



St. Paul's Journal

Eastertide 2020



Dear friends:

I am delighted once again to introduce a new issue of *St. Paul's Journal*, which once again presents the thoughts and words of members of our parish community; this issue John Baxter, Bryan Hagerman, Margaret Bateman Ellison, Mark Flowerdew, and Bill Lord.

We are of course in unusual times, and the stakes seem high. But it is not the first time as we all know; we've all heard of the Bubonic Plague of the mid-1300s, that may have killed as little as a third or as much as almost two-thirds of all Europeans. And only a hundred years ago successive waves of the global 'Spanish Influenza' ended the lives of many, estimates wildly fluctuating between less than twenty million and as many as a hundred million. Not to mention the 'moral' influenza of the Nazis who quite deliberately ended the lives of six million of God's ancient people, elevating centuries of prejudice into a murderous science. There are, sadly, many more of these deadly episodes in human history.

But then, as now, it's been important to remember what makes us human, and what makes us Christian in all times. A wonderful example has been left us in the stories of Jews making music and talking about philosophy in European death camps and Christians insisting on being at worship in the Middle East, knowing bombs could again be coming through their windows while they did so.

What makes us human, what makes us Christian, in all times? The essays and stories and poems within are written in different ways and from different points of view. Likewise, their subjects are wonderfully diverse: Mary Magdalene, coping with isolation, the resurrection, St. Paul's chancel, and, well, the pilgrimage of life. But they all offer perspectives on these two related questions. I hope you ponder them and appreciate them, as I have found myself doing.

Paul Friesen

Magdalene Through the Centuries

Margaret Arnold, The Magdalene in the Reformation (Harvard UP, 2018).

In *The Golden Legend*, a 13th-century compilation of saints' lives, Mary Magdalene is depicted as transported in a rudderless boat to the south coast of France where, in Marseilles, she converts the governor and his wife to Christianity. She also travels to Aix, bringing in more converts before retiring to a mountain cave where she lives a life of secluded contemplation. This account, like many others from this period and earlier, fleshes out the biblical narrative in some detail, inventing a good bit of material and (beginning with Pope Gregory in 591) conflating the explicit references to Mary in the passion narratives and in the account of the woman possessed by seven devils (Luke 8:2) with other figures, notably with Mary of Bethany and with the unnamed sinner who washes Christ's feet with her tears (Luke 7: 37-50). Sometimes the conflation reaches even further to include the bride from the wedding at Cana or the bride from the Song of Songs. And sometimes the invention endows her with a wealthy, landowning family in Galilee or takes her on a different, apostolic journey—to Ephesus.

The focus of Margaret Arnold's wide-ranging and wonderfully illuminating study is on the Reformation, but her first chapter gives a detailed account of "The Medieval Magdalene," and it establishes one of the primary reasons for the enduring popularity of Mary Magdalene. As an ordinary human—sinner as well as saint—she is in

some respects more accessible than the Virgin Mary (the embodiment of pious perfection), and in her ordinary humanity (especially in the conflated versions), she offers a wider range of human activity. She is, at the empty tomb, the grief-stricken witness and then the energetic speaker of the good news of the resurrection. She is the one who, in contrast with her sister Martha, chooses 'the better part' of enrapt attention to Christ's teachings. She is, with her tears and her ointment and her kisses, the penitent sinner who is rewarded with forgiveness. In these roles, she is consistently a model: for the sacrament of penance or for ascetic contemplation or for evangelism, the 'apostle to the apostles'.

At the same time, however, her authority as a model was not infrequently tested. Arnold shows that the humanists of the sixteenth century were aware that the Medieval Mary was in several ways a product of legend and of biblical conflations and that these needed to be disentangled if a reformed religion were to be based on an accurate understanding of scripture. Many of the Reformers, however, were content to retain at least some aspects of the composite Mary if that helped serve a theological point. One of the most fascinating aspects of Arnold's argument is the challenge it offers to conventional notions about the disappearance of the saints in the Reformation. This is in many respects the story of the saint who refuses to go away, even as she also sometimes appears a little less than saintly.

