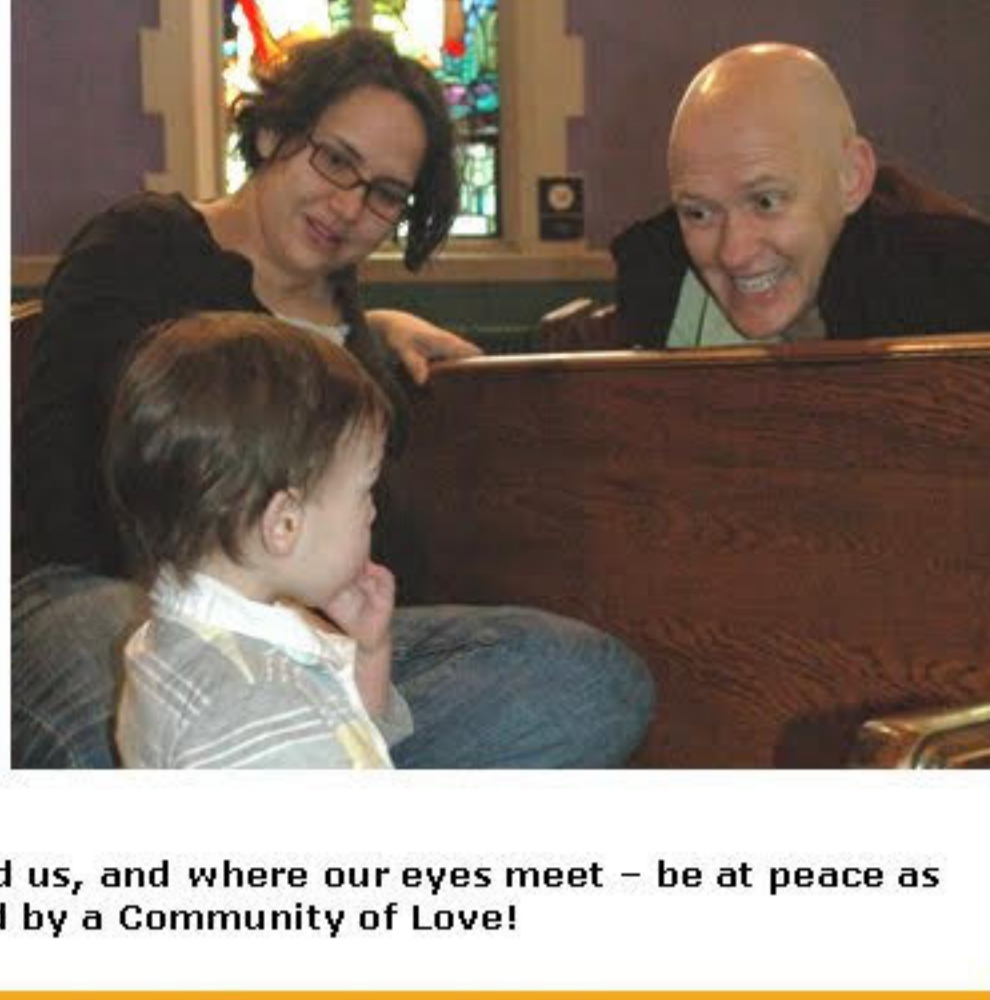


April 16, 2008

SJWTS



Dear Friends,

God is in us, around us, and where our eyes meet – be at peace as you are surrounded by a Community of Love!

Worship with us this Sunday, April 20: 5th Sunday of Easter:

8:30 Early Eucharist; 10:30 Eucharist; Sermon: Gary van der Meer; Celebrant: Gary van der Meer; Musician: Jaroslav Czerwinec, accordion; Refreshments following.

Eat Pray Love

The Thursday Morning Worship participants invite you to accompany them in reading the book, "Eat, Pray, Love" by Elizabeth Gilbert. Get it from your local bookstore or call the church office as we have a few extra copies.



Read the book this month and come and talk about it at the Potluck Supper and Discussion, **Potluck Supper and Discussion, Tuesday, April 29, 6:00 p.m. Potluck begins at 6pm. Book Discussion begins at 7pm.**

Announcements & Events

Pentecost Drama Rehearsals

We look forward to a liturgical drama for the celebration of Pentecost, Sunday, May 11, 10:30. Rehearsals for the drama, adapted and directed by Robert Shipman, **each Sunday morning after coffee(!)** beginning at 12:30. Musicians for the Pentecost Drama: Glory Glory Hallelujah (our new music group from Freedomize). Mark your calendar for a great celebration in worship.

Great Upcoming Music!

