

The Reverend's Ruminations - February 2021

As most of you know, I was away from the church for about a week in mid-January when I joined several hundred Minnesota National Guard Airmen and Soldiers, as well as thousands from nearly every state, to provide support to authorities in our nation's capital during the presidential inauguration. I am grateful for your flexibility on the two Sundays of my absence. One of them was actually planned in advance, but had to be adjusted when I departed on short notice. As I said to many via email, thank you for your prayers of safety while we were in DC. In the end, events went surprisingly smoothly, and for that we can all be thankful!

Back here in the "winter wonderland" of southern Minnesota, it still looks quite a bit like the way we fondly envision Christmas. Isn't it funny how some were wishing for a nice coating of white just six short weeks ago, but now that the excitement of Advent and Christmas have passed with the old year, many are already tired of the white stuff!?! As winter continues to hold us in its icy grip, perhaps we can draw inspiration from the Old Testament writings of the long-suffering man known as Job:

"God thunders wondrously with his voice; he does great things that we cannot comprehend. For to the snow he says, 'Fall on the earth'; and the shower of rain, his heavy shower of rain, serves as a sign on everyone's hand, so that all whom he has made may know it. Then the animals go into their lairs and remain in their dens. From its chamber comes the whirlwind, and cold from the scattering winds. By the breath of God ice is given, and the broad waters are frozen fast. He loads the thick cloud with moisture; the clouds scatter his lightning. They turn round and round by his guidance, to accomplish all that he commands them on the face of the habitable world." (Job 37:5-12, NRSV)

Not only do the physical seasons of our region continue to change at God's command, but the seasons of the Christian church march on as well. By the 17th of February, we will again observe Ash Wednesday and begin the liturgical season of Lent. During the last two Sundays of February and throughout March we will find ourselves, not giddy with the kind of anticipation that Advent offers, but instead becoming more reflective—even contemplative—as we journey slowly toward the joy and celebration of Easter (this year on April 4). It's hard to believe, but last year at this time we had not yet begun the COVID restrictions that defined 2020 in so many ways! Now that we've become fairly adept with the virtual experience, and even moved to a hybrid online/in-person service, maybe this Lenten season won't seem as jarringly isolated as last year's. I do hope you'll plan to join me for our mid-week Lenten services, no matter what format they take this time around!



Yours in Christ's service,

Rev. Cory Germain