Martin Luther retains the conflation of Mary with the sinful woman of Luke 7, but he turns away from the earlier understanding which saw her as an illustration of the efficacy of penitence and interprets her as example of justification by faith alone: the woman's love for Christ is a consequence of his mercy not a summoning of it. Luther also re-interprets the relation of Mary and Martha: not a contrast between the contemplative and the active life but a coordination of them, with faith leading the way. On Mary as first witness of the resurrection, Luther is somewhat equivocal. He is happy to accord her equality with the other disciples and especially with Peter, since that equality works in support of his challenge to the supremacy of the Pope. He also understands that such equality has some far-reaching implications for 'the priesthood of all believers', and especially for lay preachers and female preachers, yet he is somewhat less than enthusiastic about fully endorsing the latter.

One of Arnold's most original contributions comes in chapter 3, "Publish the Coming of the Lord: Evangelical Magdalenes." It offers a quick survey of six different women from diverse regions (Germany, France, England, and Austria) who are all Lutherans in essentials, but who are rather more enthusiastic than he was about female preaching. Marie Dentière, wife of a French pastor, gets around St. Paul's strictures concerning women's silence (1 Timothy 2) by interpreting silence very literally and claiming that her sermon-in-letter form, Epistle to Marguerite de Navarre is "merely a personal communication, one woman to another." But she had the epistle published in 1539,

and it explicitly defends public, female preaching, drawing on the example and precedent of Mary. Catharina Regina von Greiffenberg, in seventeenth-century Austria, summons all of the different Magdalene roles in support of a public, religious vocation, and she tackles head-on the challenge of appealing to a "prostitute-saint" with a fundamentally Lutheran argument: the particular nature of the sin and the sinner are finally irrelevant in the face of an overwhelming salvation by grace alone. What is especially striking about these examples is, as Arnold puts it, "the Magdalene is an essential tool in the construction of a Protestant, female, religious subjectivity" (71)—and this process would seem to retain links with the way holy women looked for models in the veneration of the saints in medieval piety.

In the Catholic Counter-Reformation, too, appeals to this saint are ubiquitous, focusing frequently on the Holy Penitent and sometimes using her to refute Luther. Cardinal Cajentin argues (in 1532) that while faith may initiate Mary's repentance, "charity is the cause completing the forgiveness of sins" (98). Christ did say to her, "Your faith has saved you" (Luke 7:50), but he also said, "Many sins are forgiven her because she has loved much" (Luke 7:47). And this sort of emphasis on the power of love underlies a renewed commitment to charitable works, including, for example, "the work of Magdalene houses for converting and reforming prostitutes" (108). A fascination with the sexual sinner also produced memorable works of art, including masterpieces by Titian, Caravaggio, and Artemisia Gentileschi. Each of these has a

quite distinctive perspective, but all concentrate on the actual moment of repentance, which allows them to depict both the sensuous beauty and the remorseful penitent, simultaneously.

For many Catholic women, however, the focus is rather on the witness to the resurrection or on Mary of Bethany. Teresa of Avila, for example, when introducing reforms to her order, draws on ideas similar to those of Luther in striving to balance the active with the contemplative life: Martha is to receive credit equally with Mary. Other women, such as the Italian poet and humanist scholar Vittoria Colonna and Marguerite of Navarre are also deeply sympathetic to Lutheran ideas, even as they strive to reform the Church from within. Teresa, in fact, was called up before the Inquisition, which found her Protestant sympathies suspect. Nevertheless, being within the Catholic Church meant that most of these women tended to celebrate the witness of the resurrection less for her evangelical potential and more for her intimacy with Christ, for the potency of her love and commiseration.

For John Calvin, on the other hand, that commiseration is something of a problem, and in this respect he differs not only from Catholic reformers but also from Martin Luther, and of course also from the traces of the medieval tradition that had an ongoing life in the Reformation. For him, Mary's weeping at the empty tomb is a sign of emotional excess, of weakness, of a lack of faith. For him and at least some of his followers, there is no place for "sentimental pleading with God" (173), and they strip

