

Thoughts and Smiles – June 23, 2025

“She just wanted a cup of tea.”

—“That’s it! I’m done! Mom, I can’t take this anymore!”

Leticia screamed from the kitchen.

Esteban looked up from his book, instantly catching a strange smell in the air. He rushed in—his heart racing—and found her holding a melted, scorched electric kettle. Her mother, 80 years old, sat silently nearby, eyes vacant, unaware of the chaos.

—“She put the electric kettle on the gas stove!” Leticia cried. “She could have burned the whole place down! I’m done. Tomorrow, I’m putting her in a home.”

Her mother lowered her gaze and quietly left the room.

Esteban asked gently, “Are you serious?”

—“More than ever,” Leticia snapped. “Everyone at work tells me to do it. And I’m done listening to you. I want peace.”

—“If the house burns down, then it does,” Esteban shrugged. “We’ll shut the gas off when we’re out. But we keep caring for her.”

—“I’m tired of being mocked,” Leticia sobbed. “By you. By her. I just want peace. Is that too much to ask?”

—“Yes,” Esteban answered calmly.

—“What do you mean, yes?”

—“This is a test, Leticia. And we’re meant to walk through it. Together.”

Leticia shook her head. “I’ll visit her. Once a month. She’ll be better off with professionals. I can’t take this anymore.”

Esteban paused.

—“Okay,” he said.

—“So you understand?”

—“Yes. I’m leaving.”



—“What?!”
—“I’ll stay with my brother for now.”
—“Why?”
—“Because if your mother leaves this home... so do I.”

Leticia collapsed into a chair. “Are you leaving me?”

—“I’m not leaving you,” Esteban replied. “I’m leaving the woman I no longer recognize. A woman willing to abandon her mother when she needs her most. I can forgive distance, coldness, even lost love. But betrayal... I can’t.”

—“It’s not betrayal,” she whispered. “It’s fear. Exhaustion. I’m afraid I’ll lose my mind...”
—“No. It’s a story you’re telling yourself. You want to make life easier at the cost of the one who once held you. And if you can do that to her... what stops you from doing it to me? Or to our children? I’d rather leave now than wait.”

—“So what do I do?” she asked, broken.
Esteban stepped closer.
—“You fill a pot with water.
You put it on the stove.
And you make the tea your mother was trying to make.
Because, Leticia...
she just wanted a cup of tea.”

—



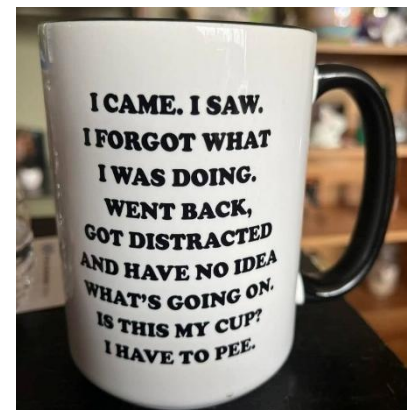
Reflection:

*Sometimes the hardest trials aren’t accidents or illness.
They’re the choices we make in the middle of them.
It’s not always easy to care for the ones who once cared for us.
But that’s the true weight—and beauty—of love:
It’s not built on comfort.
It’s built on what’s right.*

Before you let go... remember:

*Life comes full circle.
And one day, we’ll all need someone who won’t let go of our hand.*

What did this story make you feel? *(Share your thoughts on the blog.)*



HEAVEN'S BEACON

Those who choose to give have lived with those who take.
Those who choose to love have felt their strong heart break.
Those who never leave have been left a thousand times.
Those who warm the day have felt cold in the night.

Some will choose to hide, play with shadows of their pain,
Never moving far, discussing all life's strains,
But some will always love, no matter what the cost,
For some are born to find themselves when all around are lost.

Some will change, become the harder shell that
doesn't give,
Others take the pain and grow, choosing just to live,
For some are simply ghosts passing in the night,
But some are heaven's beacons, born to shine their
light.

If ever you feel lost and you don't know where to go,
Remember who you are and embrace your inner
glow.
A ghost will never question, but you are full of
why's,
So know that you're a beacon filling shadows with
your light.

- Heather Lea



One day, your child will sit across from a stranger and talk about you.
About how you hugged them... or how you ignored them.
About whether you listened, or only corrected.



