

### **ABSENCE MAKES THE HEART GROW...**

It is interesting to me to find out where certain axioms come from. "Absence makes the heart grow fonder" is one of those well know statements. It seems that the first use of a phrase similar to this was by a Roman Poet named Sextus Propertius. He wrote, "Always toward lovers love's tide stronger flows." The thought this conveys still has a special place among individuals, groups of friends, and that is especially true among brothers and sisters in Christ. We are the Family of God at Rivergate Church of Christ, and because our love for each other is clearly seen, this forced absence makes us long for the time when we can come together again.

Although there are different variations of this phrase, the one most used is said to have originated from a song written by Thomas Haynes Bayly, which he named **The Isle of Beauty**. It appeared in a two-volume book entitled *Songs, Ballads, and Other Poems*. Interestingly, it is not about a person, but it is about a place that was special to him. He wrote:

*"What would I not give to wander where my old companions dwell?*

*Absence makes the heart grow fonder, Isle of Beauty, fare thee well."*

The last part of the last verse has a special meaning to me because it reminded me of the song, we sing often *Beautiful Ile of Somewhere*. I even wondered if Mr. Bayly might not have known this song when he wrote these words. It also has special meaning to me because it is not just the place, but more so, our people I miss. Let us all continue to pray for each other, for those who are being tragically affected by this virus though illness and death, for those who have lost jobs or who are suffering from the economic crisis, for our local, state and national leaders, and most of all for this virus to be conquered.

Charles Shultz wrote, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder, but it sure makes the rest of you lonely." What a day of celebration it will be when we can again come together to worship our Father in Heaven, and honor our Savior, Jesus Christ. But remember; "He is not far from all of us for in Him we live, move and have our very being" (Acts 17:27b, 28).

Sellers Crain