away most aspects of the composite Mary, in an impulse that seems parallel with the iconoclasm that stripped images of the saints from places of worship. Arnold, however, also produces an interesting wealth of evidence showing that not all of Calvin's followers were willing to follow him in this regard. She cites in particular Theodore Beza, Calvin's successor in Geneva, as one who draws more fully on the Magdalene tradition and who praises her as a model, and in England a number of Reformed preachers follow suit, up to and including the Puritan divine, Richard Baxter. John Donne, with his characteristic flair, even uses the multiple identities of Magdalene as a way of offering praise to his friend Mrs. Magdalene Herbert (mother of the poet George Herbert). There is, he observes, so much good attributed to this saint, "that some [Church] Fathers be / Loth to believe one woman could do this; / But think these Magdalens were two or three." He then wittily suggests that his friend has simply added to their number, in virtue of her successful imitation of the good half (that is, the reformed half) of the life of St. Mary Magdalene.

From among the more radical Protestant sects, Arnold focuses on two who in very different ways look to that same life not to venerate the saint but, still, to invoke her example as a prototype of Christian belief. The first of these, the Anabaptists, did not seek to emulate Mary as evangelist, but they did see in her a model of fidelity to Christ that transcended familial bonds. By contrast, the Quakers were very much interested in the evangelist. Their English founders in the mid-seventeenth century, Margaret Fell and

her husband George Fox, sought from the start to establish the centrality of women's leadership in the Society of Friends, and in Arnold's words, "Quaker women openly claimed the mantle of preacher in the name of the Magdalene" (214).

The Magdalene in the Reformation is a striking achievement, a lucid and comprehensive survey of the multiple roles of the saint in the Reformation—or more accurately, in the Reformations (plural), Catholic as well as Protestant, including multiple waves of reformation in each camp. Saint Mary is an especially formative influence for women seeking a voice and a vocation within various religious communities, but she is equally inspirational for men as well. She is summoned as champion for large and complex theological and political issues, even as she is also the model for private devotions, and this book's

wealth of detailed examples of the latter show just how diverse and various these can be. The obvious follow-up to this study is to track the Magdalene in more recent centuries (and in her conclusion Arnold does offer a couple of illustrations from the African-American community in the 19th century). But whatever further transformations she may undergo, this saint is unlikely to disappear any time soon.

Parishioners of St. Paul's may be especially interested to know that Dr. Maggie Arnold, who grew up in Halifax, is the granddaughter of the late George Arnold, one-time Bishop of Nova Scotia. She is currently rector of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Cohasset, MA.

Submitted by John Baxter



Seven Stanzas at Easter

Make no mistake: if He rose at all
it was as His body;
if the cells' dissolution did not reverse, the molecules
reknit, the amino acids rekindle,
the Church will fall.

It was not as the flowers,
each soft Spring recurrent;
it was not as His Spirit in the mouths and fuddled
eyes of the eleven apostles;
it was as His flesh: ours.

The same hinged thumbs and toes,
the same valved heart
that—pierced—died, withered, paused, and then
regathered out of enduring Might
new strength to enclose.

Let us not mock God with metaphor,
analogy, sidestepping, transcendence;
making of the event a parable, a sign painted in the
faded credulity of earlier ages:
let us walk through the door.

The stone is rolled back, not papier-mâché,
not a stone in a story,
but the vast rock of materiality that in the slow
grinding of time will eclipse for each of us
the wide light of day.

And if we will have an angel at the tomb,
make it a real angel,
weighty with Max Planck's quanta, vivid with hair,
opaque in the dawn light, robed in real linen
spun on a definite loom.

Let us not seek to make it less monstrous,
for our own convenience, our own sense of beauty,
lest, awakened in one unthinkable hour, we are
embarrassed by the miracle,
and crushed by remonstrance.

John Updike, 1960.

The New Normal

“The New Normal” has become a buzzword in the existential reality of the Coronavirus. According to Dr Google normal is defined as; “conforming to a standard; usual, typical, or expected.” Given that definition normal is a relative term, based upon the society or era one lives in, where standards can change. For example, it is standard to drive on the left-hand side of the road in the UK. It is typical to have 12 hours of daily sunlight on the equator in Africa. It is normal to attend church on Sunday, if you are a Christian, (unless you are Seventh Day Adventist) a mosque on Friday if you are a Muslim, and a synagogue on Saturday if you are Jewish. Or a park, on any day you like, if you are agnostic.

