



Y GADWYN

(The Link)

News of the Toronto Welsh Community

Gadwyn Summer Edition

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From the Minister's Desk...

Dear Members and Friends of Dewi Sant Welsh United Church!

As most of you will know, the time has come for me to say "Hwyl a ffarwel" to Dewi Sant Church. After almost three years of ministry with and among you, I shall try retirement again for the fifth or sixth time, since the congregation has called a new, full-time minister who will begin her work among you in November of this year. As someone said to me not long ago, "You have become a real part of us." It was a compliment, of course, and so I tried to thank that person as graciously as possible. My instinct, however, was to respond, "Well, then, it's high time to leave." A minister is always part and not part of a congregation and one always lives and works in that tension. If you are part of a community it becomes more difficult- if not hazardous - to speak the truth, faithfully and with love. Yet, if you are not a part, you will never earn the community's trust.

A change in ministry personnel is always both an anxious and an exciting time in the life of a congregation: anxious, because someone new and unknown is coming and exciting because it is a chance to make a new beginning. I am excited for myself because the coming months will be a time of refreshment, reflection and new learning.

And I am excited for the people of Dewi Sant, because a new beginning for any congregation means that we learn to trust God all over again to lead God's people into new directions and new experiences. Dewi Sant is God's church. Our Gospel reading from St. Luke this coming Sunday begins with these words,

"Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom (Luke 12: 32)."

That is so appropriate when there is a change in pastorate. It is God's good pleasure to give us the kingdom, and therefore there is no need to be afraid of the future. A good way to translate the concept of "God's kingdom" is to speak of living in God's presence. It is God's great and good pleasure to enable us to live in God's presence. It is like receiving an unexpected gift, not because it is a duty or a special occasion, but simply because the giver wants to give it to us. And the giver receives as much pleasure from the act of giving as do the receivers. To live in God's good's presence is always to live with "**hwyl**," to move into the future with good cheer and cheerfulness because we know that everything is in God's hands.

I love of all you and I know that I shall miss you. But I leave you in good hands, God's hands.

Blessings, as always, Eilert Frerichs.

But there is likely a much larger number of hidden homeless without a permanent address who get by “couch surfing” with friends and relatives or have enough to pay rent but not food each month.

Those numbers are increasing each year since the 2008 financial crisis since more people have less spare cash to help.

Kelly believes that increasing awareness of poverty in our community is the first place to begin changing the situation. She thinks that the provincial and federal governments are aware but leave the problem for local communities to solve. While she doesn't think that funding alone is the answer she feels that by acknowledging poverty reduction as a priority, government leaders can lend credibility and visibility.

She suggests that if we could actually see the sheer number of poor and homeless people in our community that it would shock us into action.

Kelly muses about the possibility of a poverty rally that would encourage the poor to come out for one day for a peaceful demonstration with a message, “**You can't ignore us.**”

“Unfortunately, the poor are already stigmatized and many would be reluctant to advertise their status,” she admits.

As proof, she recalls when backpacks full of personal hygiene items and other goods were donated to BOOTC one Christmas.

“We were so excited,” she remembers, “that participants would be able to have a personal backpack to carry their things. But we soon realized that they were taking out the items and leaving the packs behind.

“When we finally asked some of them why, they thanked us but told us they didn't want to be marked in the community by carrying them around.”

Kelly thinks that we need to streamline services for the poor and homeless because there is too much overlap and people falling through the gaps. Regrettably, there is also competition among organizations and concern about job security.

Her suggestion is that individuals follow her example by giving back to grassroots organizations like BOOTC and the David Busby Street Centre. She suggests dropping in to see these organizations first hand and then thinking about the one thing you could do to help.

“As I discovered, your personal presence is more valuable than money. Seek to understand the problem, do what you can and then tell others,” she says. “Once you begin to understand the whole picture poverty takes on a different meaning. It leads to acceptance, appreciation and empathy. We must start by overcoming the attitude of denial that most of us shield ourselves with.”

She maintains that there is a personal satisfaction to knowing that you have not just donated, but made your contribution personal and become an instrument of change.

