

Oh Leelanau

... Land with so much delight

For well over thirty years now I've driven back and forth, east to west, north to south, across this county called the 'Little Finger' of this incredible State of Michigan countless times. I'm pretty sure there is not a road I have not traveled, even those that say, 'dead end'. I've been lucky to live on both sides of the Peninsula, so I've witnessed the differences in the land and the people.

This has been the summer of summers for us. With the exception of a few heat waves our temperatures have been slightly close to normal. Highs in the high seventies to mid-eighties, lows in the upper fifties so you could sleep with your window open many a night. Two nights ago it was forty-three here in Suttons Bay.

I was blessed when given the opportunity to move to the other side of the peninsula in early 2021. I found out how much more there was to Leelanau County. And I talked with people that are four and five generations deep. And then a few much deeper, the Original People, the First Nation. Much like my church family, St. Wenceslaus, which dates to the mid 1850's.

Even though there are tiny signs of the change of the season, by the tips of some trees and bushes being painted their fluorescent oranges and reds, sometimes purples, yellows galore and even gold, it is still summer. I bet the great freshwater sea Michigan would be a delight to swim in right now.

That great freshwater sea, I believe it was my salvation in so many ways. When it did get too hot, I could go down and stand in the lake and water walk or hang on a tube for an hour. That crystal clear water with the pure sand bottom never never never ceases to amaze me. Have done a bit of travelling including the Caribbean and I can tell you there is no clearer water than the water that surrounds our 'little finger'.

For the most part it has been unusually still at night here, way more than usual. This constantly reminds me of Elijah.

There he came to a cave, where he took shelter. But the word of the LORD came to him: Why are you here, Elijah? He answered: "I have been most zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts, but the Israelites have forsaken your covenant. They have destroyed your altars and murdered your prophets by the sword. I alone remain, and they seek to take my life." Then the LORD said: Go out and stand on the mountain before the LORD; the LORD will pass by. There was a strong and violent wind rending the mountains and crushing rocks before the LORD—but the LORD was not in the wind; after the wind, an earthquake—but the LORD was not in the earthquake; after the earthquake, fire—but the LORD was not in the fire; after the fire, a light silent sound.**

(over)

When he heard this, Elijah hid his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. A voice said to him, Why are you here, Elijah?

Why are we here? Sure, there are all the materialistic reasons, the boats and skis, the 'cottages' that replaced far older cottages.

But why are we here in the Leelanau?

Our Omnipresent and most Omnipotent Creator gave us this oblong round ball called earth to manage. There is not a teacher on earth, that would give us, as a whole – though some folks are really trying to reverse this, anything better than an F.

As I roam the county on various missions (physical therapy, other types of lymphedema therapy – nothing near fatal) I am constantly stunned by the raw beauty and endless art of the Master of all Masters, the Creator in all His magnificent wonder...

This is probably why, when my land lady drives me whenever her work schedule allows (she has some concern of me driving and hitting something or someone), so all I do is rubberneck. And every time, even if it is the same road, like the Bible, I see something different.

The county has changed dramatically since I moved up here over thirty years ago. Yes, the impacts of global warming became and become more and more obvious but there is also the incredible purchases of property and the buildings of houses way beyond the reach of the people who live here year round, who's kids go to our schools, who work our restaurants, grocery store, and all the various shops and events.

Something else has seeped in during and after the Covid Pandemic. There is a significant fall off of something called 'common human decency'. Lots of shop owners just use the word, 'rude'. Though whenever I hear of this, I always think back to something a dear friend said, "Be careful to jump to judgment, You never know what happened in their life before this."

Why are we here Leelanau County?

Preservation of our landscape? Preservation and support of those in greatest need in our county who cannot afford housing and some, even food, being kind to the people who help us, whether they work in a grocery store, a gas station, a restaurant, a shop...

Just why are we here Leelanau County?

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