



the
GATHERING
newsletter of the Church of the Redeemer

lent 2018





At the end of January our Incumbent Priest, David Giffen, went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He has shared images and some of his experiences through his Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts and from there on the parish Facebook page and website. It has been a powerful, moving time for him to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. The places that were touchstones of faith through the stories in scripture, became even more tangible by presence. In David's words and pictures, here is a touch of what this time of study and reflection has meant for him. No doubt the community that gathers at Redeemer will be enriched by the ways that David has been shaped by this time.



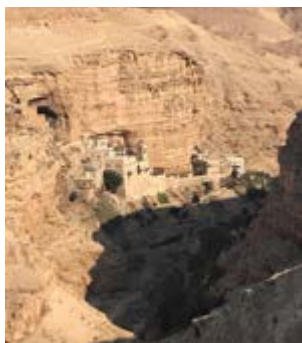
In the Judean hill-country the Lukan meeting place between Mary and Elizabeth and the birthplace of John the Baptist was made real. It is a moment and space in time where the Old and New Testament's collide and the child in Elizabeth's womb leapt with joy.

It would be impossible for me to reflect on my trip to Bethlehem without saying something about the experience of travelling through the check-points, past "the wall", and into the Palestinian territories. Being in the vicinity of the very space in time where the Word was made flesh was breath-taking in ways I cannot even describe, but seeing the circumstance by which so many are forced to suffer—while we made our way in and our way out—made me want to weep.

I cannot be here and pray here and find renewal here without really seeing what is happening here—not just in the history books, but in the here and now.

I am praying tonight for the liberation of all who suffer oppression, for freedom for all who find themselves captive, and for eyes to see ourselves for who we really are, and not just the sentimental characters we'd like to be.





The waters of life in the Jordan River. Muddy, messy, and difficult to clean off. May God leave a mark on us all.

The Judean wilderness: "The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing." – Isaiah 35:1

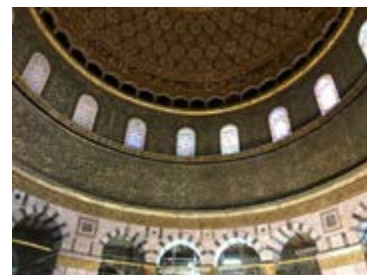
Alongside a small group of Christian pilgrims, I was given the honour of being one of very few non-Muslims to spend time inside the Dome of the Rock, Islam's third most holy site, atop the old Temple Mount. It was humbling to take off my shoes and step on the ground considered so holy by so many different people of faith. Then, from the Al-Aqsa Mosque we moved from the platform to the exterior ruins, where for centuries Jewish people have grieved, wailed, and offered prayers to God at the Western Wall. As I put on my kippah, and placed my hand upon the wall where so many have before me, I felt the deep brokenness of a conflict I am only beginning to understand. The site of both the first and second Temple, where King David's son once built, and where exiles would one-day return; the place where Jesus entered to shouts of Hosanna, and stood before the judgement of the Sanhedrin.

The air of history is palpable in this place, but so are the deep divisions, the tribal lines, and the longings for claim. As

I prayed on the southern steps of the old Temple, looking at the overlain brick that now blocks the entrance arches (a place where Jesus, his disciples and St Paul surely walked), I was overcome by the reality and the promise of the incarnation of God. No temple could contain Her; no rock or stones would ever be enough. For Jesus himself was the Holy of Holies—the suffering Messiah that so many long to touch.

I am humbled to have placed my stocking feet on holy ground, and to have touched the tear-stricken rocks of long-suffering prayer, but the Temple I seek was with me all along on this journey; the rock of my salvation sought me out years before I began any pilgrimage. Jesus is the Temple and the Rock we are looking for—destroyed and built back up. He will not be claimed, or owned, or reside in any one house. And instead of calling us to stand on holy ground, he fills us with the Holy Spirit, and makes the ground we already stand upon holy. A long way to come to find out I had already laid my eyes upon the temple of God, but so incredibly grateful to have found the destination upon the journey I've taken.

"I was glad when they said to me, 'let us go to the house of the Lord!' Our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem."—Psalm 122:1-2





I didn't know what to expect at the Sea of Galilee. The very center of Jesus' ministry where disciples were called and miracles were performed. I hoped I didn't have a romanticized notion in my head, because so many of these stories have shaped me in such profound ways over the years. None more than the resurrection story from the Gospel of John from which we named a community in my last church, at the Water's Edge. Stepping into the water I could feel Peter's overwhelming desire to get to Jesus from the fishing boat, desperately wanting him to know that he loved him and was in repentance of his denial. I was grateful for my sunglasses and distance from the rest of the group as—for the first time here—there were tears streaming down my face. My fractured ankle made it difficult to move quickly in the water, as Peter did, yet I wanted to take more steps; wanting to go further and wade deeper towards the place where Peter professed his love and committed to feed Jesus' sheep. I have always identified with Peter and the infinite ways he continually gets it wrong, but also because he wanted so desperately to know Jesus; to be close to him and to understand. I found my Lord here, in the water, and in the history, and in my own desire to repent and return to him again and again. Alongside fishermen and tax collectors, zealots and prostitutes alike, I recognized myself in the story here, and he found me at the waters' edge.

David walked the Way of the Cross. Marking each station in ways never before experienced he writes,

But then there was the fourth station, where Jesus meets his mother. The first street corner where the hustle and bustle of the city began to close in. The reading of the story and the prayers offered by the group were interrupted by trucks passing, and shopkeepers getting ready for their

day. I noticed myself getting quieter and quieter, as it dawned on me that this was no private moment between a grieving mother and her dying child.

