



# St. Paul's Journal

## *Pentecost 2015*

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### *Sacrifice?*

It's been a while since an issue of *St. Paul's Journal* has been released, what with parish office re-organization, staff and volunteer re-alignment—and the busyness of the parish over the last year, traces of which lie between the lines of the parish reflections and reports which follow.

What do a war-time Rector's report from 1917, a set of Good Friday meditations from this past Holy Week, and a report of a 'Titanic Tea' this past June, have in common?

Well, it is hard to avoid the hard word, 'sacrifice'. But it was Jesus himself who said that there was no greater love than to lay down one's life for another (*John 15.13*). It is

important to say that it has never been a part of the genuine Christian faith to urge 'sacrifice for the sake of sacrifice'. But sacrifice for the sake of others has its roots in both the life and words and works of Jesus of Nazareth, who we confess as Jesus the Christ; God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God.

The spirit of true sacrifice, for Christians, is always a response to the sacrifice of Christ, most especially in his victorious, vicarious death for us. This is why, after rehearsing the death of Christ on our behalf, the Apostle Paul says, 'I appeal to you therefore, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice...your spiritual worship.' (*Romans 12.1*) This is why the celebrant

prays, in one of our liturgies, after rehearsing Christ's sacrifice 'once offered', that God 'accept this our sacrifice of *praise and thanksgiving*.' It is why the whole congregation says together, a little later in response: 'And here we offer and present unto [you], O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto [you].' And it is why in the wonderful words of *Morning Prayer* we speak of worship extending into the rest of our lives: 'that we show forth [your] praise not only with our lips, but in our lives.' Sacrifice begins in our worship of Jesus Christ; it extends beyond these pages that follow into our *Gospel* mission to the rest of the world.

*Paul Friesen*



***St. Paul's Yearbook 1915: excerpts from  
The Eighth Rector's Nineteenth Report***

"It is always a high spiritual privilege to offer thanks to God for His blessing and His grace. And this surely is our bounden duty in connection with the work of this great parish, which everywhere bears evidence of the loving and gracious care which God in His mercy has vouchsafed to us. We may well thank God and take courage.

The year 1915 is one which while the world lasts, will stand out in history, as a time of great stress and strain on account of the vast world-war which filled every moment of its time. Our Empire called to the defence of liberty and freedom against tyranny and oppression rose with God's blessing to the

supreme heights of sacrifice, risking all, and giving all, standing ready to perish rather than allow the enemies of truth and righteousness to triumph. Canada has made an enviable name by the willing offering of her sons for service, and by the splendid devotion of our brave Canadians in the field of action. They have upheld with magnificent courage and splendid self-sacrifice the noblest traditions of our Empire.

Old St. Paul's has so long been associated with the Naval and Military forces, that it is natural for her sons to respond to duty's call. The services of our Church minister to the highest patriotism. We live and labour in an atmosphere surcharged with loyalty to King and country. It is not surprising then, to find that St. Paul's has given such a long list of devoted men to both services. And I question if any other Church in the Dominion could show such a high proportion of well qualified and specially trained men as those who have gone forth from St. Paul's for active service. The proportion of officers is very high. The number of Serjeant- Majors and serjeants of training and experience is noteworthy. While the rank and file is made up of as fine a type of men as ever marched under the standard of our King. The large enlistment makes a heavy draft upon our own forces in Church work, for some of our most valued and useful workers are in active service leaving vacant places it is most difficult to fill. And one class alone in the Sunday School, well-called "The Loyal Workers" has given over forty members to the service of King and Country.

The duties of the Rector, always heavy enough, have been greatly increased by the War. Three years ago the committee of the General Synod called me to the office of Secretary of the Committee on Prayer Book Adaptation and Enrichment, an office involving much labour and of the most difficult and exacting character. At the outbreak of the War, as Chaplain of the 66th Regiment, I was called out to active service, with it consequent duties of Church Parades at Headquarters at York Redoubt, and also at Chain Lake Camp; while from week to week visits had to be made at all the centres of activity in the western command, as well as on patients in the Military Hospital. This work has all appealed to me with special force, and has been to me a perpetual source of delight. And while I have made every effort to keep up my work as your Rector, I am conscious that many duties have been left undone. I must therefore thank you for your great consideration in overlooking all my shortcomings in this particular and can only plead that I have endeavoured to do my best under all circumstances."

"The opening of our two Mission halls to the Sailors and Soldiers on this Station has proven to be a wise movement, meeting at once a great need, and affording an opportunity of bringing good influence to bear upon our brave men who are upholding the cause of justice and right under the banner of our King. There has been a good attendance and the efforts put forth for the comfort of the men, and the recreations provided have been warmly appreciated."

*The Rev'd Dr. William J. Armitage  
Rector, 1897-1929*

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## *Parish Worship at St. Paul's*

### *Good Friday Meditations: 10 April 2015*

#### **Dawn Henwood: "Father, forgive them."**

Sometimes when I read the Bible I feel as if I'm watching one of those silent black-and-white films in which people move jerkily and too quickly, Charlie Chaplin style. Scripture is just so succinct that sometimes the stories feel almost rushed to me.

Take Luke's account of Jesus's execution: "Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with [Jesus] to be executed. When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left." We get just three short syllables—the word "crucified"—to sum up the tortuous nailing of a live body to a wooden cross.

