



The Winged Ox

The magazine of the Parish Church of St. Luke, Winnipeg

PENTECOST / TRINITY 2023

*O Holy Spirit, by whose breath, life rises vibrant out of death:
come to create, renew, inspire; come kindle in our hearts your fire.
You are the seeker's sure resource; of burning love, the living source,
protector in the midst of strife, the giver and the Lord of Life.
In you God's energy is shown, to us your varied gifts make known.
Teach us to speak, teach us to hear; yours is the tongue and yours the ear.
Flood our dull senses with your light; in mutual love our hearts unite,
Your power the whole creation fills; confirm our weak, uncertain wills.
From inner strife grant us release; turn nations to the way of peace.
To fuller life your people bring, that as one body we may sing:
Praise to the Father, Christ his Word, and to the Spirit, God the Lord.*

tr.: J.W. Grant



From the Rector



Thirty years ago, on Trinity Sunday, in Christ Church Cathedral in Montréal, I and my other classmates were ordained Deacons in the Church of God. A few weeks later, I was co-pilot on a Cessna 185 float-plane. Archdeacon Robert Bryan was the pilot, and we landed on the

sea near the parsonage in Mutton Bay, on Québec's Lower North Shore, what was once called the Québec Labrador. Just go to Newfoundland and hang a left! We were taken to the rocky shore by rowboat, with only my duffle bag of belongings, and that was the beginning of thirty years of ordained ministry.

I wish you a blessed, safe, and love-filled summer.

With love in Christ,

Paul

In Memoriam

*May the souls of the faithful departed
through the mercy of God rest in peace.*



DAVE CAIN

**Born 1st March 1938
Died 31st March 2023**

I met Dave well over 12 years ago although time seems so smooched up after COVID. I have asked Rev. Linda Parsons for some insight into our

friendship with Dave.

She first met Dave when a parishioner who knew Dave through extended family asked her to go and see him. He was very ill at the time. Although she was warned he might not give her a warm welcome, she was greeted warmly by Dave and Gloria. They shared some common interests that led to stories and spent time laughing together. In a short time, he drew her into matters of the heart and spirit. He regained his strength physically and spiritually.

I first met them when they arrived at St. Philip's saying that Rev. Linda had drawn them to the church. Being envelope secretary I got all their information for entry into the database. I got their envelopes, etc., ready and gave them their information. The next week they came to church and I greeted them. Gloria said to me "our name is Cain not Pain". I said, "I am so sorry, I will change that, but while we are on that note, my name is Bobbie and not Bonnie." So every now and again when they came in I would say; "Good Morning, Mr. and Mrs. Pain" and Dave would just chuckle and shake his head.

I am going to quote Rev. Linda on this one as she says it best. "Dave had the gift of 'helps' which grew from minor to larger repairs, to assisting and supporting in the administration of the church. He was also an encourager, a good photographer, a chuckler and friend. When St. Philip's was moving to closure, he was aggrieved that one's best was sometimes not enough: concession wasn't easy."

This was when I spent a lot of time with Dave trying to help keep the church we so loved. He did everything from changing light fixtures to fixing windows that had not closed for years. When the church closed, we talked about options in churches and we were all interested in St. Luke's as we were so impressed with Fr. Paul and

his handling of our situation at the close of our church. This turned into a blessing for us.

The last Sunday we were together, Doreen was at our table for coffee and she and Dave were talking about computers and photos and I saw Dave give her his card and say he would be happy to help her in any way he could. Did I mention he was a whiz at computers and changing 8mm tapes into discs or VHS tapes into discs? Yup, he was great with that also, taking all my old laptops and iPads and clearing them and passing them on.

Rev. Linda wrote, "Finding a new church home, perhaps even more so as a senior, is not always a clear path, but Dave's forbearance and more matured faith drew him to search and find a new worship community at St. Luke's.

"Rest In peace, Dave. Rise in glory."

As we left church together that Sunday, Dave looked over the top of his car and said "have a good week". I said "you also". He said "and be good". I said "not on your life" he said "that's a girl". I got that wonderful chuckle, he said "see you next Sunday". He got in the car and they waved goodbye, not knowing we would never see each other again.

How blessed was I to have found such a wonderful friend, and to be left with a memory that brings tears and a very large smile as I once again hear that chuckle in my head.

– *Bobbie Tougas*

Now we are God's people

Based on a sermon preached by Rev M. Dwight Rutherford, Fifth Sunday of Easter - 7th May 2023 at St. Mary Anglican Church, Winnipeg

Text: 1 Peter 2.2-10

Well known, hymn writer Ron Klusmeier, whose hymns appear in mainline church hymn books, recently offered reflections on the state of the church, based on observations made during his Tour of a Life Time.

Ron Klusmeier, may have stated the obvious – we are getting older, many congregations are in decline and are considering amalgamation. He goes on to say that many of our buildings are obsolete. Klusmeier, writes "many of our buildings are no longer physically welcoming. They are tired looking ... beautiful, solid wooden doors often intimidate strangers ..."

Klusmeier noted there are many styles of worship both in music and liturgy. Although speaking from a United Church perspective, this is equally true in the Anglican Church. It is hard to know what it means to be a typical Anglican Church. Being a relative newcomer to the Anglican Church, this has been a huge surprise. Yet, I should not have been.

Stated in more stark terms, mainline denominations, of which we are a part, are struggling. For us, it is particularly hard to see, because it is OUR Anglican Church – the church many of us have grown up in.

In the midst of this shift, I think there is hope. There can be hope when we go back into the scriptures to see how other Christians – early Christians – attempted to build community. In other words, how these folks attempted to live as an Easter people. Today, we are still learning what it means to be an Easter people.

