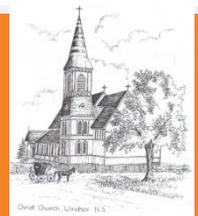


Christ Church Chronicles

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Rector's Ramblings

September's air is the clear, tall air of summer's ripeness and is rich with the fragrance of the fruitfulness of the Fall. In Alistair MacLeod's short story, *The Closing Down of Summer*, there is a sense of transition; the end of the summer and the beginning of the Fall, to be sure, but, even more, the sense of profounder endings and beginnings which belong to cultures in the passing away of certain traditions while struggling to grasp their deeper and essential meaning. There is a kind of meditative *break-through of the understanding* about matters of spiritual and cultural identity.

Spiritually, the Collects of the Prayer Book provide a similarly deep meditative experience. They offer a way of understanding. They place us within the grand and rich narratives of creation and redemption. They place us with Christ and in his body, the Church.

Consider the Collects for the Eleventh and Twelfth Sundays after Trinity. The first speaks of God's "almighty power" as being shown "most chiefly in mercy and pity". This becomes the basis for the petition "that we, running the way of thy

commandments, may obtain thy gracious promises". The paradox of power as mercy becomes the basis for our labours in order to obtain what God wants for us, his "gracious promises". The second notes God's readiness to hear our prayers despite our reluctance to pray and reminds us of a critical and crucial truth: God wills to "give [us] more than either we desire or deserve". What a splendid thought! We confront the shallow shortcomings of our desires at the same time as we are opened out to the largeness of God's goodness which alone can conquer our fearful hearts and minds. The divine mercy opens us out to a larger view of life than what we could possibly have on our own.



The task is to be open. "Ephphatha, that is, Be opened", Jesus says in the story of the healing of "the one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech". A healing miracle, it suggests that our wholeness or salvation consists in our hearing and speaking the high things of God. Without that

openness to the transcendent mystery of God and, especially, the God who engages our humanity from within the very ground of creation our lives are empty and impoverished. Yet God "give[s] us those good things [for] which we are not worthy to ask".

September marks the return to the regular patterns of our ordinary lives. It equally marks the return to what is quite *extraordinary* in those patterns and habits, namely, the things of God's grace opened out to us in the life of the Church. It is in that context, perhaps, that we can best understand the Anglican Church of Canada's *Back-to-Church Sunday* project for Sunday, September 25th. At Christ Church, it will also mark the beginning of a series of Choral Evensongs.

One of the principal glories of our Anglican heritage, Choral Evensong has often been sadly neglected in our Parishes. It is time to revive it and, perhaps, to find ourselves renewed by it. Five Choral Evensongs are planned for the year: September 25th, October 30th, November 27th, April 29th and May 27th. The services will be at 4:00pm in the Church.



The year 2011 marks an especially important spiritual anniversary. It is the **400th anniversary of the King James Bible**, a remarkable literary work which has shaped so much of the spirituality of the English speaking world. Sponsored by the Prayer Book Society, the October 30th Choral Evensong at Christ Church will feature several choirs from our region. Special guest speaker will be **Dr. Jim Gow**.

The Christ Church Book Club will meet on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm with *one exception* – the November date is now November 22nd. Among the various (and eclectic!) works for discussion are Charles Williams' *Descent of the Dove*, Jaroslav Pelikan's *Jesus Through the Centuries*, Ayaan Hirsi Ali's *Nomad*, David Adams Richards' *Incidents in the Life of Markus Paul*; *Champlain's Dream*, by David Hackett Fischer, and *Reading for Pleasure in an Age of Distraction*, by Alan Jacobs. Again, it is a way of being opened to the larger patterns of understanding that are part of our lives in prayer.

Along with the **Choral Evensongs**, I am delighted to call your attention to the **Christ Church Concert Series**. The first concert will be on Saturday, September 24th, 2011, and will feature the **classical guitar duo of Eugene Cormier and Matt Martin**. On Sunday, December 18th, there will be 'A Concert for Christmas' featuring **Paula Rockwell, Owen Stephens** and others. On Monday, April 9th, 2012, the **Acadia University String Ensembles** under the direction of **Christoph Both** will perform and on Saturday, June 9th, organist **Garth MacPhee** will give a concert. These concerts will take place at 7:30pm in the Church.

Other events include the very successful **Newfoundland, Irish and Country Evenings of Musical Entertainment**. These dates are Saturday, October 1st, 2011 and Saturday, April 28th, 2012, 7:00-9:00pm, in the Parish Hall.

The year 2012 will mark the 350th anniversary of the **mother book** of the Books of Common Prayer, **the 1662 Book of Common Prayer**, which has also played such an important role in the shaping of the English language globally. 2012 is also the 50th anniversary of **the 1962 Canadian Book of Common Prayer**. No doubt, we will have opportunities to celebrate these important milestones.

So it begins and on it goes. The patterns of prayer and praise are about our constant endeavour to enter more fully into the mystery of God who blesses us so richly with his grace and favour, giving us far "more than either we desire or deserve".

Roofs. It never ends. The Parish has committed itself to re-shingling the roofs of the Church over the next several years.

Birthdays. Happily, they never seem to end either! We congratulate Helen Gibson and Bert Galley who celebrated their 92nd birthdays; Eileen Demone who celebrated her 89th, and John Devenney who turned 87 and is still singing! At the other end, we congratulate Bev and Jacoba Morash on the birth of their latest grandchild, a boy, born to Marianne and Joey Peters who were married at Christ Church several years ago.

The **Calendar of Services and Events**, though tentative, provides a much needed road-map for our manifold activities. May we serve our Lord in all of this busyness with very great simplicity.



Rev'd David Curry