

# CORNERSTONE

February, 2015

20 Young Road  
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www.stpaulshk.org

**St Paul's**  
ANGLICAN CHURCH



“A growing community called to know Jesus Christ and make him known in the world by our presence.”

## Sunday Services

**8:00 a.m.** – Holy Communion Said service

**9:15 a.m.** – Traditional/Choral Holy Communion. Kids are invited to join the God Squad for children’s worship, crafts and games. Nursery care also available.

**11:00 a.m.** – Praise Music Holy Communion. Kids are invited to join the God Squad for children’s worship, crafts and games. Nursery care also available.

## Other Services

**10:00 a.m Wednesday** – Bible Study and Eucharist

**2:00 p.m. Thursday** – “Seniors’ Afternoon Out” Service and Social

## Inside this issue:

- **Messages from Father John and Father Craig**
  - **Ash Wednesday Program**
  - **God Squad Party Feb 22**
  - **Lenten reflection**
  - **E100 information**
- ...and more!**

March edition deadline:  
**Tuesday, February 24, 2015**

Please send submissions to:  
**cornerstone@stpaulshk.org**



## A message from Father John

### Reports, audits and financial statements

February marks a new cycle as we begin the journey towards Vestry. If we are not careful we could make the mistake that St. Paul's is about the bottom line and our ability to meet our financial responsibilities. At this time of year we look at our balance sheets and wonder if we are in better position than last year. We begin to think about obligations for 2015 and begin to make projections and targets. I think it is important to remind ourselves that all of these endeavours are important but they are not the central emphasis of our life.

Our community is called by God to fulfil His work in this place. How we make decisions, where we put our resources of time and money must reflect His will. I ask each member to pray for our common ministry and come to vestry and voice your thoughts and hopes. Together we can continue the Good work done by those who call this parish home.



## From the desk of Father Craig

### Journeying through Lent

I write this having just had Rev. Dr. Barbara Robinson preach and teach at St. Paul's. It was a reminder of how we are part of an amazing family of faith. A reminder of our need to hear God's word proclaimed and taught.

The good Rev. Dr. reminded me once again of our need to: "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." (1 Peter 3:15)

How does one prepare for this? Being grounded in God's word and ready for the work of the Holy Spirit. It is hard to believe we are in our tenth week of the E100. It has been a wonderful reminder to me at how God speaks to all times and places, and into the lives of individuals as unique, and normal ☺, as you and I.

I thank each person who has kept us in your prayers. I am always amazed at the level of support shown to the ministry and mission of our parish. I am thankful for your gifts of time and money you have entrusted to our care. I know the wardens and treasurer are always willing to answer questions and respond to inquiries.

Thank you to everyone who submitted reports and financial documents. Please take the time to read over all the reports and make sure to ask any questions. Then take some time in prayer and ask God if there is anything more that we can be doing. Help us to look at where our priority for the future should be.

Please come to Vestry and share your thoughts.

Peace, Love and Laughter,

We are looking forward to a great journey in E100 through Lent. We will have our Education Nights, as well as our Wednesday Monk's Lunches. Maureen and Elizabeth are lining up the speakers, and we will be blessed.

We have intentionally tried to follow our Lenten call, "to observe a holy Lent by self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, and by **reading and meditating on the word of God**" (emphasis added by me!).

I have been once again humbled at how God's word is so alive and life-giving. In our last Education night we placed the reading and meditating on God's word in the context of evening prayer. It just adds a fullness as we pray in community.

May we be guided by God's word, whether at vestry - "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's

*(Continued on page 3)*

(Continued from page 2)

grace in its various forms” (1 Peter 4:10) - or, maybe even in choosing a verse for your family for the coming year.

May God’s word always draw us closer to the Word made flesh, Jesus!

In hope,  
Fr. Craig+

## God Squad news

### Ash Wednesday, February 18, 2015

This year’s Ash Wednesday program, called “Come and Journey,” will be for kids in JK to Grade 6.