As they prepared to climb the stairs to continue along the Way, one of the group who had injured herself early in the trip held onto David for support as they moved upward. David continues,

One member of our group carried a large wooden cross between each station and through the streets, passing it from one to another. I didn't think much about it because my focus wasn't there, until my companion reached out and took the cross in her arms as well. With one arm she carried it, this heavy rugged instrument of both destruction and salvation, and with the other arm she held on to me. I was terrified she'd trip or stumble. I was sure that I was going to lose my grip. But we took each step, one at a time, me holding on to her, and her holding on to me.

I have people in my life that I struggle deeply to carry, and those who I know struggle to carry me. There are relationships I've prayed for in this city and back at home, wanting desperately for God to intervene. And there I was—with almost a complete stranger—being formed by God's cruciform way. Trusting, and leaning on, and giving of self—being ministered to by another disciple struggling on the Way.

The Gospel of John tells us that while hanging upon the rugged Cross, Jesus looked at his beloved disciple, and looked at his mother below, and gave them into each other's care.

The Way of the Cross is our way of life. Here in Jerusalem, or anywhere.

In the coming days of Lent and Holy Week how might we,



pilgrims in our own way and on our own journey, accept the invitation to observe a Holy Lent? How will we meditate on the word and seek Jesus? How will we walk the road from Palm branches to cross to tomb? In the days that follow, how will we run toward Jesus to embrace his presence in our lives anew? ✝

Blessed are the Peacemakers

PART 2

*Paul Pynkoski continues his series of articles
on peace and peacemaking.*

In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus told his disciples to put down their swords. Christian converts in the early centuries refused to take up arms, choosing instead to live into a new reality of loving community.

Since Constantine, however, Christians have been more likely to wage war than make peace.

The shift from Christian refusal of military service to the blessing of bombs is a story too complex to retell here. The pressing issue is whether we can, in the 21st century, continue to turn our backs on the ancient Christian tradition of non-violence.

If we believe we are called to work towards the Kingdom of God, we cannot. Some Christians have carefully constructed theologies of peace and developed a strong spiritual praxis. Let's look briefly at the witness of two twentieth century figures:

Martin Luther King Jr., in his 1967 Massey Lectures, described how he realized war influenced the issues of race and poverty:

"It seems as if there was a real promise of hope for the poor, both black and white, through the Poverty Program... Then came Viet Nam and I watched the program broken and eviscerated as if it were some idle plaything of a society gone mad on war...I was increasingly compelled to see the war...

as an enemy of the poor and attack it as such." King also saw clearly the contradiction of a war effort that was drafting black men to fight for liberties abroad that they did not enjoy at home. He saw his call to Christian ministry and beloved community as a call to "give a voice to the voiceless," not only in the USA, but throughout the world, including those we "call enemy."

Can we see a similar link between war and the current refugee crisis?

Thomas Merton, the Trappist monk, saw nuclear war as the greatest existing threat to humanity. His psychological analysis was that fear—our fear of others and our fear of what is in ourselves—was at the root of war. Linguistically, he called us to be wary of advertising, mass media, and propaganda, where language becomes "at once totally trivial and totally definitive," subverting meaning and making discussion impossible. He quotes an American general who commented on shelling a Viet Nam village, "It became necessary to destroy the town in order to save it." Merton insisted "our Christian obligation" demands that we "look at the problem of nuclear war from the viewpoint of humanity and of God made man, from the viewpoint of the Mystical Body of Christ and not merely from abstract formulas. Here above all we need a reasoning that is informed with compassion..."

War and the nuclear threat are compelling issues, but we feel often inadequate to influence what is happening on the political scene, and voiceless as individuals. This needs to change. As a first step, Redeemer will be co-sponsoring a Peace Conference late in April that will assist in providing us with the background and spiritual tools we need to find our voices and strengthen our activism. ✝

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Saying Farewell to Megan

On Sunday, January 14, it was announced that Bishop Kevin Robertson has appointed our associate priest, The Rev'd Megan Jull, as priest-in-charge at St Augustine of Canterbury, Leaside. Megan began her time with us as an assistant curate in November 2015 with a particular focus on supporting the growing faith of children and youth and their families. She was appointed associate priest in 2016.

With her guidance, we began to include the children of the community in the liturgy in more intentional ways that were playful and deeply moving. The children helped to break open the word through interactive sermons and guided the adults of the parish to experience the Eucharistic prayer with our whole being.

Megan immersed herself in the service trips of the youth group that saw them travel to Yukon and welcome their friends from Mayo, Yukon to Toronto. Here, too, her encouragement and support helped our young people find their way to deeper understanding of how to be faithful servants of Jesus.

We know well, the gifts of pastoral care, preaching and presiding that Megan offers to the Church and how blessed the people of St Augustine's are to have her as their priest. Megan's last Sunday with us is February 11. Megan, Chris and their children will join us for the pancake dinner on Shrove Tuesday and we will celebrate her ministry with us and wish them God's blessing on this wonderful new ministry that Megan is about to begin. ✝



The Path of Reconciliation: A Lenten Journey

Benjamin Gillard

As we enter into the season of Lent on Ash Wednesday, February 14, and prepare for Holy Week and the resurrection of Christ, we begin with quiet reflection. We can start by reflecting on our own experiences of brokenness, sorrow, and pain. We may also reflect on the wounds experienced more widely in our society and world, and we name these wounds. Taking stock of these things which cause grief is an important part in the journey through Lent as we look with hope and expectation towards Easter.

Of all the areas of ministry I have explored in my theological fieldwork, children's ministry has been the most challenging and transformative. Engaging with children on questions of faith has compelled me to think more conscientiously about my own understanding of Christian discipleship, and what it means to be in right relationship with others. There's no hiding behind sophisticated theological or rhetorical arguments, and children quickly figure out if something doesn't make sense or is unjust.

