



The Parish Broadside - St Peter's Anglican Church



Lent / Easter 2007

www.stpeterfredericton.nb.ca

Why Lent and Repent?

I write this note to you on a glorious, clear, sunny Ash Wednesday morning. Although Ash Wednesday is a day of penitence, the sun seems to remind us that penitence is refreshing and yes, even life-giving. After all is it not the height of pride and smug self-assurance to think that we have nothing to repent of before our loving God? Have we done nothing we regret? Nothing that we could have done better? No thoughts or acts of unkindness and nothing short of love towards the other? Surely even such brief self-examination reveals ourselves as in need of repentance. But just as our need is not only to repent of specific acts of unlove, injustice and selfishness, so too repentance is not only a matter of a discrete act of sorrow and confession, but also a state of mind. The penitence required to deal with our debt is an ongoing state not just a momentary thing.

But do we not require a fuller understanding of what penitence actually is? Surely if it is a matter of feeling miserable about ourselves this does not endear the notion to us or make Lent seem a very attractive Church season. Why not just skip Lent and get to the cheerful, affirming Easter message? In our hearts we know the answer. Such an Easter would be as hollow as those chocolate bunnies - all promise on the outside but entirely empty on the inside. If sin required of God His Son's death and nothing short of this loving sacrifice would answer the problem, then we too had better take seriously the issue of sin - our sin and our separation from God.

We know, we feel, we experience our separation and we intuit that the root problem for us lies within. The trouble is not with institutional structures, not with other people, not with anything else outside of our own souls. We have the problem, it is "me" who knows and feels my separation from God, may lack of communion with the loving Other, and I would be well advised to hear the words of Christ,

"Come onto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden"(Matthew 11:28) For we truly labor over our separation and alienation from God and we are heavy laden by our selfishness and our sins. Let us this Lent use the time wisely, let us pray, read our Scriptures faithfully and let us worship our God in His House so as to draw nearer to our Father and closer to our Savior and Redeemer.

What's Going On?

This past Sunday, Feb 18, saw a most encouraging event. The largest contingent in recent memory from First Springhill Scouting joined us at our 11 a.m. worship. The young men and women, leaders and parents were a most

Lenten Lessons & Meditations Sunday March 25.

11 a.m.

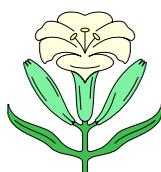
Lenten Scripture lessons paired with suitable music unite to form a unique worship experience!
Why not invite a Friend?

welcome addition in our midst. Just two days later many of the same youth and leaders joined us to help at our Annual Shrove Tuesday pancake Supper. This event too was a great success and was as well attended as any in recent memory.

As for this season of Lent several events are to be commended to your attention. First the Annual Lenten Lessons and Meditation Service on Sunday March 25. A special event and one for which our Parish is gaining a positive reputation, this service is a sort of counter-weight to Advent or Christmas Carols and Lessons. A service of suitable Scripture readings and accompanying music, the service is found to be most refreshing and contemplative

Our Sunday School also has its worship contribution to make - during Holy Week no less, at the Tenebrae service scheduled again this year for April 5, Maundy Thursday evening. This service too is a sort of counter-balance to pre-Christmas events aimed at teaching Christ's "little ones" something of the great events of that most special week. The point which needs to be made is that the entire Faith is for all followers of Jesus and the children need to be exposed to and to think about the whole life, mission and love of Jesus. All are encouraged to attend both events.

Easter Flowers



Those wishing to place Flowers in God's House to beautify it for our celebration of Christ's Resurrection please speak with either Freyda Gereau or Maria Matthews by Palm Sunday (April 1). Thank You!

Rector's Report on 2006

by

the Rev Dr R N Hebb

The year 2007 is going to be another difficult year for the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) as well as for the worldwide Anglican Communion of 77 million souls. Ever deepening divisions over issues of human sexuality will continue to make news. The public image and profile of our denomination will continue to be one of a fragmented, struggling and internally conflicted grouping of Christians. In Canada, General Synod of June 2007 will be the focus of attention, debate and conflict. Sadly, the bad public relations profile of the Anglican Communion will continue the following year with the Lambeth Conference of bishops slated for summer 2008. Who will be invited to that gathering of Anglican bishops, who won't be invited, who goes and who doesn't and what is and is not said and decided, and all the fall-out afterwards will constitute the Anglican news of 2008.

I Need to know !

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Your honest response will be most appreciated.

It is simply impossible to avoid or ignore the times in which we live, including the turmoil in our beloved Church. I for one get it pointed out to me and asked to comment every time there is 'news' - and this at Tim Horton's. I am forced to consider that everyone who attends St Peter's or those considering doing so also hear the same distressing coverage. The news is perceived by the public at large as being almost always negative and not the sort of thing which aids my feeble efforts at 'running' a 'successful' Parish. Thankfully, St Paul reminds us (1 Corinthians chapter 4/ Epistle for Advent 3) that what is required in stewards of God's mysteries is that "a man be found faithful," not successful. It is also noteworthy that a priest and rector is a steward of what belongs to another and a servant of the Lord above, not some human CEO.

So what of St Peter's in the midst of this confusion, bad PR and general time of transition? Last year saw only three

funerals but nine baptisms. While 2007 has sadly commenced with an equal number of deaths,**(see end of next column)* overall, our statistics are a cause for encouragement. Gone are the days when children are 'done' due to parental or grandparent pressure. In the 21st century such pressures seldom exist and are a footnote of history and a tale to be told by retired, elderly clerics. Now families think, ask and come. They seek God's grace for their loved ones in the Sacrament of Regeneration - the Spirit is at work in their hearts and minds. This is surely a good thing. An encouraging number are turning to our Parish. We must be prepared.

