

December 2022

Dear friends and family,



While this was another year of ‘firsts,’ there were also more and more ‘again’ experiences that mixed together to begin hinting at the flavour of life in this season.

I ‘survived’ my first Canadian winter. Honestly, I didn’t hate winter. I enjoy bundling up, and discovered that going on walks in the snow has its own wonder. I made my way to and through an impressive snow maze. I learned about plugging my car in at night and appreciated the remote start feature. The only times I got stuck were trying to get out of my parking spot at my apartment.

I had to go car shopping...again. This was not a fun ‘again.’ Winter and I were getting along, until a snow storm blew in over Easter weekend and I was in a collision. There were no serious injuries, but I had to go car shopping again. It turns out it’s much easier to find a car when you have a year of experience, contacts, and legal documentation to start with! In the first three months I doubled the number of miles on the new car. It is now outfitted with new tires for the winter.

I took several trips to see family and reconnect with friends and colleagues after a season of isolation and disconnection. These reunions and gatherings were by far the highest of the year’s highlights.



As in-person church gatherings resumed in the spring/summer, I began meeting new colleagues for the ‘first’ time in person. The unique quality of the last two years is that I met many people via email, phone or Zoom first. It was a gift to begin putting multi-dimensional stories and contexts to faces, voices, and names. I heard “you’re taller than I would have expected from Zoom” more than once. The portion of my job description that involves visiting congregations, facilitating workshops, and leading youth events picked up pace in the second half of the year.

Through the twists and turns of emotional and mental health this year, I had to remind myself...again and again...to be patient and kind with myself as the disruption of transition continued. I tried to stay faithful to essential self-care practices, and some days did better than others.

As the next year begins, there are things that I’m looking forward to, things that I’m still sorting out, and things that continue to feel foreign, unfamiliar or overwhelming. Chaos and disruption continue—both internally and externally. But gradually a rhythm that feels familiar most days is beginning to emerge.



May the ‘firsts’ and ‘again’s’ in your own stories be infused with moments of joy, peace, community and connection in ways that are meaningful and life-giving.