Many of the members of this parish have been involved with the Indigenous Solidarity Working Group and have been active champions for engaging in truth and reconciliation. Lent affords us a time in the liturgical year when we can reflect on our history as an institutional church and our

complicity with residential schools. Lent invites us to imagine how we might respond, not only as an institutional church, but as individual Christians. What does it mean for each of us to listen rightly and diligently seek the truth? How do we enter into right relationship with neighbors who have been wounded?

On Ash Wednesday, I will be spending the day at the Cathedral Church of St James with children from across the Diocese (and hopefully many from Redeemer!) and we will be exploring these questions together. Lent is a season in which we can start to teach children about Canada's wounded relationship with our indigenous brothers and sisters and invite them to consider how each of us is called labour for justice and embody God's reconciling love. As excited as I am to see months of planning come to fruition, I also feel humbled by the sacredness of the stories we will be sharing and the path of reconciliation on which we will be journeying together.

I am incredibly grateful for the wisdom and insights offered by many members of Redeemer, including the members of my learning support group: Grant Jahnke, Margo Fairburn, and Marjorie Wrightson. I have also been fortunate to work with a team at the Cathedral, which includes indigenous leaders, who are committed to transforming the church into a space that welcomes children and fosters in them a love of faith and a desire for justice. And finally, I have been incredibly blessed to have Megan Jull as my supervisor throughout my time in ministry at Redeemer. She has been an amazing source of guidance and mentorship, for both of which I will always be thankful. ✝

The **Mardi Gras** fun continues at our annual pancake dinner on **Tuesday, February 13** from 5:30 to 8 PM.

New Orleans-style jazz with *The Delphine Street Stompers* • **Children's entertainment** • **Pancakes and dessert**

The cost is \$5/person or \$10/family.

Transformation in Baptism

Karen Visser

In the space of a few minutes last Sunday, January 14, Father David changed my life. He baptized and blessed me on the Feast of the Baptism of Christ—and I experienced something completely unexpected, an altered state.

It has a name in Sanskrit—Samadhi. I doubt I'll ever get to this state again; it just happened when Father David began to pour the water over my head.

As a child, I was never baptized. My parents were a young couple working and studying in New York City. They had me, left their cozy Upper West Side brownstone for Yale and, as academics, saw no purpose in baptism.

For the past twenty years I've been studying meditation and Buddhist philosophy with two old Tibetan Lamas. They were born in Old Tibet in the 1930's before the Communist invasion. Both were abbots of monasteries, very learned, spiritual men. When they were young they had been students of the old teachers who lived the mountains of Kham in Eastern Tibet. These are the meditation masters, some teaching in the monasteries, some living for years in caves in the wild, in the ancient tradition of Tibetan yogis. Maybe like John the Baptist.

The goal of Tibetan Buddhist meditation is a state in which information coming in through the five senses doesn't disturb the mind. The mind is balanced in a state of complete calm and stillness. In theory, a Tibetan Lama could have a gun fired behind him and not really hear it. It's rough English



But it happened on Sunday. I leaned over the font, looked into the bright water and heard Father David say "I baptize you in the name of the Father..."

translation is Meditative Absorption (Samadhi) or Calm Abiding (Samatha). Samadhi and Samatha have been described to me over and over again, in excruciating detail, for years. I'll never attain it in meditation; I'd need to be in a cave in Tibet.

But it happened on Sunday. I leaned over the font, looked into the bright water and heard Father David say "I baptize you in the name of the Father..." then winter snow descended, there was a complete hush. I didn't hear anything. I didn't feel the water. I was vaguely aware of standing up, I felt some oil run into my eye, but I didn't feel it. I was held, suspended, in utter peace. I didn't hear the anointing prayer or the prayer

Father David spoke over me. I couldn't see him. It wasn't until he released the lit taper he handed me, saying "Receive the light of Christ." that he came into focus and I heard people around me, the choir singing. But as long as Father David was doing the blessing I was suspended between... I don't know. Heaven and Earth?

I haven't experienced anything like this before. Truthfully, I find mediation arduous. I do it because I want to learn something, although I never seem to get where I want to go. But in a single invocation—I was there.

A very singular thing. I can't explain it. The Holy Spirit. True power. ✝



"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant..."

Peter Bennett


In Roshni Jayawardena's farewell sermon, she emphasized the nature of Simeon and Anna's faithfulness, patience and watchfulness. My mind was fixed on the words of the *Nunc Dimittis*. "Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word." Both Simeon and Anna were old and faithful servants. Despite their age, they still had a role to play in the drama. They proclaimed what they saw, but more importantly, laid out a vision of future hope that did not include themselves. They saw in Jesus, the Messiah they had awaited.

Members of the Septimus Jones Society are those who are seized of a vision for the future of ministry at the corner. We have no idea when their gift will be received, and they have no idea what the nature of ministry will be, but we are united in a common vision of God's call to us. Here are some stories of the Annas and Simeons of this parish.

Jim and Diane are long-time members of the parish. Both have given gifts of time and talent over the years, and their gifts of treasure are consistent, even during work absences. Both Jim and Diane had been supported by the parish through the illness and death of aged parents. They were grateful for the resurrection story of the parish, for the liturgical richness, the intellectual rigour of adult learning, and the positive impact of the Redeemer drop-in program. After meeting with their planner, they decided the best way they could show their commitment to the long-term vision was the purchase of life insurance policies, with Redeemer as owner and beneficiary. Each year, they receive a tax receipt

for the premiums and when each dies, Redeemer will receive an unconditional gift of the death benefit.