Whether your voice was a safe haven—or a storm.
And in that moment, you won't be there to explain yourself.
All that will remain is their version.
Their memory.
Their wound... or their strength.

Childhood isn't just a stage—it's the foundation of their entire emotional life.
You're not raising them just to obey.
You're raising them so one day they can face the world with dignity, confidence, and self-love.
Yes, it's hard.
No one said shaping a soul

would be easy.

But if you're going to make mistakes, let them be out of love, not indifference.
If you're going to fall short, let it be because you kept trying, not because you gave up.

Let it be, when your child speaks of you,
they do so with gratitude in their soul, tears of love in their eyes,
and the pride of knowing they had a parent who never stopped trying.

Been feeling a little moody
and run down lately. So I
looked up my symptoms. It's
adulthood. I have adulthood.

Stephen King was once living in frustration and poverty, with three kids to support. His first novel, “Carrie”, was rejected everywhere he sent it. Discouraged, he tossed the manuscript into the trash, convinced his dream was over. After long days teaching English, he took a second job at a laundromat just to make ends meet.

That could have been the end of the story—if not for Tabitha, his wife. One day, while emptying the trash, she found the discarded pages. She read them, saw the potential, and told Stephen he couldn’t let this story go. She urged him to try again, to keep writing.

A few months later, a small publishing house took a chance on “Carrie”. The first print run was tiny, but the book sold out almost instantly. Demand kept growing, more copies were printed, and before long, “Carrie” was a bestseller. That one book changed everything.

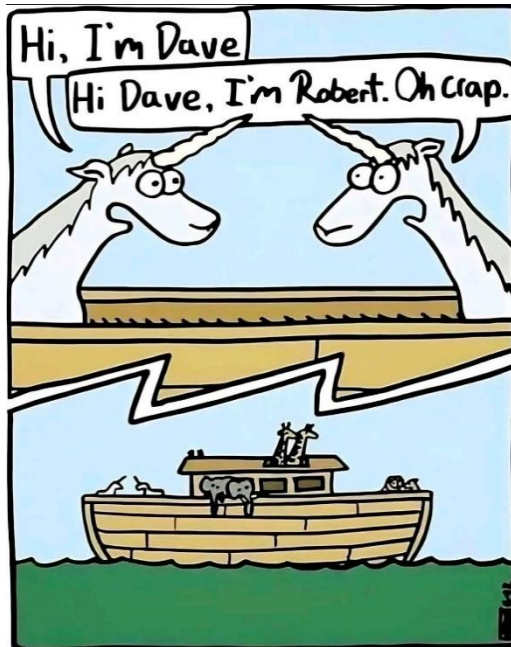
Decades later, Stephen King is a household name—the “King of Horror,” author of dozens of bestsellers and the inspiration behind iconic movies like “The Shining”, “It”, “Misery”, and “Children of the Corn”.

But none of this would have happened without Tabitha—the woman who saw hope where Stephen saw failure, the one who lifted him from the lowest point and believed in him, even when he didn’t believe in himself.

That’s why, in almost every book King writes, the first page carries a simple dedication: “For Tabby.”

Never underestimate the power of support and love. Sometimes, that’s all someone needs to change the world.





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**TO THE PERSON THAT
STOLE MY SHOES
WHILE I WAS ON THE
BOUNCY CASTLE.
GROW UP!!!**

Blessings to you All!

David Jones

Minister

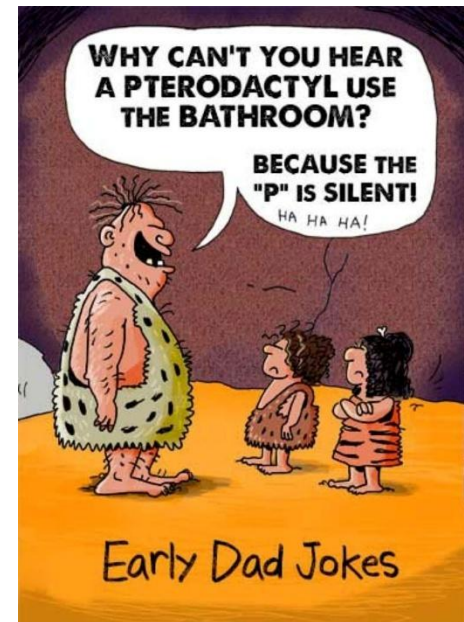
Hepworth-Sauble Beach Pastoral Charge

Check out "David's Blog" on the Sauble Beach United Church website.