High school students can earn community service hours by volunteering.

Letters to the School and a Registration form are available in the church office.

Please bring your registration forms on Sunday, or pop them into the office during the week.

If you would like to volunteer to help prepare for this event, or participate on the day, please contact Allison Brooks through the church office 613-836-1001.



*“Come and Journey”*



### Who is yours?

### Sunday February 22 at 9:15 & 11

Are you  
4 to 12 years old  
looking for  
adventure, fun  
and games?



Come  
and  
join the quest  
in  
Rutter Hall

### Let the games begin!

## Lenten reflection

by Johan de Jong

### GIVE UP:

Anger - be aware  
 Bitterness - forgive  
 Complaining - be grateful  
 Discouragement - follow hope  
 Giving up - persevere  
 Gloom - focus on reality  
 Gossiping - enlighten  
 Judgement - understand  
 Hatred - return good for evil  
 Jealousy - value all gifts  
 Negativism - focus on growth  
 Pessimism - focus on love  
 Pettiness - mature  
 Sin - love virtue  
 Worry - trust

**A Response:** The original of this good advice appeared in the Parish Notices of St. Paul's on Sunday, 23 March 2014. I spent some time reflecting on what my advice would be in such situations and how I could further simplify the message given. This is what I came up with for now, but I soon discovered that I might have replied differently on a different day, reminding me that one should never arrive at a conclusion by preconceptions or momentary thoughts alone, but always weigh meaning as it forms in living, emphasizing that being a Christian is not a matter of identity or choice but simply walking the Christian path singing the Celtic prayer:

*Be the eye of God dwelling with me  
 The foot of Christ in guidance with me  
 The shower of the Spirit pouring on me  
 Richly and generously<sup>3</sup>*

<sup>3</sup>Appears in an explanatory leaflet of an Anglican Rosary made by the Solitaries of DeKoven, in the ECUSA Diocese of West Texas, USA

## Bethesda women's retreat February 27-29, 2015

For many years, ladies from St. Paul's, family and friends have come together for a weekend retreat.

Once again we have booked Bethesda for February 27, 28 & 29.

An email has been sent to past participants and at the moment we have room for 3 more.

If you'd like more information please contact Lorna in the office, 618-836-1001.



## Just for fun...

### Acts 2:38

A woman had just returned to her home from an evening of church services, when she was startled by an intruder. She caught the man in the act of robbing her home of its valuables and yelled: 'Stop! Acts 2:38!' (Repent and be Baptized, in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins may be forgiven.)

The burglar stopped in his tracks. The woman calmly called the police and explained what she had done.

As the officer cuffed the man to take him in, he asked the burglar: 'Why did you just stand there? All the old lady did was yell a scripture to you.'

'Scripture?' replied the burglar. 'She said she had an axe and two 38s!'

Send this to someone who needs a laugh today and remember: Knowing scripture can save your life - in more ways than one!

*Submitted by Leslie Littlefield*

# E100 information

by Elizabeth Kennedy

## GUEST PREACHER:

On Sunday, January 25th, the Rev. Dr. Barbara Robinson from St. Paul's Anglican Church in Brockville preached at all three services and we were so blessed to have her with us! Her calm, compassion and intelligence permeated her sermons and her answers during the Q&A session. She gladly spent much of the day with us, and continued to answer questions and to engage in discussion even after her coat was on and she was heading out the door to another commitment in Brockville.

Now, I am not usually the best person to provide a synopsis of a sermon, as I usually catch about 10% (at best), with my attention divided between two children, trips to the bathroom, dealing with snacks, trying to quietly answer questions (this week it was "what does world without end mean?"), but I did focus during the Q&A session and I was blown away by all of her answers, but one stuck with me. Someone had asked whether it was better to read the Bible in a small group or alone. She explained that for her, she is able to engage more deeply in study on her own, but that she equally appreciates the care that she receives through her small group study. Perhaps I need to extend this thought to my own expectations of Sunday services. At this stage in my life, the knowledge that I am retaining is limited, but the care that I get is abundant.