However, what has been typical, standardized, and usual, is now rapidly changing worldwide as the result of the Coronavirus. Social distancing is not and has not been our standard practice in the past. However, it is a new reality that may continue for months to come, even when current restrictions and prohibitions are over. Going forward school may be reimagined, and family trips to a restaurant may mean a face mask (how do you eat that way?). Large masses of people meeting around a sporting event or an election may be curtailed for some time. The new normal involves many other restrictions. It is in part now being based on the time it takes for a vaccine to be developed and placed on the market. Even then, there will be some form of social distancing.

This asymmetrical form of life now emerging may change society for ever. It may in some way change how we relate to one another even after a vaccine is developed. But in the life of the Christian community how do we, how will we live? Francis A. Schaeffer wrote a powerful book entitled, “How Should We Then Live?” In the book Schaeffer attacked the values of humanism, where; values were relative and where humans are autonomous, and where there is no way to distinguish between right and wrong. Schaeffer also believed that this post-modern post-enlightenment approach would lead to fragmentation of thought. Certainly, many would argue that this new paradigm, this cultural change from the epoch of rationalism to relativism has brought a new normal.

Social distancing is the new standard, atypical to the former. And given our current reality as a church/parish family, how do we relate to distancing as a result of corona virus, and how do we care for ourselves and each other emotionally?

First of all, there are no emotional immunity passports within the Christian church or the greater world for that matter. There are however biblical passages that can give us great hope.

As we silo these days in our personal domains, we are in many ways affected by social distancing. There is a limitation on what we can do socially. We may find ourselves missing old friends, routines,

colleagues. We may feel anxious when listening to all the news, or we may find ourselves bored. There may be an emotional sense of being incarcerated in our domiciles, especially when we feel separated from loved ones in hospital, senior's homes, or those at a great distance. As a result of these circumstances, we are concerned. Mobility, our pre-existing norm, has been restrained. Consequently, we are feeling cooped up. Emotionally we may at times feel restless, angry, low, and irritable. The life events that we wanted to celebrate, (a prom, graduation, birthday, a funeral of a friend or loved one) are put off, and may not be held going forward. Seemingly cruel to us, loved ones in hospitals and nursing homes are off-limits. Our new limitations can create within us a feeling of disappointment and even despair. The new normal may also affect our closest relationships with those we love and who we are now in close contact with on a daily basis, and for some this may mean that patience runs thin, bickering arises and tempers can flare as former coping mechanisms have been stripped away.

So, we are forced to build new rhythms and routines, to create new paradigms in this new life. These rhythms and routines, and how we build them will greatly enhance our emotional wellbeing. Some of the aspects of those routines which can help to sustain us emotionally could be; the practice of daily spiritual disciplines, (prayer, bible reading/study) support within the home, the limitation of media into our lives, exercise, pet support, personal hygiene if we have to leave our home for the necessities of life, keeping social distancing outside the home,

journal writing, positive distractions like a puzzle or a family game, reading that book you have been putting off, working on home repair, contact through various media (phone, email, zoom) with friends and family.

Our current reality is however not all normative. The things that do not change are the values we continue to place on faith, family, friendships, emotional and physical health, and the ability to contextualize all of life even in the midst of a pandemic. Neither do the three great virtues of faith, hope love, become suspended. The sky is not falling in. God remains supreme, and his promises sufficient.

28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Matthew 11:28-30 New International Version (NIV)

*Submitted by Bryan Hagerman
Outreach Counsellor,
St. Paul's Church*

Beyond the Chancel Steps: *The New Paschal Candle Back Story*

After settling into days of sameness, having the Easter service video from St. Paul's was uplifting. Watching it, did you notice there was a new Paschal candle and stand? Plus, have you ever wondered why there is a Paschal candle and if it is used only at Easter?

Having recently acquired a new Paschal candle stand, it seems like a good time to provide the back story about the Paschal candle at St. Paul's. This year, as we are all well aware, was unique and this story is based upon three special things: significance of the candle, a sequence of events and parishioner spirit.

