



FROM THE RECTOR

John Newton

This past spring Mike Amirault introduced me to a short video on "church planting" in the state of Virginia. What was fascinating about it was that it was produced by the Episcopal (Anglican) Diocese of Virginia and based on the experience of several new parishes that have been founded there over the past few years.

The video depicted lively, vibrant congregations, some worshipping in school gymnasiums, some in newly constructed church buildings. The one factor they shared was dynamism—an enthusiasm for what God was doing in their corporate life together and in the lives of individual worshippers.

At one point one of the bishops of the diocese replies to the question, "Why are you encouraging the founding of new churches when there are already so many half-empty ones?" In part his answer was that new churches attract new people in a way that already established ones do not. There are many people, for example, who have "tried" church and for one reason or another it hasn't worked for them. They are looking for something new, and the new congregation around the corner or across the city is somehow able to minister to them in a way that others could not.

One woman who was interviewed shared quite candidly that her reason for throwing her lot in with a new church was that there was no one who was going to say, "But we've always done it this way," or, "We've never done it that way before." For some people that alone is enough to take them to

a new church.

Last winter I had the privilege of visiting a parish in Toronto that is discovering newness in another way. The Church of the Resurrection had suffered from seriously declining numbers for more than a generation, to the point where it was soon likely to have to close its doors. When they hired a new rector two years ago, the little congregation of thirty or so members also welcomed sixty parishioners from his former church—people who had made a commitment to bring new life to this flagging parish. The coalition has not been without its frustrations, but by and large there is a sense of excitement that the Lord is doing a new thing amongst them all.

So how do we respond to this in a church that was planted more than 250 years ago? I don't have any ready answers. Nor am I aware of any automatic formula that we can apply. Yet I am aware that we worship a God who declares, "I am doing a new thing!" (*Isaiah 43:19*), and that the good news that Jesus came to bring and that we proclaim is new wine that requires fresh wineskins (*Matthew 9:17*).

It doesn't mean that we are called to be novelty-seekers, always going after the latest fad. Jesus also told his disciples, "Every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old" (*Matthew 13:52*).

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FROM THE RECTOR (*continued*)

The key to all of this is surely the Holy Spirit. What matters far more than either innovation or tradition is that you and I be open to the power of the Holy Spirit. That means recognizing that the Christian life and the life of the church as a whole is a continuous work of transformation. It begins with conversion and it continues all the way to our resurrection at the day of the Lord. It is the blessedness of never ceasing to thirst for righteousness (*Matthew 6:6*). It is the adventure of recognizing that life in Christ is a journey where we never know what is around the corner, except that the Lord will be with us at each step along the way.

My prayer for all of us at St Paul's is that we might know that kind of newness, that our life together may never become routine or "old hat". Instead, each time we gather may there be a sense of marvel and anticipation at the new work that the Lord of heaven and earth is doing among us—and the earnest prayer on the part of each of us, "Let it begin in me."

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Submissions to ST PAUL'S JOURNAL are always welcome. The deadline for the next issue is 20 September 2002.

GARDEN PROJECT

We are seeking volunteers to help implement a new plan for the Barrington side garden on Saturday, 7 September. We will be cleaning up some of the old beds, digging new ones, trimming back tree suckers, moving existing plants, and planting new ones that have been kindly donated by members of the parish. We welcome anyone who would like to help, whether it is for a few hours or the whole day.

Plant donors: please deliver plants in the morning, if possible, otherwise other arrangements could be made if this is not convenient. We are also looking to **borrow some garden equipment:** shovels, rakes and a hand saw or tree pruners. Work will start at 9 a.m., and we will hopefully finish by mid-afternoon. Please contact Jennet Bowdridge at 443-8107 or jctb@fastmail.ca if you can help, or for more information.

WARDENS' CORNER

John Osler

"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into the harvest field" (Luke 10:2). In my two and a half years as a Warden at St Paul's, this is a passage that repeatedly enters my mind when I reflect on the life and ministry of our Parish. I am grateful and appreciative for the programs and ministries that have been established, are sustained, and are effective. Yet, I have a nagging sense that we could, and should, be doing much more given the resources of our congregation. I contend that we have a tremendous amount of unrealized potential to serve the Lord within our church, within the Halifax region, within Canada and in the world.

It has been my experience that we are able to articulate our shortcomings quite proficiently, but we are far less proficient at taking corrective measures. I offer these thoughts as a prelude to introducing the report from the Pastoral Ministry Task Force as it provides a wonderful opportunity in this regard. I am particularly keen to engage a larger portion of the congregation in all facets of our activities, to expand the number of volunteers, and to provide support and relief for those who have served, and continue to serve the Lord, faithfully and diligently. St Paul's should be a place that encourages everyone to grow as followers of Christ and members of the Church and a place that encourages, and presents opportunities, to everyone to serve Christ.