**Thank you to everyone who contributed to the luncheon** - I know that Barbara greatly appreciated the effort that went into it.

## YOU CAN STILL SIGN UP!

If you would like to join in the E100 Bible reading challenge it is not too late to sign-up. Just add your name to the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the narthex.



## LENTEN EDUCATION EVENINGS:

Please join us for Bible reading, Teaching and Fellowship on the six Tuesdays in Lent from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. in Rutter Hall.

February 24  
 March 3  
 March 10  
 March 17  
 March 24  
 March 31

All are welcome to attend! Please sign-up in the narthex.

## UPCOMING READINGS

O.T. - THE STORY OF JOSEPH  
 N.T. - THE MIRACLES OF JESUS

### February 1 - 7

Sold Into Slavery Gen. 37:1-36  
 Feeding the 5,000 Luke 9:1-36

### February 8 - 14

Prison and Promotion Gen. 39:1-41:57  
 Walking on Water Matt. 14:22-36

### February 15 - 21

10 Brothers Go To Egypt Gen. 42:1-38  
 Healing a Blind Man John 9:1-41

### February 22 - 28

The Brothers Return Gen. 43:1-44:34  
 A Demon-Possessed Man Mark 5:1-20

### March 1 - 7

Joseph's Identity Gen. 45:1-46:7  
 Raising of Lazarus John 11:1-57

# Reading with Yoder

by Johan de Jong

*“All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.”* (2 Timothy 3:16, 17, NRSV)

This essay is a personal synthesis of ideas found in a book by Perry Yoder, *Towards Understanding the Bible-Hermeneutics for Lay People*. Perry Yoder is a Mennonite who reflects on his own extensive background in reading the Bible. My comments which may diverge somewhat from his discussion have been placed between brackets.

## I - WHAT IS GOD'S LANGUAGE?

Historically the Bible is a complex collection of separate texts, which differ in age, language, style and contents. Hence understanding the Bible in part or as a whole is a daunting enterprise, the outcome of which depends on the attitude and the perspective adopted by the reader. The first question posed by the author is what interpretations are legitimate and which ones are not. And at the outset he dismisses three approaches towards understanding the Bible: (1) Bias based on personal ideas and beliefs; (2) *Pars pro Toto* - using an understanding of part of the text as a framework for understanding the whole of the Book; (3) Literalism - using the literal meaning of the text as the only meaning (which he considers to be just another form of personal bias).

How then can we hear the Bible rather than listen to ourselves? And, how can we hear God's message? In the tradition of the Church the Bible is understood as a collection of documents, written in the contemporary, common languages of people long past, showing all idiosyncrasies of their human authors, but written, collected and edited under divine guidance. As such, the Bible can be seen as representing God's interaction with mankind, a record of the Holy Spirit interacting with the faithful in history, with the potential of being 'incarnated' among the people living now, reading the text and hearing the message.

Even understanding the Book in this way, does not necessarily ensure receiving and understanding the di-

vine message. What is needed is a balanced use of reason and faith in reading, interpreting and understanding the text. Yoder suggests a twofold approach:

(1) Analytic: “a correct method of interpreting the canon”, a rational, objective analysis of the text, not influenced by particular religious perspectives or personal beliefs, to reveal the editorial intent of the Book as a whole; finding the intent of the author and the response of the audience to the text of each separate section in the Bible.

(2) Faith-based: finding the editorial unity of the Book in terms of faith; interpret the meaning of each separate section within that unity; and translate the historic message of God within the present situation, as perceived or experienced by the faithful.

[Yoder's advice is directed to individual readers of the Bible, but it is important to remember that for most of Christian history, the faithful only heard the Bible by taking part in the liturgy or listening to recitations of selected parts in a community setting. Within that context there was no problem understanding Scripture, as Church, culture and community provided the framework for hearing and responding to the message. Hearing the Word of God only became a problem when society changed and religion became a personal quest. People gained access to personal Bibles and started reading the Book outside an ecclesiastical setting, as they did any other book, and focus on the authenticity and/or meaning of each separate story. This process of objectifying the text accelerated when different 'authentic' translations emerged, soon followed by a wealth of learned, critical studies, providing different interpretations of meaning. Yoder's advice on reading and hearing the words of the Bible is clearly directed to readers in such a situation.]