That is why Peter writes: “Now we are God’s people.” Peter, tells this group of followers – and US – that we are God’s people.

What does it mean to be God’s people?

Often this text from Peter, is used to speak about the priesthood of all believers, which is central to our Protestant heritage. Newer scholarship – in particular by John Elliott, in a book called *A Home for the Homeless* – suggests this text helps to introduce the notion of the “household of God.”

In newer theology, especially feminist theology, use of the word “kingdom” has become suspect. Use of “kingdom” has become “*kin-dom*”. More importantly, we need ways to see the kingdom of God in new and fresh ways. What emerges is the Household of God. Looking at the kingdom, as household, was very prevalent when I was in seminary.

Using the term “Household of God” can be very helpful, because it helps us see our place in the community. A household, if done right, can be a welcoming and caring place, and that is important for us in the church.

Reston Church, a parish I once served, for example, hosted a coffee house on Monday mornings. It was a place for farmers to gather for coffee, when the cafe was closed. We opened the church to the community, to offer hospitality and fellowship to our community. We did not see any increase in worship numbers on Sunday, but we did get people into our building, who otherwise would never enter the doors of a church.

A contemporary understanding of what Peter was writing about.

Theologian Walter Brueggemann notes, “understanding Jesus as the living stone, believers are also to see themselves as living stones, whom God builds into a single, spiritual house.” As we build this house not everything will be clear sailing – for some – non-believers – will reject the house. In spite of this, God, will be with the community of faith, to the end of time.

When we open our doors to the community, God is with us in this endeavour, leading us to be church – *community* – in new ways.

Brueggemann notes when we use the word “household”, it underscores the collective nature of the community. That is what it means to be a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and God’s own people.

On one level this sounds pretty exclusive. However, Brueggemann reminds us that Peter had a series of specific pastoral goals in mind, which offers a corrective to exclusivity.

One: “The insistence on the unity of believers in one body – household, race, priesthood, nation – serves to create and maintain a social identity.”

Two: “The passage links this particular community with Jesus Christ.” This spiritual house, is not some sort of social club that exists only for its members. Instead, it is a household, where God is the head, and the cornerstone is Jesus Christ. The believers belong to God. It is God who builds the house; God lays the cornerstone, and the house is known by its cornerstone – Jesus the Christ.

Three: “As a result of their identification with one another and as members of God’s household, believers within this new household have a new standing.” As part of this household, no longer are members marginalized by their social condition and the world around them. Here, folks are with fellow travellers – followers of the Christ – where strength and support is taken from each other. It is this community – the household of faith – which is special. The household’s purpose is defined by Jesus Christ.

Peter wrote at a time of great pastoral need. Peter’s words are equally helpful today, as we too live in a time of great pastoral need, especially as we grapple with the lasting impact of the pandemic. Brueggemann notes “that need continues in every Christian generation, for the church constantly requires the recollection that God

created it to be a single household, taking its identity from Jesus Christ and set apart from the world.”

It does not mean however, that we are to be an exclusive, private sort of club. The text offers a challenge in that the community does have boundaries. Brueggemann notes that mainline churches often face this challenge, to define what the boundaries should be. It does not mean “anything goes”. Brueggemann notes, “identification of Christianity with the larger society and its social and political and economic structures makes it difficult to understand the church as an alternative household.”

In the rush to retain current members and get new members, a congregation tries to make themselves attractive “by means of programs that only duplicate the structures and values of the larger society.” It blurs the boundaries and we as church get lost in the wider world.

Many seekers are who are looking for a faith community, want to know what the boundaries are and what makes the church different from the world around them.

The questions we are invited to grapple with are: *What makes us different? What makes us special? What makes us God’s people?*

The central question, for me, is how do we be the household of God in this changing world? I think it comes back to that central question – the question of place – *what is our place?*

For example, should the church speak out on economic justice, or leave that to politicians? An editorial that appeared recently in *Time Magazine*, argues the middle class is disappearing. The top 1% in the US took 95% of all the new wealth created in the US since 2009. The top six best-paying jobs in the US pay just \$15.00 per hour. As the editorial writer notes “there are jobs for PhDs and burger flippers but not much in between.”

What do we say when the CEO of a major bank retires after ten years in the top job and 43 years with the bank and his pension is two million a year? In his last year with the bank, the base salary was 1.5 million and stock options brought it to some 11.2 million.

Access to this wealth and power is not our reality.

As well, the world view has changed. There has been the rise of nationalism and populism. Slogans such as “Make America Great Again” have resonated with folks and has tapped into a real anger, at all the change experienced by the average worker.

Canadians too have been affected by this shift in attitude.

Rev John Dorhauer, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ notes, “America wants to be something we didn’t think America ever wanted to be.”

What then is the place of the church? Should the church speak out as did Pope Francis, who wrote to the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, saying, “I ask you to ensure that humanity is served by wealth and not ruled by it.”

Is this the new community – household – we are asked to model? In other words, is it about keeping God at the center, with Jesus as the cornerstone?

One theologian notes “the imagery in this passage highlights the dignity of the community that is built on Christ, the ‘elect and precious cornerstone.’” and “this passage also points out the obligation that follows from being God’s people, ‘declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into light.’”

I return to the question - what then is our place?

Our place is to be the household of God, so that when people walk through our doors they know we are genuinely glad to see them and that “the church as extended family has prevailed over the church as [just] sacred space.”

Ron Klusmeier suggests we as church, need to image our place in new ways. He suggests we have much to learn from gathering places such as coffee shops, where he sees “the congregation assembled every time he enters.”

It is up to us to imagen these new ways, and we can do this by listening to folks and hearing their stories.