"Crucify," it seems to me, is a kind of technical jargon—a word created to signify and to contain a cruel technology of death. It's far too easy, especially in the Protestant tradition, to skim over the word quickly without recognizing all it implies. Good Friday forces us to slow down, to manually reel out the film strip so we can take in the crucifixion story at its true pace and realize its true depth.

To do that also involves confronting another word that too often functions as jargon: forgiveness. Within the church, it's so easy for us to speak almost glibly about it,

without realizing what it actually means to live as a forgiven person.

What does forgiveness really mean? I'm not even an amateur theologian, so I'm left struggling for synonyms and metaphors from my personal experience. I have one of each to offer to you today.

I'll start with the synonym, which comes from my experience with a prolonged bout of mental illness: "radical acceptance." In the jargon of the mental health community, "radical acceptance" means accepting that illness is part of life and that brain chemistry does not determine worth. People with chronic depression, people with schizophrenia, people with bipolar disorder we will always have with us, and "radical acceptance" means loving them as they are, not as we wish they could be. (And radical acceptance applies to ourselves as well as to others.)

This, it seems to me, is Jesus's message from the cross. "Father, forgive them," he simply says—not, "Father, forgive them; they're just not on their best behaviour today" or "Father, forgive them; they will be better behaved tomorrow." Radical acceptance means that God's love extends to us from the cross to exactly where we stand.

But, boy, radical acceptance can be hard to accept. Because who wants to really be the

kind of person who needs it? It's much more satisfying to think of ourselves as basically good people who occasionally slip up than to acknowledge that we are just as much in need of forgiveness as were the two thieves crucified alongside Christ.

For me, a powerful metaphor for radical acceptance, for forgiveness, comes through in the parable of the Good Samaritan. It's a metaphor that came to me at a time when I was greatly distressed but finally starting to recover from depression.

Depression, of course, slows the world down—and it slowed down my reading of the parable so that on this day I'm thinking of I felt I was seeing the action almost in slow-motion, and as if I were in the midst of it. You remember how the parable begins, I'm sure: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half-dead."

Now, most times when I've heard or read this story, I've skimmed quickly over this part because it's really just the set-up for the main action. The man who's attacked has no name, no occupation, no ethnic identity. We know less about him than we do about the other characters in the story. He could be anyone.

But I had not realized he could be me.

I'd been used to viewing the parable of the Good Samaritan as a story about how to love or as a scolding about failing to love. But I had not seen it as a story about the

need for love, about brokenness and pain and the experience of grace. Until the moment when I saw myself in the man lying by the side of the road, exposed and bleeding, I could not really appreciate what it means to accept God's grace, the grace shown by the Good Samaritan and summed up in those three words from the cross, "Father, Forgive them."

Most of us put up a lot of defences against God's forgiveness, defences that prevent us from living as the healed and healing people God means us to be. I think the Episcopal scholar William Countryman has some wise words for us as we listen today to Christ's voice to us from the cross, and I'll close by sharing them with you:

The message of forgiveness says to us "Get over yourself!" Get over your goodness and your righteousness, if they threaten to keep you from full participation in your humanity. Get over your faults, your inadequacy, if they're what hold you back. Get over whatever it is that makes you self-obsessed, whatever makes you reject God's wooing of you, whatever makes you feel that you would rather not go into the party, whatever makes you feel like you belong to some separate and superior race of beings, whatever makes you feel like an eternal victim, whatever keeps you from living a real human life, whatever makes you imagine that there's something in this world more important and more fundamental than love.

***Good Friday Meditations: 10 April 2015***

**Gordon Flowerdew: "Today you will be with me in Paradise."**

One of the criminals who was crucified along with Jesus hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God, since you are under the same death sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Which of the many characters in the Easter story describes the role that we are playing today? What is our individual and collective role in history? Am I one of the Roman soldiers, eager to divide up the spoils of Jesus's clothing? Do I make fun of those who are a little different? Am I a bully? Am I one of the lofty Sanhedrin priests, hypocritical? Am I one of the thieves crucified alongside Jesus? If so, am I the repentant thief, or am I the thief who never took the trouble to listen to what Jesus had to say, who never took the trouble to explore the possibility that there might be some truth to his claims? Are you one of the disciples? Which one? Scared as hell? Brazen and headstrong but not really thinking what you say? Are you a doubting Thomas? Am I Judas, obsessed with money-money-money which I relentlessly pursue regardless of whether it means that another person suffers innocently as a consequence? Are you one of the women in the story? The women are identified as compassionate, emotional, and practical. Perhaps they were not as innocent as they are portrayed in the account. Are we mere

bystanders, watching the world go by. Doing nothing very much about it. Driving our cars. Flowing with the tide.

We all play a role in the Easter story. We are all on a journey with destinies; destinies that in one sense are shared and in another sense are individual. If we work together, we can benefit from our mutual support, encouragement and shared knowledge. We are fellow travellers and we can make a difference, although it might not always appear so.

