

The Walk to Emmaus/Osler
By Patty Friesen and Terri Lynn Paulsen
Easter Sunday, March 27, 2016

Patty: Thanks for meeting me here at the Osler Café, Terri Lynn. I'll buy your coffee because we are still courting you for our Osler Mennonite Pastor of Faith and Community position. But once we hire you, you can buy your own coffee.

Terri Lynn: If I'm applying for the Pastor of Faith and Community position, what does that make you the pastor of?

Patty: I guess that leaves me as the Pastor of Doubt and Individualism☺ Speaking of faith, our Easter scriptures from Luke's gospel talk about the two disciples Cleopas and likely Luke himself walking to Emmaus – a distance of seven miles or 14,000 steps according to Fit Bit. They were discussing the events of Jesus' death and the confusing report from the women disciples about the resurrection of Jesus when ironically Jesus appeared and walked with them but they didn't recognize him. What has your walk with Jesus been like – how have you recognized him walking with you in your growing up and young adulthood?

Terri Lynn: (faith story growing up)

I usually explain my spiritual journey by saying that I learned about God at church, but met Jesus at Bible camp. My family attended our local United Church of Canada, where we involved in music and Sunday school; our involvement was broad but not deep. But my mom had attended Bible camp when she was little, and thought that my siblings and I should have the chance as well, if we wanted.

I was the kind of kid that loved camp. Not only did I enjoy all of the activities that camp had to offer, but there was something about my counselors to which I was drawn. I concluded it was the Jesus that they were talking about, so sometime that week, in my eight-year-old way, I began my journey with Jesus. Looking back, I feel like eight years old seems pretty young to have begun that journey, But I consider it part of the mystery that God would use that place and that those people to draw me to himself. I went back to camp every year – it was a spiritual oasis in my fairly desert-like habitat – I had a lot of questions and unbounded enthusiasm. Meeting Jesus in this environment has undoubtedly influenced my connection to the Creator by way of his creation. I am grateful for the very tangible way I felt the real-ness of God growing up, and how I have never had to decide if my faith was my own, or simply a by-product of my heritage.

When I moved to Saskatoon to start university and study Agriculture, I became involved with IVCF, and I attended whatever church was close or I had a ride to – so my journey has been quite trans-denominational that way.

Patty: How did you meet up with Mennonites along the way of your walk with Jesus?

Terri Lynn: One of the churches that sponsored that camp, and the local youth group I attended was an Anabaptist church, so that was my introduction.

But I showed up at a multi-faith event that was hosted at NPMC one evening in undergrad, and I noticed a compost bucket in the kitchen. This was about the time that I was beginning to think more deeply about Creation Care, and my love for agriculture and plants, living simply, and wondering how that overlapped with my faith.

So I came back on a Sunday, and it became my 'home base' as I ventured in and out of Saskatoon over the next few years.

Patty: Yeah, Patrick says he is tired of losing sheep to Osler Mennonite. First me, then Kaytee Edwards Buhler, and now possibly you. I told him that sheep migrate to greener pastures. The rest of our resurrection story from Luke talks about the two disciples inviting Jesus in for supper and in eating with him, they recognized him for who he was. I love this story for it's concrete image of Jesus walking with us in creation and in our fellowship of eating together. Can you share some of your passion for creation, sustainability, community gardening and eating together?

Yeah, I think my meeting NPMC was just the beginning of my journey in living into my passions for Creation care, and the depth and beauty of 'table fellowship'...of eating together and building community this way. I think all these passions developed over time as I lived on a couple of different farms and communities – in the states, and Canada, and also in West Africa.

It was in these places (amidst the goat-milking and carrot-thinning) that I met issues and authors and thinkers and friends that would influence my trajectory and path and the kinds of things that I would continue to pursue. Growing things, and connecting over food – the cooking and the eating – have been the 'third object' in the relational work and projects of which I have been a part.

Terri Lynn: ...tell me something about Osler's passions.

Patty: I'm so proud of our church. We have the best kids anywhere. They sing beautifully and tell the funniest jokes. Just last Sunday during Sunday School we were telling knock knock jokes while we coloured crosses – even the littlest kids were telling jokes that didn't make much sense. And we have the best youth – they are also very funny and very interested in God and the world. We went to the Islamic Centre a couple of weeks ago and that was interesting and we've helped at Friendship Inn and we are interested in doing things with other youth groups. We also like doing things inter-generationally like Hungry Hippo and Faspas and Games and Movie Nights. The youth say the best thing about our church is that it's like a big family and everyone is accepted

as they are. Our elders are wonderful also. They've been faithful for decades and give a lot to the church. Thanks for the coffee- we'll keep in touch. (clink coffee cups)