Henry has been coming to Redeemer for years. He comes from a 'high church' background, but he's at a stage in his life where he relishes the simplicity of the evening services. Henry indicated his wish to leave Redeemer a substantial gift from his estate. However, he did not have a will. He asked if we could find someone in the parish who could prepare his will for him, with the parish paying the cost. After consulting experts in charity law, we had to explain that legally, we could not be a party to such an arrangement. We gave him the names of three lawyers. Henry eventually settled on one, and the draft was completed. He had to decide if the gift should be made in the will or by way of beneficiary designation of his RRSP/RRIFs. The lawyer advised him to use the beneficiary designation. As we worked through the conversations we realized we needed to provide him with an Endowment Agreement. Our lawyer drafted an agreement that reflected Henry's wishes, but also gave the parish long term flexibility to access the capital for ministry or capital purposes, should the need arise. Henry can enjoy the travel he likes to do, secure in the knowledge that should the unforeseen happen, his wish to remember Redeemer will be realized.

The *Nunc Dimittis* continues with the words, "...For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples..." There's nothing more visionary than being confident in God's grace and remembering God's goodness by making a planned gift. Anna had been faithfully waiting in the temple. Simeon was drawn that day by a vision. Whatever your circumstance, however you have encountered the risen Christ, be mindful. Be thankful. Join the Septimus Jones Society. 

Small Group Ministry

Jeff Vidt

Beginning a little over three months ago, a small collection of people from all walks of life, young and not-so-young, professionals, parents, grandparents, married and not, have met in the basement of the church intentionally to be present with one another and foster community. It was the beginning of an experiment for our church community in starting a small groups ministry. Small groups are not new to Redeemer; whether they be in the form of bible studies, Summer Readers, Learning @ Redeemer, the Indigenous Solidarity Working Group, or many others. In fact, I am told

there are some groups that have been meeting for years! But this was a step for the church in being purposeful about forming our community and connecting anyone who may come to Redeemer, whether they be newcomers or regular attenders, seeking a loving and supportive community that can offer guidance, teaching, compassion, and fellowship in Christ.

Since we've begun, this particular group has chosen their format, topic, and style of how the group functions. In the first meeting we spent time introducing ourselves to each other, and shared what we hope to get out of the small group. We made a covenant with each other, which consisted of items we felt was important to each member: maintaining confidentiality of what's discussed, focused

on caring and supporting each other, and respect for each member of the group. As we delved further into what the small group would look like, each person contributed to its formation. One member offered their materials on evening prayers. One offered their desire to dive deeper into the scriptures. One offered their hopes that this would be a safe place to be vulnerable and reflect on their week. From these conversations, the structure of our small group was formed.

Our group chose a three-part structure consisting of 1) a check-in time, 2) discussion of the sermon / scriptures from the previous week, and 3) ending with an evening prayer developed and graciously provided by Peter Dale. From just a few people gathering from many walks of life,

we have formed a small group that is intentionally pursuing to increase the sense of compassionate community here at the Church of the Redeemer.

Our hope is that soon we will be ready to expand the small groups ministry beyond this pilot phase. We are seeking brave persons to volunteer as hosts and facilitators for small groups in the future. Training will be available for those seeking to learn how to facilitate a small group. The plan is for each group to form its own goals and structure, with support from the small group ministry committee.

If you're interested in joining a small group or perhaps starting and leading your own, please send an email to either Jeff Vidt at bjeffreyvidt@gmail.com or Carol Scovil at carol.scovil@gmail.com



Rock Eucharist featuring the music of Carole King





Celebrating Canadiana 150 on Foot

Francis Pillman

A gentle drizzle was falling as I made my way along the eight-mile highway from Cape Spear to St John's, Newfoundland. The evening of August 27 marked the start of my hike of 150 miles in honour of Canada's 150 years of Confederation and Cape Spear, the most easterly point in Canada, was the logical place to begin.

The next morning, I reassembled my backpack that included a change of clothes, sleeping bag, tent, rain equipment and an ample supply of food and water, about 50 pounds in total. Heaving this bag onto my back, I set foot on the path where mighty trains once rumbled over shiny narrow-gauge rails. What remains is a narrow road officially called the Newfoundland T'Railway and affectionately referred to as "the old railway bed."

As I progressed along the road, I became a target of curiosity since no one else was packed fully for a long journey. Most were locals out for daily exercise, walking their dog, pushing a baby's stroller, or riding their bikes. Many asked me about where I was going. When I told them I was planning on walking 150 miles, some offered congratulatory approval while others remarked 'better you than me!' or 'you're going to Gander at a snail's pace.' I received lots of valuable advice on what to expect in Newfoundland including lots of moose, bears and coyotes.

Such comments prompted me to reflect. Why am I willing to leave the comforts of home, and go eagerly off to a situation that is labour intensive, requires tedious preparation and has unknown risks such as whims of weather and angry animals?

Along with patriotic fervour, there is the curiosity factor—exploring new historical, geographical and biological dimensions. The test of one's physical capability is challenged by doing marathons. Especially important is the spiritual incentive inspired by nature. Before I leave on such escapades, I re-learn many spiritual songs such as "Till the Storm Passes By," and "Church in the Wildwood" to sing for personal comfort or to scare away large wild animals. At a snail's pace, I have time to appreciate the beauty and complexity of forests, rock formations and water bodies, while reflecting on God's awesome creations.

Newfoundland hospitality is outstanding. Three times I was offered meals and overnight shelter at strangers' homes. Twice I was rescued from a heavy rain; the other was a couple who were veteran hikers and bikers. At Avondale Station Museum, I was invited to bed down in an old railway wagon. During the long distance to Whitbourne, I encountered high temperatures in the 30's and lingering sieges of rain. The road had already become great stretches of deep, giant mud puddles. At one point I was trapped in my tent for three days and nights while rain drummed down continuously. I had sufficient food but my drinking water was low, so I caught rainwater in the wrinkles of large plastic bags laid outside. Lying in my sleeping bag gave me a long rest but it also made me impatient. Eventually I took advantage of a lull in the weather to pack up and leave. By this time the puddles covered the entire road so I had to gingerly skirt around the edges with support from bushes and branches.