## II - WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

**Exegesis** - Yoder's first task is to find a rational way to understand the text, hear the voice of the author and test the competing interpretations by the audience as they are recorded in that text; a construction of meaning from a text by word study and language analysis.

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**Duality** - Unlike mathematics the correlation between sound, symbol and meaning in language is very elastic. All words are essentially metaphors which derive their meaning from current common use. Language can convey singular meanings - usually in concise lines limited to a specific field and using words leaving no doubt as to their meaning. However, in ancient texts, language often conveys conventions of meaning, which are foreign to our current understanding. The ambiguities may not only result from a current misreading of the text, but could well have been intended by the author, allowing for several interpretations by the audience, depending on different perceptions of the situation sketched and different attitudes of the people involved. In such cases the interpretation of the text will be different for different groups among the audience.

**Intent** - What did the original author mean to say? The original intent of the author of a document has an intrinsic duality of its own, since it can only be fully understood in relation to a particular audience and a particular situation. As such understanding the text emerges from an analysis of the author, the audience and our understanding of the situation. So, in searching for the intent of the author, we have to look both at how the author uses language and how the audience (or audiences) might have received them.

**Meaning** - Within the preceding context, understanding a text does not necessarily lead to finding its "meaning". Yoder suggests that the "meaning" of a text should be described in two ways: (1) the expectation of the author in relation to an intended audience; and (2) the "meaning" given to the text by that audience, as deduced from their situation and their response as recorded in the text. The first is primarily determined by the written text and the second by our knowledge of the audience and our understanding of their situation in terms of their reported response and subsequent action.

**Significance** - The "meaning" conveyed by the author in his text may not be the same as the "meaning" or what Yoder prefers to call the "significance" given to it by the audience for whom that text was designed. He considers the intended "meaning" of the author as fixed, since it is written down and solely defined by the text. But he considers the "significance", which is mainly deduced from the response of the audience as variable, because it depends on the perspective adopted by a reader in regards to the way in which the message was given and how the audience reacted to it.

So far the focus of his analysis has been on the "meaning" intended by the author in relation to a particular audience, but within the dialectic understanding described above, the "meaning" of the text can only be fully understood by independently establishing the full "significance" attributed to the text by the audience hearing, reading and responding to the text. And it is at this stage of the analysis that Yoder considers the use of pertinent information outside the text.

### III - UNDERSTANDING "MEANING"

**Hermeneutics** - Misunderstanding the "meaning" of a text is most likely the result from preconceived ideas about the "significance" of the text. Hence a correct interpretation may require careful consideration of all available data on the audience and the situation under which the communication took place external to the text. So, for the next phase of analysis Yoder uses a process of understanding a text which focuses on goals, applies data which may be external to the text, and validates the results in terms of the resulting understanding of the text. Now he is not interested in the details provided by exegesis but in the results of all the methods of analysis used towards reaching a set goal: validating the historic setting of the text and finding a most plausible "meaning" for the text. In comparing the text to data from other sources, careful attention should be given to: (1) the conventions of the language used in the text; (2) the historic context within which the text was written, consider all possible situations that may have influenced the author and audience; and (3) identify pre-suppositions the author may have had in writing the text.

Yoder suggests three types of external information that might provide the right kind of data for interpreting a biblical text: (1) the historical context as identified by unbiased research on the geography, society, culture and language used at the time of writing the text; (2) the composition of the language used in the text within the context of other literature found in contemporary texts; and (3) the possible motivations the author may have had for writing the text at that particular time. By using these three approaches in conjunction with each other one may arrive at a most likely fit, providing a plausible setting within which the document could have been written.