PASTORAL MINISTRY TASK FORCE

Parish Council initiated the Pastoral Ministry Task Force following the departure of our Associate Rector, Jonathan Eays. They have completed their work and submitted a

report to Parish Council. Their research included interviews, many conducted in person, with over fifty parishioners. This extensive consultation identified many strengths and weaknesses, or challenges, at St. Paul's. This includes some individuals who feel quite bitter and alienated. The report includes a summary of ministry needs, a model for ministry to respond to those needs, and some specific recommendations regarding staff requirements. When the report is distributed to the congregation, I pray that you will reflect carefully on its contents and the associated communication from Parish Council.

As an interim staffing measure during this process, Mike Amirault, a student at Wycliffe College, was engaged for the summer months to support the ministry of our Rector. Mike has a tremendous love for the Lord and enthusiasm for outreach. He has initiated the 'Fish' coffee house at St Paul's and we pray for the success of this ministry and for Mike as he returns to his studies.

RENOVATIONS

The renovations project is almost complete and I thank you for your patience despite the delays. The contractor and architect are reviewing a list of deficiencies that have been identified. In early September, the Renovations Task Force will meet to review the final report from the architect, to discuss furnishings, and moving material back into the renovated area.

One major surprise, and delay, was a rotten sill resting on sodden bricks on the north wall of the church building near the end of the wheelchair ramp. The damp weather earlier in the summer also delayed the plaster and paint work. There was careful con-

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WARDENS (*continued*)

sultation with the Archives Committee during the renovations to minimize disruption to this important aspect of our church life. Through consultation, planning, and acquiring some equipment, we have improved the facilities for the archives and the volunteers. We are grateful for the support of the Ladies' Guild, in particular for the stove and refrigerator that they have donated. We are also grateful to the members of the congregation who have supported the project financially. We are pleased to report that we have exceeded our fundraising target and are well on our way to collect the pledges.

The Property Committee has been busy tending to maintenance priorities identified in the first year of a three-year plan. The more visible aspects of this plan include replacing the roofs over the Chancel and on the Prince Street building. In addition, a contract has been awarded to paint the north face of the church building and is to be complete by the middle of September. Less visible aspects include replacing the oil tank in the Parish House, including the installation of a spill tray and warning system, and a similar replacement scheduled for the Rectory. They have also completed some maintenance on the sprinkler system and alarm systems.

STEWARDSHIP

As directed at the Annual Meeting, the Executive has initiated a stewardship campaign with assistance from members of Parish Council and some parishioners. The initial correspondence has focused on educating the congregation, explaining our sources of revenue and our expenses, as many at St Paul's seem to have a poor understanding of the financial operation of the church. In brief, all our sources of revenue may be

viewed as fixed with the exception of the regular envelope offerings. These must increase by approximately \$35,000, from \$145,000 to \$180,000, and that is the minimum required to sustain our existing programs without entering into a deficit situation.

As you are aware from the weekly bulletins, our envelope offerings are lagging well behind this target. The Wardens believe that the congregation of St Paul's is blessed with 'time, talent and financial resources' and that it is God's wish and direction to us that we share each generously. Our inability to recruit a chair for the Finance and Stewardship Committee also remains a serious concern, as there are significant financial policy issues that need to be addressed.

COMINGS & GOINGS

Lastly, I wish to recognize some arrivals and departures from St Paul's in the past few months. We are delighted that the Gibling family has returned safely from a sabbatical year in England. We have, or will soon, bid farewell to Pam Nash (moving to Ontario), Richard and Annika Gruchy (worshipping in Fall River near their new home), Howard and Hannah Falcon-Lang (returning to England), and Hugh Rising (moving to Ontario). All of these individuals have enriched St Paul's and it is with sad, but thankful hearts, that we wish them well in their new environs.

We have also had the opportunity to rejoice at the marriage celebrations of Kate and David Turner as well as Kate and Sean Therien. These events are all reminders of the active and rich church community life that we enjoy at St Paul's.

FROM THE KIDS' CORNER

Yvonne Messenger

The children are having a wonderful summer in the garden. During July we followed the life of Joseph and have learned that God wants us to trust him and do our best even when things look bad. During the month of August we have been looking at God's amazing creation and have focused on one part of the creation story each week. September is just around the corner and we plan to have an exciting and fun program for kids of all ages.