After three days in Whitbourne, I hiked to Placentia Junction. With my road count in mid-September only 68 miles, I decided to shift my travel venue to Prince Edward

Island. After sailing from Argentinia to North Sydney, and several bus connections later, I arrived in the province of my birth where I resumed my walk on the first day of autumn.

The hike through PEI followed roughly the contour of the cradle from tip-to-tip. As I strode along the tree-lined railway bed called “Confederation Trail,” I recognized many place names from my early grades in a rural school. As part of geography, we had to memorize in order the names of the more than 100 railway stations in the province. Although some of the old stations are preserved, most are long gone. Memorial arches and plaques reflect the historical significance of the railway’s role in those communities. On the side of the road, glass-covered displays describe the local geography, history and wildlife.

The autumn weather was getting cooler and windy as falling leaves began to decorate the road. Large flocks of Canada geese were flying overhead. Potato harvesting was obviously in full swing. Although the rail bed is built high above streams in western PEI, I did risk it once to go down over ragged rocks to get a necessary resupply of water. In O’Leary, I barely avoided a powerful rainstorm when a tourist place already closed for the season, graciously reopened for two nights. Because of this stopover, I was

able to visit the famous Potato Museum. A few nights later the value of my sleeping bag—rated for -9C —was proven when the temperature fell to -6C and I still felt comfortable camping.

The trip through PEI was marred by the passing of my brother, James, in Summerside. Nearby, on the same day I reached the promised 150 miles. While waiting for the celebration of life for James, I prepared the eulogy I was to read doing eight to 12 mile sections of hiking that my niece and cousin shuttled me to the start of each day.

Despite the possibility of miserable weather, I decided to complete the trail in eastern PEI. Fortunately, there was a wide window of nine rainless days; my niece in the east shuttled me between her home and my hiking section each day. I finished in Souris on October 26, having done 192 miles in PEI. Added to the 68 miles in Newfoundland, I had hiked 260 miles. Before I started, I had pledge one dollar to Sick Kids Foundation in Toronto for each mile walked. With my pledged amount and pledges that some members of Redeemer made on my behalf over \$1000 was donated for this worthy cause. For this I express my heartfelt gratitude. What is the next step? Consider the expression: *A journey of 1000 miles begins with a single step.* ✚





Advent and Christmas at Redeemer

We waited in the stillness. We watched as the light from the Advent candles grew each week. We sang hymns and carols familiar and new. We listened as the story of Jesus – coming into the world as a tiny baby, coming into our lives anew – was told through drama and sermon. Bread was broken and wine was poured, blessed and shared. This was Advent and Christmas at Redeemer









Epiphany at Redeemer



LENT events

Meeting Jesus in the Gospel of John

Early this year, Archbishop Colin Johnson invited all parishes in the diocese to join him in a Lenten study and daily prayer using the resource *Meeting Jesus in the Gospel of John*. This resource is put together by the Society of St John the Evangelist and the Centre for the Ministry of Teaching of the Virginia Theological Seminary. It includes a daily video sent by email, a prayer journal, and a study guide for those who want to meet in small groups.

For our parish discipline of prayer this Lent, we will use this resource. A limited number of copies of the prayer journal are available from Ann Cope. To sign up for the online resources and to learn more, visit the Meeting Jesus website at www.meetingjesusinjohn.org



The Lost Series: A Communal Lenten Exercise

Each Sunday morning, from February 25 to March 18, the community is invited to gather on the lower level from 10.45 to 11.05AM for a communal Lenten exercise.

The Lost Series, an educational project, is informed by the drop-in program. Downstairs, five days a week, there is a community of people entering our space who experience extreme marginalization and oppression in daily life as a result of poverty. In this series, we will delve deeper into the experiences of being lost in a bustling and indifferent world which pairs with the Lenten experience of pausing as the world rushes by.

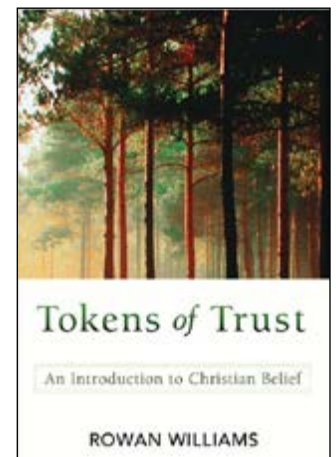
Each session will begin with a short reflection on the topic that week through a grounding passage (scripture/spiritual writings) and end with weekly practical exercises that tap into the week's focus. The series is timed so that participants can attend church and be fully engaged in each session. For more information, contact Angie Hocking, Pastoral Associate, Outreach and Community Engagement.

