



## First Sunday in Advent 2025



We are ending the year by beginning our 80<sup>th</sup> turn around the sun, together. At 79 we are thankful to live in Sitka, our home for 45 years. We are both still involved in building community. We volunteer at Raven Radio, sharing music and stories, and helping the station raise money. Suzi is on the board of the Sitka Legacy fund, raising funds and making decisions on how to spend

them to strengthen organizations on our island. Rich gets great pleasure from his daily walk along the shore or in the woods with his camera. Perhaps more people know him from his pictures than from his radio voice. His picture posts help people who can't get out, like those living in the Pioneer Home (where he also plays Santa) but enjoy being reminded vicariously why they moved here. He has made "his log" a local celebrity, taking pictures of it for over a decade, documenting its slow decay that nurtures new life.



Like many communities, Sitka faces difficulty with precipitous cuts to service agencies. Including funds pulled in the middle of projects. Many of our friends have lost jobs. But we are pulling together, supporting each other and finding new ways to strengthen community. As the Rolling Stones sing. "If you try some time, you just might find, you get what you need." We're not there yet but our work has brought us closer together.





We've spent time with the kids and grandkids. The year started with them all here in Sitka for the holidays. We woke the kids up just after midnight on New Year's Eve/day to see a spectacular aurora. Brian brought Fiona and Liam up in June for Sitka Fine Arts Camp and Kevin joined us over July 4<sup>th</sup>. Then Suzi and I went to Minnesota to pick up Liz to join the rest of us at the 50<sup>th</sup> Winnipeg Folk Festival where we celebrated another community we treasure. Before Christmas we will be in Anchorage with Kevin, Shannon and Elias.



And we got away for four months on a "Pole to Pole" cruise, starting in Florida, cruising the coast of South America to Antarctica (Picture at the top of the letter), up the Amazon, to Western Africa and finally to Iceland, Greenland and Northern Norway. We still have the travel bug. (Yes, Suzi has her arm in a sling, she broke it just before Christmas. This year she is doing fine.)

And we hope you are doing fine. It has been a year of trials (broken arm, loss of good friends, that happens when you take so many laps around the sun) but one filled with community and family.

Merry Christmas!



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