



the
GATHERING
newsletter of the Church of the Redeemer

advent 2018



Dear Friends of the Redeemer,

THE LONG absence of our Incumbent has taken much of the wind out of the sails of the parish and has left us in a fog of uncertainty. We have not been given the expected leadership to take us into 2019.

My work as Interim among you is not to make long-term plans, nor to dramatically change programs or worship patterns. Rather it is more, in this case, to act as a reminder. Rather like a lot of the Hebrew prophets did, this is a call to remember and reclaim truths of God's love for us as a people.


Several of the leading members of the church have remembered the Haslam sisters and other members of the "Washington Avenue Group" who pulled Redeemer back from closure decades ago. Others have recalled the lay leaders who have built the education programs, the outreach, service and justice activities in which so many of you are involved. Our worship patterns, people have recalled, are unmatched in the city, and possibly the country. Our life as a community of faith, as an Embassy of the Kingdom of Heaven on the corner of Bloor Street and Avenue Road, is the work and the possession not of the priests of Redeemer, but very much of the people of Redeemer.

There is nothing that the "enemy" likes more than to drag the people of faith down into despair and apathy. So I invite you to chose to resist this natural tendency and to take up the Redeemer flag and say "push-off" (or a more Canadian

variant) and do what Redeemer has always done; to rise above this for the sake of the ministry we have been given, the wisdom within our community, the joy which we have known and not forgotten here, and for the work of being apostles of the Good News of Jesus Christ, who we call teacher, saviour, lord and God.

And about the clergy...? Our job is to support, enable, teach and care for the Body of Christ, the Church of the Redeemer, in this place. It's really all about You and Jesus!

In peace,



David Howells



The Rev'd David Howells

Learning@Redeemer events

ANTHROPOCENE AT AGO

Anthropocene at AGO

This Advent we recall how our recent observance of the Season of Creation awakened our awareness that waiting with hope for our Earth's healing is rooted first in lament for the wounds we have inflicted on her.

This Advent, let's go deeper into waiting with hope.

On Sunday, December 2, at 2PM we will explore the Anthropocene exhibit at the AGO together and meet afterwards at the Sin and Redemption pub to debrief the experience. If you've already seen the exhibit, you're welcome to join us at the pub and be part of the discussion!



From Lament to Hope

On Wednesday, December 5 and 12, at 6PM, come together in the parish hall for a simple meal and discussion. Dr. Sylvia Keesmaat will share her thoughts on the biblical and theological path from lament to hope particularly in times of uncertainty.

Sylvia is adjunct professor of Biblical studies at Trinity College and Wycliffe College and has a long association with the Redeemer community as a former member of the parish who makes frequent return visits as preacher and leader of education events such as this one. We are grateful that she is able to join us as we wait with hope during this Advent season.

Please register for these events online: www.TheRedeemer.ca

RICHARD WAGAMESE: *Starlight*

Lynda Young

On Tuesday, October 25, a little over a year after his passing at age 61, CBC host, Shelagh Rogers, who Richard Wagamese called his "chosen sister," joined friends and fans to celebrate his life, his work and his final gift to readers—his book *Starlight*. The opening prayer was offered by Elder Edna Manitowabi.

Richard Wagamese, an Ojibway from Wabaseemoong First Nation in north western Ontario, was one of Canada's foremost writers. His award-winning novels are gripping and life-affirming works focusing on the experiences of Indigenous Canadians.

A video of Richard's acceptance speech for the 2015 Matt Cohan Award was shown. It was said that the speech was offered without notes and an online video of the speech gives you a sense of how brilliant this man was.

Personal stories about interactions with Richard were shared with us by Shelagh and a panel made up of friends, including scholar Jesse Thistle and writers Alicia Elliott and Drew Hayden Taylor. They gave us a picture of a man who enjoyed his friendships and he enjoyed his life.

He had a story to share with all of us. His writings came from personal experiences. His parents survived the residential schools but Richard was taken from them by Children's Aid when he was two years old. He was placed in abusive foster homes and escaped to long periods of homelessness and addiction as a teenager.

He never took a writing course or had a writing lesson. Through his voracious appetite for reading, he learned how to write and express the stories Canadians never heard in history class. His books are for those among us who want to have a deep understanding of the stories we need to hear.

Information about all of the books written by Richard Wagamese can be found online: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Wagamese#Published_works



Sing and Joyful Be!