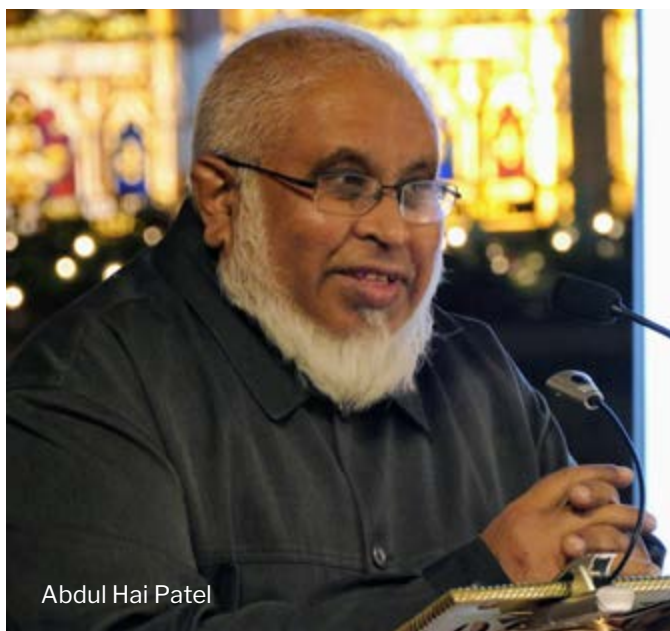
Tokens of Trust

This Lent, a three-evening discussion series on Rowan Williams' book *Tokens of Trust* will take place on Thursday evenings – **February 15, March 1 and March 22** – from 7 to 9 PM.

This is a series for anyone who is interested in exploring questions about the church, the credal elements of Christianity, and the relationship of belief to faith and prayer. Come with your questions (do we have to keep saying the Creed?) and problems (aren't Creeds just political outdated documents?) and gather with us to explore them.

Speak with Pauline Thompson or Alexandra McIntosh for further information. Registration is available through the church website and space is limited.






Abdul Hai Patel



Talking to One Another: Growing Understanding Between Christians and Muslims

The first session of this six-part series took part on Sunday, January 7 with a wonderfully engaged group listening to Abdul Hai Patel, Director of Interfaith Relations, Canadian Council of Imams; President of Ontario Multi- Faith Council, speak about the Origins of Islam, the Quran, and Hadith Literature.

Each session begins at 2PM and registration is available online. 

DATE – 2018	SESSION
January 7	Origins of Islam, the Quran, and Hadith Literature – Abdul Hai Patel
February 18	Sunnism and Shi’ism: Origins and Manifestations of Islamic Sects Dr. Liyakat Takim – Sharjah Chair in Global Islam, Department of Religious Studies, McMaster University
March 11	Sharia and Muslim Worship Practices Dr. Husein Khimjee – Professor of Islam and World Religions, Wilfred Laurier University
April 8	Islam in North America—what does it mean to live faithfully in a secular state? Riffaat Mamdani – A Public Health nurse, currently working with the Ontario Ministry of Children & Youth Services; her professional work focuses on the social determinants of health as well as equity & inclusion
May 13	Women in the Muslim World Zakira Shyrose Jaffer Dhalla – A freelance writer, playwright, motivational speaker and Anti-Racism Educator, in Muslim, Inter-Faith and secular settings; frequently appears on radio and TV
June 10	Islamic Fundamentalist Movements and Jihad Dr. Liyakat Takim – Sharjah Chair in Global Islam, Department of Religious Studies, McMaster University



SHERRI GOLISKY

On Sunday, January 28, we gathered around our postulant, Sherri Golisky, to bless her journey as she begins a placement at another parish in the diocese. Sherri will be back from time to time as her placements allow. May this time of learning and leadership be a wonderful, holy time.

A TASTE FOR CHANGE: ONE LIFE TRANSFORMED

Mark

My name is Mark. I've been going to and affiliated with The Church of the Redeemer for seven years; first as a luncheon program client, then as a volunteer and participant in other Redeemer activities and clubs and finally as a staff member in a part time contractor janitor position.

I used to have my own business and had a comfortable middle-class life. A series of events and circumstances over a few years led me to poverty and eventually the streets.

The Redeemer has been a Godsend for me first in purely material ways (i.e. food, clothing and toiletries) and then later helping me access programs and financial support.

But most of all the Redeemer has helped me more and more in emotional support and as a community that helped me to help myself. The Redeemer community let me find a purpose beyond just survival and give me back some of my old confidence so that I could make my way once again.

The volunteer activities gave me back some esteem, I could actually do things well again that other people recognized. My skills and abilities in Excel spreadsheets were a plus and needed by the organization for various activities. Then later I was offered the janitor's job which helped me in many ways. I had a purpose, was able to give back, and the money allowed me to live a more reasonable life. Through Redeemer connections and help from many people here: Jane the therapist, staff members, clergy and parishioners but especially Angie, I ended up with a wonderful apartment and life looks really good now.

Thank You.



A Word About Announcements

David Giffen

There has been nothing during my time at Redeemer that has delighted me more than worship. From the variety of music to the depth of sacramentality—I delightfully and sometimes even longingly look forward during the week to the Gathering of the Community that draws us together as one. Regardless of the service, the dance of the liturgy begins with the telling of our story in scripture, preaching, and praying and peace. The Eucharistic celebration is meant to be the culmination and climax of our common life together, but then, sometimes as though the Eucharist was not enough, we pause, for a word from our sponsors.

Yes, I am speaking about “the announcements.” It is one of the very few things that has felt out of place since my arrival, pausing the divine liturgy for a tug-of-war to see whose announcements are important enough to get highlighted this week.

