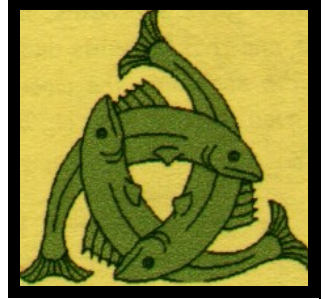


THE TRINITY NEWS



HOLY TRINITY ANGLICAN CHURCH SOOKE, BC

Vol. 4 No. 3

Our Clergy's Thoughts and Reflections

On February 20th we held our Parish Annual Meeting; this Wednesday we celebrate Ash Wednesday. We go from gratitude for the past to asking for forgiveness of God and of each other for our individual and collective sins of not living up to whom God created us to be: God's image and likeness; children of God; heirs of heaven. How, then, will we make the best use of these 40 week days of preparation for the celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus?

Inside this issue see pictures on our lives as a community of faith in 2010. God blessed our efforts with new seekers of the living God in an Anglican tradition and with other groups with whom to share our facilities. Read also articles addressing positive possibilities for the Season.

What can we say about the present in which our God is calling us to take the next step in our journey? Your Council will spend most of March 12th in an orientation and planning day.

We will go to the Diocesan Retreat Apartment and listen to God, to each other and then together decide how we can best involve everyone in our common mission of worship and stewardship at Holy Trinity.

We invite you too to take time at the beginning of Lent and think seriously about the specific good God is calling you to do here and now.

Our parish offers all of us a framework and support in which we can be re-energized, rededicated, to do the good to which God is calling us – daily

each of us in a special way is being called to make the goodness, the forgiveness and the caring of our God visible: through our care show God's caring for everyone – beginning with the least.

The Lenten Gospel states that after the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness preparing, He was ready for the mission God asked him to undertake. After that time with God, Jesus was ready to be tested. How ready are we?

Sincerely,

Alex+ and Nancy+

LENT:
**Old English for the lengthening of the light
(of the sun)/of the Light (of the Son)**

DEACON WALLY'S REFLECTION:

On behalf of Anglican, Roman Catholic, United and other churches of the Western Communities, by the end of February I had contacted one or more delegates of each local First Nation to the Truth and Reconciliation conference. I have introduced myself, and the interest of our churches to rise to the challenge of truth listening and reconciliation with First Nations' people affected by residential schools. The initial response is encouraging.

In First Nations' cultures, the relationship has priority over the task. Therefore, I have started with a focus on developing a relationship with those who will speak to me on these issues. I have patience, and faith that God will assist all who work towards reconciliation. There is no firm schedule and detailed plan. That is as it should be.

Graeme, Ruth and I will continue to extend our hands, and we will keep you informed. Remember that it is as much your job to ask us, as our job to tell you, about Truth and Reconciliation. Continue to pray for everyone.

EMPTY SHELVES — *Soon to be filled!*

The Women's Journey Group of Holy Trinity is embarking on a project to fill our empty book shelves with more current readings for a Lending Library!

If you have recent books in good condition and would consider donating them for A Lending Library, please start gathering them at home and wait for the announcement to bring them to the Church.

We are looking for books in the following categories: Spiritual, Inspirational, Theological or otherwise uplifting books for now and may expand those categories as time goes by. If you are in any doubt regarding a particular book please speak to Alex+ or Nancy+ after church.

Let us know too, if you'd like to have a lending CD library at the Church as well!

AN

ASH
WEDNESDAY
PRAYER

Lent begins with the imposition of ashes, an ancient symbol of penance common in the Old Testament and pagan antiquity. Jesus alludes to it when he condemns the cities of Bethsaida and Chorazin for not doing penance. "If the miracles performed in you had taken place in Trye and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes". (Matthew 11:21)

Jesus, you place on my forehead the sign of my sister Death: "Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

How can I not listen to this advice? For one day my life on earth will end; the limits on my years are set, though I know not the day or hour. Will I be ready to go to meet You my God?

Let this holy season be a time of grace for me and all this world.

Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain wisdom of heart.

O Jesus, you place on my forehead the sign of your saving Cross: "Turn from sin and be faithful to the gospel."

How can I turn from sin unless I turn to You, my God? You speak, You raise Your hand, You touch my mind and call my name, turn to the Lord your God again.

These are the days of Your favor. You leave a blessing as You pass on me and all your people. Turn to us, Lord God, and we shall turn to You.