Anne Evers

Many times when I've asked friends why they don't sing hymns in church, they say someone told them they couldn't or shouldn't sing. They were made self-conscious about their voice, and they stopped singing, even though they enjoyed it.

This makes me very sad, especially as I am addicted to group singing, and I know how therapeutic it is, emotionally and spiritually. To quote the rather obvious conclusion of a study on the psychological benefits of singing: "group singing is a joyful activity that promotes well-being and is life-enhancing for those involved." (Judd, Pooley, 2013)*

If there is a downside to Redeemer having fabulous choirs, it is perhaps the expectation that singing in church should always sound technically great. "The choir sings beautifully, so I don't want to mess it up." But the choirs are there to support the congregation, not supplant it. They need you to sing, and you need you to sing.

Shape note singing is a method of encouraging/teaching congregations to sing sacred choral music. It began over 200 years ago in New England, at a time when most churches didn't have organs or choirs, so congregational singing was the only music available. Eventually this method took root and thrived in the American South.

Since the 1970's it has also grown as a folk tradition, with regular community singings taking place throughout North America (including right here in Toronto), and around the world. This music is intended as a community worship experience, not a performance. As such, there is no expectation that everyone singing has a good voice, always sings on pitch, or blends in well with those around them.

On **Sunday, January 27, at 7PM**, there will be a Eucharist featuring the music of *The Sacred Harp*, the most widely used hymnbook in this tradition. Some of the tunes will be familiar (Common Praise includes nine Sacred Harp tunes); many will be new to you. A number of regular Sacred Harp singers will be attending, but they will not be performing the music. We will all be singing together, using our "sacred harp," the human voice, to praise, lament, and celebrate. ✝

Common Praise #	Common Praise Title	Sacred Harp Tune Name	Sacred Harp #
251	Come, Ever Blessed Spirit, Come	Distress	32B
47	We Praise You, Lord, For Jesus Christ	Detroit	39T
614	Forgive Our Sins As We Forgive	Detroit	39T
352	Amazing Grace! How Sweet The Sound	New Britain	45T
284	Blessed Feasts Of Blessed Martyrs	Holy Manna	59
35	Wash, O God, Our Sons And Daughters	Beach Spring	81T
482	Come And Journey With A Saviour	Beach Spring	81T
585	Lord, Whose Love In Humble Service	Beach Spring	81T
665	To God, With The Lamb And The Dove	Edgefield	82B
400	What Wondrous Love Is This, O My Soul, O My Soul	Wondrous Love	159
608	Come, You Sinners, Poor And Needy	Restoration (First)	312B
609	Far, Far Away From My Loving Father	Restoration (First)	312B

*Judd, M. D., & Pooley, J. (2013). The Psychological Benefits of Participating in Group Singing for Members of the General Public. *Psychology of Music*, 42(2), 269-283. <http://ro.ecu.edu.au/ecuworks2013/7>

Photo: Anne Evers leading a song at the Annual Central Ontario Shape Note Singing Covention this past August.

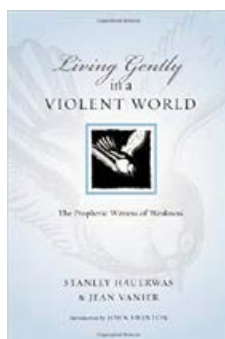
Redeemer Readers

Redeemer Readers, the Church of the Redeemer book group meets in the board room on the lower level for one hour at noon on select Thursdays throughout the year. New members are always welcome and all are welcome to attend as many of the sessions as you can. This year our books focus on doctrine, spirituality, and charity in books written by important Christian thinkers of our time.

Thursday, December 13

Living Gently in a Violent World: The Prophetic Witness of Weakness,
Stanley Hauerwas and Jean Vanier.
(2nd Edition, IVP, 2018).

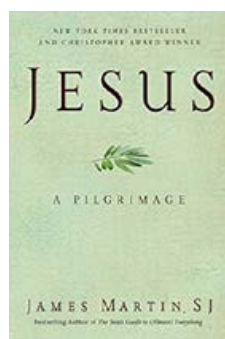
Theologian Stanley Hauerwas and Jean Vanier, founder of L'Arche communities throughout the world, consider how society reacts to people with disabilities and how faith informs a positive, compassionate response.



Thursday, January 31

Jesus: A Pilgrimage,
James Martin.
(HarperOne, 2016).

