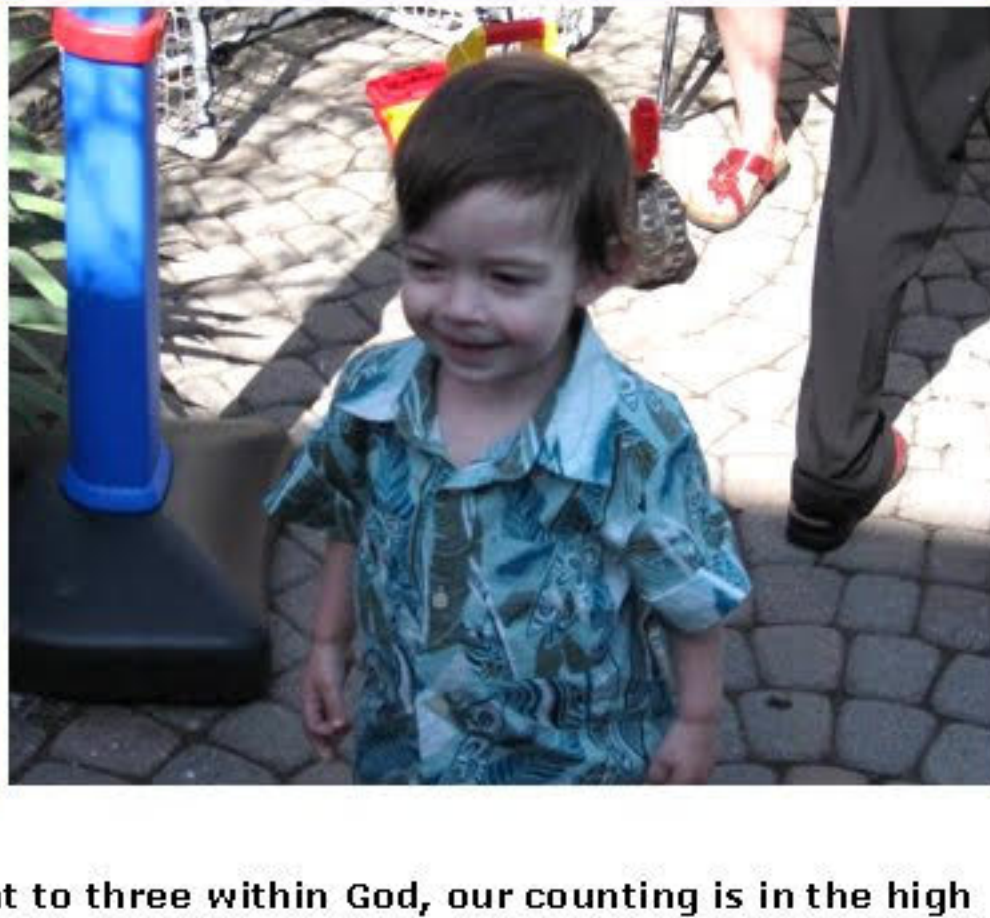


May 14, 2008

SJWT



Dear Friends,

Before we can count to three within God, our counting is in the high numbers about the ways we are moved as living breathing signs of God's love.

Worship with us this Sunday, May 18:

8:30 Early Eucharist; 10:30 Eucharist Sermon: The Rev. Gary van der Meer Celebrant: The Rev. Bob Shantz; Musicians: Dorothy DeVal and Susanna McCleary. Refreshments following.

Response to the Cyclone Disaster in Burma

Your response to the the disaster in Burma is encouraged through the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (our Anglican disaster relief charity) or through the Canadian Red Cross:



Canadian Red Cross: The official death toll from Cyclone Nargis in Burma is approaching 32,000 - but observers fear the final count will be much higher. Estimates of people at risk of starvation and illness range from 750,000 to 1,5 million. These are truly staggering numbers. While the military government of Burma refuses foreign aid workers into the country, 27,000 local Red Cross volunteers have been distributing basic relief items such as tarpaulins, mosquito nets, potable water and water purification tablets. The Canadian Red Cross is supporting the relief efforts in Myanmar with an initial contribution of \$100,000. In addition, Canadian Red Cross disaster response personnel and relief supplies are on standby to deploy. If you wish to make a financial donation to the Red Cross you may give online at www.redcross.ca, call 1-800-418-1111 or contact their local Canadian Red Cross office.

