



LIFE AT ST. GEORGE'S

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“Our mission is to nurture our relationships with God in Christ, with one another, and with our community.”

FROM JOHN'S DESK

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What I learned on my Summer Vacation

Well, that's not entirely accurate, because it happened shortly after I returned from vacation in June, when I attended the biennial Worship Conference co-sponsored by the Anglican and Lutheran Churches in Canada, this year held in Montreal. This year's keynote speakers were Dr. Gordon Lathrop, a Lutheran pastor and educator from Philadelphia, and the Rev'd Karen Ward, pastor of a joint Lutheran-Episcopal congregation in Seattle.

The title of this year's conference was "Order and Chaos", a reminder that God created everything out of chaos and gave it order, but also that God overturned the old order of sin and death through the chaotic life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

I wanted to share a few quotes

and insights I gained during this conference. These are things that touched me and made me think about how we do church here at St. George's. Maybe they'll do the same for you.

Karen Ward:

"We're in the midst of a huge cultural shift, a major change in how people understand the world around them. We have already undergone the shift from pre-modern thinking (authority and institutions shape the world) through the so-called modern worldview (reason and science explain everything) to a postmodern era where people perceive everything through the lens of their own experience and perspective. There is a huge search for spiritual meaning in postmodern society, but church is often the last place people look for spiritual answers.

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FROM JOHN'S DESK (CONT)

Even though we live in a time when we can experience almost anything (if we have enough time and money), there is very little opportunity for us to experience the transcendent (i.e. God). But the church has a rich storehouse of spiritual treasures that most people don't know about. We have to uncover them, dust them off, and offer them to people in an accessible way. People are searching for symbols which will help them navigate the growing chaos of the world."

Gordon Lathrop:

"The local assembly [that's us, folks] does what the church does all over the world, but in its local context. Unity in diversity is what is required today: gathering, hearing and preaching the Word, sharing at the table, baptizing, being sent out into the world."

"The community of God is based on God's hospitality, not on whether we all like each other or even get along with each other. Modern worship needs a strong centre [what he calls the

bath, the table, prayer and the word] and an open door (for going out as well as for coming in)."

"We don't have to throw everything important away. Our culture is always looking for a new, so-called creative way to do things, as if the things that used to be important have now lost their meaning (which is far from true)."

Karen Ward: Her church in Seattle is very diverse but has a clearly defined set of "rules of life", "practices" and "virtues". Anyone who is willing to subscribe to these rules, practices and virtues is welcome to participate in the life of this Christian community.

Rules of life:

The *big* rule: the Baptismal Covenant.

The small rule: love God and your neighbour, give invitations and provide a welcome to strangers, engage the local community, practice what you preach, share your stories, throw parties, create art, exchange

gifts, renew the culture, steward creation.

Twelve practices of faith: hospitality, worship, prayer, scripture reflection, tithing, confession, forgiveness, fasting, feasting, pilgrimage, retreat, re-creation.

Twelve virtues of faith: generosity, graciousness, thankfulness, humility, accountability, compassion, transformation, obedience, courage, faith, hope, love.

Gordon Lathrop: "Symbols are important in worship: they need to be large, accessible and open. There is room for all of us and everything we are in the enacted symbol of the Eucharist: our joys, our sorrows, our despair, our numbness, our worries, our hopes and dreams."

Some food for thought!

John +



THE POWER OF PRAYER

Prayer is essential in the life of a Christian. It is like the fuel that keeps the fire burning. It is an act of faith. No matter what the focus of our prayer is, it is by faith that we believe that prayer is heard and answered by God. It may be for praise, thanksgiving, intercession or petition; in every case, we expect a response from God. Prayer is the energy that keeps our personal relationship with God intact. Prayer is a conversation with God.

Jesus gave us a model prayer that we call 'The Lord's Prayer'. There are several references in the Bible about Jesus going aside by himself to pray. His time in the Garden of Gethsemane is a good example (Luke 22:41-45). John 17 records Jesus' prayer for his disciples.

We can pray with or without words, in whatever posture we choose, for any length of time. We can use printed prayers or words from songs and the Scriptures. God's answers come to us as we listen for Him. He may speak directly to our Spirit,

through hymns, inspirational material, through His word, through others and also through the sermon on Sundays. God knows our needs before we ask but we need to ask (Matthew 7:7).

The early Church was established on the practices of the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers (Acts 2:42). Paul and Silas were in prison praying and singing hymns to God when an earthquake shook the chains off their feet and the doors wide open (Acts 16:25-26). Peter was in prison and the angel of the Lord led him out. The believers were gathered at Mary's house praying when he knocked at the gate (Acts 12:12-13).

All of us have experienced, read or heard about miraculous answers to prayer. We pray for ourselves and for others. So often, families have experienced peace and quiet in the midst of pain, suffering and death. So many times people have said they could feel that others were praying for them. Our communication with God affects and transforms each moment

of our experience. He fills us with a constant yearning to give him thanks and praise. Our God is waiting for us to talk to him, to bring about the change that prayer can give.

"How long has it been since you talked with the Lord and told him your heart's deepest secret?"

How long since you prayed, how long since you stayed on your Knees till light shone through?"

Talk to him now; give him your needs for your family, friends and church. There is no limit to His answers. There is power in prayer.

Margie Lyttle

If you would be interested in being part of a prayer group here at St. George's, please speak to Margie or Father John.



SR. CONSTANCE JOANNA

We are pleased to announce that The Reverend Canon Sister Constance Joanna Gefvert, SSJD, will be joining St. George's as an Honorary Assistant in September. She will normally be presiding once a month and preaching once a month, plus leading some educational/formational events, starting with an Advent Quiet Day on Saturday, December 13. Please mark this date in your calendar now. Sister Constance Joanna is a well-respected retreat leader and we are very fortunate to have her as part of the St. George's family.