"Today you will be with me in Paradise." Just what do we know about Paradise? A nice place, for sure. Will there be a social hierarchy. If so, will it be similar to the social hierarchy here on earth? In Mark's gospel (10:31) we read: Many who are first will be last. It doesn't say "All" but it does say "Many". One of my favourite verses in scripture is in Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians (13:12). I will insert a few extra words reflecting my personal interpretation but in essence I think Paul's understanding of paradise is as follows. He writes: For now we see [God and all things] through a glass, darkly, but then [when we get to Paradise, we shall see God] face to face. Now I know in part; but then I shall know, even as I am known.

I'm a great believer in science. When there's something I don't understand, I try to explain it from a science perspective. I'm one of those geeks [?] who believes that unexplainable biblical phenomena are manifestations of our limited knowledge of the physical world. Just as our understanding of God is like peering

through a glass darkly, our knowledge of science also resembles peering through a glass darkly. At every point in history we have marvelled at our science knowledge. What we have been slow to realize is that our knowledge has always been and always will be finite: like a drop in an infinite bucket. While biblical miracles were miraculous in terms of their timing, plausible science-based explanations have been proposed. I'm thinking of rainbows, objects in the sky that illuminate our days and our nights, various physical phenomena that enabled the Israelites to flee the Egyptians, survive in a desert, and that guided them towards Mount Sinai. As far as I am concerned, Christian theology and science are 100% compatible. While some Christian tenets that originated through human ignorance may need to be debunked, it would not surprise me if by the end of time, which might not be so far away, all aspects of the story of Christianity that we currently accept on faith will ultimately prove to be consistent with science, even including such things as the virgin birth, the divinity of Christ, and salvation through his death.

"Today you will be with me in Paradise." Many years ago, John Newton delivered a sermon here at St. Paul's, part of which has stuck in my mind ever since. He was talking about death and what happens after death. Not an easy sermon topic from the perspective of a priest's personal experiences because none of us (or at least no one that I know, other than Jesus himself) has crossed over and returned to tell us what it is like on the other side. We can talk about what God has done in our lives here on earth. But after we die? We only know what Jesus told

us, or what we read in the book of Revelation.

In his sermon many years ago, John Newton described a popular conception of death in which the soul is released from the human body like a canary released from the captivity of its cage and flying away to canary Paradise, perhaps a warm temperate climate. After the winter we've been having, I love that image. It struck me as a wonderful romantic and blissful metaphor of what death will be like. At the time I was eager, and still would be today, to embrace the notion of my body returning to dust while my soul ascended to Paradise like a canary released from its cage. Imagine my dismay when John then told us that there was no scriptural basis for such an image. A few days later, at Kejimkujik Park, I asked him if he had an alternative image that I could use and that was more scripturally based. He spent a good half hour trying to help me understand how he envisioned Paradise, as described in the Bible. Unfortunately for me, it was at an intellectual level that was way too complicated for me to understand. The Book of Revelation is no children's storybook.

So here I am. Struggling with my cognitive limitations not just with regard to life after death, but also with regard to how we should relate to non-Christians, our involvement in politics, and what truly are the appropriate contemporary take-home messages in the anachronistic stories of political favouritism in the Old Testament. That's me. How about you? How about us? How are we doing as individuals, as a Church, and as a human race, in terms of accepting,

cherishing, acting upon, interpreting for the benefit of others, Jesus's supreme sacrifice, his gift of eternal life, undeserved?

***Good Friday Meditations: 10 April 2015***

**Olive Swinski: "Woman, here is your son."**

The words that Simeon speaks in this passage are those of a dying man. Simeon was a prophet who was told that he would not die until he saw the messiah. So, when Jesus enters the temple with his mother, Simeon recognizes Jesus as the messiah and states what Jesus will do and that he, himself can now die. When I first began to read this passage, I immediately recognized it. A few summers ago I had the opportunity to work at an Episcopal camp where each morning we would say Morning Prayer or have the Eucharist and in the evening we would have compline. If you were to live in a monastery, there would be different services throughout the day, the last of which is compline, which happens right before you go to bed. Compline is a quiet service, where at the end, Simeon's words are said. Since I had said compline every night for an entire summer, I had become very familiar with Simeon's last words. With my familiarity, however, I forgot that the passage does not end there.

After Simeon has his revelation, he turns and speaks to Joseph and Mary and Simeon directly tells Mary the Jesus's missionary work will "pierce her heart with a sword." Although these are Simeon's last words, this is the first time that Mary really finds out about the life that Jesus will lead. Mary did

hear from the angel Gabriel, but this is the first time that Mary hears from a human source what Jesus' life will be like. With children and babies in particular, we tend to think that their lives are filled with hope and promise. Jesus as a child still holds all of that promise; however, Mary knows that his life has death written into it from the beginning.

Jesus is also aware of his fate. He knows from the beginning that he has a divine mission and that part of it includes his death. As a concept, this is easy to understand, but as Jesus gets closer to his death, the human implications of him dying become more prominent. Jesus is both divine and human, but I find that Jesus' divinity and humanity are on a gradient. I find that at times, Jesus allows his human side to really shine. One particular example of this is when Jesus says "Woman, here is your son." At first I thought that Jesus was talking to Mary and saying that here he was, on the cross. However, when you look at the context, Jesus is talking to one of his disciple (most probably John), and tells Mary that this man is her son, and then he turns to John and tells him that Mary is his mother. After this introduction, John takes care of Mary.