Kelly invites you to start by contacting Barrie Out of the Cold at volunteer@barrieoutofthecold.org, or going to www.barrieoutofthecold.org for an online volunteer application.

Thank you Kelly for the invaluable work that you are doing. We are always proud to hear how our “grown up” Sunday school kids are doing.

More Milestones

Sarah Conti graduated with an Honours B.A. degree from York University in June. (Sarah is the grand-daughter of George and Meryl Davies).

The Second Instalment of The Trip to South East Asia

After re-charging our batteries and relaxing for a couple of days, we crossed into Viet Nam at Chau Doc.

We walked across the border, then got transport into the sleepy riverside town, in the Mekong delta. It is well known for its "floating market". There are numerous boats of all sizes selling fruit and vegetables, and, while we were there, flowers. Flowers were abundant and mainly yellow, because it was "Vietnamese New Year" or Tet. We visited an ethnic Cham village, many of whom have converted from Hinduism to Islam. They still cling on to their language and culture despite long term efforts to absorb them into mainstream Viet Nam culture.

Next stop Can Tho, the largest city in the delta (population over 1 million). Being a riverside town, it too had its floating market. Some boats had "long-tail" motors, others were rowing boats, rowed standing, forward-pushing style. We took an interesting side trip up some canals to an orchard growing exotic fruits.

Ho Chi Minh City, HCMC, formerly Saigon, was not far away. It is Viet Nam's largest city (10 million compared to Hanoi 6-7 million). This bustling city is full of people and motor cycles. Crossing the road is a life-threatening event. Flowers were abundant because of Tet or the "Vietnamese New Year", and in the city, attractions included the Jade Emperor Pagoda, Notre Dame cathedral and nearby Post Office, and the Reunification Palace, made famous by the "Fall of Saigon" in 1975. It was here the North Vietnamese tanks breached the gates and raised the red flag. One room houses a full-size snooker table, but there were NO pockets ! It is interesting that Christianity is the second most popular religion, second to Buddhism. This is likely a reflection of 100 years of French colonial rule and 25 years of American rule.

HCMC is well known for its "motorbike cowboys", who snatch cameras and handbags from moving motorbikes. Unfortunately, we have first-hand experience of this kind of theft.

Out of town, a short journey away, (65 kms NW of HCMC), are the Cu Chi Tunnels. These are a network of tunnels covering a staggering area of 250 kms. These included kitchens and meeting rooms, and were an effective network for waging guerilla war. Some of the tunnels have been enlarged to accommodate "European" tourists. Numerous guerilla snares and other anti-personnel devices are also on show, as well as a period propaganda film.

A flight to Da Nang and a taxi trip took us to Hoi An, a UNESCO designated "world heritage site". From the 16th to the 18th century it was Vietnam's most important port and trading post. It is a small picturesque town with many old houses and temples, but better known today for its tailor shops, and known as a "silk Mecca".

From Hoi An, we back-tracked to Danang, Vietnam's 4th largest city, then, via the Hai Van tunnel through the mountain which forms a natural barrier between north and south Vietnam, to Hue, on the Perfume River. We were passing through the DMZ.

Hue was the capital city from 1802 to 1945. The Imperial City, within the walled citadel was built in 1802, but extensively damaged by successive wars with the

French and Americans. A dragon boat ride up-river leads to Thien Mu Pagoda. The tower at the front of the pagoda, built in 1844, has 7 tiers, some say signifying the 7 steps to Buddhist enlightenment. A little further afield, at the confluence of two tributaries of the Perfume River, is the Tomb to Minh Mang, one of the most popular Nguyen Emperors. The tomb can be reached by a long walkway, flanked by numerous stone statues and frangipani trees.

A flight from Hue to Hanoi, then a bus trip, found us in magical Halong Bay. There are over 3000 towering limestone islands in the Gulf of Tonkin. Most of the bay has been designated an UNESCO World Heritage site (1994). On an overnight cruise on a junk, we learnt how to make "Spring Rolls", as well as making the usual visits to caves and islands.

