

June 3, 2008

SJWT



Dear Friends,

We invite you to walk with us - the Trail (Saturday), the Path of Faith (At all times), and the Celebration of God's Love (Sunday). Looking forward to seeing you!

Worship with us this Sunday, June 8: 4th of Pentecost and Anointing:

8:30 Early Eucharist 10:30 Eucharist Sermon and Celebrant: Gary van der Meer; Musician: Bruce Reid. Refreshments following.

Bruce Trail Hike



June 7: hike the Bruce Trail with outdoor litany, followed by visit to a pub in Creemore! Our hike this Saturday will leave at 9AM sharp from church. If you have a car you can use for the hike, please bring it to church so we can work out car pooling from there. Looking forward to seeing you all! Bring water, picnic, warm and waterproof clothing, sturdy shoes, bug repellent, camera. This hike will be 3-4 hours and will take in some amazing crevice caves on the trail. Plan to be away until at least 6PM.

For more information, contact Tom Gehrels, 416-656-9111 or mariengehrels@yahoo.com.

Announcements & Events

Great Upcoming Music!

June 8: Bruce Reid, piano and guitar; June 15: Glory Glory Hallelujah, praise band; June 22: Ken Whiteley, guitar; June 29: Jaroslav Czerwinec, accordion.

Upcoming Baptisms

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

Final payments due for 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. Please make the final payment cheque payable to St. John's Church, West Toronto. Questions and sign up: Lynelle Gehrels, 416-656-9111 and Joan Devitt, 416-766-3062

Worship with us during the week

Thursday June 5, 10:30 a.m. Morning Prayer, with scripture discussion followed by home baked refreshments; and visiting. Tuesday, June 10, 7:00 a.m. Morning Prayer, with Anglican Rosary and silent meditation;

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 Czerwinec, Accordion.

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!

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.

Leadership Team Meeting

Monday, June 16, 7:30 pm at the church

Altar Frontals

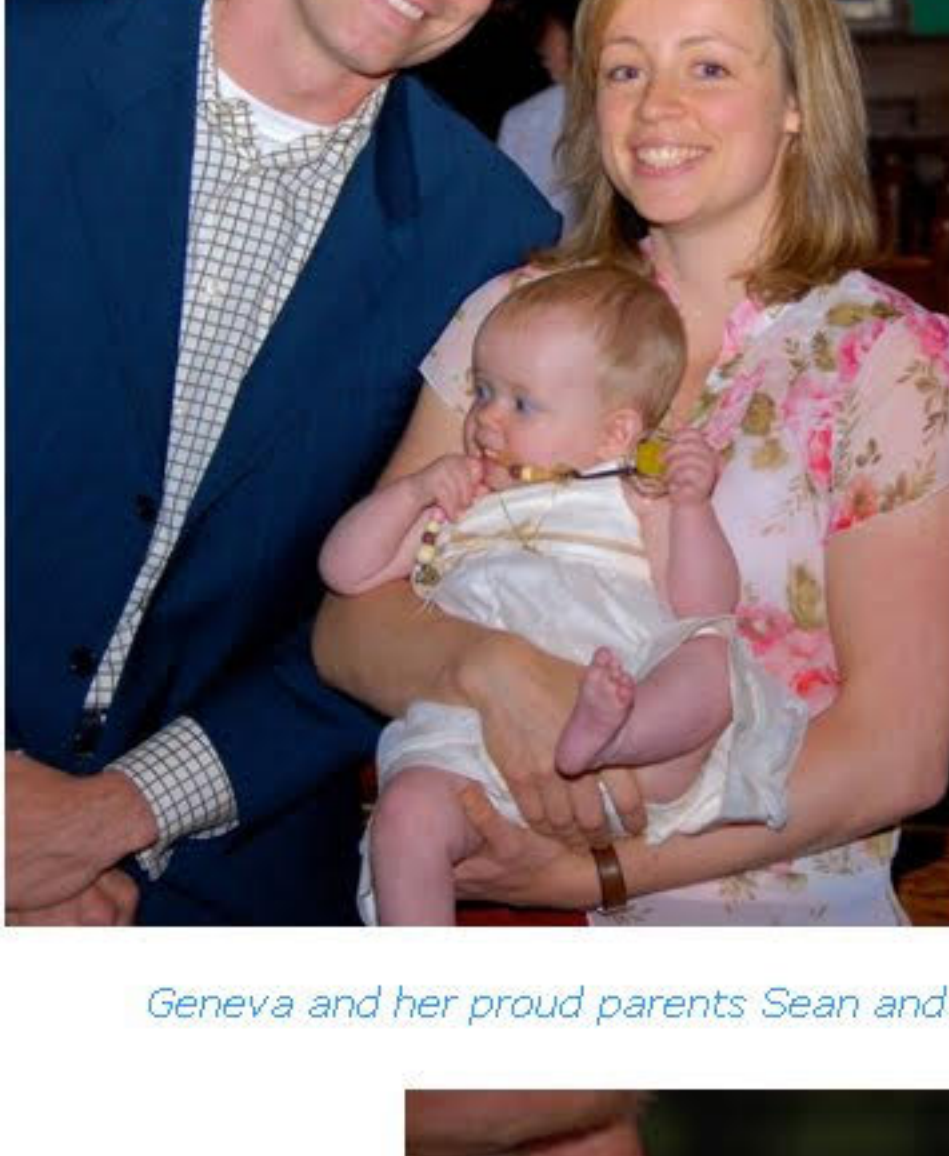
We invite your input in designing the new altar frontals, next Sunday, after the 10:30 service. Give some thought to symbols that illustrate and evoke our St. John's values and the seasons of our faith. We are halfway to the fundraising target of \$1000 to commission the designs by artist Willem Hart, and invite your continued support.