On Saturday of Holy Week, we could access online the Easter Vigil presentation featuring *The Service of Light*. It said a candle is lit, and included the following prayer:

Father, we share in the light of your glory through your Son, the light of the world. Sanctify this new fire, and inflame us with new hope. Purify our minds by this Easter celebration and bring us one day to the feast of eternal light. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

In normal times we assembled at the entry of St. Paul's on Saturday night and the Paschal candle was lit with a flame from a small sacred fire representing the light of Christ coming into the world. This represents the

risen Christ, as a symbol of light (life) dispelling darkness (death). A new Paschal candle was blessed, carried to the front and then lit throughout the Easter Season and also at baptisms and funerals.

If you remember, the Paschal candle at St. Paul's in past years was a large candle surrounded with lilies on a high pedestal at Easter and with lesser adornment at funerals. About a year ago the Chancel Guild decided to simplify the presentation and its maintenance throughout the Easter Season by acquiring a permanent candle stand and a slimmer taller Paschal candle. Little did we know that going in and out of the church to tend Easter flowers and lilies would be limited in 2020.

Sandra MacLennan kindly offered to donate a new candle stand in memory of her parents. Research found Broughton's in Toronto could supply what we wanted; an order was placed. The supplier guaranteed the chosen candle and stand would be delivered for Easter. Then came COVID19.

Contact with the supplier at the end of March indicated the stand was available. The candle, however, was not but a taller candle with another symbol was in stock. They agreed to ship stand and substitute candle but, where to? The office was closed. I was in 14-Day home isolation.

Then came the answer to prayer and the evidence of parishioner spirit. Peter Secord received the parcels at his home and delivered them to the Vestry. Samuel, our Sexton, unpacked the boxes and noted that the candle was likely too tall. Chancel Guild members Julia Atkins, Carolyn Tomlin and husband John Ferguson were scheduled to go in to set up the Easter flowers, the new stand and Paschal candle. Carolyn assured me, they had lots of experience adjusting candles. Meanwhile, I had received the invoice and found the cost of the substitute candle was double the one originally ordered. After a restless night, I had an idea. Instead of cutting off the costly candle we could use a 14-inch Christ candle from our Advent inventory.

The setup team confirmed the new candle was too tall. Still in isolation and well into micro-managing, I asked Julia to bring the candle to my house. After raiding my

collection of liturgical bits and pieces I was able to create a Paschal candle with an enhanced cross symbol. The Rector picked it up on his way home that afternoon. (All this while maintaining social distance.) The next morning Samuel inserted the candle in the new brass stand before videoing the Easter service. Our sincere thanks are due to all who helped in *Project Paschal Candle*.

So, now you have the back story to the candle you saw if you watched the Easter service video or service videos since Easter. Suspect you will likely be more aware of the Paschal candle in the future when it is lit at Easter or also at baptisms or funerals. Just don't let this Easter 2020 story distract you from paying attention to sermons in the future.

*Submitted by Margaret Bateman Ellison,
Co-Director, St. Paul's Chancel Guild*



Don't Know Where I'm Going

Don't know where I'm going — I don't choose the plan
I won't walk it perfectly, but I'll do what I can
Don't know when I'll get there, don't know what I'll see
Don't know where I'm going, but that's ok with me

Don't know where I'm going — someone better does
Can't say how much further, but I'm closer than I was
Maybe it's tomorrow, maybe it's today
Don't know where I'm going, but I know I'm on my way

Don't know where I'm going — following my prayers
Don't know yet which roads I'll get, but Yahweh put them there
Maybe greener pastures, maybe stormy seas
Don't know where I'm going, but I know who goes with me

They say I'm a grown-up — no longer a child
They say I should plan my life, but that may take a while
I wish I could tell you, I wish I knew more
Don't know where I'm going, but that's what faith is for.

