



Ministry Update

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My dear friends,

The warm weather has arrived! Isn't it wonderful?

It has been a little while since I've written an update. I hope this finds you all well and in God's peace.

A few weeks back I grabbed some Timbits and headed to the Kyuquot/Chekliisaht First Nation treaty office, not sure of who would be there or what would transpire. I figured a sweet treat would likely pave the way for a visit with someone. As I drove, I thought of how things have changed over the years that I've been connected to the community. Fifteen years ago, I could've dropped in unannounced on anyone in the community for a visit. Most people didn't venture far from their homes and if they did, they would likely be back soon. No one tends to have people over anymore. Seems like it's so much harder to connect with people nowadays.

When I got to the office I was greeted by the receptionist, who didn't have a clue who I was, so was not giving me any kind of permission to wander inside the bowels of the office to find someone with whom I could visit. She kindly said, "Can I help you?" I fumbled my way through my request, "um...uh...is Ella or Anita around?" "Let me see who is here," and she disappeared around the corner.

Seconds later, Sammy walked into the lobby, with his co-worker close behind. (Sammy used to work with me when I was catering). He had been hired two days prior as the youth worker for the nation. We chatted about his new position, and we were both pretty excited about what it meant for him: stability for his family, and the ability to stay home for work instead of working away for weeks at a time (his work over the last while has been cooking at fishing and logging camps along the BC coast, so was away a lot and not very consistent).

Just then Anita rounded the corner (Anita is Sammy's partner and also worked with me when I was catering). "Hi!" She always has a generous greeting when she sees me. Anita, Sammy and I stood and chatted for some time about various things that were going on for different family members and their prayer needs. At one break in the conversation Sammy said, "Hey! Do you want to teach the youth how to cook?" I said, "Do I!"



A week later I was sitting in the office with Sammy, and three other workers involved in program and cultural development for the nation. We planned and organized and brainstormed what these cooking classes could look like. Ideas were flying as to how we could do it and expand on it: learning cultural food practices, growing their own food through gardens, involving elders (by inviting them into the kitchen and/or feeding them), doing seasonal cooking (salmon bbq on the beach over an open fire, for example), cooking on a budget. It took me back to the days when I was working for my brother-in-law's first nation, when the staff would sit together in the board room and dream, and scheme, and plan, and organize programs for the members. Those were heady, exciting, fulfilling days.

My first class will be May 26.

I'm still spending time with Agatha, my dear friend with early onset Alzheimer's. I'm taking her to a potlatch tomorrow, the first potlatch that I've been to since before COVID. I am so excited to watch her enjoying seeing relatives again and singing to the music and eating traditional foods. This will likely feed her weary and grieving heart.

I'm learning about Sabbath (through practicingtheway.org) in my small group as a practice. It is life transforming! One of the aspects of Sabbath we're exploring is feasting together as a community. Well, you know me and food... Back in the mid-2000s, the family I'm adopted into (which includes Anita & Sammy) used to get together every Sunday afternoon for "Fellowship". We would have a potluck, sing songs, my NAIM colleague Jim Miller would do a wee sermon, and we would pray together. It's the closest thing I've come to a Sabbath feast. I'm about to suggest to my sister, Betty, that we take it up again, once a month. In this day of texting and messages and little community contact, it might even be revolutionary for us all to be together again to share a meal and pray!



Thank you for your support spiritually, prayerfully and financially. I am so blessed to be here doing this work and it is, in part, through your generosity that I am able to do so.

Kathryn

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