At this time, most likely Joseph is gone, meaning that Mary is a widow, and most likely Jesus (the oldest son's) responsibility. By transferring his responsibility of his mother to his friend, Jesus, in some of his last words, is taking care of Mary. In its most basic form, a son who is about to die is making sure that his mom will be ok once he is gone. This is an extremely human act.

What does this act say about Jesus? I find that Jesus is not only more relatable when he is being more human than divine, but also that he is an exceptional example of what we should aspire to be. By taking care of his mom, Jesus points to the love and compassion that is within most parent-child relationships. I am not a parent, so I can't really relate with Mary, but I am a child, and therefore I can relate with Jesus. At this point in my life, I am making that transition from a child being taken care of by their parent to a child taking care of their parent. Responsibility comes along with growing up, and the responsibility one has to their parents just increases as times goes on. Knowing that even as he is on the cross Jesus still takes care of his mom, sets for us an example of how we should treat our parents and those we care about.

### ***Good Friday Meditations: 10 April 2015***

#### **Peggy Toole: "My God, My God - Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me!"**

These are not gentle words. This is a call of a son to his father. Of Man to his Creator. We are not invited into the moment - we are observers only.

This is the Universal Cry for help that has been heard since the beginning of time. It can be the cry of one man or it may be the cry of a nation. It is phrased as a question.... but it is more a prayer. It cannot but be intensely personal. It is the razor sharp call that banishes any illusion of personal power and which transfers the ability to endure to a power greater than any one person or group of people. These words spoken from the

cross are ones of isolation and a wakening to reality.

It is a cry of NEED... which rises and will continue to rise to the Heavens... acknowledging the Supremacy of God. IT IS THE CALL OF THE SPIRIT ASKING FOR HELP.

Not a cry of despair, not even one of abandonment, but one of CONFIDENCE that affirms there is a path we can find, there is a prayer which we can raise, a voice which shall answer.

One of the wonders of our Christian faith is that it allows us to make our own choices. However, we all recognize that the responsibility rests with us to find a reasonable path to reach our goals and to fulfill our destiny, whatever we deem it to be. In childhood, when we need help, we call on our parents, defining not only our dependency, but also defining the responsibility that our parents have accepted in giving us a family environment in which to dwell. It sometimes takes a lifetime to realize how much we are indebted to good parents.

Eventually we must make the ultimate choices, nurtured by the strengths of our parents, the opportunities that have opened to us and their dedication to our well being.

We are all born in the image of God which our Faith leads us to acknowledge.

That nucleus within each of us that is a part of God develops as we take on responsibility for our own growth and recognize our deep

spirituality. We do grow and that is good..... but the aura of self-sufficiency is somewhat an illusion and subject to indecision and failure.

There comes the crossroads when we seem to lose our way or are overwhelmed with burdens too heavy for our strength to sustain. Our faith permits us to seek help from a higher power.

Who has not called on God when we seem overwhelmed ....and who has not received an answer?

No one who asked has ever been refused.

The answers are as diverse as the questions and depend on how we listen and what we choose to hear... how close we are to the cross and where we stand can make the difference.

Life is in itself an individual journey. We choose, on our way, to find joy, renewal, sorrow, fulfillment, love or hate, beauty or bounty - much in proportion to how much we value each of these elements. This may be determined by our personal goals and our own self respect.

The end result of our enrichment and development will still be found inadequate to some of the tasks of living or dying. And so we ask again and again.

In prayer it is wise to quietly wait for the answer. The answer will come. It may be simply the still small voice of calm which sews up the ragged edges of our reason and once again allows us to function and to face

situations with faith and self control, encouraging us to use our own resources.

The ultimate answer may indeed NOT be fulfillment... but it may well be that most precious of all gifts - Hope.

This, the gift of HOPE, for me is the ultimate gift of the Cross.

### ***Good Friday Meditations: 10 April 2015***

#### **Derek Hounsell: "I am thirsty."**

We shall not cease from exploration  
And at the end of all our exploring  
We will arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.

T.S. Eliot

Our lives are full of activity, we rush here and there; little time for rest, to consider, to reflect. On this day, at this special time, let us journey once again to the Cross and meditate upon all it holds.

Let us prayerfully hear the familiar words, and seek understanding of God's intentions for us and the world.

Jesus said, "I thirst."

Our awareness of humanity, our physical nature enables us to enter into this moment. Jesus has experienced torture, both mental and physical abuse in extreme measure, and approaching death he knows the dark depth of sorrow and doubt. As we meditate, we feel his anguish. Yet even now, as N.T. Wright puts it, "There is Jesus, no longer desiring but still intending to do God's will."

Good Friday is just that - Good Friday - because Jesus is not a failed Messiah, but triumphs, even on the cruel cross.

Jesus says, "I thirst."

His body longs for drink.

His soul is tormented as he thinks of the needs of the world,

And His Mission.

He was well aware of what many of his time considered their needs: the driving out of foreigners who controlled their land and their lives; the reform of the Temple where the leadership followed the wish and will of the Roman overlords. Many looked for a warrior king. In three short years, in word and deed, Jesus brought a different message, and called all people to share the life of God's intended kingdom - in peace and love.

Jesus said, "I thirst."

Interestingly, this particular phrase, in the NRSV translation, is found only in John. In one respect this is not surprising because water, the source of life and salvation, very much flows through John's gospel:

John 2. The wedding at Canaan - His first miracle, fully showing the change He brought.