Jesuit priest James Martin describes his journey, both physical and spiritual, through the Holy Land. He connects places he visits to passages of scripture and reflects on how these stories of Jesus' life have meaning for life in our time.



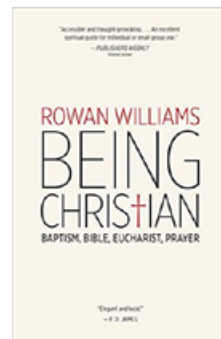
Thursday, March 21

*In this session we will discuss three books by **Rowan Williams**, former Archbishop of Canterbury.*

Being Christian

(SPCK, 2014).

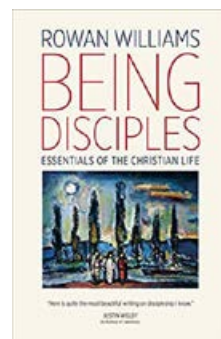
This book delves into four vital aspects of Christian life: baptism, bible, eucharist, and prayer.



Being Disciples: Essentials of the Christian Life

(Eerdmans, 2016).

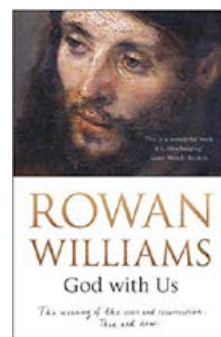
We are all at different stages of our life's faith journey. In this book, Williams explores how we follow Jesus in our time as we grow in faith.



God with Us: The Meaning of the Cross and Resurrection – Then and Now

(SPCK, 2017).

Williams looks at the story at the heart of the Christian gospel—the cross on which Jesus was crucified and his resurrection.



Thursday, May 9

Gilead,
Marilynne Robinson.

(Harper Collins, 2006).

This work of literary fiction tells the story of generations of a family in a rural Iowa town as seen through the eyes of the Reverend John Ames. He recounts for his young son experiences of his father and grandfather as well as his own theological struggles. ✝



#AdventWord

There are a number of ways that you can mark the days of Advent at Redeemer.

This year we will be part of **#AdventWord**—a global Advent calendar. Each year we are offered the opportunity to receive a daily AdventWord meditation and respond with an image on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. You can go to adventword.org to sign up for the daily reflections. Our daily prayer reflections are using the themes for #AdventWord for inspiration and for our daily social media posts. Each Sunday morning the daily prayer booklets will be available in church and on the website.

We open the church on select days for about 90 minutes at the end of the workday or on the weekend for **Advent Chapel**. Dates and times will be posted on the bulletin board and on social media. In the quiet of candle-lit space you are invited to take time to pause from the rush of Christmas preparation and be still. If you are in the area and see the lanterns on the front steps—please drop in and find a moment of peace.


The Magi followed a star that led them to the Word Incarnate. With the encounter with Jesus, they followed a path in a different direction. This year we are bringing back **StarWords**. On Advent One the bowl of the font will be filled with stars, each one with a word—a star to guide you. The invitation is to pick a star—trust that the one you pick is the right word for you this season and in the months

#AdventWord 2018

2 Dec #Journey	14 Dec #Prune
3 Dec #Watch	15 Dec #Prepare
4 Dec #Focus	16 Dec #Rejoice
5 Dec #Night	17 Dec #Sing
6 Dec #Light	18 Dec #Ancestor
7 Dec #Sprout	19 Dec #Wash
8 Dec #Alert	20 Dec #Ablaze
9 Dec #Wild	21 Dec #Sign
10 Dec #Cry	22 Dec #Expect
11 Dec #Grow	23 Dec #Persist
12 Dec #Rough	24 Dec #Peace
13 Dec #Smooth	25 Dec #Celebrate

www.AdventWord.org   

to come—and use it for inspiration, meditation, reflection, hope in your prayer life and as you dream what the future holds for you.

Our 11.15 AM choir takes time out of their rehearsal schedule on the Thursday before Christmas to take their beautiful music out onto the front steps and share the joy of the **carols of the season** with those who pass by our doors. If you are in the neighbourhood on Thursday, December 20 at 6PM, drop by and share in the fun! 



On Sunday, November 11 we blessed, to our use, a new processional cross. This one is smaller and lighter—perfect for children to use (and for adults who find our brass cross too heavy to carry). As we welcome more children into liturgical roles, it good to be able to add crucifer to the list of roles they can take on.