Back in Hanoi, we visited the Hanoi Citadel, in which is Ho Chi Minh's mausoleum containing his embalmed body, and his house. His body lies in a heavily guarded severe room, where no speech or photos are allowed, and visitors are herded quickly, in twos, through the area. Every year, his body is sent to Moscow for 3 months, for "Maintenance". Nearby is the "One Pillar Pagoda", which dates back to the 11th century. There are several places of interest to visit in Hanoi, such as the museum of Ethnology, the "Old Quarter" and its market and restaurants. Everywhere, one can find Pho or noodle soup, usually with beef (bo) or chicken (ga). There are even vegetarian dishes such as "vegetarian pork meat skewer, vegetarian chicken curry with cashews and potato, and stir-fried vegetarian spare ribs with vegetables"!

A stroll around Hoan Kiem Lake, in central Hanoi, takes one past the Ngoc Son pagoda, reached by the Bridge of the Rising Sun, and a number of other Buddhist and Confucian Temples.

Hanoi International (Noi Bai) Airport is a 45 minute drive from downtown Hanoi, but we left from there to return to Canada, via Shanghai. **Dr Steve Jones**

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A child was asked to write a book report on the entire Bible. Here is what was written: (Out of the mouths of babes)

The Children's Bible in a Nutshell

In the beginning, which occurred near the start, there was nothing but God darkness, and some gas. The Bible says, 'The Lord thy God is one,' but I think He must be a lot older than that.

Anyway, God said, 'Give me a light!' and someone did. Then God made the world. He split the Adam and made Eve. Adam and Eve were naked, but they weren't embarrassed because mirrors hadn't been invented yet. Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating one bad apple, so they were driven from the Garden of Eden.....Not sure what they were driven in though, because they didn't have cars.

Adam and Eve had a son, Cain, who hated his brother as long as he was Abel. Pretty soon all of the early people died off, except for Methuselah, who lived to be like a million or something.

One of the next important people was Noah, who was a good guy, but one of his kids was kind of a Ham. Noah built a large boat and put his family

and some animals on it. He asked some other people to join him, but they said they would have to take a rain check.

After Noah came Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jacob was more famous than his brother, Esau, because Esau sold Jacob his birthmark in exchange for some pot roast. Jacob had a son named Joseph who wore a really loud sports coat.

Another important Bible guy is Moses, whose real name was Charlton Heston. Moses led the Israel Lights out of Egypt and away from the evil Pharaoh after God sent ten plagues on Pharaoh's people. These plagues included frogs, mice, lice, bowels, and no cable. God fed the Israel Lights every day with manicotti.

Then he gave them His Top Ten Commandments. These include: don't lie, cheat, smoke, dance, or covet your neighbor's stuff. Oh, yeah, I just thought of one more: Humor thy father and thy mother.

One of Moses' best helpers was Joshua who was the first Bible guy to use spies.

Joshua fought the battle of Geritol and the fence fell over on the town.

After Joshua came David.; He got to be king by killing a giant with a slingshot. He had a son named Solomon who had about 300 wives and 500 porcupines. My teacher says he was wise, but that doesn't sound very wise to me.

After Solomon there were a bunch of major league prophets. One of these was Jonah, who was swallowed by a big whale and then barfed up on the shore.

There were also some minor league prophets, but I guess we don't have to worry about them.

After the Old Testament came the New Testament. Jesus is the star of The New Testament. He was born in Bethlehem in a barn. (I wish I had been born in a barn too, because my mom is always saying to me, 'Close the door! Were you born in a barn?' It would be nice to say, 'As a matter of fact, I was.')

During His life, Jesus had many arguments with sinners like the Pharisees and the Republicans.

Jesus also had twelve opossums. The worst one was Judas Asparagus. Judas was so evil that they named a terrible vegetable after him.

Jesus was a great man. He healed many leopards and even preached to some Germans on the Mount.

But the Republicans and all those guys put Jesus on trial before Pontius the Pilot. Pilot didn't stick up for Jesus. He just washed his hands instead. Anyways, Jesus died for our sins, then came back to life again. He went up to Heaven but will be back at the end of the Aluminum. His return is foretold in the book of Revolution.

Clarice Terry

Changes