John 3. The encounter with John the Baptist.

John 4. Woman of Samaria; where Jesus used the occasion to talk of "the living water." Those that drink of this water will be

thirsty: Those that drink of the water I give will never be thirsty."

John 6. Jesus walks on water.

John 13. Jesus washes the disciples' feet - what stronger message of how we should regard and treat each other.

And in John 19: "After this when Jesus knew all was finished, he said, (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." This moment was a fulfillment of the long foretold scriptures.

Jesus knew the scriptures. He knew this moment had to come. Perhaps reciting scriptures (psalms) made the cross bearable.

John, the Gospel writer, knew his scriptures. For both, Jesus and John, the moment of the cross is really not about approaching final, destructive death, but a climactic moment when Jesus, through God, approaches a mementos victory.

The sequence, the pattern of events was well written in Psalms. Consider ps. 69 - a prayer for deliverance from persecution which begins: "Save me O God for the waters have come up to my neck."

And ps.22, a plea for deliverance from suffering and hostility which begins: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Both these Psalms conclude with a cry of triumph, as in BCP p. 501 Ps. 22 (v.19-21 and v.27-31).

Jesus said, "I thirst."

The word thirst can imply loneliness, isolation and desolation.

Yet, throughout the Gospels we are reminded of the relationship between Jesus and his father, God - a relationship most evident in the context of prayer - and Jesus wishes us to know the value of prayer.

In John 11 v. 41 with his friend Lazarus already in the tomb he says: "Father I thank you for having heard me... but I have said this for the benefit of those around me."

Jesus prays; he encourages prayer. And not simply petitions. Recall his time away from the towns and crowds. Time for listening and reflection. The road to the cross was not a rushed, chance event. Jesus prays, hears and obeys:

John 16 v. 5: now I am going to Him who sent me.

John 17: Father the hour has come to glorify your son, so that your son may glorify you.

Later in the garden, while Peter sleeps. He prays fervently...that the hour might pass from him, but...When Jesus hung on the cross, there can be no doubt that God, as always, was present...and that Jesus was aware of the presence. In this context... "I thirst." might very well be part of a prayer. "I thirst," and we might add, "but if it is your will."

May we seek to know and do God's will today, and all the days of our earthy lives.

We shall not cease from exploring

And at the end of our exploring

We will arrive where we started

And know the place for the first time.

T.S. Elliott

### ***Good Friday Meditations: 10 April 2015***

#### **Tom Sellers: "It is finished."**

It is finished. The immediate question arises – what is finished? When we think more than casually about finishing anything, we begin to realize that nothing in our human lives is ever really finished. Most of us have spent considerable periods this winter shovelling snow. We look forward to the last snowfall. Are we finished shovelling? Well, just temporarily – we will have snow again next winter. When spring is fully here we will get the lawnmower out and cut the grass regularly, perhaps even every 5 or 6 days when growth starts and then maybe every week or 10 days. Grass cutting will finish in the fall, but only until the next spring.

When someone dies, we can perhaps say more definitely "it is finished", but even then the influence of that person over family and friends in what they have said, done and believed continues – and so on. So, is anything ever finished?

Jesus said very definitely "It is finished". These words are found only in John's Gospel – John 19:30. In English it is three words but in the Greek it is only one word – an accounting term that means "paid in full". We have to ask what was paid in full? Jesus was declaring the debt owed to his Father

was wiped away for ever – not His debt but the debt owed by mankind – the debt of sin.

In the Jewish faith, the high priest went into the holy of holies dressed up in the best of linen and covered with priceless stones and diamonds to beg forgiveness for the sins of his people once per year and for one nation. The high priest could be dead and replaced by another before the next year. Yet at the crucifixion we have one man staggering under the weight of the cross who is going to take all the grief and sin, not of one nation but of the whole world – and not once a year but once and for always.

When Jesus said “it is finished” he means he had eliminated the debt owed by mankind – the debt of sin. That which He had been sent to do was to provide atonement for the sins of all who would ever believe in Him and to reconcile sinful people to a holy God. Only God in the flesh could accomplish such a task. All the prophecies of Jesus life, ministry and death contained in the Old Testament were fulfilled and finished at the cross.

Most importantly the power of sin and Satan was finished. Jesus' finished work on the cross was the beginning of a new life for all who were once “dead in trespasses and sins” but who are now made alive in Christ.

“It is finished” - it is a shout of victory – the work you gave me to do, the mission you sent me to accomplish is finished.

***Good Friday Meditations: 10 April 2015***

**Bill Lord: “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.”**

This final cry that Jesus utters on the cross is, like the preceding six words, probably so familiar to most, if not all, of us that we may fail fully to comprehend its significance. In these next few minutes, therefore, I would like us to reflect upon it and, if possible, hear it afresh or as if for the first time.

The words that Jesus uses here are from Psalm 31 v. 5, viz, “Into your hands I commit my spirit; deliver me Lord, my faithful God”. Immersed in the scriptures as Jesus was from his boyhood, and throughout his earthly life, it is not surprising that quotations from the psalms would spring naturally to his lips, especially in times of great stress. Indeed, throughout his ministry, beginning with his temptation by Satan in the desert, Jesus referred time and again to the Hebrew scriptures. They were as much a part of his life, and just as necessary to him, as food and drink. So here, as he prepares to give up his life on earth, he uses these familiar words from Psalm 31.

