Rev's Reflections

Today is Groundhog Day, the halfway point between the Winter Solstice and the Vernal Equinox. It's the exact middle of winter, the holiday Celtic pagans call Imbolc, and ancient Christians called Candlemas. Some call it St. Brigid's Day. I may be wrong about this, but I've always thought St. Brigid's Day could be one of those Pagan/Christian mash up holidays created by the early Catholic Church to roll indigenous rituals into the Christian liturgical calendar.

Secular American pop culture doesn't look today toward ancient rites or saints, but rather to Puxatawny, Pennsylvania. Every year since 1887 a groundhog gets named Phil and reporters show up to see how he'll respond when he's forced out of his den. Legend goes that if he sees his shadow and goes back to bed, we'll have six more weeks of winter.

The truth is, whatever happens on February 2, we'll get six more weeks of winter. That's when winter ends, whatever the weather.

Even though I never saw the Bill Murray movie "Groundhog Day," I always think on this day about its premise: that we keep doing the same things over and over again until something significant knocks us out of the endless loop of repetition. In congregational life, it's really easy to keep doing the same things year after year, simply because it's what we've always done.

Your current board is hoping to NOT fall into the Groundhog Day trap, so they've been hosting a series of meetings, informal but structured conversations designed to help them create the beginnings of a roadmap that they can use to live into our mission more deeply. We'll be having one of those conversations tomorrow, Saturday, February 3 from 10am to noon in the sanctuary.

I hope you can be there with us. I know the conversation will be way more interesting than waiting for a marmot to come out of a hole.

In Peace
Rev Denis