Submitted by Mark Amadeus Flowerdew

26 January St. Paul White 10 am **All-Ages Eucharist** *BAS Kid's Roles & Gospel Story & Art Show* **Lunch**

Acts 26.9-23 *Psalm 67* *Galatians 1.1-24* *Matthew 10.16-22*

2 February Presentation of Christ *White* 10 am **Eucharist** *BCP*

Malachi 3.1-4 *Psalm 84* *Hebrews 2.10-11; 14-18* *Luke 2.22-40*

9 February Epiphany 5 Green 10 am **Eucharist** *BAS*

Isaiah 58.1-12 *Psalm 112* *I Corinthians 2.1-16* *Matthew 5.13-20*

16 February Epiphany 6 Green 10 am **Eucharist** *BCP*

Deuteronomy 30.15-20 *Psalm 119.1-8* *I Corinthians 3.1-9* *Matthew 5.21-37*

23 February Last Sunday of Epiphany Green 10 am **Eucharist** *BAS*

Exodus 24.12-18 *Psalm 99* *II Peter 1.16-21* *Matthew 17.1-9*

26 February Ash Wednesday Purple 11 am **Eucharist** *BCP* *6:30 pm **Eucharist** *BAS*

**Isaiah 58.1-12* **Psalm 103.1-18* **II Cor. 5.16 – 6.10* *Matthew 6.1-21*

1 March Lent 1 Purple 10 am **Litany & Eucharist** *BCP* **AGM & Lunch**

Genesis 2.15-17; 3.1-19 *Psalm 32* *Romans 5.12-19* *Matt. 4.1-11*

8 March Lent 2 Purple 10 am **Eucharist** *BAS*

Genesis 11.31-12.9 *Psalm 121* *Romans 4.1-17* *John 3.1-17*

15 March Lent 3 Purple 10 am **Eucharist** *BCP*

Exodus 17.1-7 *Psalm 95* *Romans 5.1-11* *John 4.1-42*

22 March Lent 4 Purple 10 am **Eucharist** *BAS* (*Sermon: Retreat Preacher*)

I Samuel 16.1-13 *Psalm 23* *Ephesians 5.8-14* *John 9.1-41*

29 March Lent 5 Purple 10 am **Eucharist** *BCP*

Ezekiel 37.1-14 *Psalm 130* *Romans 8.6-17* *John 11.1-45*

5 April Palm & Passion Sunday Red 10 am ***Procession & +Eucharist** *BAS Kid's Activities Lunch*

**Matt. 21.1-11 Is. 50.4-9a Psalm 31.9-16* *Philippians 2:5-11* +*Matthew 27.11-54*

8 April Holy Wednesday Red 11 am **Eucharist** *BCP*

Isaiah 50.4-9a *Psalm 70* *Hebrews 12:1-3* *John 13:21-32*

9 April Maundy Thursday Red 6 pm **Eucharist** *BAS* **Supper**

Exodus 12:1-14 *Psalm 116* *1 Corinthians 11:23-26* *John 13:1-17; 31-35*

10 April *Good Friday Colourless 12 pm **Liturgy of the Cross** *BAS*

*TBA: Multiple readings

11 April *Holy Saturday White 7.00 pm **Vigil of the Resurrection** *BAS*

*TBA: Multiple readings

12 April Easter Sunday White 10 am **Eucharist** *BCP*

Jeremiah 31.1-6 *Psalm 118.19-29* *Colossians 3.1-4* *John 20.1-18*

19 April Easter 2 White 10 am **Eucharist** *BAS*

Acts 2.14a; 22-32 *Psalm 16* *I Peter 1.3-9* *John 20:19-31*

26 April Easter 3 White 10 am **Eucharist & Confirmation** *BCP* (*Preacher & Presider: Bishop*)

Acts 2.14a; 36-41 *Psalm 116* *I Peter 1.17-23* *Luke 24.13-35*

3 May Easter 4 White 10 am **Eucharist** *BAS*

Acts 2.42-47 *Psalm 23* *I Peter 2.19-25* *John 10.1-10*

10 May Easter 5 White 10 am **Eucharist** *BCP*

Acts 7.54-60 *Psalm 31* *I Peter 2.2-10* *John 14.1-14*

N.B. Looking Ahead: 'Bluenose Sunday' (9.00 am 17 May); Ascension Sunday (24 May); Pentecost (31 May); Trinity Sunday (7 June).



St. Paul's Church
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Submissions to *St. Paul's Journal* are always welcome.

Why not submit a spiritual reflection, prayer, poem, or a book review?

The next issue of St. Paul's Journal will appear during the Pentecost II timeframe.

Deadline for submissions: 9am, Monday, June 8, 2020.