There are, however, as you probably noticed, a couple of small but significant differences between the verse and the words which Jesus uses.

First of all, Jesus prefaces his quotation with the word “Father” and secondly, he omits the latter half of the verse, “Deliver me Lord, my faithful God”. I would like us to think about and reflect on these differences, and then consider what they might tell us

about Jesus and, thus, our relationship to him and to God the Father.

To give some context and background to the psalm from which Jesus quotes we should note that, in all probability, it was written by David when he was being pursued by King Saul and his army, at grave risk of being captured and of even losing his life. However, despite the real and imminent danger in which he found himself, David placed his entire confidence in God's ability and willingness to deliver him from his enemies, and to keep him safe. Thus, when he penned the words, "Into your hands I commit my spirit", he was not thinking of his death but, rather, trusting his life to God's safe-keeping.

It's important to note that the psalmist doesn't address God as "Father"; in fact, it would never have occurred to him to do so. The notion of God as being a Father to his people can, of course, be found throughout the OT; however it was never used in the first person, e.g., as a child might address her father, 'Daddy'.

How much more personal, therefore, does the psalmist's statement of trust in a loving God become with the simple addition of the word 'Father'. It reveals the beautiful intimacy with the first person of the Godhead which Jesus enjoyed in eternity past, and which will never again be broken. It also speaks of an assurance of being accepted, of being welcomed home.

However, can we imagine the reaction of those surrounding the cross who heard Jesus cry out, 'Father'? For some, it confirmed

them in their conviction that he was a blasphemer, a heretic, who deserved to die. For a few others, however, there would surely have been the dawning realisation that the wonderful, mysterious, loving relationship that appeared to exist between this man hanging upon a cross and the Creator of the universe could, in some sense, be theirs also.

You may have noted that Jesus used the term 'Father' in the first and last words only. As we heard from Andrew, Jesus had earlier cried out, using words from another psalm, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Clearly, he had felt utterly abandoned; indeed, at that moment, in the extremity of his agony, Jesus may even have feared that his relationship with the Father, unbroken until now, was severed for ever. Perhaps this is why, for the first and only time recorded in Scripture, Jesus did not (perhaps could not?) address God as 'Father'.

But now, although still suffering the excruciating agony of crucifixion, Jesus recognizes that his obedience in accepting death on the cross has totally restored his relationship to his Father. Not that it had ever been truly broken; it was simply that, as the prophet Habbakuk had written 600 years earlier, God "is of purer eyes than to look upon evil". At that moment, therefore, God had been forced to turn his gaze away, as his beloved son Jesus became sin for us, i.e., took upon himself all our sins and paid the penalty for them.

And this is where we turn to the second significant difference; Jesus' omission of the latter half of Psalm 31:5, "Deliver me Lord,

my faithful God". Why would he not have quoted the verse in its entirety? Well, as we know, some twelve or so hours earlier, Jesus had prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, "My Father, if it is possible, take this cup from me". We cannot begin to imagine the horror and revulsion with which Jesus contemplated his coming ordeal. How grateful we should be, therefore, that he continued his prayer with the words, "Yet not my will, but yours be done". He knew that, to bridge the gulf between God and humankind, and to restore the relationship which had been broken by sin, it was necessary that he sacrifice his life on the cross. So, unlike David, whose plea was that God would deliver him from those who were conspiring against him, Jesus faced them resolutely, in full knowledge of what awaited him.

Now, hours later, following the travesty of a trial and his resulting crucifixion, Jesus is about to enter into the presence of his Father. Remember that, even in these last few minutes on the cross, Jesus was still fully in control of events; the laying down of his life was absolutely self-determined! As he told the Pharisees at one point, "No one takes [my life] from me; I lay it down of my own free will ... I have power to lay it down and power to take it up again". So then, having accomplished the work which God had given him to do on earth, Jesus called out, with confidence and complete trust, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit" and gave up [Literally, 'breathed out'] his life. As one commentator has put it, "This commending his spirit to his Father has been termed his entrance-greeting to heaven' ... Jesus was going home!

So what does this mean for us? Well, if we have placed our trust in Christ, we can, like him, confidently commit ourselves to God's safekeeping, both now and for the future. As Jesus once told his disciples, he was going to prepare a place for them and that, one day, he would come back and take them to be with him. This is the glorious promise which, today, on Good Friday, we can only anticipate but which, with Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday, became a reality, first for the repentant criminal and then for all who can say with confidence, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit".

As we reflect upon these seven words from the cross, may we each acknowledge, with the hymn writer, Isaac Watts, 'Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all'.

### ***Parish Life & Mission at St. Paul's***

#### ***Titanic Tea, 13 June 2015***

"Every person was someone you would want to have in your lifeboat!"

The 13th of June proved to be a lucky day this year and the sun shone on our Parish Project. Thanks to contributions of money, food, time, and effort, St. Paul's Titanic Tea was a success.

