



## CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL OTTAWA Easter 2018

Dear Friends,

One Eastertide Sunday in May, 2010, Bishop Michael Curry, then Bishop of North Carolina and now Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church (USA), was a guest preacher in the Cathedral. A bracing westerly was blowing over LeBreton Flats and down Queen Street as I walked several blocks to the hotel to collect him. I became aware of a very strong wind chill.

Bishop Michael was waiting for me in the lobby, wearing a light suit and no overcoat. I commented on the weather and gently suggested he wear my anorak for the walk to the Cathedral, but he cheerfully declined (with a knowing comment about how he had been born in Chicago). I realized he had no idea of the temperature, which was an unseasonable 0°C, or the chilling effect of the wind. I good-naturedly and firmly insisted he wear my coat.

We walked out to the street and he quickly did up the zipper and attached the various Velcro seals. The hood came up after a few metres. By the time we were a quarter of the way back his eyes were watering and a worried look overtook his normally smiling face. Soon the hood was closed to a tiny opening and he leaned into the biting wind. At the three-quarter way mark he put his back to the wind and exposed his face just long enough to say, with genuine incredulity: "How do people live here?!"

Bishop Michael Curry is a courageous leader. In 2016 he replied to sanctions placed on The Episcopal Church by the Primate's Meeting of the Anglican Communion by stating: "Our commitment to be an inclusive church is not based on a social theory or capitulation to the ways of the culture, but on our belief that the outstretched arms of Jesus on the cross are a sign of the very love of God reaching out to us all."

Later that year, in a controversial visit to Rome, he stressed the importance of cooperation between all churches, saying our shared mission "is to help the human family, with all its variety and all its diversity and all its differences, to find a way to become not simply a disparate community but a human family of God... The choice is ours, chaos or community."

More recently, he has championed revival within The Episcopal Church—to "stir and renew hearts for Jesus" and "to welcome people who aren't part of a church to join the Jesus Movement."

I am certain many people fail to understand what the Jesus Movement is all about—often taking on a chilled, incredulous look and asking: "How can thinking people buy into that?!" Good idea for followers of Jesus like us to look to our hearts for an answer to give.

As we celebrate the very essence of the Jesus Movement on Easter Day, ask yourself what it is about Jesus that touches your heart. What story about Jesus speaks to you? What is it about Jesus that inspires you to be generous or determined to serve others? What does the resurrection of Jesus say to your heart?

The death of Jesus tells me God is present within the lowest places of our humiliations, injuries, sorrows, pain, or loss. The Resurrection of Jesus tells me the hope we need to sustain us in this life can never be destroyed. I believe it is the most profound statement of God's abundant, gracious love: there is always more than we can see, there are always more possibilities for life, there is always hope—for everyone.

I pray this Easter is a time of revival for you.

With kindest Easter blessings,|

The Very Reverend Shane Parker  
Dean of Ottawa