Santa Claus Parade Party





Instructed Eucharist



Our new scholar-in-residence, Nate Wall, preached on the Feast of All Saints, Sunday November 4.



'Business?! Mankind Should Have Been My Business!'

Angie Hocking

This year marks the 15th and final year of our annual reading of A Christmas Carol at Church of the Redeemer. Fifteen years of retelling this powerful story by Charles Dickens. This is a story that reminds us to care for each other, to share our wealth, to savour life and to live it to its fullest.

We have had so many incredible readers over the years join us for this special occasion. It's been an event that brings the Redeemer community together as well as the larger Toronto community. The profits from this event have fueled our important year-round work in the basement, now called The Common Table, which is one of our communal

manifestations of making *mankind our business*, five days a week.

Join us this year as we welcome our very special readers: Judy Maddren, Craig Lauzon, Jean Bubba, Peter Kaleghan, and Jani Lauzon. The event will take place Sunday, December 9 at 2.30PM. Tickets are available online and at Sunday morning services.

Come one, come all! We hope to see you there.



The 15th Annual dramatic reading of...


A CHRISTMAS CAROL

In support of The Common Table drop-in program at Church of the Redeemer


Sunday, December 9th at 2:30PM
with reception to follow

Come, listen to this familiar story retold


OUR READERS:




Craig Lauzon
Actor and comedian




Judy Maddren
Radio announcer



Jani Lauzon
Puppeteer and musician



Peter Keleghan
Actor



Jean Bubba
Storyteller

This beloved Redeemer tradition supports The Common Table drop-in program that feeds and builds community with the homeless and under-housed in our city. Join us to hear this familiar story of transformation and hope.

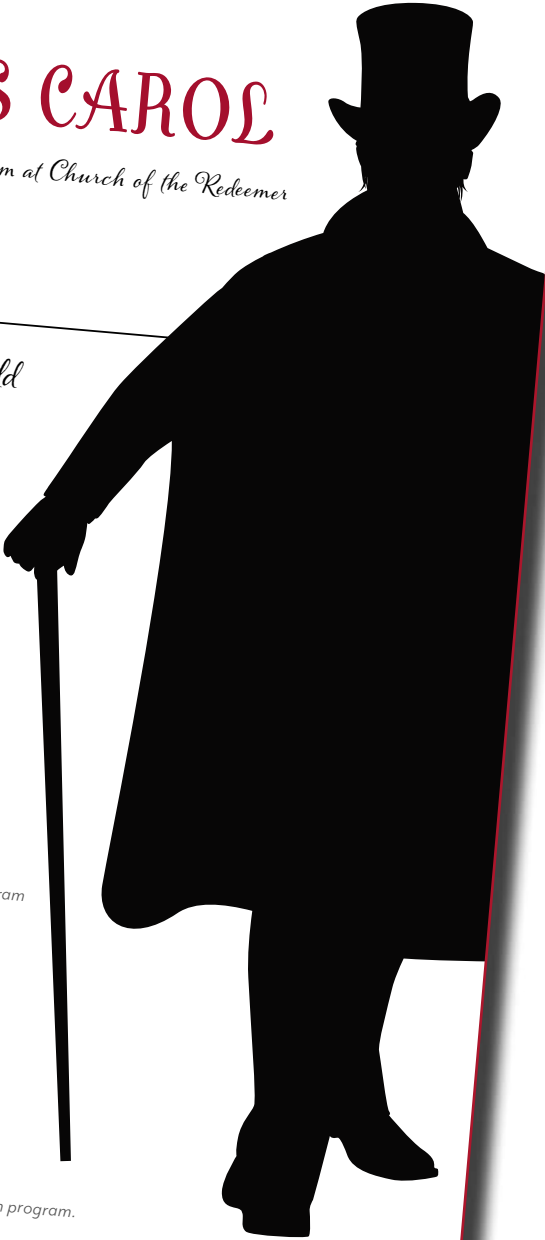
TICKET PRICES*:

- Adults \$25
- Students/Seniors (65+) \$20
- Children/Youth (6-17) \$10
- Family (2 adults and up to 4 children/youth) \$60

*You can purchase tickets following the Sunday morning services and online.
If you cannot join us, please consider a donation to The Common Table drop-in program.

CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER
162 Bloor Street West at Avenue Road | www.theredeemer.ca

THE COMMON TABLE
Redeemer's Drop-in Community





2018 THANK YOU TOUR: **Boldly Bearing Witness**

Heather Bennett and Sara Lawson

'...grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.' When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness. Acts 4: 29-31

Our annual *Thank You Tour* enables members of the parish to reflect on and express gratitude for the many ways that the Holy Spirit has been active: through the clergy, staff, lay leaders, volunteers and parishioners involved in offering liturgies, sermons, a wealth of programs, and activities, as well as diligently participating on boards and committees.

The *Thank You Tour* also raises awareness of our responsibilities to contribute toward **meeting the financial commitments that were made at Vestry**, our annual parish meeting. At Vestry, we made our plans for the year ahead: what we would do to proclaim God's presence in the city of Toronto, how to work to correct injustices in the world, how to help those near and far. **We made bold decisions when we developed this year's budget. Now is the time to be bold to ensure that we complete the journey that we have undertaken.**

We began 2018 with a palpable sense of moving forward as a parish in bold, new ways.

From January to June, Learning@Redeemer offered the series *Talking to One Another: Growing Understanding Between Christians and Muslims*—a bold approach to facilitate difficult conversations.

Paul Pynkoski spearheaded the planning and delivery of *Voices for Peace—A Conference on Peacemaking*. In this time of fear of 'the other,' we were challenged boldly to be witnesses for peace by Jim Forest in his sermon, *Blessed are the Peacemakers*.

Over 60 people attended the *Death, Dying and Letting Go* workshops, focused on funeral planning, estate planning and Wills. Bold preparations to be witnesses of our faith and to leave a legacy after the end of our lives.

The Indigenous Solidarity Working Group (ISWG) continued its *Travel for Learning* initiative, actively working toward

reconciliation, by going to Tyendinaga for the annual Landing Ceremony. We also participated with other churches along Bloor Street in the REDress Project, to raise awareness about violence against Indigenous women and girls, by hanging red garments outside our front doors and along the east side of our building. These were a bold and haunting witness.

Having responded to the horror of the van attack on Yonge Street in April, we once again opened our doors in response to the shooting on The Danforth. Via signage and social media, we invited our neighbours and fellow citizens to come into our beautiful, sacred space to pray, to talk, or simply to feel the presence of the Divine, in response to and in spite of heinous and unbelievable acts of violence. Our open door, our defiance not to fear, and our presence were bold acts of welcome and witness to love and to hope.

Over four weeks, our first Season of Creation focused on the beauty of creation, the interconnectedness of all things and the urgent responsibility to care for the Earth. The *Earth Song* service was a bold liturgy of music, poetry, scripture readings and a powerful message, *NOW is the Time!* delivered by The Very Rev'd Bill Phipps, invited as special guest preacher.

In November, Nate Wall, our Scholar in Residence, led *As If: Reimagining the Bold and Beautiful Things Christians Say They Believe*. This was an invitation for each of us to consider, *What do I believe?* and, *Am I willing to admit what I believe?*

*Now is
the time to
be bold to
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the journey
that we have
undertaken.*



Bold questions indeed, and the answers may lead to bold witness.

The All Souls Requiem, and the Blue Christmas service remind us that, amongst members of our community, individuals are grieving the death of loved ones, the loss of employment, the ending of relationships, the ravages of serious health challenges, and the subtle and not so subtle changes in ageing. We are grateful to the Rev'd Susan Haig, Associate Priest, and for the Pastoral Care team who carry out a ministry of witness and support, often in times of severe testing of one's faith.

Behind the scenes, clergy, staff, members of the Board of Management and Advisory Board, committee members and volunteers, plan, challenge one another in considering possibilities and making decisions, oversee the spending and raising of the funds to sustain the ministries we offer.

The Property Committee commissioned a capital fund study to anticipate the likely building repairs and replacement work to be done over the next several years, and to estimate the associated costs of these. From the outside, our building stands, as a witness to the Divine. Inside, the beauty of the stained glass, the artifacts on our walls, the furnishings and the patens and chalices familiar to generations who have worshipped in this place, quietly affirm the power of belonging to a long-standing community.

For many years, we have partnered with the City of Toronto's *Investing in Neighbourhoods* program, which has enabled us to offer, and benefit from, paid work for individuals who need to gain valuable experience to move forward in their lives. This has been a bold opportunity to bear witness to what it means to be followers of Jesus as we teach assistants in the office to respond to the needs of those who call, come to the office, or contact us electronically, or as we instruct a caretaker or drop-in support worker, to interact effectively with participants in The Common Table.

