

Pastor's Greeting September 2026

"Love never ends; as for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophesy is imperfect; but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away. . . For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood."

-Saint Paul writing in 1 Corinthians 13:8-10; 12

A few days ago another good friend from the Nativity Lutheran congregation in Bend passed on to his final reward. One of this friend's superpowers was his ability to welcome new folks and remember old friends. He always attended the mid-week Bible study. Like many we have known and loved he will be missed, but not replaced.

I have been reading The Source by James Michener. It begins as an archeological dig in Israel is organized. The book progresses through the history of the Holy Land beginning thousands of years B. C. It is a fabulous re-telling of the people and the religion of that land. As St. Paul says: "our [and their] knowledge was and is imperfect.

Even in this era of Artificial Intelligence, our knowledge is imperfect.

John Donne, brilliant poet, scholar and Anglican priest of the 16th Century wrote a lovely explanation of how Christians view the phases of life:

"When a child is baptized in the church that child is thereby connected to the body that is the head which mine, and ingrafted into that body of which I am a member. And when she buries a man, that action concerns me: all mankind is of one author, and is one volume; when one man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better language; and every chapter must be translated; God employs several translators; some pieces are translated by age, some by sickness, some by war, some by justice; but God's hand is in every translation, and his hand shall bind up all our scattered leaves again for that library where every book shall lie open to one another." -John Donne "For Whom the Bell Tolls"

When we read St. Paul's letters to the Corinthian Church we find that some things were dominant: speaking in tongues[mysterious language] prophesy and current wisdom. But St. Paul claims, and we believe he had direct revelation from the Risen Christ.

So what is real and what is lasting? St. Paul says Love. Jesus says the Kingdom of God. Both. We long for the time when the imperfect will pass and the perfect comes when we are "translated" to where we are perfectly understood, perfectly read, safe in the arms of God.

Peace and Joy, Charles R. Bade