



the Parish of St. Dunstan

On the traditional lands of the Sto:lo Nation

March 8th 2020

2nd Sunday in Lent



Welcome!

This is a diverse & safe congregation for people wherever they are on their journey with Christ. We are an inclusive church which means we celebrate women in leadership, children at the Eucharist & welcome LGBTQ+ people to participate fully in the community.

W O R S H I P

Jesus, the Gardener

tending to our spiritual growth.

John 20:15

For Children

The **Nursery** is staffed & open for children ages 0 to 4.

If you are interested in helping with this ministry, talk to David.

Activity bags are available in the entry near the colouring table.

All our volunteers & staff have a criminal record check.

Taking Communion

Everyone is welcome to receive bread & wine as a sign of our commitment to Christ & Christ's commitment to us.

There are **gluten-free wafers** for those who need it & **juice** for those who prefer.

Prayers for healing with the anointing of oil is offered beneath the cross during Communion. Please **light a candle** as a sign of your prayers.

Today's Scripture

Introductions to the Lessons by Bill Bennett

Genesis 12: God call Abram to a journey into the unknown. He is named 'Abraham,' bestowing a new identity in relation to God. It is a journey set against a divided humanity & society.

Romans 4: Paul explores the learnings from Abraham's heroic act of faith & what this means for Jew & Gentile.

John 3: The gospel of John, written late in the 1st century AD, explores in this reading how official Judaism struggled to understand the meaning of baptism as re-birth through water & the gifting of the Spirit.

Sermon Notes

Is life possible even in difficult environments?

Of course, it is. This is essence of Christian faith. We believe that life conquers death, that light shines in darkness, that love supersedes fear. Faith is an action, not a set of creeds or dogmas. To have faith means to participate in the grand vision of God that affirms life, peace, joy, kindness, goodness, love, justice, etc. We do this because we believe God's vision for the world is good, true, beautiful, & possible despite overwhelming evidence that suggests otherwise. At least we try to.

We live a lot of our spiritual lives at night. In spiritual terms night is that time of life that is burdened by fear, doubt, or disorientation. Night is when we question whether God's vision is real or not. Night is when we struggle to understand God's ways. Spiritual night wonders if any of this is all true. It is natural. It is real. It is scary.

Nicodemus comes to Jesus in his spiritual night. He has questions. He is uncertain. But he knows Jesus is the light.

Can anything grow at night? With Jesus, the Gardener, yes.

Weekly devotions are printed at the back of this bulletin.

The liturgy is taken from the Book of Alternative Services of the Anglican Church of Canada. Hymns numbers are indicated after the hymn title & found in the blue Common Praise hymn book. The readings are taken from the Revised Common Lectionary. The entire service is projected on the wall.

Gathering the Community

Announcements
Trisagion, 707
O God, We Call
the Confession & Prayer of the Day

Proclaiming the Word

The Book of Genesis (12:1-4a)
Psalm 121
Paul's Letter to the Romans (4:1-5, 13-17)
By Night We Hasten, 530
the Gospel according to John (3:1-17) & the Sermon
the Nicene Creed, the Prayers of the People, the Confession & Absolution
the Peace & the Offering
May the Spirit of Christ, 483

Holy Communion

All are welcome to receive bread at Communion.
I Am the Bread of Life
We Will Walk On
Now Let Us From This Table Rise

Sending the Community

the Blessing
As the Sun with Longer Journey, (tune 48)

Please visit the Information Table in the entry if you have any questions.

OUTREACH

Monday

Fraser River Counselling at St. Dunstan's

Low cost counselling is provided by supervised counselling students from Trinity Western University. For more information, please connect with an intake worker at 604-513-2113.

Tuesday

Aldergrove Food Bank Soup Kitchen

The Parish of St. Dunstan's has committed to cooking & serving soup on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month. Please connect with Ann Embra at 604-534-9292 or ann_embra@telus.net to learn how you can get involved.