Earlier this year it was suggested we should have a project to draw parishioners around a special occasion - a project to raise funds as well as to help parishioners become better acquainted. In bygone days Chowder

Lunches were held weekly during Lent in the Church Hall and a tent was regularly set up on the Grand Parade for a Strawberry Tea at the Church Fair on July 1st. Blessed with a history of parish projects, several members of the Chancel Guild asked, "Why not have an afternoon tea?" The next question was, "But where?"

Learning the house bequeathed to the women of Halifax by George Wright, now managed by the Council of Women, was available, planning began. The Titanic theme was chosen because George Wright, a parishioner of St. Paul's, had bequeathed the Victorian mansion just prior to his sailing on the Titanic. A little research into afternoon teas in the 1912 era and of what had been served in the Titanic's dining room, helped to form our tea menu. The date was set and food was requested.

Scones and clotted cream were created as well as cucumber, chicken, and salmon sandwiches, lemon tarts, tea breads, and other sweets. The menu received high praise from guests for quality and variety. Some claimed it was the best tea they had ever attended. Thanks to many parishioners who graciously loaned tiered cake plates and teapots, guests received personalized service in a setting that was traditional and entertaining. Like afternoon teas in the 1912 era, music was provided. Pianist Ian Bent who has specialized in music from the Edwardian era performed throughout each of the two seatings.

Our youth, both young men and young women, who served also contributed to the atmosphere of the event. They were a joy to

see as they served guests and socialized with them. Guests were most complimentary. The young men were praised on wearing shirts and ties.

The idea to include a Silent Auction was also well received. Parishioners contributed a number of outstanding items. Thus people were enticed to actively participate. At the end of the event we found we had raised more from the auction than from selling tea tickets.

The team of helpers who worked behind the scenes (ages 8 to 80+) pulled together and although the Butler's Pantry provided limited space proved "many hands lighten the load and can accomplish much". From transporting supplies, setting up tables, arranging plates, making tea, doing dishes, to finally seeing things cleared away, including doing linens, and returning items that were loaned, it was a great experience and a privilege to have worked and socialized together. Every person was someone you would want to have in your lifeboat!

Would we do it again? Time will tell. The venue limited us to serving 120 people, 60 per seating. Regrettably we only sold 75% of our tickets. The earlier time was the most popular. In retrospect the system for selling tickets would need to be different. Another venue that allows more people per seating and has a service kitchen would be helpful. But this year's venue supported the Titanic theme and people told us they enjoyed the atmosphere created at the George Wright House. At the end of the day many parishioners were joined together in a common cause and \$3300 was raised for

outreach activities. As a result contributions have been made to: The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund, The Rector's Discretionary Fund and The Fish.

A sincere thank you to everyone who contributed in creating the event and/or participated by attending. We have shown afternoon teas are not out of fashion and many people enjoy wearing a hat to tea. Plus we benefitted from having many talented and willing people at St. Paul's. Another year? Another theme? Another venue? More people involved? An earlier date? More tickets sold?... Time will tell.

**Margaret Bateman Ellison**

***St. Paul's and the Great War "For King and Country" June – September 2015***

Our summer exhibition is greatly indebted to the many hours of research by Tinker McKay (who provided us with so much of St. Paul's own history to work with) and to the astute eye and design sense of Mike Vavra who created the didactic panels that enliven the stories and lives of some of those who worshipped at St. Paul's a century or more ago. The exhibition had grown out of conversations with Tinker as she shared the many interesting glimpses of our shared parish and individual stories as they related to the era of the Great War. Photographs, sketches, excerpts from texts and personal correspondence helped describe the character and qualities of the young soldiers who joined the war effort – and that of their families and friends, and the clergy of St. Paul's. The recurring motif in the exhibition was the Memorial Arch at St. Paul's that

bears the names of 91 young men who died in that conflict.

Indeed, the exhibition's narrative (very much like a work-in-progress, and likened to an archeological dig that daily brings new finds to the surface) is *our* story today as parishioners of St. Paul's. It should not strike someone as strange to find these images and stories on display within a church. With the men and women whose lives are highlighted in this exhibition we have all been baptised into a shared new and eternal life. In a homily, Br. Mark Brown (SSJE), refers to the physical church as a kind of threshold between two infinities, the one "behind us the certainty of decay and demise of all things – and before us the eternity of true life [.] A church can be a place where we come to know that this new infinity is our birthright. That having called us up and out of non-existence, the Creator invites us to be with him in the place of infinite life. The place where the Saints have gone before us."

*Then he said, to me, Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely." Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord your God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord.'*

*Ezekiel 37.11-14*

**Ian McKinnon, Parish  
Artist-in- Residence**



# Frank Albert Symons

Born 28 April 1869  
Killed in action 30 April 1917  
Age 48



Colonel Frank Albert Symons, CMG, DSO, R.A.M.C., born at Halifax 28 April 1869, baptized 27 May 1869, was the fourth of five sons and six daughters of John Hughes Symons of Devonshire, who came to Nova Scotia in the 1840s. Frank chose medicine as his career. Beginning in 1887 at Dalhousie Medical College, he went on to Edinburgh University graduating in 1891 with the degrees MB and CM. He joined the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1896, served in the South African War, the garrison at Malta, and by 1911 had left his wife and four young daughters in the more healthful climate of England while he served in Ceylon and India.

