

March 14, 2008

SJWT



Dear Friends,

We held our Annual Vestry Meeting this past Sunday. Our report for the year tells where we have been and sets a course for the coming year: Join us in celebrating God's friendship with us, as the foundation for our friendship with each other and the world!

Worship with us this Sunday, March 16: Palm Sunday:

8:30 Early Eucharist; 10:30 Eucharist; Sermon: Gary van der Meer; Celebrant: Gary van der Meer; Musician: David Jones, piano and organ. Refreshments following.

Annual Vestry Meeting Report and Minutes

Please find in the attachment the minutes and the report from the Annual Vestry Meeting held last Sunday.

Announcements & Events

Lenten Program

St. John's will host a shared Lenten program with Redeemer Lutheran Church, Wednesday evenings; last Wednesday in this series is March 19, 7:30 - 8:45 pm. The program will be held at St. John's. Bob Shantz will present his new book, "Windows on our Souls" along with artist Sarah Hall and art historian Peter Larisey. Learn about art, the early Christian catacombs, stained glass, and theology (Bob's writings!). The evening will include reflections, concluding with Lutheran Evening Prayer, Musician: Barry Short.

Great Upcoming Music

Sundays at 10:30 a.m. sharp - Palm Sunday: David Jones, piano and organ; 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.

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, March 17, 7:30 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.

We'll have a great blend of excitement, adventure, classics and action. Join us for some good laughs with hilaric "Monthy Python & the Holy Grail", classic "Casablanca", some French Cuisine "Ratatouille", action with "The Bourne Ultimatum" and the beautiful "La Vita è Bella". All of this right in the local High Park Village private movie suite!

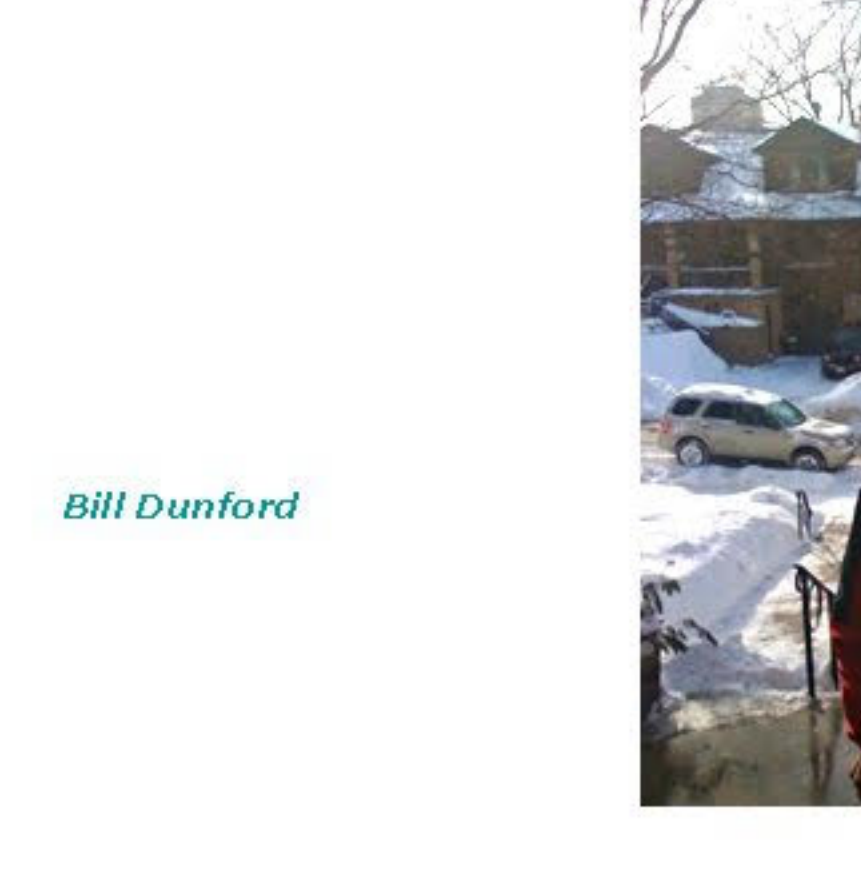
This brand new private cinema provides us with a Commercial quality 60inch screen with full Dolby Pro Logic surround sound and theatre style viewing for 12 in comfortable leather seating. The cinema is located on the lower level of 66 Pacific Avenue (High Park Minto Buildings).

We have limited seating so select your favourite movie and buy your tickets now! All proceeds will go to St. John's. All movie tickets are \$5 per movie per person. Please purchase your tickets after the 10.30 services.