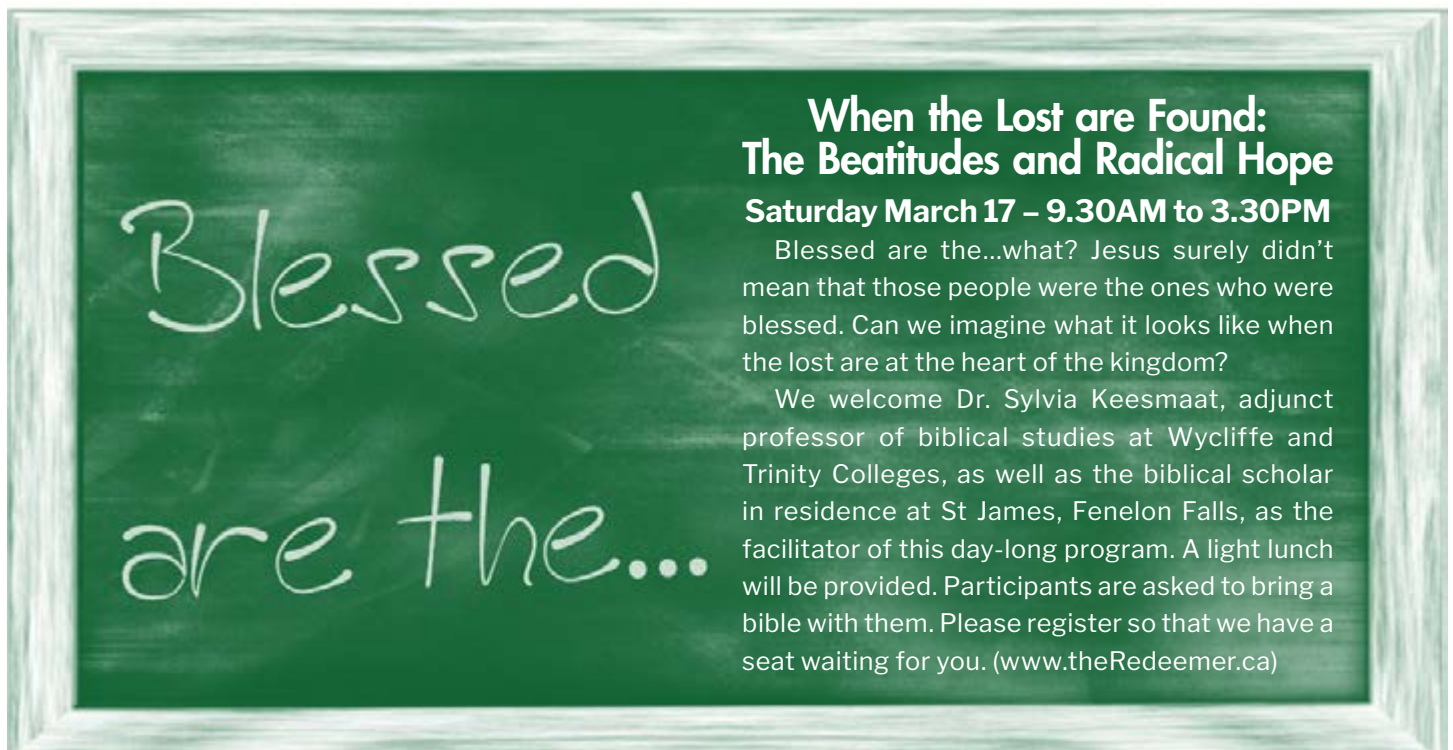
Redeemer has had different practices over the years when it comes to announcements, from a free-flowing microphone being passed around, to a line-up at the lectern that goes six pews deep, to suspending the announcements entirely for weeks and church seasons. But to the best of my knowledge, the placement and timing of the announcements has never been experimented with, and I wonder if we might find a more appropriate time and way to greet our people, and

draw them into the blessings our announcements highlight, as they are called to participate in each week.

There are so many media to receive our news today, from eNews, the website, social media, and the bulletin, not to mention the physical signs and bulletin board. If you want to know what’s happening in our parish, it really isn’t hard to find out. But for announcements that aren’t obscure (the ones that really are only meant for a select few), we need to consider how announcements reach visiting ears, the ones who don’t know where to find all our information so easily—the ones we say we want to see more than once. It is essential that these are the announcements that get spoken from the front of the church each week—and I have come to believe that perhaps they need to come with a greeting and a welcome.

During the season of Lent, we are going to do the announcements in a new way. Before the liturgy begins at 8AM, 9.30AM and 11:15AM, a member of the leadership team will come to the lectern and welcome the congregation. They will declare a territorial acknowledgment (something we should have begun long ago), and highlight the discerned information that needs to be best shared with the audience we seek to hear it. Any additional instructions newcomers might need will be given, and the congregation will be invited to stand and prepare with a moment of quietness to begin.

Change is hard. Regardless of when, why or how we do it, so hear me when I say, “this is an experiment.” Let’s see how it feels when we pause announcements (our tradition at Redeemer) for Holy Week, and together we’ll discern a way forward in Easter. ✝



When the Lost are Found: The Beatitudes and Radical Hope

Saturday March 17 – 9.30AM to 3.30PM

Blessed are the...what? Jesus surely didn't mean that those people were the ones who were blessed. Can we imagine what it looks like when the lost are at the heart of the kingdom?

We welcome Dr. Sylvia Keesmaat, adjunct professor of biblical studies at Wycliffe and Trinity Colleges, as well as the biblical scholar in residence at St James, Fenelon Falls, as the facilitator of this day-long program. A light lunch will be provided. Participants are asked to bring a bible with them. Please register so that we have a seat waiting for you. (www.theRedeemer.ca)



In Memory of Mark Ernsting

As part of the Bach Vespers service on Sunday, December 17, two stoles were presented by the choir in memory of Mark Ernsting. Mark was a member of our choir and was killed two years ago.



Staff Updates

It is our joy to share the news that **The Rev'd Susan Haig** has been appointed associate priest at Church of



the Redeemer, effective Thursday, March 15. In addition to providing leadership in worship, Susan will be responsible for pastoral care.

For the past five years Susan has been the part-time incumbent of St. Theodore of Canterbury in North York and a psycho-

therapist in private practice. The seeds of her call to ordained ministry, as well as her passions for mental health and social justice, were sown during a year living and working at the original l'Arche community in France.

