

A Gospel Moment

Further to the story of the Sun Peaks, mountain side Chapel, as told by the Rev. Stephen Muir at the Celebration of New Ministry service, I would like to offer the rest of the story.

It all started when I was the Dean and Rector of St. Paul's Cathedral in The Diocese of Cariboo. A gentleman, the marketing director of the resort, entered my office, wondering why he and his fiancé could not get married at Sun Peaks. Every other denomination had refused to marry them, for one reason or the other. After hearing his story, I said there was not a problem because under the Anglican "rules", marriages were permitted in locations where there was no chapel, if a permanent residential community existed. I agreed to officiate on one condition, namely that he seek to unblock the overtures to establish a chapel on the mountain. He agreed, and within 24 hours he had cleared the way and had chosen two potential sites. Ultimately, I picked the site and a hotel owner from Europe agreed to build the facility on the mountain. The following season, there was a beautiful Swiss style chapel nestled amidst the snow clad pines.

Stephen Muir, described the consecration service of the chapel - a wonderful moment of celebration of new Ministries. Over the following years, I would conduct services for the ski in parishioners, jam on the guitar and banjo while gaining an afternoon of free Sunday skiing.

I offer this story because of what transpired after the consecration. Being an avid skier, I was asked to ski down the mountain in my full clerical robes. It was a photographer's dream, a great PR stunt for the church and the resort. On one particular traverse, I noticed another skier coming down the run. Unfortunately, she caught an edge and did a face plant into a rather powdery snow bank to the amusement of her friends. They gathered in a horseshoe pattern around their compatriot leaving a spot for me to arrive by coincident. As the woman extracted herself from the snow bank and brushed the powder from her goggles, she looked up. There to her surprise, was a priest in full ecclesiastical regalia. Seizing the moment, I said, "Yes, some people get the ski patrol...you got the priest! I am sure the story went viral.

It is a Gospel story...the stuff of life. It is what we were made for. Go, find your moment!

NJP