Church Picnic

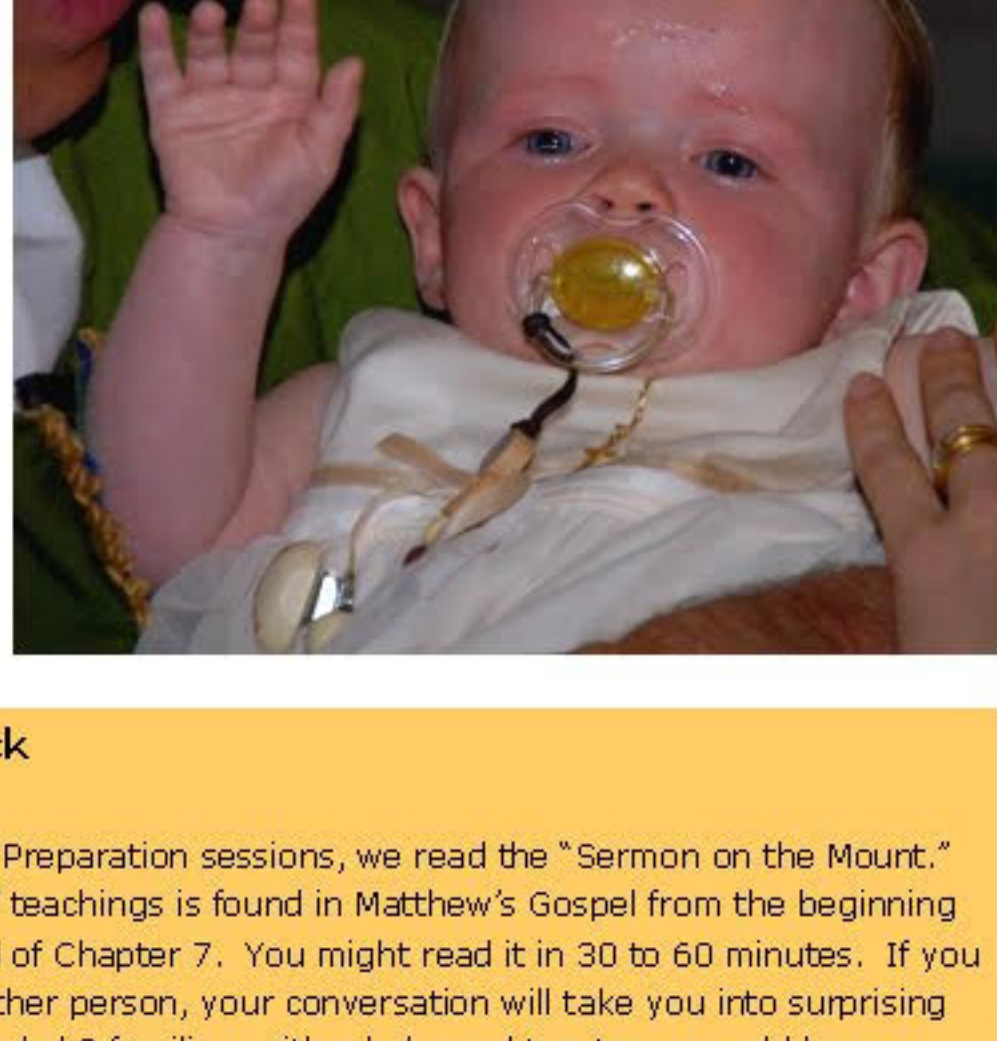
Sunday, June 22, we will have our annual potluck lunch and backyard Eucharist. See sign up sheet at action desk.

