

May 22, 2008

SJWT



Dear Friends,

The people of St John's do the planting and the Creator does the germinating. We participate in the mystery of life!

Worship with us this Sunday, May 25: 2nd of Pentecost:

8:30 Early Eucharist 10:30 Eucharist Sermon: Rev. David Luxton Celebrant: Rev. Bob Shantz; Musician: Barry Short. Refreshments following.

Announcements & Events

Great Upcoming Music!

May 25: Barry Short, organ and piano.

Upcoming Baptisms

Plan to be with us as we celebrate the **Baptism of Geneva Watson, Sunday, June 1 at 10:30.** We will celebrate the **Baptism of Robert Heal and Zachary Cardwell, on Sunday June 15 at 10:30.** We remember Geneva, Robert, Zachary, their families, godparents and baptismal sponsors in our prayers.

Worship with us during the week

Thursday May 22, 10:30 a.m. Morning Prayer, with scripture discussion followed by home baked refreshments; and visiting. **Tuesday, May 27, 7:00 a.m.** Morning Prayer, with Anglican Rosary and silent meditation;

Tuesday Evening Worship

Every Tuesday 7:30 p.m. in the Garden Chapel **from July 7 to August 28.** Our theme this year is *'Who do you say that I am?'* a reflection by different people on who Jesus is to them. How I describe my Faith.... Musician: Jaroslav Czerwinec, Accordion.

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

Sunday School Camp-Out: Advance Notice

The Sunday School Camp-Out will take place in the Church backyard, Friday, **June 20 after school to Saturday June 21.** Tents, Barbeque, marshmallows... Mark your calendars!

Sign Up for Doors Open Toronto

We will be open for Doors Open Toronto Saturday, **May 24 and Sunday, May 25.** **We still need people to sign up for Sunday time slots.** We invite you to sign up, at the Action Desk for one or two hour shifts. We would also like to be able to offer coffee and cookies (the sub theme is sacred circles so no squares please).

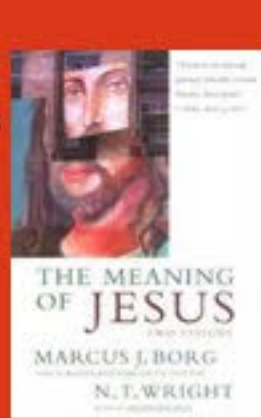
Advanced Notice

We will hold a One-Day Yard Sale on **Saturday, September 27.** Put the date in your calendar. Set your items aside in a box – Start now! Bring the box to the church in August and early September for storage on the balcony. For more information, contact Sue Ferguson, 416-769-5267.

Book Study

Readers of Eat, Pray, Love invite you to join them in reading a second book, **"The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions,"** by Marcus Borg and N.T. Wright, (Harper, San Francisco, 1999). Bishop Tom Wright of the Diocese of Durham, England presents a traditional view of Jesus, and Marcus Borg presents a radical progressive view, in dialogue with each other. Order it at your library, bookstore, or online. Potluck Supper and Discussion:

Wednesday, June 11, 6:00 p.m.



"Glory, Glory Hallelujah" Worship Band Leah, Andrew, Mike and Laura

Two Worlds in the Church

Lately I notice that the subject of the Trinity keeps coming up. Really! I have done no asking to prompt this. In unrelated conversations, I hear people saying that the idea of one God made up of three distinct persons does not make any sense to them. They cannot relate. There seems to be no obvious compelling point for even being interested in why it should be important. It is not an urgent matter to understand how the idea arose. And there is no obvious practical application. We pray to God. Jesus is a compelling role model. And of course the energy that moves through each of us, and through our group dynamics can be seen as the Spirit of God. We recognize it by its fruits. What more do we need to know?



And there are other insistent voices. Knowing there is community within God, each with roles within a unified harmony is to inspire us as couples, as families and as a congregation. Whole typologies of how we live a balanced life are described as mirroring the balance of ways of being found within God as the Trinity. God is creator beyond the seven days and Darwin is no threat. Jesus is more than a role model or moral example. His death and resurrection are a pattern of how we "die" as our old selves in order to have "birth" as a new person with a new start walking with God. His death and resurrection saves us from the self-oriented life we had, and saves us for eternity. The breath of God prompts us to pay attention, to feel called, and to long for "more." Each of these is an experience of the God of the Trinity.

We know the Jews and the Muslims have no such quandaries...God is God. For some of us, this distinct Christian paradigm is fundamental. Others among us have tried, but conclude it is not essential. And in the struggle between these two worlds, preachers feel the need to say something. I am told that often what they say is heresy. (Trying too hard...) So let me come out of the closet on this one as well. I am a Trinitarian Christian. I like the childlike clover illustrations, and the adult paradigm "Balance within the Godhead" explanations. I appreciate the centuries old massive Sudoku puzzle handed down to me from theologians whose names I cannot pronounce. And I am humble enough to say that I would want to be way better at understanding their results before I dismissed them. But in practice I do not understand the Trinity. I just try to walk with God. Occasionally I read a good book that "goes at it again." Trying to understand the Trinity teases my brain into reviewing what I think about community, balance, energy, science and an unending number of other quandaries. The Trinity makes me think.

For me, the best reading for Trinity Sunday is Psalm 8: When we consider the heavens and moon and stars, we ask God, "What is man that you should be mindful of him?" Who am I that God is interested in me? We hear that we are only just a bit less than angels, and we add to God's honour just by being who we are. Our attempts to systematize who God is, our muddling, puzzling, theorizing, and describing, these are an act of praise. They are a form of being in awe. For a moment we think we get it: it is like the beautiful notes of our favourite hymn, or scenery of such beauty as to take our breath away. Every time you try to say what the meaning of something is, you are doing what excites people who talk about the Trinity. God has created us to have beautiful minds.

I consider the lilies of the field...and I consider how you are God. Amen.

Gary van der Meer

For meditation and reflection, consider the scriptures for next Sunday, May 25, 2008: Isaiah 49:8-16, 1 Corinthians 4:1-5, Psalm 131, Matthew 6:24-34.

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.sjwt.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.

