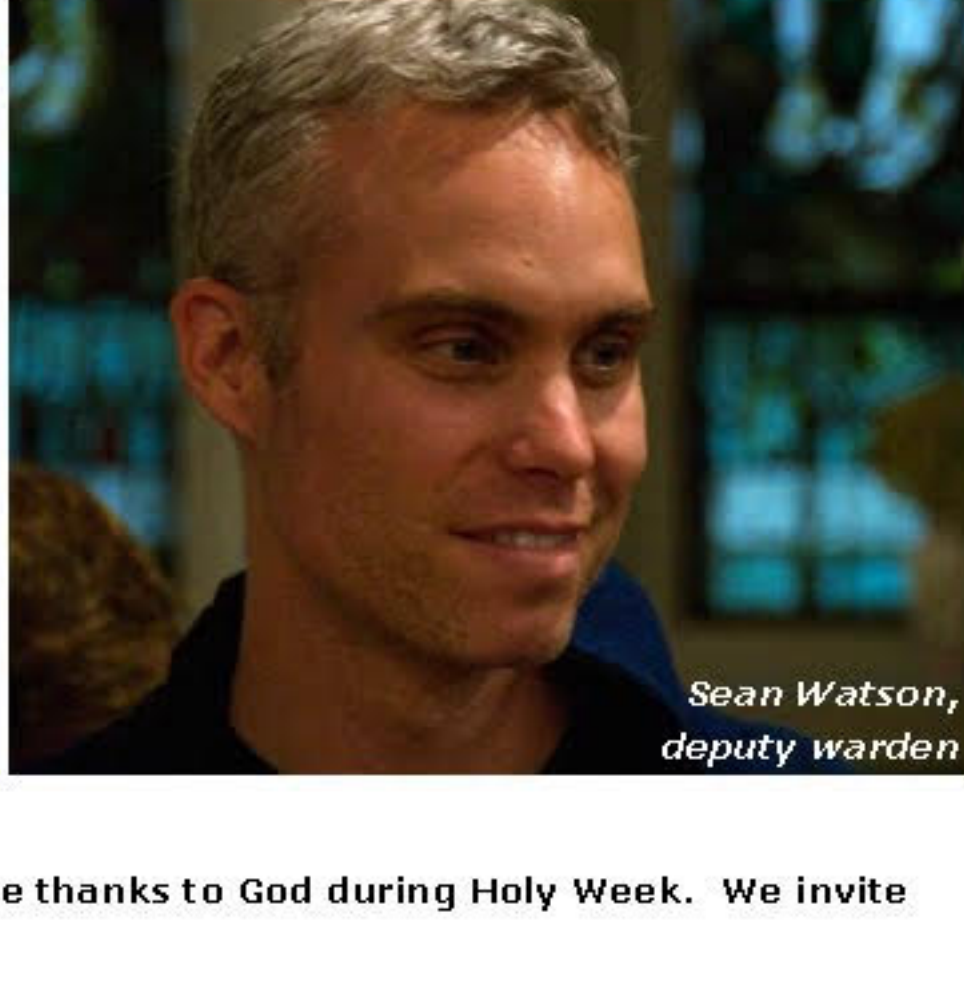


March 19, 2008

SJWT
LMJCS



Sean Watson,
deputy warden

Dear Friends,

So many ways to give thanks to God during Holy Week. We invite you to join us!

This week is Holy Week at St. John's:

Thursday, March 20 at 6pm: Maundy Thursday dinner. Footwashing, Eucharist, and Stripping of the Altar. Musician: Jaroslav Czerwinec.

Friday, March 21 Children's Service at 10.30am: Good Friday. Child-Centred Good Friday Worship at 10:30 am. **Solemn Liturgy at 2:00 pm.** Music: Jaroslav Czerwinec, accordion, and Jane Smiley, vocal soloist.

Saturday, March 22 at 8.00pm: Easter Eve. The New Fire, Candlelight Vigil, Renewal of Baptismal Vows, and Celebration of the First Eucharist of Easter. This year's host is the Anglican Church of St. Mark and Calvary, 21 Blackthorn Avenue, just north of St. Clair.

Sunday, March 23: Easter Day. 8:30am Eucharist. 10:30am Eucharist. Music: Dorothy De Val, organ, and Susanna McCleary, violin and vocal soloist.

Announcements & Events

End of Winter Walk

Sunday March 30 we will organize an End of Winter Walk. We will start after the 10:30 service (approx. 12:15PM) from St. John's. We will walk the trails of High Park, ending up at the Grenadier Café around 2PM. Those who want to stay for a bite to eat can do so. This is a great opportunity to bring your children along, so we look forward to seeing you all there!

Great Upcoming Music

Maundy Thursday: Jaroslav Czerwinec, accordion; **Good Friday:** Jaroslav Czerwinec, accordion, and Jayne Smiley, soloist; **Easter Sunday:** Dorothy DeVal, organ and Susanna McCleary, violin and vocal soloist; **March 30 and April 6:** Freedomize! From the downtown twenty-something church Freedomize: Andrew, guitar; Leah, vocals; Mike, drums.