I come originally from Cleveland, Ohio where I was born, went to school, and earned my undergraduate degree. I have lived in Minneapolis, Minnesota (where I went to graduate school), in Detroit, Michigan (where I taught English at Wayne State University), and in Blacksburg, Virginia (where I also taught English at Virginia Tech).

With a strong belief that God was calling me to full-time service in the church, I left the U.S. in 1984 to join the Sisters of St. John the Divine, and in 1992 I became a proud Canadian citizen.

During my time in the Sisterhood, I have done many different kinds of ministry – teaching, administration, leading retreats, spiritual direction, and pastoral care at St. John's Rehab Hospital.

I had felt a call to priestly ministry for many years, but because of my other responsibilities I wasn't able to pursue it until I left office as Rev. Mother in April, 2005. I was ordained Deacon on May 6, 2007, and Priest on February 17, 2008. To me it's truly "amazing grace," considering my mature years.



My current full-time job is Pastoral Coordinator of the Convent Guest House. I also

do spiritual direction, lead retreats, and teach part-time at Wycliffe College. For relaxation, I love reading good mysteries (and watching film versions), walking, listening to music, and playing the piano.

I am looking forward to being associated with St. George's Willowdale. I will be with you about every other Sunday, and I will be doing some educational programs, beginning with a quiet day for the parish in Advent.



LIBRARY CART NEWS

Humble Beginnings:

On May 12th, 1915 Roger Louis Schutz-Marsauche was born in Provence in French speaking Switzerland. He is the ninth child born to parents Charles Schutz and Amelie Marsauche.

In 1940 at the age of twenty-five he founded the French based Taize Christian Ecumenical community. He provided safe refuge to political refugees, Jewish people and members of all Christian Churches.

The Taize Community:

In 1949, Brother Roger founded a monastic ecumenical and international community. Community life is focused on prayer, meditation and music. The current Taize community consists of members of several denominations spanning

over 30 countries. Several thousand people gather annually for world wide Taize events..

Today there are over 100 Brothers of many faith traditions including Anglican, Roman Catholic Protestant and Reformed faiths.

Brother Roger saw part of his mission in life to devote himself to reconciling the various Christian Churches. He reached out to youth with his spiritual messages of hope peace and love.

Brother Roger wrote 16 books and he co- authored two books with the late Mother Teresa.

Spirituality of Taize:

"Today, throughout the world, Taize's name evokes peace, reconciliation, communion and the ardent expectation of

a springtime of the Church. When the Church listens, heals, reconciles, then she becomes what she is in her most radiant aspect: a crystal clear reflection of a love" -(Brother Roger)

On August 16, 2005 during a Taize prayer service, Brother Roger was murdered. He was ninety years of age.

For further information, you can find "Brother Roger of Taize Essential Writings" (2006) on St. George's LibraryCart.

There are many websites and virtual tours devoted to Brother Roger, his life and works . You can also find Taize music prayers and information at several websites including;
www.taize.fr
www.youtube.com

Lori Grauds & Lucy Browning

ST. GEORGE'S CALENDAR

Worship:

Sundays at 8 and 10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Tuesday to Friday mornings at 9 a.m. Morning Prayer

2nd Thursday of each month at 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist at Lansing Retirement Residence

Celebration of Harvest Thanksgiving

Sunday October 12 at both services



REDEVELOPMENT

On June 12, your Churchwardens made a presentation to the Diocesan Executive Board, to request Diocesan approval of the final budget for our redevelopment project, which had been approved at Special Vestry on April 6, 2008. Parishioners will recall that the budget has increased substantially since we received preliminary budget approval in 2005, because of delays and new City charges. However, we also developed what we believed was a solid business case to create a daycare centre at St. George's, to generate revenue to meet the budget shortfall, and that was presented to Executive Board.

Executive Board expressed concern about the size of the cost increases and was not prepared in June to recommend approval of the final budget to Diocesan Council, without further work on St. George's part. In order to move forward on the project, St. George's has been asked to develop three design and budget scenarios, with these requirements:

- 1) A building with a sanctuary that seats 300 (rather than the planned 240), built for the originally approved budget. What would that look like?
- 2) If scenario 1 does not provide enough space to deliver the approved ministry and program plans, how much more

would it cost for a building with a sanctuary that seats 300 and that accommodates St. George's ministry plans? What is the lowest risk way of financing this?

- 3) If a daycare is needed to finance scenario 2, what would that mean for project costs and financing requirements?

Your Redevelopment Design Committee has resumed intensive work with architect Elizabeth Davidson, and will be meeting with Ms. Davidson throughout August, as well as with 2 representatives of Diocesan Council, to keep them informed of the design and costing work.

The design and costing work for the 3 scenarios has been completed and we will be presenting our plans once again to the Diocesan Executive Board on September 11.

Please continue to pray for the success of our redevelopment project.

*Geraldine Sperling,
Redevelopment Coordinator*

Redevelopment Design Committee: Murray Browning, Angela Goodwill, John Hunter, Janet Kirk, Kathy Lindsey, Geraldine Sperling, Rev'd Canon John Wilton, Elizabeth Davidson (Advisor)



REMEMBER, EVERYONE IS WELCOME

AT ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH

SUNDAY SERVICES AT: 8:00am & 10:30am

**"To nurture our relationships with God in Christ,
with one another, and with our community."**

416-225-1922 www.StGeorgesToronto.ca