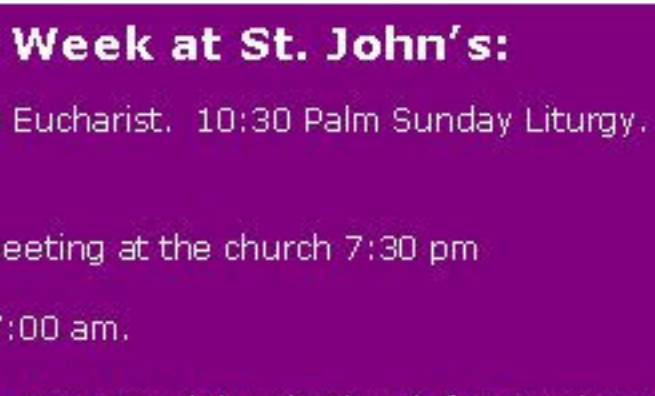
During "Casablanca", traditional Moroccan Couscous will be served. Popcorn & soda available for a suggested donation fee of \$2.

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

PS—Read more about the movies in the attached .pdf document



Alison Smiley & Bob Shantz



Bill Dunford

Mark your calendar! Holy Week at St. John's:

Sunday, March 16: Palm Sunday. 8:30 Eucharist. 10:30 Palm Sunday Liturgy. Musician: Barry Short.

Monday, March 17: Leadership Team meeting at the church 7:30 pm

Tuesday, March 18: Holy Eucharist at 7:00 am.

Wednesday, March 19: Field trip to St. Mary Magdalene's Church for Tenebrae at 8:00 pm. St. Mary's is located at 477 Manning Avenue (intersection with Ulster).

Thursday, March 20: Maundy Thursday. Supper, Footwashing, Eucharist, and Stripping of the Altar, begins at 6:00 pm. Musician: Jaroslav Czerwinec.

Friday, March 21: 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: Easter Eve. Easter Vigil at 8:00 pm. 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. 8:30 Eucharist. 10:30 Eucharist. Music: Dorothy De Val, organ, and Susanna McCleary, violin and vocal soloist.

Friendship – Are there limits to what we can expect?

Who are your friends? How many years can you count in your longest friendships? Are you making new friends as time goes by? What do the stories of our faith offer to inform our friendships?



Although our scriptures do not set as their main task to tell us what friendship should look like, they show friendships that are beautiful.

The description of David's friendship with King Saul's son Jonathan is of two young men who enjoy and support each other in spite of the conflicts that surround them. When Jonathan dies in war, David sets his grief to poetry, saying of Jonathan, "greatly beloved were you to me; your love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." (2 Samuel Chapter 1). The book of Ruth shows the friendship between Naomi and her daughter-in-law Ruth. Ruth could have allowed geography to bring their kinship to an end, but insisted, "Where you go, I will go; Where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God." (Ruth Chapter 1) Our scriptures are equally eloquent about friendship betrayed. In Psalm 55, David writes of the friend who betrayed him. Betrayal by an enemy is to be expected and though terrible, we can handle it. "But it is you, my equal, my companion, my familiar friend, with whom I kept pleasant company; we walked in the house of God with the throng." When they went together (as we might say of ourselves), and they shared meals. The loss of this friendship is a deep wound.

When is a friendship on the line? You might think betrayal means it is over. That when Judas did what he did, Jesus fired him from friendship. Despite the heavy-handed telling of the gospel writers, Jesus dealt kindly with Judas. Jesus was the man of reconciliation, and I believe that is what Jesus would offer even Judas. And to put the shoe on the other foot, Jesus was good friends with two sisters, Mary and Martha. They often put him up for the night when he was in Jerusalem. They supported him and lived by his message. And then he didn't come in time when their brother was dying. What would your friends say if you were not there for them? I have to admit that a part of me wishes that Jesus did not raise Lazarus from the dead because none of us can do that for our friends. But Jesus is Jesus, and I am not, which is worthy of remembering! And even more comforting is that both Martha and Mary said what they needed to say, and then received the support Jesus was able to give. To me, that is beautiful expression of their friendship.

What can we reasonably expect of our friends? It seems in these busy times that months fly between conversations. What I most want is for my friends to be real with me. There is a comfort in knowing my friends support me in my struggles, that even if I have been a shit, our friendship is not on the line and that is what I want to offer to my friends; call it loyalty to a fault if you like! As I said, these are busy times, what does it take to keep friendship real? The word David used, companion, is the key: it means "sharing bread together." We enter friendship by sharing time, sharing food, and underneath the food, sharing ourselves. In Le Petit Prince, the prince and the fox become friends by "taming" each other in ongoing rituals of spending time together. When I consider my friends, I know we may laugh or cringe at the twists and turns by which our friendships have endured. And how grateful I am! These examples from the scriptures confirm what I want my friendships to be about.

God, you have befriended me; let me be a blessing to my friends. Amen.

Gary van der Meer

For meditation and reflection in the coming week, consider the scriptures for next Sunday, March 16, 2007 - Palm Sunday: Isaiah 50:4-9a; Matthew 21:1-11.

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.