The Common Table, formerly known as the Drop-in program, continues to be a welcoming space for all who are tired, struggling with economic or health challenges, homeless/living in shelters/under housed, or those looking for a place to belong and be valued as fellow human beings. Volunteers prepare and serve a hot breakfast and lunch each day. Several support services are offered. The program continues to be a bold and wholistic response to needs inadequately addressed by government.

Bach Vespers, Rock Eucharists, a Bluegrass Eucharist and the Advent Carol Service draw parishioners, passersby and people from across the GTA to participate in liturgies that reach the soul through music. These enable us to open our doors and witness to a faith that is alive, and changes lives!

As we look toward 2019, the Refugee Settlement Committee is preparing to welcome three young men from Eritrea. We do not yet have details about when they will arrive, but planning is well underway to prepare for their arrival. Undertaking this sponsorship is a bold witness that underlines our commitment to boldly "seek and serve Christ in all persons."

While we rely upon the time and talent of our dedicated volunteers, clergy and staff, there is also a cost to each of these ministries and outreach programs. The revenue to date has not been sufficient to cover our costs. **We are presently facing a deficit of \$250,000.**

We invite each of you to prayerfully, and with thanksgiving, consider making a financial gift to support the ministries offered by the Church of the Redeemer. At Vestry, bold decisions were made in approving this year's budget. Now is the time for this gifted and generous community to **be bold in completing the journey that we have undertaken.**

We are **grateful for every gift** as we rejoice in the bold ways that members of the parish faithfully witness to the love of God, for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.



ALL SAINTS & ALL SOULS





We are delighted to have Lyds Keesmaat-Walsh join us as our youth ministry intern this year. On Sunday, November 18, Bishop Kevin Robertson welcomed Lyds into this role at the morning services. Lyds grew up in our church and it is wonderful to welcome them back to Redeemer in this new role. Welcome Lyds!



Looking Into The Abyss and Finding Hope

Paul Pynkoski

Chris Hedges is a former war correspondent, an ordained Presbyterian minister, and a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist. He was interviewed at the Toronto Reference Library this Autumn. Hedges spoke about what he saw as the sicknesses in Western society, particularly in the USA. He had stories and statistics at his fingertips to identify the social, economic, and political symptoms. But an hour's interview was hardly enough and I bought his book, "America, The Farewell Tour," to dig a little deeper.

Hedges "examines the disturbing pathologies of a country in irrevocable decline" says the inside of the dust cover, but not through academic studies or through the work of others. Instead, Hedges hit the road, crossing the United States and Canada to interview everyday people touched by inner city decay, drug and gambling addictions, porn and sadism, and lack of work. He was on-site for Standing Rock and attended an introductory class on "Mindfuckery." He spoke with Antifa and Proud Boys members.

Hedges draws important connections—he argues that, "The radical left and the radical right, each made up of people who have been cast aside by the cruelty of corporate capitalism, have embraced holy war...They hold themselves up as the vanguard of the oppressed...These groups are separated, as Sigmund Freud wrote of those who engage in fratricide, by the 'narcissism of minor differences.'" He links war and

prostitution, saying both feed "off the despair, poverty, and hopelessness that afflict" us, and that both profit from dehumanizing others. For war, it is the enemy; in prostitution, it is women. Hedges is relentless in his probing, spending 230 pages documenting his findings. It was a difficult book to read. Indeed, on several occasions the stories and images disturbed my sleep, waking me at 4AM.

The darkness he describes seems overwhelming. If it was the final word it would hardly be a book worth recommending. But in the final section on "Freedom," Hedges leaves us with models of hope through resistance—models of alternative community, acts of non-violent civil disobedience like Standing Rock, non-violent protests in USA prisons, and artistic endeavours. And these models hold out the possibility of healing.

Hedges moves us from apocalyptic darkness to the hope of the Kingdom, concluding, "Power is a poison. It does not matter who wields it...Resistance is not fundamentally political. It is cultural and spiritual...Resistance is not only about battling the forces of darkness. It is about becoming a complete human being. It is about overcoming estrangement. It is about our neighbor. It is about honoring the sacred. It is about dignity. It is about freedom. It is about the capacity to love. Resistance must become our vocation."