ESL

Classes are at 7pm. All are welcome. For more information please connect the church office.

Thursday

Community Meal

Each Thursday at 4:30pm.

Want to help create this amazing meal? Please sign up on the poster at the entrance to the Worship Space. For more information on what volunteering involves, please connect with David.

Stewardship

*Have you considered signing up for **pre-authorised debit (PAD)**? It is easy & a good way to support the church even when you cannot be present for a service. Please connect with David or one of the other parish leaders for more information.*



PWRDF

The Primate's World Relief
and Development Fund

For more information, please visit PWRDF.ORG. There you can read all about the good work it does, current areas of need & how you can participate.

COMMUNITY CARE

- Reconciliation** *The priest is available to hear confession by appointment.*
- Listening Prayer** *Prayer for those in crisis or need. For more information please connect with Katherine Murray at katherine.murray22@gmail.com.*
- Spiritual Direction** *Trained Spiritual Directors are available. To arrange please email StDunstansCentre@gmail.com*
- Ride Sharing** *If you need a ride, or can offer one, please let someone at the Information Booth know.*
- Visiting** *If you need a visit, please call the office to arrange. If you would like to become a pastoral visitor, please connect with the priest.*
- Prayer Chain** *If you wish someone to be remembered in our Prayer Chain Ministry, please email the office.*
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Men's Coffee

Wednesdays at 9am

Men's Breakfast

the 2nd Sunday of the month in the hall

Women's Coffee ☕ Crafts

Fridays at 10am

Women's Breakfast

the 2nd Sunday of the month at McDonald's

Plant a Seed this Lent

Join the PWRDF to purchase seeds for farmers around the world to promote crop diversity.

Your donation of \$30 provides one 20kg bag of seeds to a farmer.

(Each donation is matched by the Government of Canada with an additional \$180. This means your donation of \$30 equals \$210.)

Please mark your envelope "SEEDS FOR FARMERS"

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Children

Messy Church every 3rd Friday of each month (September to May) at 4:30pm. Messy Church includes stories, crafts, dinner & Holy Communion. It is planned with the whole family in mind. All are welcome. Please connect with Carol Tindall at 604-866-6125 for more information & how to volunteer.

St. Dunstan's & St. Andrew's Youth **Stay tuned for the next event!**

We will have opportunities to lead games & crafts as well as spend time together for a Bible Study.



ST DUNSTAN'S CENTRE FOR
**SPIRITUAL
RENEWAL**

The Centre for Spiritual Renewal is the name we give to our Adult Christian Formation programs at St. Dunstan's. Please pick up the most recent program guide & check our website regularly for more information on coming events.

Centering Prayer

Wednesdays at 6:30pm, Fridays at 11:30am
20 minutes of silence & connection with God.


Study Group





Lectio & Labyrinth


Fridays, from Noon to 1pm
A chance to practice our journeying & listening together. Indoor labyrinth practices are available.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS


Events marked with  are through the Centre for Spiritual Renewal.

 **Welcoming Prayer** *Sundays, March 8th – April 5th | 11:30am-1pm*
Please see Centre for Spiritual Renewal program


 **Interfaith Labyrinth Walk** **Today, March 8th at 2pm**
Prayers for Women's Healing & Freedom
Please see Centre for Spiritual Renewal program


 **Spiritual Practice Series** *Sunday, March 15th from 7 to 8:30pm*
Celtic Knotwork with Belinda Llewellyn
Please see Centre for Spiritual Renewal program


Messy Church *Friday, March 20th from 4:30 to 5:30pm*

 **Women in the Easter Story** *Wednesday, March 25th from 10am to 12pm*
Facilitated by the women of St. Dunstan's
Please see Centre for Spiritual Renewal program

Seniors Tea *Wednesday, March 25th from 1:30 to 3pm*
Topic: How to Use the Modern Cell Phone

 **Spring Yard Sale** *Friday, March 27th & Saturday March 28th*
from 9am to 4pm
Please see Centre for Spiritual Renewal program