This was a focus of King Charles’ Coronation, where the dominant theme was building the new community, that is both inclusive and diverse. It reflected on the common good – to care for all peoples. The liturgy noted that this king comes to serve and not be served. A reminder to all of us – as we build the new community – we too are called to serve and not be served.

“As a result of becoming the people of God, we should be proclaiming or communicating the praises of God who has called us into his marvellous light.” “And we who had not obtained mercy, have now obtained mercy.”

“Now we are God’s people!” Amen.

The Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ

Some ten days before Pentecost, on 18th May, we celebrated the Ascension of Jesus. Below is what Fr. John Wortley wrote for the Pentecost/Trinity Winged Ox in 2019.

Of all the great mysteries of our Lord's life, the Ascension is the most puzzling. In the first place we have only the word of one evangelist for it (the brief account in Mark 16.19 is almost certainly a later addition). Admittedly our informant is Luke, generally the most reliable of the evangelists. He portrays the Ascension twice, once at the end of his Gospel and again at the beginning of Acts. Yet even though both accounts are believed to be by the same hand, there are discrepancies.

In the Gospel Jesus leads the eleven disciples to Bethany, a village on the Mount of Olives not far from Jerusalem. When they get there, he instructs them to remain in Jerusalem until the coming of the Holy Spirit, after which he blesses them. "And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy." (Lk 24)

In Acts Luke describes a meeting (possibly for a meal) at which Jesus commands the disciples to await the coming of the Holy Spirit, "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight" and two men in white appeared to tell the disciples that he will return "in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." (Ac 1.9–10)

The Gospel and Acts appear to describe the same event, but present quite different chronologies; the Gospel implies that the Ascension took place on the same day as the resurrection while, according to Acts, it was forty days afterwards. In this the church (east and west) has followed Acts, which is why the Feast of the Ascension is always on a Thursday (or was until it was recently moved to the nearest Sunday in the west.)

But neither in east or west did the church heed either of Luke's account, for the creeds uniformly state that the Lord "ascended into heaven," whereas the Gospel says "he was carried up into heaven," while Acts has that "he was taken up and a cloud received him out of their sight," rather like Romulus, the founder of Rome is said to have disappeared in a whirlwind during a sudden and violent storm and was believed to have been assumed into heaven by Mars, the god of war, ca. 716 BC.

Romulus was only one of several people that are said to have gone up into (or come down from) heaven. Figures familiar to Jews would have included Enoch, Ezra, Baruch, Levi, and the prophet Elijah. Moses, was deified on entering heaven; and the children of Job, also ascended into heaven following their resurrection from the dead. Non-Jewish readers would have been familiar with the case of the emperor Augustus, whose ascent was witnessed by Senators, the Greek hero Hercules, and others. Christians would have read how Antony the Great witnessed his companion Ammon of Nitria being taken up into heaven. In none of the above cases is anybody said to have ascended (i.e. of his/her own energy,) always to have been "taken up" or assumed into heaven.

Further confusion arises because in some older languages one and the same word does duty to mean both heaven and sky. Nobody today believes that heaven is above our heads, hell below our feet, so we need to re-interpret. Our clue here is a bit later on in the Creed: "whose kingdom will have no end." What happened there on the Mount of Olives was that Jesus stepped out (or was taken out) of time and space and entered his timeless, spaceless, infinite kingdom. On the one hand he became invisible, on the other he became vitally present throughout creation. Or, as the Creed colourfully portrays it, he took his seat at the right hand of God in the glory of God the Father. If we were willing to push that analogy a bit further still, we might say that Ascension is the coronation of the Lord of Glory, which we almost do when we sing the "ascension" psalm: "God is gone with a merry noise and Lord with the sound of the trump. (Ps 47.5)

– The Rev. Dr. John Wortley



What is Pentecost?

While we might think that Pentecost means something to do with penitence, and it is true that St. Peter called the people to repentance, Pentecost means “fiftieth”, in Greek. It is the fiftieth day after Easter. The Jews were also celebrating *Shavuot*, fifty days after the first day of Passover. In Acts 2, we read of all the out-of-town visitors for this celebration of the Passover of the children of Israel.

It is interesting to read in St. Luke’s Gospel that, in spite of the upheaval of the census, the crowds, coming and going, the heavenly choir in the night sky, Jesus’ birth was relatively quiet ... compared to the crowds in Jerusalem at Pentecost.

At the time surrounding the end of Jesus’ earthly ministry, we have the riotous welcome of Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, then the murderous mob of “Good” Friday. After the crucifixion, all was quiet as the disciples grieved and kept a low profile. Jesus came to them suddenly and quietly in the Upper Room, unexpectedly on a beach after a fruitless fishing trip, but when you read the story, there is a feeling of the disciples saying: “What happens next? All our hopes and dreams are lying in bits.” Peter: “I’m going fishing” ... back to something I know?

All is quiet until Luke 24. Jesus appeared to the disciples again and we have the story of the Ascension of Jesus. This a private affair with the disciples – no pre-planning, no meals, no crowds, just the disciples and they ask Jesus: “What are you going to do now?” and by implication, “What are we supposed to do now?”

Jesus says: “It is not for you to know the times or the period that the Father has set by his own authority. BUT, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.”

And he leaves them standing there.

That works for the disciples, because they do not know the latent power which will be stirred, but, if we are thinking about ourselves, do we ask of Jesus: “What are you going to do now?” or rather, “What should we do now?”

What happens next as we look at our parish, our diocese, our Anglican church in Canada and across the World?

And Jesus said to the disciples: “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. Wait and see what you will be able to do then.”

