



September 7, 2021



## *Fable of the Pastor*

Currently I am reading a book from my library. Friedman's Fables written by Dr. Edwin Friedman, a rabbi, psychotherapist and leadership consultant to churches and synagogues before his death in 1996. Friedman's Fables expounds upon Dr. Friedman's life work assisting individuals, congregations, and corporations to understand themselves better within their system known as a family. How do the crises and traumas enable us to function and grow as individuals and as a family? Fables contain 24 stories told from the perspectives of animals that help to broaden our understanding of one another with deeper insight and provide new tools to enjoy more significant family relationships.

Using that model, I offer my own fable from recent visits to Oak Bay Marina. Olive first came to the Birthing Rock on Tuesday in late August. Of course, Olive cared little that it was Tuesday or that it was August. She knew that her time on the Birthing Rock happened about the same time as last year and she needed to make up the 70 kilometers or so quickly to secure her place at the most famous place in Oak Bay for seal delivery. The Birthing Rock was known to seals throughout the Juan de Fuca strait as THE place to give birth. The Rock had been famous for years among the human community as a public place where human types walking from the Marina to Willows Beach could view seal birth and new life in front-row fashion.

Of course, Olive cared little about human types and their rubber-necking habits, for her needs were more primal. She needed to reach the Rock before it was too late, before ten other seals arrived before her and laid claim to the premier spot for birthing seals. The rock was just large enough to accommodate her berth and her birth. It allowed her a 360 degree view of the harbor where she could see predators long before they became a danger.

Olive made it just in time. In human time it was around 10:00 AM on that Tuesday in late August. Olive only cared that Lottie was healthy, safe and had all her fins and flubber. Never mind that Lottie was not able to fit on the rock beside Olive to nurse. The Rock was never known as Nursing Rock – it was only known as Birthing Rock. Lottie learning quickly to dogpaddle while nursing. Olive, however, was focused on Wayne, close enough to be a nuisance and just far enough away to know that he lingered. When he ventured too closely, Olive emitted a low, guttural growl providing a warning to Wayne and all others that might be considered a predator to young Lottie's early development.

Of course, Olive was unable to focus only on her place on the Birthing Rock. She immediately needing to concern herself with getting in the water herself to teach Lottie the thrill and the danger of the deeper water. That is where Lottie needed to learn the lay of the lake in how to feed and to protect herself. "A mother's work is never

done” and Olive could provide no better example of that to the human spectators in general and to Lottie specifically as their reservation on the Birthing Rock ran out and their life and work returned to the deeper sea. The Birthing Rock would be there for the next family that would emerge in plain sight – for Naomi and for Ruth and for Carol but for now, once again, it had served its purpose.

What can Olive teach us about the significant places in our own lives where new life is birthed? What lessons must we remember about the necessary moments of providing for others while at the same time protecting those who are vulnerable? When is it time to leave our familiar comfort zones and venture back into uncharted waters where adventure, opportunity and new discoveries await us? Let Olive and Lottie lead the way.

Blessings along the Journey. Mitch



## Laneway Get-together in September

Join us Thursday afternoons, between 2 & 4pm, outside in the laneway.

Come for the iced tea, shortbread and conversation or just to sit in the shade and enjoy seeing familiar faces.

All welcome! Questions? Call Sheelagh - 250 385-5157

The laneway get together will continue through September depending on weather. If it is pouring rain, the meet up will be cancelled.

## Volunteers Needed!

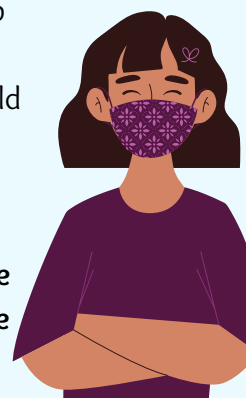
The two rooms that the Thrift Shop is currently in are being redecorated for new uses. Are you able to help pack up the items in the Thrift Shop, which will then be donated to other charities or suitable causes? If so, please contact Patricia Shuckburgh (250-381-1615) regarding access and scheduling, which we are coordinating to help keep people safe during COVID. We appreciate your help with this task! With thanks, Mission and Outreach Committee



## Important Mask Update

Our previous protocol for in-person worship required masks to be worn only while entering and exiting the church. Masks could be removed while seated.

However, in the spirit of the current mask mandates around the province, the session has approved that **all worship attendees be required to wear a mask at all times in the building**. Thank you for doing your part to keep others safe!



[Click here](#) for information on "Whose Land? Whose Promise? Palestine, Justice and the Bible" a webinar through the lens of Liberation Theology with the Presbyterian Church in Canada and partners.

## Reservations for Sunday

[Click here](#) to fill out the reservation form for this Sunday's service.

Those who do not have a computer are welcome to call Whitney at 778-587-1227 to reserve a spot at the service. Reservations need to be made by Friday afternoon.

## Read From Your Bible This Week

- Proverbs 1:20–33 and Psalm 19
- James 3:1–12
- Mark 8:27–38