[It is important to note that "understanding" derived from external sources, as listed in the preceding analy-

*(Continued on page 8)*

sis has changed over time; and that the value of the data generated has to be carefully considered due to the assumptions, goals and criteria used by the academic disciplines that produced the data. Although all these different methods of analyses may sound bewildering, the good news is that most of it has been done for us. During the 20th century, understanding the text of the Bible has been greatly facilitated by several new translations of the Bible under the umbrella of most main-line churches and has resulted in the publication of a variety of excellent Annotated-, Study- and Reference Bibles, providing condensed, pertinent and up-to-date information from the rich supply of Biblical research, which is usually complimentary and seldom contradictory. Hurray!]

[Yet Yoder's review is still of value because it emphasizes that the Bible has never been an oracle in the Greek tradition of Delphi, giving cryptic answers to vexing personal or public questions. The divine message always emerges as a concrete resolution from an intensive dialogue between God and mankind. Reading the Bible is like praying to God, a communication often resembling a struggle, taking place in the mind of readers, at two interacting levels: first, generating a full understanding in mind and heart of how God interacted with his people in history; and, secondly an inner transformation of the readers resulting from hearing the historic message and applying it to their present situation.]

#### IV - UNDERSTANDING IN FAITH

Understanding the Bible has been discussed as an objective process to understand the "meaning" and the "significance" of a text within the context of an unbiased neutral perspective. The question that arises now is how does a person of faith read the Bible differently than one without faith? One answer is that the faithful read the Book primarily as a divinely inspired perspective on the human condition and a guide for living life, while a person without faith may read the Bible in terms of one or more of the analytic perspectives discussed above ... folklore, history or literature. Another is, that within the context of a religious community, people read the Bible primarily as a source of personal and community renewal by sharing a common understanding of the Bible as a document of divine experiences collected by people of faith throughout the history, which provides a timeless framework for finding the right path in life for present and future generations.

As an object the Bible is just a book written over a long

period of time, but valued and used within the context of a community of faith the document becomes the "Living Word", a vehicle for the work of the Holy Spirit in their midst. By reading the book, the faithful create a situation pregnant with new initiatives, personal change, commitment and action. Yoder suggests that personal commitment, action and behavioural change among members of the faithful are the most significant indicators of a full "hearing", a full understanding of the spiritual meaning and significance of text within the Bible.

[As a religious canon the Book has no intrinsic authority of its own, except that the individual writings were born in communities of faith, first among the exiled people of Judea, then followed by persecuted Christians, and finally the documents were collected, authenticated and adopted as a canon by emerging religious institutions, such as the Church and Rabbinical Judaism, and brought forward into the future to remain alive in the ongoing search for divine meaning by the faithful up to the present time. In this search the authority of the Bible is renewed in an ongoing dialectic between author, audience and situation. In order to understand the continuing dynamics of this process, full weight should be given to the role of each of the three elements in this process.]

[The "Word of God" is a metaphor which stresses the role of the divine author of the Bible to the exclusion of the human audience. By making the author the sole authority this term fails to recognize the process of mutual exchange by which divine inspiration and faith are born and sustained. Not surprisingly the same term has often been used to strengthen the role of the institutional Church by limiting or controlling the interpretation of the document by the faithful. In contrast the term "writings inspired by God" fully recognizes the human context within which God was experienced, the documents were written and continue to be read, evaluated and selected as part of the Canon. The 'Word' arose in history from the communications of God with selected communities of faith. This work of inspired authors and editors, as well as the ongoing efforts of human audiences receiving, collecting, preserving and using these writings, thereby keeping them alive over the centuries, could not have existed outside communities of faith.]

*Towards Understanding the Bible-Hermeneutics for Lay People*  
Perry B. Yoder, Faith & Life Press, Newton, Kansas: 1990  
Read & Interpreted by Johan de Jong, 28-12-2014





## St. Paul's Agora

Do you have something you would like to sell, trade, or give away?

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