 **Sung Evening Prayer** *Sunday, March 29th from 7:30 to 8:30pm*
With Cathy Hardy
Please see Centre for Spiritual Renewal program

 **Sufi Turning** *Sunday, April 19th from 7 to 8pm*
With Anna Bernhardt & Susan Burns
Please see Centre for Spiritual Renewal program

WEEKLY PRAYER

The following is a resource to help you connect with Sunday's theme & continue your prayers through the week. This can be done on your own or in the family group. This liturgy is based on Home Prayers found in the Book of Alternative Services (p. 687). **If you do not have a prayer book, please take & keep one for your use.**

The theme for this year's Lenten season comes from the Gospel according to John chapter 20. In this famous account of the resurrection of Jesus, Mary Magdalene stands at the tomb weeping. While she mourns Jesus comes to her & asks, "Why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?" Mary supposed Jesus to be the **gardener** & asks where they have placed Jesus. **Jesus the Gardener** will guide us through the desert of Lent until we see him face to face in the **garden** of resurrection. **This week we wonder about Gardening at "Night".**

1. The Preparation

A candle is lit as someone prays,

Holy God, whose Spirit's breath prompts our seeking: transform the night-time of our fear into a welcoming womb for us & all the world; through Jesus Christ, in whom we are born anew. Amen.

2. The Reading & Reflection

Read the passage from Scripture then reflect using the wonder questions as your guide. This guide uses the New Revised Standard Version.

GENESIS 12:1-4A – THE NIGHT OF UNKNOWNING

Notes on the reading:

- ☞ *This reading marks the shift in the Genesis stories from poetic mythology to a more "historical" format.*
- ☞ *The Abram/Abraham & Sarai/Sarah narratives take up much of Genesis & from here on after God is referred to the God of Abraham & his descendants.*
- ☞ *Abram changes his name to Abraham later in the Genesis when he makes a covenant with God.*
- ☞ *Abram/Abraham is considered our primary ancestor in faith because he hears the call of God & does what God tells him. He is the first who can see the world as God sees it (my definition of faith).*
- ☞ *God makes a promise to Abram that he will become a great nation & through him all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Early Christians understood Jesus to be & descendant of Abram. Through Jesus the world is blessed.*
- ☞ *Abram leaves his life & enters a desert to discover the unnamed & unknown land promised by God. It is a remarkable act of trust.*

I wonder if you have ever had to do something difficult.

I wonder how you feel when you start new uncertain projects or chapters in your life.

I wonder if God has ever spoken to you in the same way God spoke to Abram.

PSALM 121 – THE NIGHT OF VULNERABILITY

Notes on the reading:

- ☞ Psalm 121 is called a Psalm of Ascents. It is believed these types of Psalms were pilgrimage songs sung by those visiting the great temple in Jerusalem. When the pilgrim lifted their eyes to the hill, they were lifting their eyes to the temple, the place where God dwelt.
- ☞ Pilgrimage & travel in the ancient near east was dangerous. People often travelled in large caravans to discourage thieves. Travelling with company also helped people battle the elements in their travels. The hot sun & cold moon (v. 6) were not merely metaphors but real dangers.
- ☞ God as “keeper” (v. 5, 7, & 8) is a vision of a guard or protector. Perhaps likening God to a hired escort on the dangerous roads. God ensures our safety on the way.
- ☞ In all the danger of life with all the need for protection & security, the poet reminds the pilgrim that no hill, guard, security detail or other protection is a substitute for the help & salvation that God provides.

I wonder if you have ever felt unsafe.

I wonder what you do to keep yourself feeling secure.

I wonder what the difference is between trusting our own security plan & trusting God.

I wonder if you have ever been on a pilgrimage.