This fall, the Nursery, for babies and children up to 3 years, will be back in the Memorial Room. We will continue to have a teenager there to care for and teach our youngest ones. There will also be an adult volunteer present each week who will help supervise and care for the little ones.

Children aged 3 to 13 will make the move back to the Parish House for Sunday School classes near the end of September. All of the children will be learning the same themes and Bible stories, although activities are different according to age. We will continue to use the SALT (Sharing And Learning Together) program and our themes this fall include "Living God's Way" (a series on the commandments of God from the book of Exodus), and "Who Is Jesus?" (finding out about Jesus from the gospel of Mark).

Celebration! Sundays will take place on the fourth Sunday of most months and will be led by a creative and enthusiastic group of young adults and teens. This team will lead the children in worship and singing, and will teach the Bible lesson for the day in a creative way. Last year we saw this part of our program really thrive as the kids demonstrated the fun they were having worshipping God.

We will also be starting up a Parent and

Tot group for those of you with little ones at home. We plan to meet on the first and third Wednesday of the month, from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. We will meet for the first time on Wednesday, September 11 at the Parish House. Please join us!

As always, we are in need of volunteers for the Children's Programs. We would be delighted if you would be willing to use your gifts and abilities with our children. Please consider teaching, doing a supervising in the Nursery, or serving as a member of the Children's Program Advisory Committee. Above all, please pray for the work that God is doing among the children at St Paul's. We want Sunday's at St Paul's to be fun and enjoyable for all the children. We want them all to feel loved and comfortable in their classes. We want them to grow in their understanding of how much God loves them. Please also pray that God would touch the hearts of those he wants to help work with the children and that all of our volunteer needs would be met.

Feel free to contact me with any comments or suggestions.

DIVINE FIRE

Denise G. McKay

Fire is both a terrifying, yet fascinating power,
Within our world a fire burns somewhere each minute in an hour,
It could be a volcano spewing lava to the sky,
Or a simple family barbeque seen from traffic passing by.
A high rise apartment holocaust, with fire truck sirens in the night,
Someone watching dancing flames in the hearth, a relaxing sight.
An explosion on the highway, a tanker truck on fire,
Or a flame-controlled new rocket ship, sent higher, even higher.
Fire, although frightening can be a comfort too,
It's a necessary factor in the things we need, and do.
Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire from God,
He spoke to Moses midst a fiery bush on Horeb's desert sod.
Two sons of Aaron with incense offered 'strange fire' to the Lord,
But angry God sent fire and devoured them, by him it was abhorred.
Elizah watched the prophets call to Baal to answer prayer,
But Jehovah sent the fire that dried the soaking sacrifice there.
The Old Testament years were ended, and sacrifices done,
Because Jesus died, and rose again, sacrificed for everyone.
He's carried out God's wishes, the sacrificial plan,
For the saving grace of nations, every woman, child and man.
Soon after Jesus left this world the Holy Spirit came,
In the form of fire, sent by God, on each apostle's head, a flame.
The flame was just a symbol for the promise Christ had given,
That the Holy Ghost would enter them, and fit their soul for heaven.
They'd be equipped for teaching, some healing, and to cope
With every situation, while spreading good news of faith, joy, hope.

Written and composed with God's help for Pentecost 2002.

"... and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost..." *Acts 2::3,4 (King James Version)*

A QUOTATION WORTH REMEMBERING

"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more... It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home..."

From *A Place Called Home* by Melody Beattie

Submitted by Gretchen Gillis

BOOK REVIEW

Roger Bureau.

Slaves, Women and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis
by William J. Webb
InterVarsity Press, 2001

“Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? And are you determined out of the same holy scriptures to instruct the people committed to your charge, and to teach or maintain nothing as required of necessity to eternal salvation, *but that which you shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the same?*” (Book of Common Prayer, page 663 (my italics)).

This is the oath that is made by all ordained priests and bishops in the Anglican Church. As Christians, lay people must also be guided by the word of God as given to us in Holy Scripture. Yet this is a tall order because it is easy, as we all know, to find almost any passage we want to support our perspective of “The Truth”. It is for this reason that William Webb’s book on *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals* is so helpful.

Rather than select appropriate passages in scripture to support his agenda Webb thoroughly analyses Scripture from Genesis to Revelation to come to some understanding of the three main themes outlined in the title of his book. By this means he traces development of thought through the ages and comes to a point where he can track the changes in societal and theological attitudes over several thousands of years.... then bring them forward to the present day...and eventually to a perspective of what might be “ideal”. So he starts with “pagan times” moves through “biblical times” then to “our own culture” and ultimately to “an ideal

ethic”. His calls this is “redemptive analysis.”

