



## HEALTH MINISTRY

### Get Back in the Sleigh

We lost Frank Brinckerhoff on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July this year. He loved the poem “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” by Robert Frost. Anytime I quoted it in a Herald article, he would call me on the phone to tell me how much he loved the poem. So here’s to you, Frank. I love the poem too and it captures this time of year:

“Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village though;  
He will not see me stopping here.  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.  
The only other sounds the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,  
But I have promises to keep.  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.

The way to Christmas resembles an endless journey that Madison Avenue starts well before Halloween. When we were growing up it seemed like there was a lot of time between Halloween and Christmas. It was an exciting time filled with the sights, sounds and smells of the holidays. Each one to be savored with the expectation of Christmas goodies. Close your eyes; you can smell the turkey roasting, hear the carols playing and smell the pine scents of the Christmas tree cut days before Christmas instead of in September. Now a days the journey to Christmas seems like a mad dash that becomes a blur. We are running besides Frost’s horse drawn sleigh instead of riding in it.

How about we get back in the sleigh and enjoy the journey. We could help ourselves by:

- Getting enough sleep.
- Keeping it simple. It doesn’t have to resemble a Norman Rockwell painting.
- Watching our carb intake. Be mindful of what you are eating as you graze during the holiday season.
- Making time to walk and exercise.
- Keeping in mind what Advent is all about.
- Remembering to feed the dog.
- Counting your blessings.

- Remembering loved ones no longer with us.
- Having fun. Enjoy the season. Don't make it all work.
- Forgiving someone who has wronged us. It is good for your heart.

Our greatest gift to anyone is ourselves; our love and compassion, taking time to listen, taking time to feed and clothe the needy, taking time to visit the lonely. So this Christmas as we are bombarded by Christmas ads try the gift of presence instead of presents. Use your special unique talents and skills to create a magical time to share with the world. Remember Jesus was our special gift. All other gifts pale by comparison.

Wishing you all of God's blessings this Christmas season. Be kind to one another.

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"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"  
- Robert Frost