April 13: Barry Short, organ and piano; April 20: Jaroslav Czerwinec, accordion; April 27: Anne Lederman, fiddle; and Tom Leighton, piano; May 4: Ken Whiteley, guitar; May 11: Glory Glory Hallelujah, worship band (yes... our new musicians!).

Youth Supper

We invite our young people (age 12 and up) to a first Pizza and Fun Visit, Sunday, **April 20, 6-8 pm** hosted by Brad Christakos and Brenda Holmes at the home of Brenda and Pat. Details: Brenda, 416-616-3251, Brad, 416-767-9347.

Volunteer on the Board of Early Enrichment Daycare

The Early Enrichment Daycare (founded by St. John's) is governed by a Board, made up of 7 members: 3 Parent Representatives, 3 Church Representatives and the Incumbent. The wardens invite expressions of interest in serving as a Church Representative. The Board meets 9 times per year on a weekday evening. We are grateful to Anne-Marie Mohler who has completed a term on the Board. Allan Waters and Jill Arthur continue to serve as Church Representatives. Please speak to Gary or a warden to express interest.

Leadership Team Meeting

The next Leadership Team meeting will be **Monday, May 12, 7:30 p.m.**

Worship with us during the week

Thursday April 17, 10:30 a.m. Morning Prayer, with scripture discussion followed by home baked refreshments; **Tuesday, April 22, 7:00 a.m.** Morning Prayer, with Anglican Rosary and silent meditation;

Worship Field Trip – St. Anne's Church

This year, Bishop Poole invites all the congregations of York-Credit Valley to "Glimpses of Glory" the York-Credit Valley Easter Carol Service, **Sunday, April 20, 4:00 p.m.** at St. Anne's Anglican Church on Gladstone Avenue. St. Anne's is a Canadian landmark: the church interior was painted by members of the Group of Seven! The Choirs and Choristers of all York-Credit Valley area churches are welcome to take part in this festive service. If you wish to be part of the mass choir, you are expected to be available for a 2:00pm rehearsal on April 20th, and should contact the Director of Music, Christopher Dawes, c/o the Church of St. George-the-Martyr, 416 598-4366, chris.dawes@orgalt.com. Music will be provided immediately after Easter, and must be prepared in advance of the 20th. Choristers are requested to bring copies of "Common Praise" on the 20th.

St. John's Spiritual Retreat at St. John's Convent

The theme for our spiritual retreat is "Sacred Spaces" – Sacred Spaces within ourselves, in our homes, in our church, and around the world."

Our retreat leader will be Sister Louise, SSJD.

Friday, June 13 to Saturday, June 14. \$110,

includes your own room and all meals.

Questions and sign up: Lynelle Gehrels, 416-

656-9111 and Joan Devitt, 416-766-3062



Gardening Day!

Help us prepare the front garden and the backyard Garden Chapel for spring,

Saturday, May 10. Plan to spend the morning!

York-Credit Valley Area Ministry Day - Passionate Spirituality "...life to the full."

Keynote address: "Passionate Spirituality: An Anglican Oxyoron" by the Venerable Michael Patterson. Archdeacon Patterson serves as Executive Officer for Diocese of Niagara. Prior to his current ministry, he served as Director of Evangelism for the diocese as well as priest in various parishes. **Workshops:**

Passion for Evangelism – The Rev. Dr. Duke Vipperman, Church of the Resurrection; Passion for Justice – The Rev. Canon Jeannie Laughrey, All Saints Sherbourne Street; Passion for Children's Ministry – The Rev. Amy Crawford, Children, Teens and Youth Coordinator for the United Church of Canada; Passion for Stewardship – The Rev. Canon Peter Walker, St. Peter's Church, Cobourg; Passion for Planting – The Rev. Jenny Andison; St. Paul's Bloor Street. Saturday, April 26, 8 am to 3 pm. Lunch will be provided for those who request it in advance.

There will be a \$10.00 charge to cover the cost of the lunch. The Franklin Horner Community Centre is located at 432 Horner Avenue (between Kipling and Brown's Line) in Etobicoke. It is accessible by TTC from Kipling Subway Station (there is a stop right in front of the facility). Telephone is 416-252-6822. See the Poster in the Narthex.

Writing Cheques to St. John's

Our bank has tightened its rules about cashing cheques written to St. John's. Our official name for banking purposes: "St. John's Church, West Toronto".

Bishop's Company Dinner

The Bishop's Company is holding a Gala Dinner on Wednesday, April 30, with special guest, Valerie Pringle. Last year, the event generated over \$95,000, which was used to equip the College of Bishops in responding to a variety of emergencies facing our clergy, including but not limited to: healthcare needs, unexpected travel requirements, a housing crises or funeral costs, none of which is covered by our diocesan operating budget. Details: **Wednesday, April 30** – Reception at Church of the Holy Trinity, followed by dinner at the Marriott Hotel. Single Ticket price: \$175. Parish Table (10) \$1600. Starts at 6:00 at Holy Trinity. Dinner at the Marriott at 7:00. Evening ends around 9:30.