ROMANS 4:1-5, 13-17 – THE NIGHT OF FAITH

Notes on the reading:

- ☞ In this passage Paul reflects on the great figure of Abram/Abraham introduced in Monday’s reading.
- ☞ Paul uses Abraham as evidence to his argument that God desires faith not adherence to particular cultural codes of conduct (i.e. the Law of Moses). His appeal to Abraham over Moses is an appeal to an older revelation. Abraham is before Moses & was found righteous in God’s sight before the advent of the Law.
- ☞ For Paul, works (v. 2) is the word to describe the energy people expend in trying to gain God’s favour or the codes of conduct people participate in to be included in God’s plan.
- ☞ In Paul’s understanding, we do not need to try to gain God’s favour by our actions, neither do we need to follow particular codes of conduct in order to belong (i.e. the early non-Jewish Christians did not have to become Jewish first to follow Jesus). Faith in God or in Jesus is enough to participate fully in God’s promise of life.
- ☞ Historically passages like this were instrumental in affirming the theology of the Reformers. Their argument was that the church of their day was expecting people to do more than just have faith in order to be members.
- ☞ This passage is still foundational for our ever-widening understanding of who is a Christian & who is not. God does not care about membership tests or theological affirmations. Rather, does one see the world as God sees it? Does one participate in life, goodness, peace, joy, etc.? If so, their faith is enough.

I wonder if it is easy to belong to a religious institution.

I wonder if you feel like God’s favour is on you & that you belong.

I wonder if we have more work to do to understand how people belong in the church.

JOHN 3:1-17 – THE NIGHT OF SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

Notes on the reading:

- ✧ This is one of the most famous stories in our time. John 3:16 has become a foundational text used to inspire people to become Followers of Jesus.
- ✧ Nicodemus comes to Jesus at night (v. 2). This is a symbolic night. It means, for John, a time of misunderstanding, confusion & resistance to Jesus' message. John is not trying to say all night is bad. But he uses the metaphor to make a distinction between those who believe & those who do not.
- ✧ John makes a point in this reading to say that those who should understand the teaching or Jesus are the very ones who do not get it. The resistance of the religious leaders to Jesus' way is a great irony for John.
- ✧ Nicodemus eventually does follow Jesus (chapter 19), but for the moment stays in the night.
- ✧ Jesus' call to spiritual transformation always leads to the cross (v. 14).

I wonder if you have ever felt resistant to Jesus' words.

I wonder who it is possible for spiritual "experts" to be unable to trust Jesus.

I wonder how you can move from spiritual night to spiritual day.

JOHN 19:31-42 – THE NIGHT HAILS THE DAWN

Notes on the reading:

- ✧ Our final reading is a reminder that believing in Jesus & following his way leads us to a cross.
- ✧ Jesus' death takes place in the context of night (see John 13:30). It is a time of misunderstanding & faithlessness.
- ✧ His death also takes place in the context of the Passover (see John 19:14). Passover is a time of God's deliverance. It, too, took place at night (see Exodus 15:29 & 30). For the early Christians Passover was the primary lens by which they understood the death of Jesus. They understood his death as a sacrifice of love. Indeed, from the start of John's Gospel Jesus is referred to as the Lamb of God (1:29).
- ✧ The blood & water from Jesus' side (v. 34) has been understood since the first commentators of the Gospel as the gifts of baptism & Communion. Jesus' death brings new life & nourishment.
- ✧ Nicodemus is described by John as the person who had at first come to Jesus by night (v. 39). It would seem as though the light that Jesus planted in his heart was bearing fruit.

I wonder what the cross means to you.

I wonder what it means that God does so much work at night to help humanity.

I wonder how baptism & Holy Communion is a way in which you can find life & light.

3. Prayers & the Lord's Prayer

Choose a litany from the Book of Alternative Services (beginning on page 110).

The liturgy concludes with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Sunday: Lent 3. Readings include: *The Book of Exodus 17:1-7, Paul's Letter to the Romans 5:1-11, & John 4:5-42.*



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ST-DUNSTANS.CA



The Parish of St. Dunstan, Aldergrove



Office Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday 8:30am — 12:00pm

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