



Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast
January 31, 2021
4th Sunday After Epiphany
(The Epiphany, January 6, 2021)

Revised Common Lectionary Scripture Readings for this Sunday

- Deuteronomy 18:15-20: God has appointed Moses as his emissary.
 - Psalms 111: A song of thanks and praise for the wonderful works of God.
 - 1 Corinthians 8:1-13: Paul is alarmed at the behavior of the Corinthian Christians. (see below)
 - Mark 1:21-28: Jesus begins his ministry and the people “were all amazed.”
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Ready or Not, Here Comes Lent: 1 Corinthians Opens the Door

Lent begins in two and half weeks, on February 17. What we know of Lent depends on our church membership. In some denominations, Lent is observed as a season of “penance”; in others, the faithful pay more attention to the end of Lent – Easter, the Resurrection. The reading for this week from 1 Corinthians kicks off a discussion of “penance” or “repentance”, and *I will be writing more about the rich Biblical meanings of those words in the February newsletter.*

Nowadays we hear much talk about “healing” and “coming together,” when, in fact, hurtful behavior continues which prevents healing and injures everyone. The same was true at the time Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians. The church of Corinth was heavily fragmented.

One group of “puffed up” individuals within the Corinthian Church was pushing Paul’s view of “freedom in Christ” too far. Paul admonished them in vs. 9: *“But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.”*

Some Corinthians insisted on conducting themselves in a profoundly individualistic fashion, their behavior affecting the morale of the Church adversely. Paul’s aim was to see that the corporate strength of the church was built up and that the “squeaky wheels” became more sensitive to the common good rather than pushing their individual rights too far. “Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.” We can mull that over. What behaviors are we holding onto which adversely affect the common good? And how do we understand “repentance?”



Special prayers this week: comfort for Cora’s family; for Charley’s continued healing; Mary’s recovery; those suffering in the pandemic; peace and calm in our country.