In October 1914 he was Commanding Officer of No. 1 Casualty Clearing Station in France. For "service in connection with operations in the field" he was awarded the DSO in February 1915 and promoted Lieutenant Colonel. In the New Year's Honours List 1917 he was created a CMG. On 30 April 1917, as Assistant Director of Medical Services, he was returning from tending the wounded at Arras when he was killed by a shell. A tribute from a fellow officer published in *The Times*, London, May 10, 1917: "He died at his post doing his duty as always. He was a gallant officer, gifted above all of us, and a true friend who was universally beloved and respected. His place will be difficult to fill, and it is cruel that such a career as his should have been cut short by such a mischance."

Rupert Symons placed a brass plaque here on the first pillar in memory of his brother. The battlefield cross that first marked his grave in France is now part of his memorial in the Cloisters of Salisbury Cathedral, England.



St. Paul's  
and the  
Great War  
"For King  
and Country"





*Our Student Guides for this summer: Marina Bruggeman (left) and Bailey Bowden (right).*

### *Marina Bruggeman*

I am Marina and I am entering my second year of law at Dalhousie University. I am originally from Ontario and I completed my undergraduate degree at the University of Guelph where I double majored in Classical Studies and Criminal Justice and Public Policy. I was very pleased to be a summer guide at St. Paul's. As a student of history, it was an honour to work in such an historic location.

*Marina Bruggeman*

### *Bailey Bowden*

Hello there! My name is Bailey Bowden, and I am so pleased to have had the opportunity to return to St Paul's for a second term. I previously worked here in the fall of 2014 during the height of the cruise ship season. I am currently in my fourth year at Mount Saint Vincent University where I am in the Public Relations program with a minor in Family Studies. I have enjoyed seeing new faces and meeting new people.

*Bailey Bowde*

**St. Paul's Church, Halifax**  
**Liturgies & Readings: Pentecost Season 2015**

Revised 10 June 2015

14 June	<b>Pentecost 3</b> Green	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BCP
	I Samuel 15:34-16:13		Psalm 20	II Corinthians 5:6-17 Mark 4:26-34
21 June	<b>Pentecost 4</b> Green	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BAS
	I Samuel 17:1-49		Psalm 9	II Corinthians 6:1-13 Mark 4:35-41
28 June	<b>Pentecost 5</b> Green	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BCP
	II Samuel 1.1; 17-27		Psalm 130	II Corinthians 8:1-15 Mark 5.21-43
5 July	<b>Pentecost 6</b> Green	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BAS
	II Samuel 5:1-10		Psalm 48	II Corinthians 12:2-10 Mark 6:1-13
12 July	<b>Pentecost 7</b> Green	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BCP
	II Samuel 6:1-19		Psalm 24	Ephesians 1:1-14 Mark 6:14-29
19 July	<b>Pentecost 8</b> Green	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BAS
	II Samuel 7:1-17		Psalm 89:20-37	Ephesians 2:11-22 Mark 6:30-34, 53-56
26 July	<b>Pentecost 9</b> Green	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BCP
	II Samuel 11:1-15		Psalm 14	Ephesians 3:14-21 John 6:1-21
2 August	<b>Pentecost 10</b> Green (Natal Wkd)	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BAS
	II Samuel 11:26-12:13		Psalm 51	Ephesians 4:1-16 John 6:24-35
9 August	<b>Transfiguration Sunday</b> White	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BCP
	Daniel 7:9-14		Psalm 99	II Peter 1:16-19 Luke 9:28-36
16 August	<b>Pentecost 12</b> Green	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BAS
	I Kings 2:10-12; 3:3-14		Psalm 111	Ephesians 5:15-20 John 6:51-58
23 August	<b>Pentecost 13</b> Green	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BCP
	I Kings 8:22-43		Psalm 84	Ephesians 6:10-20 John 6:56-69
30 August	<b>Pentecost 14</b> Green (265 <sup>th</sup> )	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BAS
	Song of Solomon 2:1-13		Psalm 45	James 1:16-27 Mark 7:1-23
6 September	<b>Pentecost 15</b> Green	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BCP
	Proverbs 22:1-23		Psalm 125	James 2:1-26 Mark 7:24-37
13 September	<b>Pentecost 16</b> Green (Back to Church!)	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BAS (Parish Luncheon)
	Proverbs 1:20-33		Psalm 19	James 3:1-12 Mark 8:27-38
20 September	<b>Pentecost 17</b> Green	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BCP
	Proverbs 31:10-31		Psalm 1	James 3:1 – 4:10 Mark 9:30-37
27 September	<b>Pentecost 18</b> Green	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BAS
	Esther 7:1-10; 9:20-22		Psalm 124	James 4.11-5.20 Mark 9:38-50
4 October	<b>Pentecost 19</b> Green	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BAS
	Job 1.1-5; 2.1-10		Psalm 26	Hebrews 1.1-4; 2.5-18 Mark 10.2-16
11 October	<b>Thanksgiving Sunday</b> White	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BCP
	Deuteronomy 26:1-13		Psalm 100	Philippians 4:4-9 John 6:25-35
18 October	<b>Pentecost 21</b> Green	10 am	<b>Eucharist</b>	BAS
	Job 38.1-39.4		Psalm 104	Hebrews 5.1-6.3 Mark 10.35-45



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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 in February 2016, *deadline for submissions: Monday, 18 January 2016.*

