

July 2, 2008

SJWT

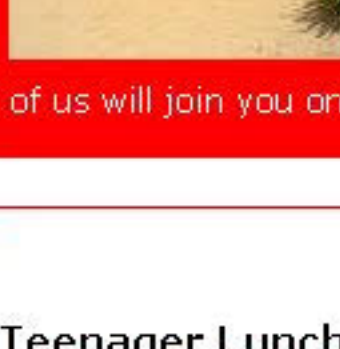


Dear Friends,

Now that summer is here, take a look at the opportunities for spiritual refreshment, right here!

Worship with us this Sunday, July 6: 8th of Pentecost: 8:30 Early Eucharist 10:30 Sermon: The Rev. Gary van der Meer. Celebrant: Rev. Gary van der Meer; Musician: David Jones, organ and piano.

Come to the Beach!



July 12: Bike and Hike Toronto Island – the easy version is come, get us a great spot at the beach and the walkers and bikers will join you at the waterside. 11 AM Bike from the Church; 12 PM Meet at the Ferry Dock (bikers and walkers). Bike organizer: Anthony Ruta. Beachhead organizer: Lynelle Gehrels (for those who want sand and water – the rest of us will join you on the beach after we finish biking/hiking!).

Announcements & Events

Teenager Lunch

Attention 12 to 17 year olds at St. John's: Father Gary and the St. John's Youth Committee would like to invite you to join us for pizza lunch at a local pizza place after the 10:30 service on July 13th. Each attendee will be asked to contribute \$5.00 towards the cost of this lunch. There is a Youth Donation Box at the Action Desk – we ask for your support to be able to get our youth program started with this event. For further information: Brad Christakos (416-767-9347) or brad.christakos@rogers.com.

The Rev. Stu Schroeder

We join our brothers and sisters of Redeemer Lutheran Church as we remember the life of their interim pastor, Stu Schroeder, who passed away suddenly. We remember his family and the Redeemer community at this time.

Breakfast for the homeless

The Leadership Team supports the invitation from St. Stephen's College Street for volunteers from St. John's to come once a month to put on breakfast for the homeless, beginning in September. We will need 6 volunteers on Sunday 7 to 9:15 am, one Sunday per month. Think about whether this might be a way you might make a difference in the world. Sign up at the Action Desk.

Great Upcoming Music!

July 6: David Jones, piano and organ; July 13: Glory Glory Hallelujah, praise band; July 20 and 27: David Jones, piano and organ.

Update on Designs for the new Altar Frontals

We have raised the \$1000 to design our new altar frontals. Thanks to everyone who supported this endeavour. We will now ask Willem Hart to proceed with designs based on the ideas we offered.

Worship with us during the week

Thursday, July 3rd, 10:30 a.m. – Morning Prayer (with discussion, home-baked refreshments, and visiting).

Summer Tuesday Evening Worship

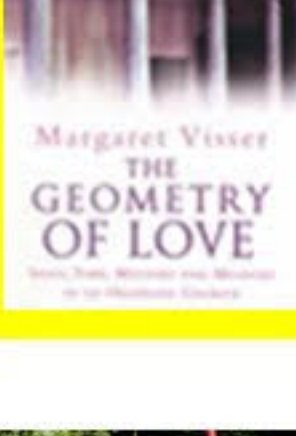
Every Tuesday 7:30 p.m. in the Garden Chapel from July 7 to August 28. Our theme this year is 'Who do you say that I am?' a reflection by different people on who Jesus is to them. How I describe my Faith.... Musician: Jaroslav Czerwiniec, Accordion.

Upcoming Hikes

September 6, October 4 – Great details to come!

