

RECTOR'S REFLECTION

What is the gospel? According to some of those annoying “suggested posts” that keep showing up on my Facebook news feed, the gospel is about praying for prosperity and, if you do it correctly, God will shower you with lots of money so you can buy all the things you want. Really, wherever you look, you will find competing versions of the gospel. This is one of the reasons why we have so many Christian denominations: what the essence of the gospel is varies between different groups and even individuals.

This is not a new issue in the church. It was one of the preoccupations of St Paul as he guided the churches he founded. In the passage we read this week from his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul writes that the gospel is veiled to those who are perishing. Here's the situation: as time went by, the congregation that Paul had founded in Corinth was visited by so-called “superapostles” who came to proclaim a gospel that was rather different than the one Paul proclaimed. The Corinthians weren't sure who to believe and they were tempted to believe Paul's competition because the gospel they proclaimed was much like the prosperity gospel I mentioned above. Paul's gospel, on the other hand, was much more difficult to accept.

Paul believed that God was working to bring this evil world to an end and to inaugurate a new realm. The lens through which Paul saw this was Jesus. Confessing Jesus as Lord meant that God's work in the world was revealed in Christ: the death of Jesus on the cross is representative of the age of suffering in which we live; the resurrection of Jesus represents the transformation from suffering to the new world. The suffering we endure in this world is caused by human resistance to God's vision. By following Jesus, Paul believed that we would suffer and then be redeemed, achieving eternal life through resurrection. The superapostles, however, taught a gospel of glory without suffering; they did not believe that the present world would end and a new realm be ushered in. For the Corinthians, it must have been tempting to believe in a gospel that said that they would not have to suffer but would achieve glory, and furthermore, achieve it in this world. It was an easy gospel.

But we know that the superapostles, for the most part, lost out, because the Church has adopted Paul's teaching. We do not teach that Christians shall not suffer but that we will, in fact, suffer more than unbelievers because our call is to stand in opposition to the world. The great promise of the gospel is not that we will be free from suffering but that God stands with us in our suffering. Our hope is that the suffering will be redeemed in the transformation of the world into the kingdom of God, when heaven and earth will pass away and all shall live in the light of God.

Paul's worldview is as important for us to understand today as it was for the people in Corinth. As Ronald Allen puts it, “Paul advocated what we might call a ‘holy discomfort’ with the present status of the world. Paul's gospel calls for people to be discontent with brokenness, injustice, scarcity, exploitation, violence, and death, and to believe that God seeks to increase community, wholeness, justice, abundance, peace, love, and life.” While it might seem nice to think of a gospel that helps us to feel good about ourselves, this gospel does nothing to transform the world but leaves in place the brutal structures of the world. The gospel we proclaim finds God actively at work in us changing unjust structures, transforming evil to good, and striving not only to be comfortable ourselves but to make our world a better place for all.



THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF TYENDINAGA

*To be a Spirit-filled and life-giving place where strangers
become friends and friends become disciples.*

SUNDAY CELEBRATION

Sunday 15 February 2015
Last Sunday after Epiphany

SUNDAY CELEBRATIONS

9:30 a.m.

Jan-Mar and Jul-Sep—All Saints' Church, 1295 Ridge Rd
Apr-Jun and Oct-Dec—Christ Church, 52 South Church Ln

PARISH PRIEST

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Mission Statement

Our mission, for the glory of God in Jesus Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit, is to:

- Celebrate all that God has done for us through worship and witness with others.
- Respond to our call to be disciples of Christ by sharing our faith, rooted in the Word of God, with others and encouraging others to become followers of Christ through word and action.
- Practice good stewardship of our human, financial and environmental resources, working to ensure that all of God's Creation is viable for future generations.
- Grow ourselves and others by reaching out to our communities, following Jesus' example of generous caring, giving, and welcoming.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Food Bank Donations—We gather non-perishable food items on the first Sunday of each month and donate them to the Food Bank. The Food Bank is experiencing a significant increase in the number of families it serves so this is a material way we can help our neighbours. The next Food Bank Sunday is 1 Mar.

Absence of the Rector—Brad will be away on a course from 10 Feb to 24 Feb. Pastoral emergencies will be covered by Cathie Vick.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper—Tue 17 Feb, 5-7 p.m., QAPC. Come enjoy a supper complete with pancakes, sausages, and bacon—the ancient custom of using up the fatty and sugary foods in the house before the Lenten fast began on Ash Wednesday. The pancake supper is free as a gesture of hospitality to our community so we ask parishioners to provide donations to purchase the food. The signup sheets can be found in the boardroom beside the kitchen.

Ash Wednesday Liturgy—Wed 18 Feb, 7 p.m. at All Saints' with Imposition of Ashes and the Celebration of the Eucharist. The Rev'd Dorothy Lancaster will preside.

Climate change and faith with Katherine Hayhoe— Thu 19 Feb, 7 p.m., St George's cathedral, 275 King St, Kingston. Internationally acclaimed atmospheric scientist and committed Christian Katharine Hayhoe will talk on climate change and faith. The event is being organized by the diocesan Green Group. Tickets \$15 at the Church Bookroom or register online at www.climatechangeandfaith.brownpapertickets.com.

Lenten Study—Starting Wed 25 Feb and continuing for six weeks. We will gather from 5-7 p.m. in the QAPC. Each session will begin with a simple potluck supper and continue with the study. There are 12 books available at the front of the church for those planning to attend.

Rectory Rental—The rectory is available for rental on a weekly basis as a cottage for tourists, fishermen, etc (and may be rented for shorter periods in the off season). Check out the website at cottagesincanada.com/bayofquinterectorycottage and please tell your friends who might need a place to stay!

PRAYERS THIS WEEK

Anglican Communion

The Most Rev'd and Rt Hon Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury
Diocese of Mandalaay (Myanmar)
The Rt. Revd David Nyi Nyi Naing

Diocese of Ontario

The Rt Rev'd Michael Oulton
Parish of Newboro-Westport
The Rev. Peter Molloy

Companions

St Ann's Episcopal Church, Amsterdam, the Very Rev'd Neal Longe
HM Chapel Royal, Hampton Court Palace, the Rev'd Canon Denis Mulliner

Parish of Tyendinaga

Love in Action

Pray for the families of: Marie Brant; Nora Brant; Pat & Harvey Brant;
Pat Brant; Rodger & Gloria Brant

READINGS FOR SUNDAY 22 FEBRUARY

Genesis 9:8-17
1 Peter 3:18-22

Psalms 25:1-9
Mark 1:9-15

Stewardship Reflection

The Rt Rev'd Michael Pollesel

Peter "didn't know how else to respond," says today's passage. As a faithful steward, how do you think you might respond?

Financial Report

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|-----------------------|----------------|
| Weekly Need: | \$2,459 |
| Last week's Offering: | <u>\$1,233</u> |
| Last Week's shortfall | \$ 1,226 |

Based on the 2015 budget and the number of identifiable givers, the following is what is required of each giver in order to meet our needs:

Weekly: \$40 Monthly: \$173