Primate's World Relief and Development Fund: The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund has committed \$30,000 as an initial response to the devastation in Myanmar (Burma). Action by Churches Together (ACT), through whom PWRDF works, is expected to launch a formal appeal for funds shortly. PWRDF will re-evaluate the level of its response at that time. Anglicans across Canada may respond with their donations through their local parishes, through online donations http://www.pwrdf.org/ or by calling PWRDF directly at 416-924-9199, extension 320.

Announcements & Events

Great Upcoming Music!

May 18: Dorothy de Val, organ, and Susanna McCleary, violin and vocal soloist; May 25: Barry Short, organ and piano.

Worship with us during the week

Thursday May 15, 10:30 a.m. Morning Prayer, with scripture discussion followed by home baked refreshments; and visiting. Tuesday, May 20, 7:00 a.m. Morning Prayer, with Anglican Rosary and silent meditation;

Tuesday Evening Worship

Tuesday Evening Eucharists begin in June! Every Tuesday 7:30 p.m. in the Garden Chapel from June 5 to August 28. Our theme this year is 'Who do you say that I am?' which is intended to be a reflection by different people on who Jesus is to them. We hope to have people speak on this topic from our own community (like you), from other Anglican churches and from other denominations (and possibly other faiths - for example, who is Jesus to a Mormon, to a Muslim, to a Buddhist?). 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

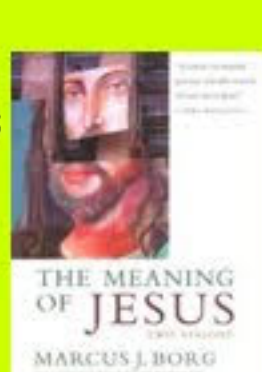
We need hosts for Doors Open Toronto Saturday, May 24 and Sunday, May 25, 10 am to 5 pm. Please sign up, at the Action Desk for one or two-hour shifts, working in pairs. Consider baking cookies for our visitors.

Thanks!

Thanks to all who worked so hard to present Sunday's celebration of the Holy Spirit, and especially Robert Shipman who adapted and directed this presentation. Thanks to all who assisted with Saturday's yard clean up! The indoor clean up is Thursday, May 22, 10:00 a.m.

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.



The cast of the Pentecost Play 2008!

One in the Spirit

Perhaps you have seen the photo of the earth as a beautiful round planet floating in space. You can make out the land mass of the continents separated by the blue oceans. For the first time humanity was depicted as one species - no division by country or ethnicity or language or religion. Our religious conviction that we are one in the Spirit was given new meaning by the astronaut photographer. Poets and mystics have known this and expressed it in words: "Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness' ... male and female God created them." A good blessed planet of land and water was created along with men and women inhabiting it who's only distinguishing feature was as being made in the likeness of the Creator. We live in a sacred place, one in the Spirit.



It is, therefore, no wonder that the multi-cultural residents of Jerusalem could hear and comprehend the message of the Spirit. Each person on Earth is animated, is alive, in the same Spirit of God. We all have the same needs and aspirations. Rabindranath Tagore, an Indian poet of the Adi-Dharma sect of Hinduism, wrote this prayer:

Give Me Strength
This is my prayer to You, my Lord - strike
strike at the root of penury in my heart.
Give me the strength lightly to bear my joys and sorrows.
Give me the strength to make my love fruitful in service.
Give me the strength never to disown the poor
or bend my knees before insolent might.
Give me the strength to raise my mind high above daily trifles.
And give me strength to surrender my strength to Your will with love.

Poets from other lands could have written what William Wordsworth wrote in his poem "Tintern Abbey:"

For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

We are one in our wonder, our vulnerabilities, our hopes and dreams, and our need for love. Let this understanding increase our compassion for each other .

We are one in the Spirit. Amen.

Bob Shantz

For meditation and reflection, consider the scriptures for next Sunday, May 18, 2008: Genesis 1: 1-2:4, 2 Corinthians 13:11-13, Psalm 8, Matthew 28:16-20.

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.