~ Lenten Prayers, Marion Hatchett



CHURCH FOR THE FUTURE

Leaders for the Church.

Your Parish Council, the parish's leadership team, will be having an Orientation Day on March 12th. Some of the day will be directed towards the way leaders need to be in a church setting. The topics listed here may not be specifically addressed that day in great detail, but they are still good for the basis of some significant conversation between you, your Council, as well as among themselves. Consider these thoughts:

Daily Operations - A healthy organization needs a leadership team that sees its charge as the future and its task as strategic thinking. In a corporation, that would be the board of directors. In our congregation, it's the Parish Council. In partnership with the clergy, councils need to study how successful congregations are thinking about their futures.

Embrace risk and change - There isn't any way forward for congregations that don't involve substantial risk and change. Leaders need to stop being averse to risk, trying to minimize risk, or even trying to manage risk. After nearly 50 years of relentless decline, leaders need to make a radical commitment to change, including moving away from Sunday morning as primary locus of ministry, investing aggressively in technology, and rethinking their devotion to "the way we always did it." Leaders must imagine a future beyond what they know!

Get smart about organization development - They need to understand how churches work – not how they once worked in the "golden era" that a few always remember, but how they work today.

We need methodologies that are better suited to this era. — We need to ask how others have been growing churches of all sizes while we were declining. All other systems are changing, from schools to banks to newspapers to gasoline stations. Why would churches think themselves exempt from needing to adapt their method?

Enhance skills - Too many elected leaders believe that their life skills and job skills are readily transferable to the church setting. In fact, church duty is unlike other.

Leaders need to ramp up their preparation and performance. Too many believe they just need to show up at meetings, take a few minutes to examine the budget, and then start making decisions. Given the complexity of issues facing most congregations, such lack of preparation is irresponsible.



Leaders need better data - They need to insist on sophisticated, consistent and accurate metrics. Everything that went astray in the 1960s and beyond could have been seen and dealt with if leaders had been equipped with better metrics. Parish Annual Reports (PARs) and other reports are barely a starting point.

All of this leads us to these questions:

Is our Parish Council ready to embrace these six suggestions? Are you ready to support them?

These ideas, or some variant of them, will continue to be a major way forward for church growth and vitality, so now is the time to take first steps.



~ from *Congregational Development Studies*



Lent: A Time to Change Direction

When we change direction, it means we might not end up where we first

intended to go. Sin has a way of turning us from God. We know we should be headed one way, but we go another and soon we are way off course...or tripping up from the trouble we've caused. Lent is a time to move toward God.



Lent begins with the symbol of ashes, then challenges us to rise above the ashes of our own destruction. Lent challenges us to deep decision-making arising out of the kind of inner-conflict Jesus experienced in His 40 days of trial in the wilderness.

This Lent, let us dedicate ourselves to spiritual endeavors, to growing in our awareness of God and of the qualities of God. That's right, the qualities of God within you!



As we read or listen to the stories of God, of the truths Jesus tells us about, let them take root and grow. Let them nourish you spiritually and contribute to your wholeness as a child of God and a person of faith.

Let stories from scripture, meditations and other sources for Lent remind you that you are spiritual in nature and that you have divine qualities to use which will enrich you life and those around you.

Lent—a golden time for...

opportunities to prepare our heart and mind for spiritual transformation. Consider the following thoughts, meditations and ideas for your personal growth:

As I grow in my awareness of God, I'll harvest a rich supply of blessings in my life.

"Let them both grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time

"I will tell the reapers, 'Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

Mt. 13:30

Anger, unforgiveness, judgment, or negative thoughts that keep me from knowing I am one with God are the "weeds" I need to get rid of. Then as I let go of any negative thoughts I will produce only positive thoughts of light and love. Thoughts of kindness, patience, love and self-control are worth harvesting, for they will help me grow ever closer in my relationship with God and the people in my life. These



gifts are the wheat I will harvest this Lenten season.

God's creation is so vast and magnificent! From the tiniest seed to the tallest mountain, we can see

evidence of God's love, God's activity. Look around you, see the beauty of nature and know that God's had created you with a beauty within. What a peaceful feeling to recognize that for the truth that it is. From your tiniest cell to the most intricate system, you can see and feel God's glorious activity with you and within your life! Just as a seed of the pine contains the potential to become a magnificent tree, you too have the potential to become the best you can be. Through the creative activity of God within, you have the knowledge, strength and energy to be healthy, successful and free!