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.



Geneva and her proud parents Sean and Dionne!



House on the Rock

For one of our Baptism Preparation sessions, we read the "Sermon on the Mount." This collection of Jesus' teachings is found in Matthew's Gospel from the beginning of Chapter 5 to the end of Chapter 7. You might read it in 30 to 60 minutes. If you read together with another person, your conversation will take you into surprising places. Our group included 3 families, with a baby and two ten-year old boys as candidates for baptism.

Some things prompted us to talk about Sunday worship - not a surprise as it is our main reference for living the Christian life. We recognized the Lord's Prayer. We also talked about the Peace. It means something different after Jesus says, "Leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, then come and offer your gift." We shake hands and hug; then we give our offerings! The order is consistent with our experience, but now the Peace in Church means more. It is a regular practice that reminds us to go beyond what is easy to seek harmony with each other, with people in our church community with all the people in our lives. When we came to loving our enemies, this became a natural extension of the Peace. We were quick to name Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Nelson Mandela: They are so close to what Jesus says!

We read some things that challenged us to be interpreters. With two divorced families in our group, we needed to think through what Jesus says about divorce. We talked about comparing the different versions of what Jesus says, about the divorce practices of the time how damaging they could be. We talked about how our church's teachings have changed. Instead of taking the text as how it is, we found it liberating think for ourselves with Jesus as the springboard. Jesus' use of hyperbole (exaggeration for emphasis) - gauging out our eye if it causes us to sin - pushed us: We really need to think for ourselves as Christians!

And we read some things that make sense even though we know they are hard. We know that when you die, you can't take it with you. It makes sense when Jesus says, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." But we live in a materialist culture. We are always buying. So much effort goes into having more. Is it hyperbole when Jesus says we cannot serve both God and Wealth? Or should we take this one literally?

Some sayings of Jesus are confusing and require a whole lot of unpacking. We had to do a lot of work with "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light..." We compared light: Our light is not to be hidden under a bushel. And we compared eyes: finding fault with others is seeing a speck in their eye. Being filled with light is being life-giving. And our eyes are our outlook of humility, our attitude of gratitude.

Just as every religion has a version of the Golden Rule (do to others as you would have them do to you), we recognized that we share the spiritual path with all people of faith. To explore the Way of Jesus together involves telling some of your story. We found this to be respectful and the opposite of "throwing your pearls before swine." As for the house on the rock, Jesus is the firm foundation for our baptisms this month. We welcome Robert and Zachary and Geneva into the Way of Jesus.

Help me to give light to all in the house. Amen.

Gary van der Meer

For meditation and reflection, consider the scriptures for next Sunday, June 8, 2008: Genesis 12:1-9; Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26.

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.