Prayer Circle Check-in

Prayer Circle participants and anyone interested in Prayer for our St. John's community - please come to the check in meeting at the home of Sheila Crummey, **Tuesday, March 25, 7:30 p.m.** Call Sheila for details: 416-762-9224.

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"**.

Leadership Team Meeting

The next Leadership Team meeting will be **Monday, April 14, 7:15 p.m.** These meetings are where the St. John's community coordinates our Events Calendar and provides support to the people organizing and leading Events. It is also a great place to bring new ideas for our community.

Movie Day



Come to the Movies on **Saturday March 29 from 12:30 pm to 11:00 pm.**

There are still some tickets available and there is a 2nd show of Casablanca!!

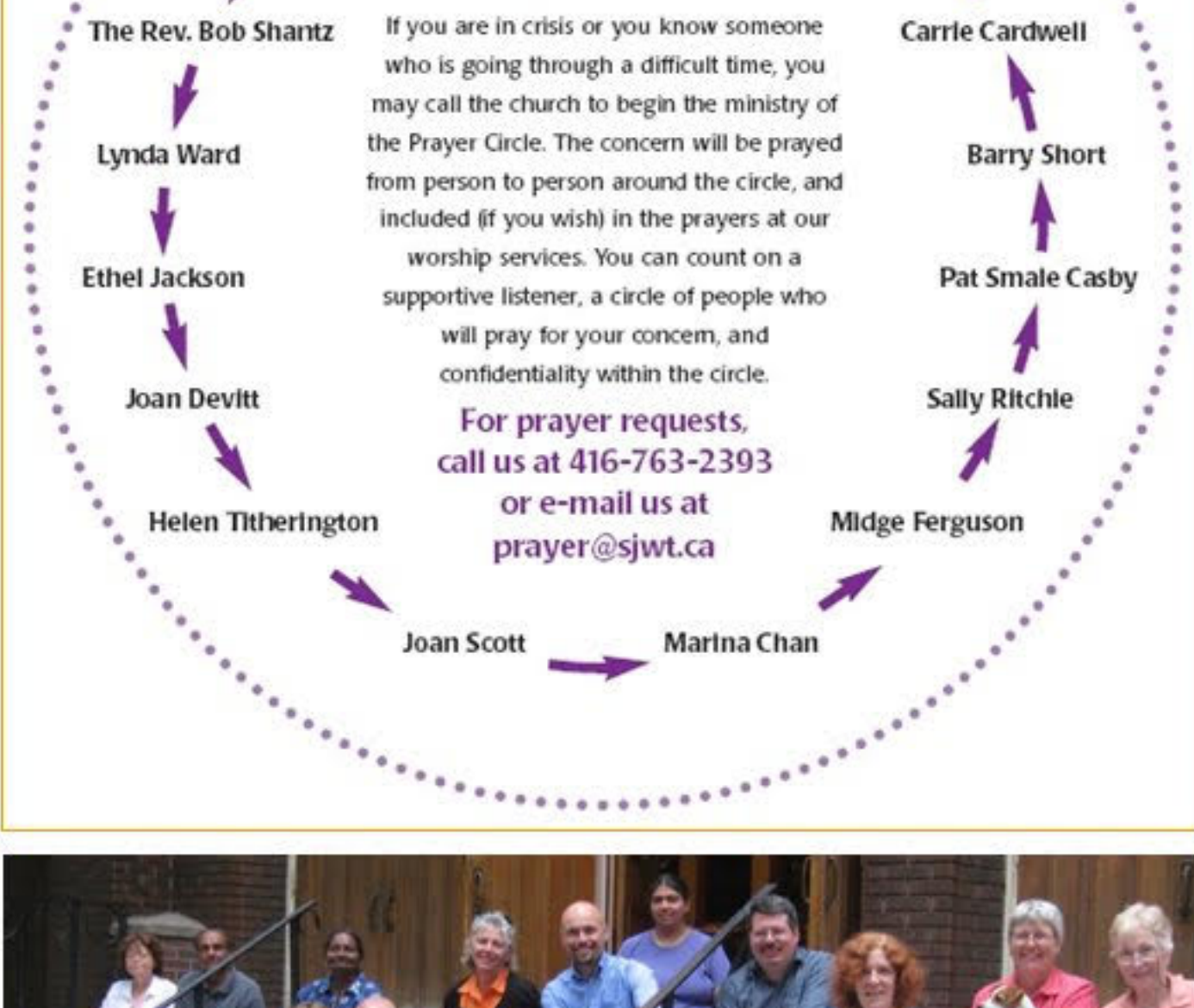
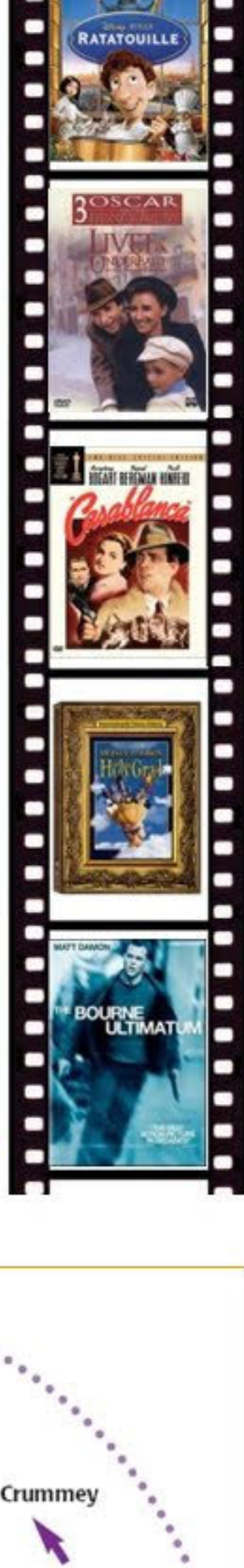
Join us for some good laughs with hilarious **"Monty Python & the Holy Grail"**, classic **"Casablanca"**, some French Cuisine **"Ratatouille"**, and action with **"The Bourne Ultimatum"**. All of this right in the local High Park Village private movie suite!