For the disciples, a quiet trip back to Jerusalem, until, boom, we read the story of the Holy Spirit breaking into all this waiting, almost as if to say: “Okay, time for action”, and not just for the disciples, but for everyone who is there in Jerusalem for the celebration of *Shavuot*, the *First Harvest of the Grain*. People from all over Palestine were there and they were amazed, and asked, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

Are we puzzled, frustrated, and ask, “What shall we do, now?”

What is Jesus saying to us?

“You HAVE received the Holy Spirit. No need to wait, time to arise.”

– Sheila Welbergen

- 1 Forth in thy name, O Lord, I go,
my daily labour to pursue;
thee, only thee, resolved to know
in all I think or speak or do.
- 2 The task thy wisdom hath assigned,
O let me cheerfully fulfill;
in all my works thy presence find,
and prove thy good and perfect will.
- 3 Thee may I set at my right hand,
whose eyes mine in-most substance see,
and labour on at thy command,
and offer all my works to thee.
- 4 For thee delightfully employ
what e’er thy bounteous grace hath given;
and run my course with even joy,
and closely walk with thee to heaven.

– Charles Wesley

**“We aren’t human beings
having a spiritual experience.
We are spiritual beings
having a human experience.”**

– Teilhard de Chardin

The only sign Jesus offers

Jesus said, “No sign will be given except the sign of Jonah.” – Matthew 12.39 This strong one-liner of Jesus feels rather amazing and largely unheard. He even says it is an “evil age” that wants anything other than the simple sign of the prophet Jonah. He says it is the “only sign” that he will give.

This is indeed unsatisfying. For it is not a sign at all, but more an anti-sign. It demands that we release ourselves into the belly of darkness before we can know what is essential. It insists that the spiritual journey is more like giving up control than taking control. It might even be saying that others will often throw us overboard, and that we get to the right shore by God’s grace more than right action on our part. It is clearly a very disturbing and unsatisfying sign.

Faith is precisely *no-thing*. It is nothing we can prove in order to be right or used to get anywhere else. If we want something to believe in (which is where we all must start), we had best begin as Christians with clear ground, identity, and boundaries. But that is not yet faith! That is merely securing the foundations for our own personal diving board.

Faith is the leap into the water, now, with the lived experience that there is One who can and will catch us – and lead us where we need to go. Religion, in some sense, is a necessary first half of life phenomenon. Faith is much more possible in the second half of life, not necessarily chronologically but always spiritually. To paraphrase Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855), “Life must be lived forward, but it can only be understood backward.” Jonah knew what God was doing, and how God does it, and how right God is – only after emerging from the belly of the whale. Until he has first endured the journey, the darkness, the spitting up on the right shore – all in spite of his best efforts to avoid these very things – Jonah has no message whatsoever to give. Jonah is indeed a symbol of transformation. Jesus had found the Jonah story inspiring, no doubt, because it described almost perfectly what was happening to him.

(Think of Jesus working his way through all the suggestions the devil makes on how to ‘behave’ in his ministry.)

Much of my earlier work with men and spirituality was teaching them how to trust their time in the belly of the whale, how to stay there without needing to fix, to control, or even to fully understand it, and to wait until

God spit them up on a new shore. It is called “liminal space,” and I believe all in-depth transformation takes place inside of liminal space. To hope too quickly is to hope for the wrong thing. The belly of the whale is the great teaching space, and thus it is no surprise that Jesus said this was the only sign he was going to give (Luke 11.30).

– R. Rohr. 2.4.2023

“God asks only that you get out of God’s way and let God be God in you.”

– Meister Eckhart, sermon on I John 4.9

Letting go

Fr. Richard Rohr describes the spiritual discipline of detachment as the practice of “letting go”.

In the larger-than-life people I have met, I always find one common denominator: in some sense, they have all died before they died – and thus they are larger than death, too! Please think about that. At some point, they were led to the edge of their private resources, and that breakdown, which surely felt like dying, led them into a larger life. They went through a death of their various false selves and came out on the other side knowing that death could no longer hurt them.

They fell into the *Big Love* and the *Big Freedom* – which many call God.

Throughout most of history, the journey through death into life was taught in sacred space and ritual form, which clarified, distilled, and shortened the process. Today, many people don’t learn how to move past their fear of diminishment, even when it stares them down or gently invites them. This lack of preparation for the “pass over,” the absence of training in grief work and letting go, and our failure to entrust ourselves to a bigger life, have contributed to our culture’s spiritual crisis.

All great spirituality is about letting go. Instead, we have made it to be about taking in, attaining, performing, winning, and succeeding. True spirituality echoes the paradox of life itself. It trains us in both detachment and attachment: detachment from the passing so we

can attach to the substantial. But if we do not acquire good training in detachment, we may attach to the wrong things, especially our own self-image and its desire for security.

Each time I learn to let go of what I thought was necessary for my own happiness, I invariably find myself in a larger place, a larger space, a deeper union, a greater joy. I'm sorry I can't prove that to you ahead of time. We only know it after the fact. I used to read every book I could as a young man thinking if I understood good theology, good philosophy, good psychology, I'd know how to live the so-called "perfect life" and it would show me how to open the door in front of me. Now, in the last season of my life, I realize that what's in front of me is still largely darkness – but it doesn't matter anymore. That's because letting go has taught me that I can look back, not forward, back at the past of my life and I can truthfully say, "What have I ever lost by dying? What have I ever lost by losing?" I have fallen upward again and again. By falling I have found. By letting go I have discovered, and I find myself in these later years of my life still surprised that that is true.

– R. Rohr. 4.23.2023

Reflections about the Trinity

"God in three persons: blessed Trinity."

