



Ministry Update

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The text read, "They're gonna be taking him off the breathing tubes today."

I was on my way to Port Alberni to visit my dear friend Agatha (the one with Early Onset Alzheimer's). When I got the text, I turned around at the next exit, an hour away from the hospital in Campbell River. Travis, my grandson in the native family, had suffered a series of seizures a few days prior; in their midst, his heart stopped. He had since been in ICU in an induced coma. Travis was the youngest of ten children. Like many of his siblings, he lived on the street with his girlfriend; as you can imagine, the scene would've been fraught with hard street drugs.

I arrived at the hospital just after nursing staff turned off the machinery that was sustaining his 25-year-old life. Anita immediately turned toward me as I walked in the door and said, "Can you say a prayer?" There were only a handful of people in the room. I looked at Travis's mom and dad who were clinging to each other and looking longingly into their child's waning face. His other grandmas and a few aunties and cousins were there to witness the passing of his precious life, and to support one another.

I stood between my sister, his Grandma Maggie, and his Aunty Amanda. With hands resting on each of them, I prayed to the Giver of Life. I prayed that Travis would be at peace and at rest with his heavenly Father. I thanked God for the beautiful young man that lay before us, struggling to breath, until finally he didn't. Anita leaned over to me and mouthed, "Thank you for coming."

Sometimes, even after all these 36 years that I've lived in this community, I wonder about my role here and how God might be using me. Sometimes it seems clear and other times it is veiled, at least to me. One thing that has evolved over the last year or so has been my Friday morning Facebook check-ins with the family. Every Friday I post on Facebook asking if anyone in the family has any prayer requests (remember that this family is more than 98 strong). Mostly there are five or six who respond, but every now and again there are others, those who don't have a faith as far as I know, who ask for prayer.

It's an amazing journey. I can follow up with those asking for prayer to learn more about their situation or to find out that there has been answered prayer! What a privilege for me to be able to be involved in such a way and to get to know those for whom I'm praying.

On an “unrelated” note, I have recently started the discipline of fasting twice a week (inspired by Practicing the Way practicingtheway.org). One of my fast days happens to be Friday. It has made the prayer opportunities richer, focused, and more poignant!

Agatha (Early Onset Alzheimer’s) moved from Cumberland, a 1.5-hour round trip drive from where I live, to be closer to her family, an extra 4 hours of travel round trip for me to get to her. I am so pleased that she is closer to her family. When her daughter let me know that Ag would be moving to Port Alberni, she also told me that despite all the family that Ag has in Campbell River, I was the only one who visited her. My heart sank. Now her daughter is in walking distance from Agatha, so I’m happy to drive the extra time it takes to visit her. It just won’t be as often as I would like.

As everyone launches into the Christmas season, with parties and dinners and gatherings happening, I am pleased that I can help cook a community dinner for the Kyuquot/Cheklesah (<https://kyuquotbc.ca>) First Nation. That will be December 8. Please pray that it goes well and that community members would hear and remember the meaning of Christmas.



Blessed Advent and Christmas to you, my friends. Thank you for helping to sustain me over 2023 as I live and work here among the Nuu-chah-nulth in Campbell River.

Much love and gratitude,

Kathryn

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