<https://saubleunitedchurch.ca/category/davids-blog/>



Decided to have a yard sale this weekend so I could argue with strangers about whether this toy we spent \$100 on is worth 50¢ or 25¢.



Salesman: This car will seat 6 people without any problems.

Me: I don't think I know 6 people without any problems.

Recipes should include photos of the mess you have to clean up after cooking

WHEN THE WORLD FEELS AT WAR

*"The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it."*

(John 1:5)

For Christ is risen.
And even here—
that changes everything.

A Pastoral Reflection: When the World Feels at War

We live in a world that feels increasingly unsettled. News cycles spin faster than we can keep up with. Trust in institutions is eroding. Conflicts seem to simmer everywhere—sometimes boiling over, sometimes just beneath the surface. And even when we're not directly touched by violence or war, something in the air has changed. It's not just the noise of the world that's louder—it's the silence between that feels heavier.

More and more people are beginning to wonder aloud: Is this what war looks like now? Not only bombs and tanks—but the constant pressure of fear, confusion, and division? A kind of

psychological warfare, where the weapons are misinformation, manipulation, digital surveillance, and cultural unrest?

It's easy to assume war only happens when it's declared with flags and formal statements. However, much of what we experience today feels like a conflict unfolding in subtle ways. One doesn't need a battlefield to feel under siege. Just ask the anxious parent who can't imagine bringing a child into this world. Or the young person who wonders if any future is secure. Or the elderly widow who watches the news and wonders if the world she once knew has simply unravelled.

We feel the signs of trauma, even if no one's named it as such: sleepless nights, a sense of dread, a persistent uncertainty. Even our relationships suffer—trust wears thin, tempers flare, hope flickers. What used to feel stable now feels uncertain. What once seemed far away now lands at our doorsteps and fills our inboxes.

And in this strange new world, the lines are blurring: between war and peace, truth and propaganda, crisis and conspiracy. We don't always know what to believe—only that something isn't right.

But here is where the Gospel meets us.

Because Jesus, too, lived in a world torn by empire and unrest. He walked among the disoriented and the discouraged. He met people who felt like pawns in a system too big to change. And he didn't come with more force, but with mercy. He didn't overwhelm with power, but overcame with love.

In the midst of a chaotic world, Christ became flesh and walked among us—healing the sick, calming storms, restoring the broken. Not because the world had sorted itself out, but because it hadn't.

That is the miracle of our faith: God enters the very place of unrest.

"The light shines in the darkness," says John's Gospel, ***"and the darkness did not overcome it."*** It didn't then, and it doesn't now.

Psalm 116 tells the story of someone ensnared by fear and surrounded by death—***"the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me"***—and yet, they called upon God and found grace. ***"Return, O my soul, to your rest,"*** the psalmist writes, ***"for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you."***

This is still our promise. God has not abandoned us to chaos. Even now, when the world feels at war—when peace seems elusive and truth hard to find—God is not absent. Christ is still risen. And resurrection still breaks in, even through rubble.

You are not broken because you feel weary. You are not faithless because the news overwhelms you. You are human. And you are held.

So let us lift our eyes—not in denial of the darkness, but in hope that sees beyond it. Let us care for one another with tenderness. Let us offer kindness where cruelty is loud. Let us plant seeds of peace in places of unrest.

Because the tomb is empty. Christ is alive. And that changes everything.

Amen.

Even when the world feels at war,
and even when the battles don't look
like they used to, we are not alone.
Our Saviour sees the hidden wounds,
the anxious nights, the weariness
of this strange new world.
And God promises us not just survival—
but resurrection.

And so, dear friends, you are not broken
because you feel confused. You are not failing
because the news overwhelms you.
You are not powerless in the face of complexity.
You are beloved. You are not alone.
And you are held in the arms of a God
who is still at work—even now—bringing healing
where there is harm, light where there
is shadow, and peace that passes all understanding.