This is an important book in our current political climate, especially for those who are possessed of that longing we call spirituality. Its importance lies not only in the observations Hedges presents, but because he leads us by example: he has looked directly into the abyss and in spite of the darkness, sees the glimmer of hope.



Accidental Saints: *Summer, Reading, and Discussion*

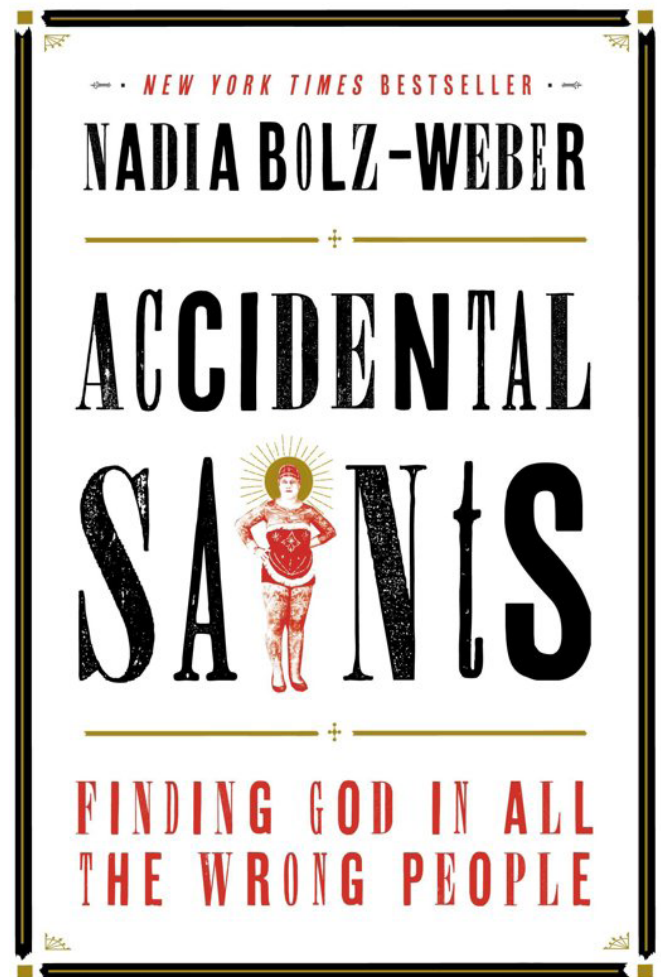
There are books of spiritual reflections rooted in stories. There are books that are little more than short sermons organized around a theme or personal experiences. *Accidental Saints*, the book chosen for Redeemer's summer reading program, is unlike any of these.

Author Nadia Bolz-Weber, a Lutheran pastor, has produced a book of personal stories, but has related them with an uncanny sense of freshness and vulnerability, consciously placing them within the structure of the Christian year. She does not start with Advent, however. She takes liturgical liberty based on her theme, beginning and ending with the Feast of All Saints. Each section of the book is preceded by a quotation from the Exsultet (the ancient hymn sung at the Easter Vigil). Each chapter explores a personal story against the background of scripture. What she seeks to relate, then, must be seen in the context of the Paschal mystery lived out in our worship, framed by scripture and calendar.

Bolz-Weber engages the reader in a process of narrative theology. She is clear about the goal of her stories: Heroes from the past are fine, but can we discern in the immediacy of our every day lives the presence of "accidental saints?" Accidental, because our lives are not lived among stained glass replicas, but with flawed and wounded people. Saints, because their lives in some way point us towards the divine.

Each story provoked us to recall our own experiences—of isolation, community, grace, and forgiveness. We were enticed to think about how we confront sin and evil, and how things both wonderful and difficult find liturgical expression. She wonders whether the liturgy for the Feast of the Holy Innocents is large enough to have room for both the victims and the shooter at Sandy Hook (and we might wonder how our prayers might find room for both the victims and the van driver of the attack in North York). As we talked, we found ways to share our own stories, and to make connections between our stories and Nadia's.

Accidental Saints presents us with a challenge. Not to discover whether such a thing as sainthood is possible, but rather a challenge of call and response. A call to attentiveness, the willingness to investigate our daily experience for signs of the divine presence, to find the infinite in the ordinary. Nadia encounters "accidental saints" in a conversation



on an airplane, while discharging firearms at a shooting range, and in her avoidance of a person with ugly pants and bad breath. And with each encounter comes the opportunity to respond. To respond to the identification of our own shortcomings, and to reach out to others. Because the God of Jesus Christ does not use us because of our goodness and strength, but because of our stumbling, our weakness, our imperfections, and our anxieties.