To be prepared means at least two things. First, we are a known entity among the Anglican parishes of the city and a known quantity in the local community. We are doing things correctly and we are a stable, identifiable force. We must seek to remain known, stable and predictable. People are looking, in part, for such known Christian, stable entities. They know who and what we are and can join in on a Parish's life knowing what they are joining. This must continue.

We must also change with the times. Change in worship and music would be highly ill advised and counter-productive. These are elements of stability at St Peter's which attract people. They must continue. Anyone who wants different, new and changing can go to almost any other Parish and find it. However, changing with the times means identifying what we have that is unique and distinctive and proclaiming it to the world - and they will come. To this end we have embarked upon the erection of a Parish Website on the World Wide Web. This is a major step, a positive step and step in tune with the times and our emerging new demographic. It must continue and expand. Our face to the world which emphasizes what is unique at St Peters, the website is also a means of internal communication and potentially even of internal dialogue. The maintenance and improvement of a first rate site requires help. We need more write ups on aspects of parish life and we especially need many more images, digital photographs and images which are current and which encourage 'visits' to our site. Anyone with a camera (especially a digital one) can help and we ask for your help.

Other plans for this year include a new white marble floor in the sanctuary of St Peter's to be installed, hopefully, this June. This too comes under the heading of building on strengths and making our wonderful place of worship even more beautiful. Three donors have already pledged and the cost of the project is entirely covered without touching Parish funds whatsoever! Other and new approaches to fund management have begun to be discussed in light of changing times. A discussion on the possible erection of an arms-length Trust or Foundation which would support what we treasure and aim to perpetuate at St Peter's is also in order. Furthermore, new approaches to the stresses imposed on our limited volunteer labor reserve are needed. The time is simply past when work around or inside the Parish property gets done by *someone*. We are

running very short of 'someones' and the faithful ones we have are tiring. I am amazed and amused by how often outsiders speak in a manner which reveals that they assume we employ a Parish secretary, a year round groundskeeper and a 24 hr, on call, property handyman. However, as you are well aware we do not. Nonetheless, one very promising development is coming this summer. We plan to paint some of the interior of the Parish Hall and in this and other matters look forward to increased levels of cooperation and liaison between the Parish and the First Springhill Group Committee which represents our beaver, cub and scouting groups.

All these measures must not however distract us from our initial and primary purpose - the worship of the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As we are learning in the weekly Bible Study on the Revelation of St John, the divine, the goal of our spiritual journey is the kingdom of heaven where there, and there alone, we find final happiness and fulfillment in an activity which we share with the angels, namely, the worship of our God. All our efforts now are to be done in light of this final purpose and even now our greatest mission and most important activity is the worship of our God. Let us seek together to realize this goal in our hearts, our minds, our lives and collectively, in our little Parish of St Peter's here in Fredericton. May the God of love, bless us all.

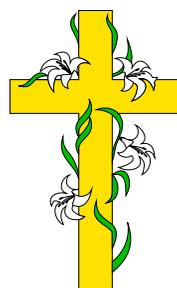
[* I would be amiss not to comment on this past, hectic and sad, week, (Jan. 15-19) This week revealed a very healthy and supportive parish in action. Drawn together by loss and grief the people of St Peter's rose to the occasion. The choir and organist were called upon for three funerals in the space of four days - not a complaint was heard. Many of these same ladies, assisted by many others, catered three post-service receptions in the same constricted period of time. Our volunteer church cleaner and sexton/snow-shoveler exhibited equal reliability and performance. While I am sure that I am aware of only a few of the acts of compassion and kindness which occurred, those alone assure me that the love of Christ is an active force in our little Parish. As one man assured me, "oh yes, it is a caring, supportive Parish community - they rise to the occasion and they do good!"]

Easter Services 2007

Sunday April 8

8 a.m. Holy Communion

11 a.m. Choral Eucharist



Warden's Report on 2006

Reverend Dr Hebb and Parishioners of St. Peters:

There were two meetings which we attended in 2006. One was in Sussex and the other at St. Mary's. Both basically dealt with church finances and the issue of churches joining or closing. These meetings are always well attended.

There were no large renovations to either church hall or rectory to report in the past year.

A central vacuum system was installed in the church which was much appreciated. Also, the old steps leading from the highway to the church were removed and sodded. The churchyard mowing was done and the area well kept.

We were fortunate enough to have lights installed along the railing leading up to the hall, which I'm sure are appreciated by patrons who walk them at night. As well, several new additions are now in use in the hall kitchen which pleases the ladies a great deal.

Finally, the rectory would like to report that there were no major problems in 2006. The Wardens and Vestry would like to thank everyone for all their help and contributions to the parish throughout this past year.

Thank you,

Audrey Kelly

Mary Christie

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Lenten Studies at St Peter's, 2007

This year's Lenten Studies will examine the life of the Church of England in Colonial New Brunswick from 1847 to 1868. Sessions will be held in St Peter's Parish Hall 2385 Woodstock Road. The dates are Feb 25, March 4, 11 and 25. All will commence at 2:30 p.m. and last one hour.

The wealth of information found in Bishop Medley's Charges will be employed as the lense through which we encounter the issues, debates and spirit of the Church in that dynamic and evolving era. Church construction, mission expansion, economic upturns and depressions, Puseyites, poverty, Evangelicals, advances in travel, the new Dominion and the emerging Anglican Communion all form part of the engaging fabric of the Medley era Church.

The first session of Feb 25 is entitled "A New Bishop in a New World: Medley's Initial impressions and first Charge."

Coffee and light refreshments will be served weekly.

All are welcome to attend!

March 4 is PWRDF Sunday
Theme: "Enough for all"
Envelopes available at rear of Church.

