

I want to thank The Reverend Paula Leggett for this reflection which I think is important for us to think about with all that is happening in the United States and in our country of Canada during this pandemic.

Pastor Perry

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Vicars Blot – St. Alban's**

9 January 2021 – published Jan 11

The year of COVID 19 began for me in mid-March 2020, and that twelve-month year has about 2 months left to play out. It is in March that we had to close the doors of our churches, begin to learn social distancing, and start to think about masking. Just when we thought nothing more could shake up this year, we watched as an angry mob stormed the US Capital, we saw a Congress woman on the floor and a Congressman giving her comfort, and we sat with the knowledge that the sitting US President had knowingly incited a pumped up and angry gathering of right-wing misogynist white supremist men and women – believing their narrative that the same US President had fomented is the absolute truth, and all the rest of the USA was lying to them – incited them to charge the Capital, put a stop on the due-process ratifying the results of the November presidential election, some of them even screaming, “kill the traitors!” – that is, those who stole the election from Mr. Trump.

Now, five days later, the nightmare continues as leaders hope they can prevent any other atrocious act by Mr. Trump and as media, historians and everyday Janes and Joes ask how the country can go forward when a segment of the population is convinced in its narrative that they will likely continue their public and often violent resistance, becoming an internal terrorist threat that will continue as long as people believe their alternative history and ideology. I cannot imagine what will change minds so possessed by such fear-based righteousness.

I remember how odd the Canadian way seemed to me when I first landed in Canada – from the USA – over 30 years ago. From being appalled by the seeming disrespectful debates across the floor in the Parliament I soon began to appreciate things like a “loyal opposition,” and a “minority government,” and to rejoice in a country where politicians not only put up with but joined the shenanigans of “Canadian Air Farce” and “This Hour has 22 Minutes” – even Mr. Harper seemed to enjoy the game. You got to respect politicians who can laugh at themselves.

Being a citizen of an ‘earthly realm’ as well as Gd’s Commonwealth is an exercise in discernment and flexibility. Just how far can I expect my country to reflect the Kingdom of Heaven? And how long will that Kingdom tarry, so that the world continues to be a

place where great love and great hatred exist side-by-side, and where there is more than enough hurt, brokenness and injustice for humankind to respond to? How long will selfishness and greed and just plain evil continue to sidetrack, divide and redirect our resources and energies, even our hearts?

Is what we watched evidence that humanity cannot change, cannot reach toward its divine self rather than remain captivated by the survival sense gone wild? Should the Holy One just shelf this project and the world come to a Full. Stop. End? Or is it evidence that the freedom to choose means that every generation must confront its own selfishness and evil, and every person who chooses love is already living in the truth of Gd's Commonwealth and even if humanity should Full. Stop. End it will be our own doing and not the wrath of Gd?

I prefer to believe every generation has a chance to incarnate the kingdom of Gd. Times like this challenge my position, make it seem fated that Gd will have to step in to put a stop to it all.

Are we made for fate or for freedom? Does one person's loving action 'cover' for the evil of others (think of Abraham and Gd negotiating over Sodom and Gemorrah)?

"Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven." Does the Kingdom come whenever we choose to love, to forgive, to be generous? Is the Kingdom of heaven "at hand/among us"?

Rev'd Paula Leggett