The Christian doctrine of the Trinity (Latin: *Trinitas*, lit. *triad*, from Latin: *trinus* 'threefold') is the central doctrine concerning the nature of God in most Christian churches, which defines one God existing in three co-equal, co-eternal, consubstantial divine persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ), and God the Holy Spirit, three distinct persons (*hypostases*) sharing one essence/substance/nature (*homoousion*) As the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) declared, it is the Father who begets, the Son who is begotten, and the Holy Spirit who proceeds. In this context, one essence/nature defines what God is, while the three persons define who God is. This expresses at once their distinction and their indissoluble unity. Thus, the entire process of creation and grace is viewed as a single shared action of the three divine persons, in which each person manifests the attributes unique to them in the Trinity, thereby proving that everything comes "from the Father," "through the Son," and "in the Holy Spirit." - *Google*

Describing the Trinity is not easy to do. We may try and liken it to the many 'faces' of a human being. "He is a man: a husband, a father, a captain of industry. "She is

a woman: a wife, a mother, she runs her own business." None of those things describe an autonomous person apart from the others: they are one and the same.

Genesis begins: In the beginning God created everything ... OK, we get that ... and without God creating everything ... the earth was without form and void.

St. John's gospel starts: 'In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.' Or is St. John speaking about one who said: "I am the Word, the Truth and the Life?" If Jesus was an agent of creation, why say that the Holy Spirit is the Lord and Giver of Life?

Twice God is quoted as calling Jesus his Son: at Jesus' baptism and at the Transfiguration. So how can they be Father and Son and yet One? Separate but together?

The puzzle continues: Jesus: "...and I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you for ever. ... you will know him because he abides with you, and he will be in you."

So now we have God who created Jesus, his Son, and an Advocate, the Holy Spirit who will live with us /in us.

The fathers of the church thought they could finish all this confusion quite simply in the Apostles' Creed, around 341 CE.

Note: *The Book of Alternative Services (BAS)* has two 'versions': modern Language (p. 188) and the 1962 *Book of Common Prayer (BCP)*: (p.234). We also use a slightly more modern language version ... *Sorry*.

You will find two statements of faith, the two creeds on pages 188 and 189 in the BAS. Read them together and compare.

I think of the Apostles' Creed as the "Working Person's Creed" – sharp, concise, clear statements of facts and that is IT!

The Nicene Creed goes into great lengths to explain WHAT we believe about the relationship of Jesus to God the Father. "...eternally begotten of the Father," (except in his human form). He (Jesus) is "...God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God. ... Through him all things were made." as St. John said: The Apostles' Creed acknowledged Jesus as Son of God and our Lord, then proceeds to give a very detailed statement of his conception, birth, suffering and death, resurrection, ascension, place in Glory and his second coming.

The Nicene Creed starts 'We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, creator of heaven and earth,' ...

and then goes into a very detailed statement of what we believe about Jesus in what we could call his spiritual 'status' as well as a brief acknowledgement of his human life and form.

The Apostles' Creed acknowledges the Holy Spirit in six words: "I believe in the Holy Spirit, ..."

Hold on – six words? That is IT for the Holy Spirit?

Where did the concept we have of the Holy Spirit come from? There is some mention in the Old Testament, but not even close to Jesus' promises of this Holy Spirit dwelling in us as Advocate.

In the Old Testament the words are usually 'Spirit of Holiness' or 'the Spirit of the Lord'. Isaiah 11.2–3, and Isaiah 61.1. But these are more easily understood as meaning the Spirit of the God ... not what Christians mean and think when they say "The Holy Spirit."

The Nicene Creed explains the statements and this is especially noticeable when it comes to the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity.

"We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father.* With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets."

*Naturally there is some argument over this statement: does the Holy Spirit proceed from the Father, only (p. 189), or the Father and the Son? (p. 234). While the BCP says the Holy Spirit 'proceedeth' from the "Father and the Son" (p. 234).

The modern version in the BAS reads: "We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the FATHER ..." period.

Is that important? Well, I guess you could say one way you have a duo of father and son and the other ... with the Holy Spirit, a Trinity.

The communion of saints is missing in one creed while the acknowledgement of one baptism is missing in the other. This one baptism was and still is a sticking point in some denominations. Is the baptism in the name of the Father, and the Son, or in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit? Anglicans go for the trinitarian baptism.

In one creed the work of the Holy Spirit is acknowledged – 'through the prophets' (thereby preceding Pentecost), and not in the other.

The Apostles' Creed acknowledges "I believe in the Holy Spirit", but makes no comment as to his work or function: he is just 'there.'

Does it really matter whether we say that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, or just the Father? Or that some churches Baptize in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit or just the Father and Son?


Well, I will leave those questions for you to ponder – and for you to consider the wording and implications of what is put in and left out of the two creeds ... either of which we confess to at every eucharist ... and a lot of other services, too!

I have used the BAS in the quotes of both versions of the creed.

If you want another explanation/interpretation of the creed, go to the *Book of Common Prayer*, and turn to the Creed of Saint Athanasius - p. 695. Probably written in the fifth century and NOT by Athanasius.

– S. Welbergen, May 2023.


"As long as the sun shines, the grass grows, and waters flow"



A Treaty Medal was given to First Nations Leaders as a symbol of the Treaties that were entered between First Nations and the Crown. It depicted equal status, equal footing, and the handshake of friendship and peace.

Through the Treaties, co-existence and the First Nations way of life would always be respected and honoured "as long as the sun shines, the grass grows and waters flow". Each medal was designed to have the date and Treaty number added at the appropriate time.

Treaty No. 1 was negotiated and entered into in August 1871 at Lower Fort Garry.
Treaty No. 2 was negotiated and concluded in August 1871 at Manitoba House.
Treaty No. 3 was negotiated and entered into in October 1873 at the Northwest Angle of Lake of the Woods.



