



St. Paul's Anglican Church

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May 25, 2023

Dear Parish of St Paul,

First I wish you to know that Jodi and I continue to be amazed by, and incredibly grateful for, your prayers and support. Truly we are blessed by God through you and we continually thank God for you. We also pray for you daily. Thank you for your faithfulness in Christ to us, to each other, and to the Gospel!

I also wish to give you an update re. my recovery and return to work. I am much better these days and much of what might be called “resting pain” – pain that is continually present whether I am moving or resting – has dropped dramatically (except for the occasional “bad” day). I am in the physiotherapy stage of my recovery, and it is very much a case of “two steps forward, one step back”, but with an overall steady progress. I am seeing incredible gains in mobility, range of motion, and overall pain levels (particularly for specific actions that I could not previously manage), but it also stirs the pot a bit too. Because of the new hardware in my lower back, and the bone graft that continues to ossify, my back does not move like it used to and the motions required by physiotherapy creates new stress points for my muscles and joints. So my days are (not unhappily) filled with prayer, physiotherapy, appointments, and reading – and yes, Netflix too. 😊 Jodi and I also have both been very much preoccupied with the health of our mothers (Myrna and Diana), as they each continue to decline quite seriously – placing stress on the whole family, but especially their primary care-givers. Your continued prayers for them would be greatly appreciated.

Regarding my return to the parish, I met with the Bishop in the first week of May, fully expecting to return to the Parish of St Paul and resume my duties as Rector in the first week of June. The Bishop, however, informed me of something I probably should have known already – namely, I cannot just decide to return to work, but need my physician’s approval to do so. This makes sense, of course, as I am on disability because a doctor said I am unfit to work; it only makes sense that a doctor needs to say that I am now fit to work again. I was able to meet with my physician shortly thereafter (Tuesday, May 9, 2023) and the gist of it is that she was not able to recommend that I go back to work at this time and strongly advises that I wait until the end of June. At that time, I will meet with the neural surgeon who did the surgery and get his assessment as to the amount of bone formation in my bone graft and whether it is sufficient. I have every reason to believe that that will be positive and I will be cleared to return after that. I am currently approved to be on long-term disability through until July 2, and so I will remain on that (and not back at St Paul’s) until then. My expected return to work, then, is now revised to Sunday, July 2, 2023.

This was quite disappointing news for me at first, but I have since been able to see both the wisdom in her decision and God’s grace in it. The situation is made much easier for me knowing the great work that Rev Sarah is doing in my absence, as well as the competence and care of both the Staff and Vestry of St Paul’s parish. In the Daily Office Lectionary, which is used for Morning Prayer, we have been going through the Letter to the Hebrews. I have been greatly comforted by the emphasis on the surpassing excellence of our Saviour, which gives us confidence of our place in God’s heart and family. It is the same confidence I have that God continues to hold you dear in my absence and also continues to hold Jodi and I dear as well.

Grace and Peace in Jesus Christ,

Myron+

Rev. Myron B. Penner

Connecting
people
with God
and
each other