Her approach generated significant discussion in the two groups that worked through *Accidental Saints*, and the discussions occurred on several levels. The primary level was an exploration of what Nadia was telling us about herself and her life. Her anxieties, fears, and conflicts, as well as her radical commitment to those who don't "fit" into traditional church structures were readily on display. Her creative interaction with Scripture pushed us to rethink our own interpretation of the stories she used from the Old and New Testaments. Her commitment to the liturgy, especially the Christian year and the Feast of Easter, begged for reflection on the role of liturgy in our community life, and raised questions about how we might, in a practical way, make liturgy more relevant within our walls and how we might take liturgy into the streets. ✝





SERVICES OF NOTE

THE ADVENT CYCLE

We gather in darkness and we wait for the light to break through. The light that grows week by week. We await the One who is the light of the world. Each week, a candle on the Advent wreath is lighted.

Sunday, December 2 – Advent 1 at 7PM: Our annual service of Advent carols: the music and the readings explore the season of Advent.

Sunday, December 9 – Advent 2 at 7PM: The Cantabile Chamber Singers will be our guest choir for Bach Vespers. Cantata 61 – *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* – thoughtful preaching and prayer-filled liturgy gather us in as we continue our time of Advent waiting and preparing.

Tuesday, December 11 – Blue Christmas: The Christmas season is supposed to be one of joy—and yet for some of us, we find it difficult to embrace that merriment. We grieve—the loss of a loved one, a recent separation or divorce, unemployment, being away from family and home for the holidays. For others of us it will be uncertainty about community, the world around us, God's beloved creation that adds weight to the days. The Blue Christmas service creates liturgical place for those who need healing. Join us at 6 PM

Sunday, December 16 – Advent 3 at 7PM: Join us for Bach Vespers. This service of word and beautiful choral music features Bach's *Gloria in excelsis Deo* (BWV 191).

Sunday, December 23 – Advent 4 in the morning: We gather at 8AM (Said Eucharist), 9.30AM (Sung Eucharist with nursery care) and 11.15AM (Sung Eucharist with nursery care). Come, be with us as the fourth candle in the Advent wreath is lit.

Sunday, December 23 – Advent 4 at 7PM: Join us for Taizé. Candlelight, prayer, song, and stillness. A peaceful way to end the week and prepare for the days ahead.



CHRISTMAS

O Come All Ye Faithful—words of a familiar carol yes, but also an invitation. Come—gather together as we immerse ourselves in the age-old story that seems new again. Come—sing the carols and songs that tell of the birth of Jesus—the Light of the Word—come into our world so long ago and born in us again now. Come—gather around the table and celebrate—Jesus, bread for our journey, and cup of salvation. Come!

Monday, December 24 – Christmas Eve:

The Pageant and Sung Eucharist at 5PM

The children and youth join in telling the age-old story of Jesus' birth so that we hear it again as though for the first time.

7.30PM Candlelight Eucharist

Come and join us for a celebration of Christmas in candlelight, song and word

10.30PM Solemn Eucharist

Choral music, solemn procession and sung Eucharist with incense form the foundation of this worship service. After the service we continue the celebration with a time of fellowship and fine fare.

Tuesday, December 25 – Christmas Day: The quiet has come. We are invited to draw nearer, to welcome the Prince of Peace. Join us at 10.30AM

Sunday, December 30 – Christmas I: Services at 8, 9.30 and 11.15 AM. Please note that there will not be an evening service.

Sunday, January 6 – Solemnity of the Epiphany: We walk the way of the Magi and we bear witness to mystical gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh being placed at the feet of the Mystery. 8AM Said Eucharist and 9.30AM Sung Eucharist with nursery care. The 11.15AM service is a Solemn Sung Eucharist with procession. Incense will be used.

Sunday, January 13 – Baptism of Christ: We draw near the water to remember our own baptismal ministry as we are called into the world to serve.

A LOOK AHEAD

Catechesis 2019

From just before the beginning of Lent until Easter, our catechesis program is offered. If you feel the promptings of the Spirit to explore your faith in a more intentional way, this may be the place. Details about the dates and specifics of the program will be made available in the coming weeks. Stay tuned!