The Diocese of Rupert's Land is making all efforts to uphold these Treaties and the intent in which they were negotiated.

We acknowledge that we meet and work on Treaty 1, 2, and 3 Lands, the ancestral land of the Anishinaabe, Ininew (Cree), Oji-Cree and Dakota, and the homeland of the Metis Nation.

We are grateful for their stewardship of this land and their hospitality which allows us to live, work and serve God the Creator here.

This plaque was presented to the Parish Church of St. Luke by Bishop Geoffrey Woodcroft. It needs a suitable home in the church.

Thank you, Bishop Geoff!

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name
in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, Holy, Holy, merciful and mighty,
God in three persons,
Blessed Trinity.

– Reginald Heber, 1826

A fountain of fullness

The Franciscan philosopher, theologian, and mystic St. Bonaventure (c. 1217–1274) described the Trinity as a “fountain fullness” of overflowing love.

Picture three buckets on a moving water wheel. We can see these water wheels in rural areas of Europe. They usually have more than three buckets, but each bucket empties out and swings back, inevitably waiting to be filled again. And it always is!

Most of us can't risk letting go or emptying out. We can't risk letting go because we aren't sure we will be refilled. But the three persons of the Trinity empty themselves and pour themselves out in to each other. Each knows they can empty themselves because they will forever be refilled.

To understand this mystery of love fully, we need to “stand under” the flow and participate in it. It's infinite outpouring and infinite infilling without end. It can only be experienced as a flow, as a community, as a relationship, as an inherent connection.

– Rohr, 1.12.2022

“I lived in the open mindedness
of not knowing enough
about anything.
It was beautiful.
How quietly,
and not with any assignment from us,
or even a small hint of understanding,
everything that needs to be done
is done.”

– Mary Oliver, “Luna”

Blessed are those who mourn

Peace activist John Dear asks what Jesus' teaching “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted” might mean for us in times of global injustice.

“Blessed are those who mourn,” Jesus says. Millions of people in our world mourn because their loved ones have been killed by war, starvation, or injustice.

Do we grieve for those who die in war? For those incinerated by nuclear weapons and bombs? For the many thousands who die each day from starvation? Do we allow the sorrow of the world's poor to touch our hearts? Do we look the suffering of the world in the eye ... or do we turn away in denial and thus postpone our own inevitable confrontation with grief?

Jesus promises that, as we mourn the death of our sisters and brothers around the world, God consoles us, and we find a peace – even a joy that we did not know possible.

Divine Anarchy

Jesus came among us preaching a kind of divine anarchy. In the Gospel of John, we hear Jesus say: “The truth shall set you free.” (8.32) In other words, he came to cause some trouble — “good trouble”, as John Lewis, the courageous American Christian and civil rights activist used to say. While Jesus didn't talk too much about political institutions and religious hierarchies, he was, in his own words, “as wise as a serpent and as innocent as a dove” in relation to both.

Jesus knew very well that this “good trouble” can trouble the forces of evil. Along with John Lewis, we could also think of Dan Berrigan, and his brother Philip, both Jesuit priests, active in the era of Vietnam protests. So direct and so public were their actions that Fr. Dan ended up on the FBI's “most wanted” list — the first and only priest ever to be on that list. Once you do a little reading about the life of Thomas Merton, who became an equally stalwart public voice against the Vietnam war, you learn that his sudden and shocking death, at age 53, in Thailand, could have come at the hands of the CIA. The CIA have also been implicated in the shocking and infamous murders of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper, and her 16-year-old daughter in El Salvador in 1989. The Jesuits were a source of hope for the poor of El Salvador. The Gospel of Jesus still frightens the powers that be.

We might also mention the Christian peace activist, Jim Forest, who died peacefully, age 80, January 13th, 2022. Former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams wrote of him: “Jim Forest’s record of exceptional witness and discipleship is a unique record of both activism and deep spiritual discovery. It is a precious testament to a whole age of generous and risky Christian radicalism — and as such it is water in our contemporary wilderness.”

The public execution of Jesus can be properly understood as the result of “good trouble”. The proclamation of the inherent dignity of all humankind in the preaching and healing action of Jesus eventually brought about the collusion between church and state. When I say, “church”, I mean the hierarchy of the faith community to which he belonged. The hierarchy saw, in his espousal of a divine anarchy, a threat to the established order. Rome, the imperial power of the day, occupying Israel at that time, likewise saw Jesus as a threat to the established order.

The divine anarchy of Jesus is rooted in Holy Scripture. The Scriptures of Jesus were the Hebrew Scriptures. These Scriptures, which formed and nurtured what St. Paul came to call “the mind of Christ”, are most often termed by Christians, the “Old Testament”. However, there is nothing “Old” about them!

In the very first verses of our Bible we hear our God, pictured as if in divine assembly: “Let us make humankind in our own image.” It must have been a powerful moment for the young Jesus when he first read, or most likely heard, these words for the first time. Likewise, the Hebrew Scripture: “The Spirit has anointed me to bring good news to poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free ... to proclaim the year of our Lord’s favour.” This is a direct quotation from the prophet Isaiah. Jesus found his footing in his culture and his life’s purpose in his Scriptures.