God's love and grace in me creates a forgiving heart and opens the way to lasting peace.



While my life seems to be in a constant state of change, I can make sure that what I hold most

dear is not stored in a "house built on sand." I will work toward relationships that are solid and long lasting by opening my heart to God's love and being an expression of that love. When I combine faith, prayer, meditation and openness to God's love, I will create a firm foundation for my life, for my life is built on the firm foundation of faith.

~Nancy+

MORE THOUGHTS FOR LENT!

We all have a choice; mostly it is a matter of choosing, what is life-giving and letting go of what I think I must have. May I choose to die to selfishness whenever that choice will lead to more life for others and myself.

Christianity is often accused of making folks feel guilty. I guess a kind of "false guilt" that is just formless anxiety might be encouraged by some misdirected believers. Still, we know we can vigorously deny our own guilt until it becomes so obvious that we finally have to face it. Lent is the time to seek the truth and speak the truth to ourselves.

Facing up to our shortcomings and the avoidance of truth is hard work. It's easy to start feeling worse about yourself as you begin to admit your failings. But it's best we let go of all that guilt, real or imagined, and all the shame and pain we have caused or endured, because Jesus calls us to be healed not condemned.

Do you find that sometimes faith can seem very abstract and theoretical. We say to ourselves, "Jesus is my Lord, and I love God" but then we take a step back, in fear or even disgust, when we see on of the least of our brothers and sisters on our streets. Pray that the Holy Spirit will strengthen us to respond to the needs, indeed God's needs in those least able to care for themselves.

Lest we think that Lent is all about sin, remember that on the inside, our core being is all about life not death. If it weren't for the mystery of Jesus' dying and rising we'd not even bother with Lent. Let's listen more attentively and believe the Good News in the depths of our being as we journey toward Easter.

Remember "love your enemies," that command that lurks around the edges of the whole Gospel? Jesus does not just ask of us to do this, He did it Himself, just to show us that it is possible. This will never be an easy one for us, but with God's help it can become possible. Pray for those who would wish you harm.

They come, and sometimes they keep coming; hardships. Whether we want them or not, whether we welcome them or not, whether we endure them or not. But remember, no one but Jesus could endure all the hardships that the Gospel entails. Pray for a heart like that of Jesus, a heart willing to bear the burden of love for the sake of others.

Memory is a great gift - if we are willing to accept everything it offers us. But some things we'd rather forget. May our memories remind us of who we really are. But God is about forgiveness, so may those memories also assure us that God chooses not to remember even the worst of our actions. Pray for a clear conscience in order to live freely.

Trust: so much of life comes down to that simple word. But when trust is misplaced it takes a long time to get over it. A very long time. But trust is the key to our relationship with Jesus. If we are going to grow in faith, we must trust Jesus every moment of every day. Jesus is our hope, and into His hands we commend our spirit.

Some people have almost nothing to live on. Yet we avoid looking because if we really saw the need, our conscience would tell us to do something! Lord, help us to see the suffering of our brothers and sisters, not so we won't feel guilty and helpless but so we will do what we can to ease their plight.

~ Adapted from Mark Nielsen's *To Show Great Love*

HELLO AND GOODBYE!



Our combined Parish Council,
those leaving and those coming in for the year 2011



CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION we awarded to the following during our Annual General Meeting:
Laura Sutherland (pictured) Council Member and Clerk (2008—2010); Charles Isherwood (pictured) People's
Warden (2009 & 2010); Ruth Montaldi, Synod Delegate and Council Member (2010); Ian Seidel, Council Member
and Envelope Secretary (2008—2010); Richard Cousineau and Sandra MacLean Council Members (2010).

We, the Parish, thank you for your service.

Newly Elected for 2011:

Brian Fitchett, People's Warden; and new Council Members: Maureen Hasanen, Valerie Mills and Gayle Morton
(also appointed Clerk). Thank you for your willingness to serve.

~ Alex+

TRUST? FEAR NOT? NO WORRIES!

Early this month, we'll enter the liturgical season of Lent, which will carry us through a period of spiritual reflection, aboard the emotional roller-coaster of Palm Sunday into Holy Week, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and to the triumph of Easter Sunday morning and its vacant tomb.