This brand new private cinema provides us with a Commercial quality 60inch screen with full Dolby Pro Logic surround sound and theatre style viewing for 12 in comfortable leather seating. The cinema is located on the lower level of 66 Pacific Avenue (High Park Minto Buildings).

All proceeds will go to St. John's. All movie tickets are \$5 per movie per person, and \$10 for the Casablanca shows (with dinner). Please purchase your tickets after the 10.30 services.

Between the two "Casablanca" shows, traditional Moroccan Couscous will be served. Popcorn & soda available for a suggested donation fee of \$2.

For more information or to buy tickets, please contact Marilyn at 416-551-1990 or info@marilynkluykens.com



Imagine the Summer weather... Tuesday Eucharist!

Imitate this?

There is a spiritual tradition in Christianity called the "Imitation of Christ." We look to Jesus as an example, almost as an older brother, and we try to do what he does. This is a marvelous and beautiful way of living, especially for some of the things Jesus did. So Jesus says, "Let the children come to me, do not hinder them." And we aspire to an inclusive mandate and we put our energy, interest and time into helping children get closer to Jesus. Upstairs and downstairs, we strive for worship that is inclusive. Then there's the scene with angry men about to stone a woman caught in the act of extra-marital sex. Jesus says, "Let the one without sin cast the first stone." Despite the media feeding frenzy around public figures, we hold up Jesus for imitation. We say that like Jesus, we leave the judging to God, and do not sit in judgment on other people. Sometimes, we use this story by analogy for many things that we think ought not to be condemned. Admit it, we lightly skip over what Jesus says to her: "Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on, do not sin again."

It is great to call upon Jesus as an example to support the conduct and values to which we aspire. But the "Imitation of Christ" is dangerous, especially in Holy Week. Jesus is welcomed by the fickle crowds. He continues to boldly share what he thinks of religious hypocrisy. He annoys people who have power. They turn him in. He neither does nor says anything that would defend his behaviour. Even when Pilate tries to find a way to "get him off" Jesus doesn't cooperate. It all leads to death by excruciating suffering. With the hindsight of 20 centuries, we might say that the suffering was worth a lot; that it makes up the difference for each of us. But, at the time nobody saw that value. All he had done looked like wasted effort, folly so hard to justify that even his best friends abandoned him. Would you imitate this?

This is a serious proposal. It doesn't originate with me. It has been around since before the apostle Paul. You will find an example in Paul's Letter to the Philippians, Chapter 2. Paul's letter, written sometime around 58 to 60 of the Common Era, about 25 years after Jesus was executed, says, "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus..." He then quotes from a song that the people would have known, much as I might talk about the feeling of being wretched with a reference to "Amazing Grace." Paul quotes the song, that Jesus, "emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness...he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death..." Paul says, "Let the same mind be in you..."

I don't think I am ready to imitate this road to death. But who would you go to the wall for? Would you, for the sake of your child or your parent, "Empty yourself"? I believe we do find ourselves doing folly at times. Self-sacrifice, altruism, pouring out your heart for someone... Regardless of what other people think, we know what we are choosing. You probably can name a time in which you set your own needs aside. Maybe you have been closer to imitation than you knew.

In Holy Week, such thoughts of Imitation are challenging. So how about some comfort: What happens to Jesus this week is about something beyond our imitation. Jesus is imitating God and showing us what God is like. How God would go to the wall for each of us, for love. If the God of Love does humility the way Jesus demonstrated, maybe it is to comfort me when the ways in which I extend myself are beyond what I thought I had to offer. God loves us in all our uncomfortable giving and loving.

God, who befriends me, let me be a blessing to my friends. Amen.

Gary van der Meer

For meditation and reflection in Holy Week, the scriptures are truly rich: You might consider one for each day: Maundy Thursday: John 13: 1-15, 31-35; Good Friday: Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Holy Saturday: Matthew 26:1-28:20; Easter Sunday: John 20:1-18.

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.