What Jesus found in his Scriptures, St. Paul later amplified in his understanding of the impact and full meaning of the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus: “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?” (1 Cor. 3.16)

We are to be understood not only as bearers of God’s Image but also of God’s very Spirit! This is the root of what we might call a “divine anarchy”. Each human being on the planet is imbued with a divine dignity. Each human being on the planet is born of, and bears, God’s Holy Spirit. As Jesus intimated to Nicodemus, the puzzled and spiritually hungry Pharisee: “The wind

blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

As we come into faith in the witness of Jesus to the sanctity of all life, we are born into the free-flowing independence of God’s gracious life. It is for the sake of the inherent dignity of our divine origin, image, and purpose, that our radical defenders of the faith witnessed, and often to the point of martyrdom, to our freedom. As Jesus once said: “The Sabbath was made for humankind, not humankind for the Sabbath.” (St. Mark 2.27) In other words, our dignity, purpose, and destiny do not lie in the institutions to which we belong; if our institutions bear any dignity, purpose or sense of destiny at all, it is surely original in the persons these institutions have been called to serve. The charisms of Spirit have brought into being a joyous and divine anarchy — ultimately without political institutions or hierarchy.

Would we call that the new heaven and the new earth?

The Venerable Max Woolaver is the Rector of St. Andrew’s, Grimsby.

- ACC website - April 26 2023
- Diocese of Niagara, by Max Woolaver
- March 14, 2023. *Topics*: April 2023

Was Jesus liberal or conservative? Moving beyond old-fashioned binaries

At the end of the *Chronicles of Narnia*, C.S. Lewis says, “You have no idea how good an old joke sounds when you take it out again after a rest of five or six hundred years.”

Well, it probably hasn’t been quite that long, but I still like the one that says, “the world divides into two kinds of people: Those who divide the world into two kinds of people, and those who don’t.”

Right now, the Christian world generally divides itself into two groups. If you doubt me, try explaining the various controversies that have roiled the church in recent years without using the terms “left” and “right” or “conservative” and “liberal”. It’s difficult, isn’t it? Part of the reason we get stuck is that we insist on using this divisive kind of language. Do we really need it?

The terms “left” and “right” in this sense originated in the French parliament in 1791, after the French revolution, when those in the National Assembly who supported the King sat on the right side of the king,

and those who supported the revolution sat on the left. It was that simple. Two hundred years is not a long time for Christians who celebrate events from more than two millennia ago. For Christians, this is relatively new terminology. It is worth noting that the language comes from a secular source — not that there is necessarily anything wrong with that — but we might well be cautious before adopting language into Christian vocabulary that might distort our spiritual vision.

Both/and, not either/or

So here's my thesis: in a sense, Christians ought to be both conservative and liberal. Does that sound strange? But think about it. To be conservative is to conserve what is good from the past. Every Sunday, Christians around the world express their profound conservatism by enacting an ancient rite — the Eucharist. This is one of those times when we agree that saying “we've always done it this way” is a good thing. Equally, though, all Christians are liberal, since liberal at its heart means free, generous, fully alive. The apostle Paul — who some see as deeply conservative — says, “For freedom Christ has set us free: stand firm then, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.” *Them's fighting words!*

Of course, there are distinctively Christian constraints on both our conservatism and our liberalism. They are not blanket approvals for any kind of behaviour or belief. We are not conservative to the extent that we want to reintroduce temple sacrifices. Neither are we liberal to the extent that we think anything is permissible. There are things worth conserving, and limits worth observing.

As Christians, we take our cues on both fronts from Jesus. So, we must ask, was he conservative or liberal? As you may have noticed, Jesus often has an annoying habit of not giving a direct answer to a direct question. If we insist on applying our simplistic categories, we would have to say he was a peculiar mixture of the two.

On the one hand, his life was guided by the Jewish scriptures: “the Son of Man must go as it is written;” “this scripture must be fulfilled in me;” and so on. In other words, he understood himself and his mission to be shaped by his scriptures. And he lambasted the Sadducees, the liberals of his day. (They didn't believe in the resurrection, remember.) Isn't that pretty much what we would call fundamentalism? So he's conservative, right?

On the other, he interpreted Jewish law radically — to the horror of the religious leaders: “The Sabbath was

made for humankind, and not humankind for the Sabbath.” He had little tolerance for the traditions of the Pharisees, the conservatives of his day, who majored on the minors of religion: “You tithe mint, dill, and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith.” So he must be liberal, surely?

We might conclude from such references that Jesus was both “liberal” and “conservative”, but that's too simple. In fact, it just goes to show how unhelpful these terms are. In Jesus, those two things which we like to separate are so closely woven together that we miss the point if we try to pull them apart. You have probably heard the ways we do this: “Of course, in some ways Jesus was a man of his time, which is unfortunate but inevitable—but in the ways that really matter he was our contemporary.” What is confusing is that his radicalism on social issues grew directly out of his conservative view of the scriptures! He really doesn't fit those tired old left-right categories, and why should he? What God has joined together, let no-one put asunder.

Bigger fish to fry

So can we categorize him? It's a dangerous thing to try, but I think we can safely say that Jesus marched to a different drummer he called “the kingdom of heaven”. Significantly enough, it's an idea which harks back to creation and the Creator's desire for a healthy world, and forward to the end when that same Creator makes all things new. I suppose we could summarize that as looking back (like a conservative) and looking forward (like a liberal). But there I go again, falling into the old trap of separating things that really shouldn't be separated. Jesus stubbornly demands to be considered on his own terms, not ours.

There are legitimate distinctions to be made within Christian faith, and Jesus clearly made some. But he tends to call them by more challenging names than left and right. He invites us, for example, to faith rather than mistrust, obedience rather than disobedience, fidelity rather than independence. In trying to follow him, our choices may sometimes seem to the outsider to be conservative and at other time liberal. If that's confusing for people, so be it.

So should I be a conservative liberal, or a liberal conservative? A liberative or a conserberal? But maybe that's not the point. These days, I come across younger church leaders who describe themselves as “post-liberal” and “post-conservative”. Apparently, young

people have figured out that the old language doesn't help us very much, particularly if we want to be faithful followers of Jesus. The rest of us could learn something from them.