When I worked in the newsroom of the Calgary Herald, we handful of practicing Christians of various denominations would meet for lunch, usually on Shrove Tuesday, and share what we planned to "give up" for Lent. This ritual of modest sacrifice would be met with bemusement by the majority of our journalistic peers who, needless to say, weren't regular churchgoers. Newsrooms tend to be extremely secular societies.

For many years, I recall that I alternated between forsaking chocolate and Starbucks coffee, two of my guilty pleasures. Like most New Year's resolutions, these self-imposed bans usually lasted, oh, a week, maybe two at the most, before I caved into my all-too-human frailties and scored a jumbo Caramilk bar and an espresso. Nagging guilt then dogged me through the rest of Lent.

This year, knowing chocolate and coffee are two of the basic food groups for me, I'm going to try to give up something else, something far more destructive to my body and mind. I'm going to try to give up fear and worry for Lent, as a starting point. And I'm going to try to give them up because I know that, just as excessive liquor and drugs are to many others, fear and worry are truly debilitating to me.

We were discussing fear and worry during an Early Church service last month, and even suggested maybe there should be a 'Worriers Anonymous', as there are organizations for those wrestling daily with alcohol and narcotics.

We in Sooke in 2011 live in arguably the finest nation in the world: prosperous, tolerant, safe, healthy ... the

list of superlatives goes on. We don't have to worry about disease stalking our children or about our political leaders sending the military to crush dissenters.

So why do many of us, myself front and centre, worry so much? Do I have enough money saved for retirement? What is growing old going to be like? Have I given my son the skills he will need to thrive when I'm gone? Do I have enough firewood stashed away to get through a prolonged, chilly spring? Will I chop off my leg if my chainsaw slips? How do other people view me? Have I been a good enough person to get into Heaven? I know, I know, these all sound trivial, but they've all kept me up late into the night.

But the bottom line is pretty stark: if I'm really the follower of Jesus that I think I am, if I'm not just paying lip service to my faith, then what is stopping me from taking all the repeated encouragement from the Bible to trust in God, to "fear not", to heart?

In Isaiah, the prophet reminds us, "Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you."

In Psalm 56, we are told, "In God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"

And then, of course, there are those trusting birds of the air and those lilies of the field, who prosper without spending any of their day bogged down by worry and fear.

I visited New Zealand for a month in 1989, starting my journey in Christchurch, that beautiful city so devastated by a recent earthquake. On my first day there, I asked a cab driver for walking directions to the magnificent cathedral, the heart of Christchurch whose spire has now crashed to earth. The cabbie took time out of his day to draw the route on my tourist map. I thanked him and he responded with that wonderful saying that is so common to New Zealanders and Australians ... "no worries, mate!"

That's my phrase, my mantra for Lent 2011, and hopefully beyond.

~Graeme Morton

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR MARCH



- 2 Women's Tea @ 3 pm
- 4 World Day of Prayer/Tea @ 2 pm
- 6 Taize @ 7 pm
- 8 Shrove Tuesday—Pancake Dinner @ 5:30 pm—7 pm
- 9 ASH WEDNESDAY Service 10 am Ashes and Holy Communion
- 12 Parish Council Orientation at Retreat Apartment from 10 am—3 pm

Men's Breakfast @ Mom's Café—9:30 am

EARLY CHURCH Pot-luck following 5 pm Holy Communion

TURN CLOCKS FORWARD ONE HOUR!

- 15 Parish Council @ 7 pm
- 16 Mothers' Union @ 1:30 pm
- 17 Canada Blood Services 12:30—8 pm
- 24 Regional Mothers' Union Meeting 10:30 am—2:30 pm Bishop James will preside at Holy Communion
- 30 Worship Committee 11am; Women's Journey 11:45; Men's Luncheon @ Mulligans—noon

ADDICTIONS AND SPIRITUALITY: A REGIONAL LENTEN SERIES with simple meal @ 6:15pm:

22 @ St. Peter and St. Paul, Esquimalt

29 @ Church of the Advent, Langford

April

4 @ St. John The Divine, Victoria

12 @ Holy Trinity, Sooke

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CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays

- 1 Brian Sutherland
- 3 Joan Coates
- 6 Nancy+
- 10 Ed Salway
- 17 Les Tickner
- 18 Lucinda Welch
- 20 Terri Muir
- 27 Mitchell Sutherland; Leo Myers