Theological and cultural analysis go hand in hand. As society “progresses” it is interesting to note the ever-greater acceptance of women in the society. The same is true of the changes in the concepts of slavery, serfdom and eventually worker conditions.

Following the same analytical perspective on the subject of Homosexuality it becomes very clear that from a very early time in biblical history the objections to this became very strong and there is no clear biblical evidence of any changes occurring as culture changes. This is what he calls “transcultural”. His point being that in many things theology and culture clearly evolved but on other issues (such as of acts of homosexuality or bestiality and other key activities i.e. murder etc.) the basic tenets of society have not changed and theologically there is no room for flexibility.

One criticism I would have of Webb is that, in his attempt to be as objective as possible he covers the same ground from too many angles and so becomes repetitive. On the other hand the methodology which he uses provides a much more objective and sustainable way to analyze areas of dogma where disputes are likely to arise. Light reading it is not. But it is rewarding because of the depth to which he has gone to, to discuss issues that all too often are treated in a cursory and cavalier fashion.

WAYS YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

in Children's Programs:

- teach a Sunday School class (usually 10 Sundays in three months)
- supervise the Nursery 5 times this year
- do a Children's Talk once or twice this year
- join the Celebration Sunday team (10 Sunday commitment)
- be a member of the Children's Program Advisory Committee (4-5 meetings per year)
- provide and serve snacks at Parish House (2 times a year)
- lead music
- be part of a drama team
- share your special talent
- plan and do a craft
- be a Youth Group leader

THE GREATNESS OF GOD

Denise G. McKay

I've written more than once about the season of the fall,
 But I can't resist to say again, "it's my favourite season of all."
 Summer has its beauty, and spring comes fresh and new,
 And winter has its merit for certain sports to do,
 When autumn starts you know it, by the freshness in the air,
 And varied colour clouds whiz by, stiff breezes here and there.
 Good weather for the joggers, hunters prowl the woods,
 Country folk start canning, and harvesting their goods.
 The colours of the tree leaves, and bushes, berries, vines,
 Show us God's great handiwork in nature's own designs.
 It's amazing how each season, everything that grows
 Comes up on time, just when it should, exactly like it knows
 When to start the process, within God's master plan,
 His marvellous world-wide garden for the benefit of man.
 I'm glad there's changing seasons, something nice for one and all,
 Myself, I'll take the autumn, and those colours of the fall!

Written and composed with God's help for Autumn/Fall 2002

"God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend. For he saith to the snow, be now on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength." *Job 37:5, 6 (King James Version)*

IT'S A SMALL WORLD!

Gretchen Gillis

One lovely Sunday after church this summer, my husband and I met a young Japanese woman, here as a tourist *en route* to Prince Edward Island. As we chatted with her, we learned that her hometown is Gifu: the very same hometown as our young friend, Aya Nakanishi, who had returned to Gifu only a few weeks earlier, after almost a year of living and working in Halifax, and worshipping at St Paul's Church! *It is a small world!*

Aya came to Nova Scotia at the encouragement of a Nova Scotia woman who had taught her English, in Japan. When Aya arrived in Halifax in August, 2001, after a visit with her friend's family in Salt Springs, she knew absolutely nobody. But she was able to find a place to live, and a job. And one September morning, she came to our 9:15 a.m. service. A Christian, one of very few in Japan, Aya was glad to meet and make new friends here at St Paul's, as well as at work. By the time she was preparing to return home, Aya had made many good friends; we were sad to see her leave, but we knew she was returning to a loving, close-knit family who had missed her very much.

I want to include an excerpt from Aya's recent email, written August 6th. It seems especially significant as our world situation continues.

Aya writes:

Today (August 6) is the anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Some atomic bomb victims hand a story down to our generation. Have you ever seen some pictures about Hiroshima and Nagasaki? It was a hell on earth... Many people still have hard time. They were saved, but some people said they couldn't help many children who (were)

crushed under collapsed schoolhouse. The fire swallowed them. Some burning dead people...mother was down protecting child. The war makes people crazy. I pray the world will become peace.

We join Aya in her prayer for world peace; and let us pray, too, that God will bless Aya, and lead her to meet other young Japanese Christians who will pray and worship with Aya. God does love to bring people together.

LANDMARKS

We offer congratulations to:

- **Murray & Jody Knowles**, who celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in July
- **Helen Streb**, who turned 90 on 7 August
- **Karl & Parnell Perry**, who celebrated their 50th anniversary on 9 August
- **David & Phyllis Redman**, who will observe the 60th anniversary of their marriage on 22 September

Our sincere condolences are extended to Helen Streb and her family on the death of George, on 29 July.