Susan practised law at Legal Aid Ontario for 20 years following her call to the bar and after ordination served for four years at All Saints, Sherbourne Street and then at the Church of the Incarnation. On January 27, she celebrated the 10th anniversary of her ordination to the priesthood.

She is the proud mother of Sarah, Seth, Hannah and Dave (her son-in-law) and finds great joy in the company of her grandson Logan. She practises yoga and loves to cycle, hike, read, listen to music, and cook.

As Susan prepares to leave her current parish, we hold her and all the people of St Theodore of Canterbury in our prayers during this time of transition.

We look forward to welcoming **Nathan Wall** as our new Scholar in Residence, responsible for Adult Christian Formation, in June.

Five years ago Nate moved to Toronto to study just south of the Redeemer at Wycliffe College, Toronto. Growing up in Saskatchewan he spent most of his time with his feet on the ice or his nose in a book. After



being won over by Jesus in his teens, he discovered the biblical languages during his Bachelor's degree. He hasn't been able to shake the Bible since.

Now Nate is a PhD student in Theological Studies at Wycliffe and the University of Toronto. He studies the Old Testament and the sermons of 17th century poet-priest John Donne. More than just about anything else, Nate loves to learn and to help others learn.

On behalf of the Board of Management, I would like to thank the following individuals for their time, treasure and commitment to the Redeemer! They have all completed their terms as directors and have been instrumental in effecting positive change on the Board.

Please join me in thanking:

John Selles – 7 term Treasurer

Jonathan Batty – 6 term Director

Andrew Drummond – 6 term Director

Julian Scarfe – 4 term Director

Ryan Carlsen
Chair, Board of Management

SERVICES OF NOTE

WE PREPARE FOR LENT

The Last Sunday after Epiphany and the Burning of the Palms, February 11: The palms from last year's celebration of Palm Sunday are burned after the 9.30 and 11.15AM services in preparation for Ash Wednesday. We also say farewell to our associate priest, Megan Jull.

Bach Vespers – Sunday February 11 – 7PM:

Thoughtful preaching and beautiful choral music give shape to this service. The choir will sing Bach's Cantata *Wie schon leuchtet der Morgenstern*.

Ash Wednesday, February 14

The tracing of a cross with ashes on our foreheads and the words *You are dust and to dust you shall return* is part of the beginning of our journey through Lent.

Ashes Before Work – 8 to 9AM

Our priests will be on the steps offering a prayer, imposition of ashes and a blessing for all who pass by our doors and want to observe the day.



The church will be open for prayer and reflection during the day.

Sung Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes – 12.15PM and 6PM

A traditional Sung Eucharist with prayers, hymns, readings, sermon, communion & imposition of ashes.

LENT

We pray. We repent. We give alms.

Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent: Some of us live near the church or work nearby. Why not consider coming to one of the mid-week services as a way of marking the Lenten journey. We gather in the space at the front of the church at 12.15PM

Sundays in Lent: The penitential rite we use through the days of this season calls us to confess and accept responsibility.

SUNDAY EVENINGS IN LENT:

Evensong – Sunday, February 18 – 7PM:

A traditional evening service with schola and reflection offered by the presider.

Rock Eucharist – Sunday, February 25 – 7PM:

Join us as the gospel music of Bob Dylan is woven through the liturgy, the word is proclaimed, the bread is broken and the wine is poured at our 7PM service.

Evensong – Sunday, March 4 – 7PM: A traditional evening service with schola and reflection offered by the presider.

Taize – Sunday, March 11 – 7PM: Candlelight, song, prayer, silence. Come. Be still.

Rock Eucharist – Sunday, March 18 – 7PM: The music of the Tragically Hip is part of our service this night. We gather to hear the good news opened up and to receive bread and wine, blessed and shared.

HOLY WEEK

We immerse ourselves in the story that brings us from palm branches to upper room; from bread and wine to foot washing. From prayer in the garden to a cross and to an empty tomb.

Palm Sunday – March 25: We enter the city of Jerusalem with Jesus. We cross the threshold of Holy Week. The exhortation on Palm Sunday reminds us of our obligation to enter Holy Week with the fullness of our being. We are not dismissed at the end of the service because the liturgy continues throughout the week.

In the evening, at 7PM, we complete the day with Holy Week Vespers. We feature Bach's Cantata BWV 125 *Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin*

Monday in Holy Week, Tuesday in Holy Week and Wednesday in Holy Week:

Two celebrations of the Eucharist will be held each day at 12.15PM and 6PM.

Maundy Thursday – March 29 – 7.30PM: We wash the disciples' feet, we remember the Last Supper, we strip the altar, and we watch and pray in the garden.

Good Friday – March 30: Two Good Friday celebrations will call us to be still, to descend and to let go. A service for all ages will take place at 9.30AM and a reflective celebration at 12 noon.

The Great Vigil – March 31 – 9 PM: The new fire is lit and carried into the church. We hear the story of redemption through song and readings. The catechumen gather before the Bishop and we renew our baptismal vows with them. Gathered around the table we are fed, ready to be sent out into the world to bring the good news of Jesus. And we party with our famous Resurrection Celebration at the end of the service.

Easter Day – April 1: Join us at 6AM for the sunrise service. The community continues our celebration of the resurrection at services at 8, 9.30 and 11.15AM (the latter service will be Solemn Eucharist with incense).

THE SEASON OF EASTER

Wine After Dusk – Sunday, April 22 at 7PM

Join in as our friends from Wine Before Breakfast share in the leadership of a Rock Eucharist.

Bluegrass Eucharist – Sunday, April 29 – 7PM:

Join us as word is proclaimed, we share in bread blessed and broken, wine blessed and poured, and we are sent out into the world to proclaim the gospel.