Prayer Circle Check in meeting

For any emergency concern, you may activate the Prayer Circle by calling the church office, or by calling an individual named in the diagram. Your concern will travel from person to person until the circle is completed, and members of the Prayer Circle will continue to remember your concern in their personal prayer time. Please join us for the Prayer Circle Check in meeting, **Thursday, April 17, 7:30** at the home of Sheila Crummey, 416-762-9224.



Helen & Marina

Herding Cats

A few months ago, while visiting a small village in the Yorkshire Dales, I climbed the hills and watched the sheep. I realized that I don't really know anything about them – firsthand. I have heard they are not very intelligent, and that they get lost easily. In our use of English, we refer to people as 'sheep' to suggest that they are timid, easily led, or stupid. I did some research to make up for my lack of personal experience: Did you know that sheep are on par with pigs and cows in intelligence?

They solve problems: In Yorkshire, a flock of sheep learned to get over cattle grates by rolling over them on their backs! Sheep recognize the faces of other sheep and also recognize human faces – and remember them for years. Jesus undoubtedly spoke from firsthand experience when he said, "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father." (See John 10:1-10)

Most city-folk do not know sheep. But we know people. We are surrounded by them. And knowing people as we do, you might disagree with the idea that people are like sheep. Church People, going by the ones getting coverage in the media, are temperamental and hardly timid. So for our benefit and lasting enjoyment, the company EDS created a television commercial comparing people to cats: A scene on the range, with hurtin' music, and two cowboys on horses, as hundreds of cats run by... One cowboy says, "Being a cat-herder is probably the toughest thing I've ever done." He points his own wounds, "I got this one this morning...if you look at his face, he's just ripped to shreds." The Acts of the Apostles portrays the earliest flock of people to be called the church. In a beautiful scene of harmony, "they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, the breaking of bread, the fellowship and the prayers." (See Acts 2:37-47) If you read all of Acts, lovely scenes of metaphorical sheep with their shepherds turn into cats held together by cowboys. Luke is a transparent reporter; he shows us a reality that often falls short of the ideal.

Cat-herding describes the church in history. For us in the church today, bringing together independent-minded cats is reality. Do you want to say something to defend the church? Maybe you disagree! Maybe you would like the church to be portrayed in a more complimentary way to those outside and to those new to it. "Don't scare them away!" We scared a lot of them away before I ever said "cat-herders."

I will offer my own words in defense of the church: The world outside the church is also full of conflict. You know it is! Outside the church, you can hunker down as a grim realist if you want. Inside the church, you can't. We keep holding up this ideal of the early church, intent on sharing, praying and loving. Luke's picture of the church is our word of truth. We offer it both as good news and so we can be converted again. Every now and again in the church, you do get a deep scratch. Is it worth it? Let me repeat the words of the scarred EDS cat-herder: "You see the movies, you hear the stories...I'm livin' a dream. Not everyone can do what we do. I wouldn't do nuthin' else. It ain't no easy job, but when you bring a herd into town and you ain't lost a one of them, ain't a feelin' like it in the world."

Jesus says of himself as shepherd that he will not lose a single one of them. "No one will snatch them out of my hand." Each of us is worth it: Jesus shows it by what he does. In my experience, cats have interesting personalities and endearing charm. If we're cats, we're still worth it. It is also my experience of church that sheep (people feeling lost and timid) outnumber cats. So, let's keep holding up the ideal of the apostles: Each person whether timid sheep or clawing cat is very much worth knowing and loving.

The peace of the Lord be always with you. Amen.

Gary van der Meer

For meditation and reflection in Holy Week, the scriptures are truly rich: You might consider one for each day: Sunday: April 20, 2008: Acts 7:55-60; Psalm 31; 1 Peter 2:2-10; John 14:1-14.

P.S. I hope you find it helpful to get an update like this from St. John's Church, West Toronto. If you would like something listed in the announcements, or if you know someone who would appreciate receiving this, please contact me. If you would prefer not to receive news from St. John's in this way, please also let me know.

Best wishes, Gary+

Check our website. www.sjwts.ca

And remember this!

We are not a Building!

We are an accessible, accepting, diverse community. We are young and old, able-bodied, and disabled, employed and unemployed. We are married, single, divorced, straight and gay. We are from all over the world, yet we could live next door. You will find open minds and open hearts at St. John's.

The mission of St. John's Church is to build a community of caring believers committed to Christ, to work for justice and service to all in need. We gather to praise God, and to give and receive support to meet the challenge of our daily ministries. We call on all who will to come and join us.