Advanced Notice

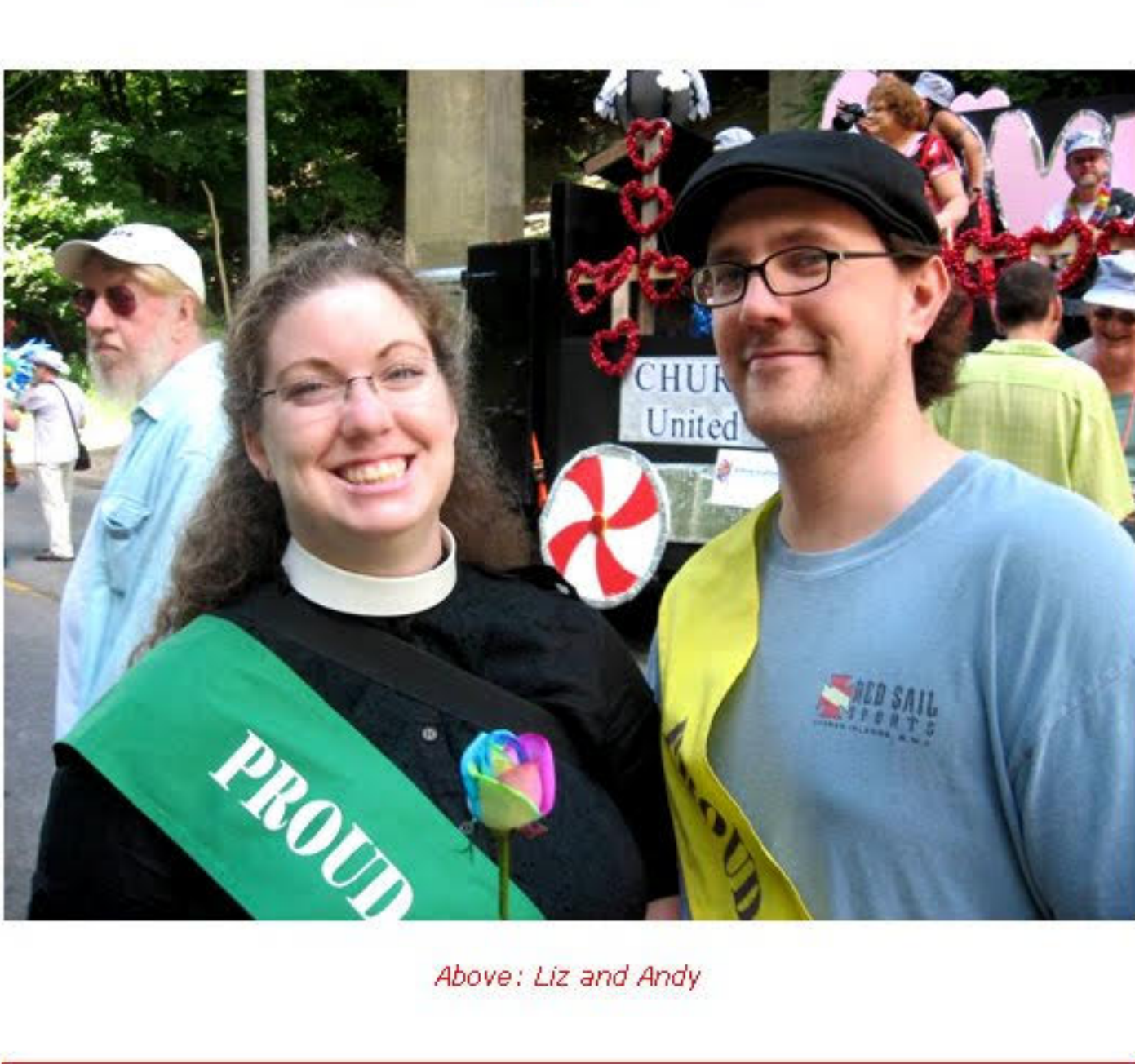
We will hold a One-Day Yard Sale on Saturday, September 27. Put the date in your calendar. Set your items aside in a box – Start now! Bring the box to the church in August and early September for storage on the balcony. For more information, contact Sue Ferguson, 416-769-5267.



St. John's Book Club - The Geometry of Love "The Geometry of Love" by Margeret Visser, takes readers on tour of an "ordinary church", Sant'Agnese fuori le Mura, a smallish Roman church dedicated to the fourth-century martyr Saint Agnes. Her work covers art, architecture, theology, myth, symbolism, history, Christian doctrine, with the subject church as a launching pad to find meaning in many symbolic places. In keeping with the location, our discussion will feature a (potluck) Italian Pasta Dinner, Wednesday, July 9: 6:00 supper; 7:00 discussion.



Above: Sue, Caitlin, Jen, Gary, Jessica, Tara, Brian, Alexis, Heather, Christian, Liz, Andy; John Spragge also participated.



Above: Liz and Andy

Thanks: to Michael Hudson for his great photos of the Pride Parade!

New Insights

Without doubt in our lifetime we have had or we will have to do something that we wish we could avoid. Perhaps we have had to confront a good friend about an inappropriate behaviour. We may have had to actually end a friendship or fire a colleague.



I am sure, however, that no situation was as extreme as the Old Testament story of how Abraham thought God wanted him to sacrifice his child. Nevertheless, I am equally certain that the feelings of fear, anger, hurt, or panic, which we experience, are as overwhelming as those Abraham initially felt. Although I am not a biblical scholar I think that the story of Abraham and Isaac demonstrates that when God is the core of our being, we come to understand what God really wants us to do. Human sacrifice was acceptable in the time of Abraham and Isaac. Abraham, living in this culture, first assumed that God was asking him to sacrifice his son. However, Abraham came to realize that God really did not want a human sacrifice. To me, the event illustrates a turning point in Abraham's understanding of what it means to be human.

Seeking to understand what God really wants, we also may be enabled to view a situation from a different perspective or to see a detail or feature that we overlooked. This new insight may help us to identify a kinder more loving approach to the task at hand. We may find comfort because we see another viewpoint that confirms that we are doing the right thing.

In approaching a very difficult disciplinary incident, I found comfort and direction when I used the following prayer:

Christ as a light illumine and guide me  
Christ as a shield overshadow me  
Christ under me, Christ over me, Christ beside me on my left and my right  
This day be within and without me

As I explore the concept of God as the core of our being, I am drawn to the Celtic understanding that our senses link us intimately with the divine within and around us. In other words God is not some far away divinity, God is within us and around us. John O'Donohue writes that we are in touch with God through our senses of vision, taste and speech, fragrances and breath, listening, and touch. He challenges us to ask ourselves how we behold the world. If we look at the world with a fearful eye, all we see are things that can damage us. If we look in a loving way then we will be aware of all the possibilities and see what God really wants us to do.

God, teach us to apply our hearts unto wisdom. Amen.

Evelyn C. Butler

For meditation and reflection, consider the scriptures for next Sunday, July 6, 2008: Genesis 24:34-67; Psalm 45:10-17; Romans 7:15-25; Matthew 11:16-30.

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.