John Bowen is Professor Emeritus of Evangelism at Wycliffe College in Toronto, where he was also the Director of the Institute of Evangelism. Before that, he worked as campus evangelist for Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. For over thirty years, John has been a popular speaker, teacher, and preacher, on university campuses, in churches and in classrooms, and at conferences, across Canada and the USA. His most recent book is The Unfolding Gospel: How the Good News Makes Sense of Discipleship, Church, Mission, and Everything Else (Fortress 2021)

– John Bowen, March 14, 2023
– Topics: April 2023

“Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks.”

– Phillips Brooks

Consider this...

On this day after the coronation, it is tempting to talk about power. In particular, political power. Not in the sense of partisan politics but power that is given to any government, or is taken by any government. But I didn't think I have enough understanding to comment meaningfully on that.

Then the readings for today challenged me to recognize that each of them talk about power. Proverbs puts forth the argument that truth has great power. When one has learning and prudence then truth and wisdom can impart knowledge and discretion. These people will have insight and, by following the ways of the Lord, good advice and strength. To me this suggests that by

using this discernment, we ask good questions and we can elect governments who will govern rightly for the good of all.

Psalm 121 is such a solace, a giver of inner strength. The Lord is there with us always. He is with us as we make decisions and with us if they are poor ones, as much as when they are right ones.

Peter writes about the strength of faith in Christ. He is full of joy that the people who have not seen Christ are willing to suffer for him and to hold onto their faith in him even through trials. We are all to be strengthened through grace, sent to us by the Holy Spirit.

And Luke in the Gospel reminds us not to worry about who is greatest among us but to see how we can serve. It is more important that we serve genuinely and follow the example set by Christ, than we sit at the table.

Power then needs to be carefully used. It needs wisdom and insight to be used well. It needs knowledge and intelligence to choose those to be in power. And we do not need to fuss about who is the greatest but more about who serves well and most like Christ.

The Israelites begged for a king. Finally, God granted that they should have a king. Their kings all had clay feet, and indeed most of the ones we know about, crowned or uncrowned, also have clay feet.

So in this year of elections and by-elections, try to choose wisely. Listen carefully to the platforms and try to see through the rhetoric. And, as for our new king, we pray, that he may rule wisely and with insight. In the name of the Trinity, Amen.

– Homily: The Rev. Deacon Susan Roe-Finlay
– 5.9.2023

**“If Knowledge is Power,
Knowing What
You Don't Know
is Wisdom.**

– Thomas OOping

Tuesday Morning Hospitality

Our parish has decided to put the efforts and resources formerly used by Tuesday Morning Hospitality towards the Holy Trinity ministry called “The Lunchroom”. We no longer have the stamina to do this work alone, and they too are struggling to maintain their program. It is a fellow Anglican effort, and provides services to many of the same folk as we did prior to the pandemic. Things will be gathered and taken to Holy Trinity weekly so please leave your donations downstairs at St. Luke’s church. The parish office hours are Monday–Thursday, 9:00am to 12:00 noon. Ring the bell on the intercom for access.

From Holy Trinity’s website:

Every Tuesday beginning at 11:00 am, we welcome everyone who wants a hot, nutritious meal. There are no strings or conditions attached. Just come and eat. We serve until we’re out of food for the day.

For many of the folks who join us for lunch, this is one of the only sure meals they’ll get in a week. It’s also one of few food security programs in Winnipeg’s downtown that serves ready-to-eat meals. Food insecurity and poverty come in many forms and we meet folks every week who don’t have anywhere to cook for themselves, so finding prepared food is part of their daily routine.

The Lunchroom is looking for donations of various items for soup including: carrots (pre-chopped and cooked is even better), canned tomatoes, frozen vegetables, lentils and beans (either canned or dry which have been prepared), meat such as ground beef or wieners, rice, pasta.

We can always use mittens, hats, scarves, socks, new underwear as well as hygiene supplies.

Holy Trinity is located at 256 Smith Street.

For more information or to co-ordinate donations, please contact Karen Bender [benderender3@gmail.com] or The Rev. Deacon Susan-Roe Finlay [stluke@shaw.ca].

St. Luke’s Haiti ministry

Since we learned of the crisis in Haiti and the difficulties God’s Littlest Angels was having we asked they be put on the prayer list for St. Luke’s. Trey Sarnes, the Executive Director has since located a new site for the orphanage which would be safe for staff and children. It needed to be free from the gangs which had terrorized the community.

The team at Haiti can be viewed at this site [<https://www.glahaiti.org/directors-and-leadership/>]

For more information on God’s Littlest Angels, please visit their site: [<https://www.glahaiti.org/>].

For the Canadian branch please visit. [<https://www.glacanada.ca/>]

In July we plan to send a donation from St. Luke’s to GLA Canada, to be sent onto Rev. Trey Sarnes at GLA Haiti. The donation will be towards educational programs for children in the orphanage and medical supplies as needed.

A number of emails have been sent to Trey but we no longer receive replies. I was warned months ago that Trey would not reply as he did not want to risk any further danger to their community.

– Colin and Elizabeth Briggs



Happy Birthday
to
Betty De Jong
who is celebrating her
103rd birthday!

Parish Hall kitchen update

These photos were taken very recently. In early May, the two residential stoves and the dishwasher were ordered. Once the dishwasher is installed, the other items that were ordered can be brought in and placed. Many items have not yet arrived. We are getting there!



The next **Winged Ox**
will be the
Harvest/Patronal edition.
Deadline: **Sunday 15th October**

The Winged Ox

Editor: Sheila Welbergen stwelbergen@shaw.ca

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The Parish Church
of St. Luke

