

GARDENING IN THE **Desert**



the Parish of St. Dunstan

On the traditional lands of the Sto:lo Nation

March 1st 2020

1st 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.*

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 2: This second parable or tradition about creation addresses God's lordship & human obedience, & particularly human temptation, all of which is seen as the 'Fall of Humanity.'

Romans 5: The language & imagery in this reading may be rather challenging to follow. Paul talks of the origin of sin in Adam, & the free gift of forgiveness & hope in Jesus.

Matthew 4: Jesus is single-minded in his mission to humanity despite the attractions of finding easier ways to achieve his hopes.

Sermon Notes

Can anything grow in a desert?

Of course it can. We all have seen beautiful pictures of deserts following a spring rain. Our spiritual ancestors lived in close proximity to the desert. They knew both the intense scarcity & the surprising fecundity of these ecosystems. They saw in deserts a helpful metaphor for the human condition.

In Genesis we read about the beautiful garden where God's children lived in abundance. There Adam & Eve ate a forbidden fruit & their eyes were opened. In Matthew, the Garden is long gone. Jesus is led into the desert by the Holy Spirit & there is presented with temptations by the devil. How far we have come from the garden.

As we follow Jesus into the desert & witness his temptation, we see our own struggles laid bare.

The three deserts of our Gospel reading are
the desert of
the desert of
the desert of

The nourishment we receive in the desert is called:

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

Trisagion, 707
O God, We Call
the Lenten Gathering

Proclaiming the Word

The Book of Genesis (2:5-17, 3:1-7)
Psalm 32
Paul's Letter to the Romans (5:12-19)
Tree of Life & Awesome Mystery, 179 (vs. 1,2,6b)
the Gospel according to Matthew (4:1-11) & the Sermon
the Nicene Creed, the Prayers of the People, the Confession & Absolution
the Peace & the Offering
God Who Gives to Life, 428

Holy Communion

All are welcome to receive bread & wine (or juice) at Communion.
How Deep the Peace
We Will Walk On
For Forty Days

Sending the Community

the Blessing
You Who Dwell in the Shelter of the Lord, 531

Coffee & refreshments are served in the hall following the service.
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 in Lent** *Sundays, March 1st – April 5th 11:30am-1pm*
Please see Centre for Spiritual Renewal program


World Day of Prayer *Friday, March 6th at 10am at St. Dunstan's*


 **Lent Morning Retreat** *Saturday, March 7th from 9am to 12pm*
With Joe Baker
Please see Centre for Spiritual Renewal program


 **Interfaith Labyrinth Walk** *Sunday, 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

 **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

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 in the Desert.**

1. The Preparation

A candle is lit as someone prays,

Almighty God, Whose Son fasted forty days in the wilderness, ☞ was tempted as we are but did not sin, give us grace to discipline ourselves in submission to our spirit, that as you know our weakness, so we may know your power to save; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive ☞ reigns with you ☞ the Holy Spirit, one God, now ☞ for ever. 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 2:15-17; 3:1-7 – WHAT HAPPENED TO THE GARDEN?

Notes on the reading:

- ☞ The first part of our reading from Genesis concludes the account of the great Garden of Eden which God planted. In this garden was everything that was needed for life to succeed ☞ grow. Chapter 3 is the beginning of the story of how humanity was exiled from the garden into the wilderness of life.
- ☞ The serpent is an ancient symbol of death. Desert dwellers knew how dangerous snakes were because they were able to inflict so much damage without being noticed until it was too late.
- ☞ The serpent lies to humanity by suggesting God is keeping good things away from them. The lie is that humanity will never be able to enjoy the good things of life unless they rise beyond themselves ☞ become like God.
- ☞ Instead of becoming like God, however, humanity's eyes are opened ☞ they realize how "naked" or unlike God they are. From now on humanity does whatever it can to disguise their humanness while they attempt to cross the desert of life on their own, doing whatever it takes to succeed.

I wonder how you feel about snakes.

I wonder what sort of things are more dangerous than they first appear to be.

I wonder how you disguise yourself from God or from others in your life.

I wonder how you try to make it through life on your own.

MATTHEW 4:1-11 – CAN ANYTHING SURVIVE THE DESERT OF LIFE?

Notes on the reading:

- ✧ The Gospel for this past Sunday is the famous story of Jesus in the desert. The desert is the symbolic (✧ literal) place of scarcity ✧ meanness. It is the place of brutal honesty ✧ dependency on God.
- ✧ While yesterday's reading might suggest that we threw ourselves out into the desert of life by our grasping ✧ pride, the Gospel is clear that it is the Spirit of God that leads Jesus into the desert (v. 1). Deserts are necessary locations of spiritual growth.
- ✧ Fasting (v. 2) is a way to remember our life is dependent upon God, not material things.
- ✧ The tempter (v. 3) or the devil (v. 5) is a later way of describing the snake in Genesis 3. The snake, tempter, or devil is the compulsion to depend upon ourselves for life (v. 3), seek power or control (v. 6), ✧ to pursue glory or fame as our final goal (v. 9).
- ✧ The last line of the story is another reminder that deserts are not places where people are abandoned by God.

I wonder if you have ever experienced a desert moment in your life.

I wonder if you know someone who is experiencing a desert moment.

I wonder how you met God or were ministered by angels in your desert.

I wonder how you can be a ministering angel to someone who is in a desert.

ROMANS 5:12-19 – THE FREE GIFT OF NEW LIFE

Notes on the reading:

- ✧ Last Sunday's second reading comes from Paul's great letter to the Romans. In this letter Paul presents his teaching on Christ ✧ his relationship to Moses' Law. His thesis is that anyone can receive God's free gift of life by simply connecting with Jesus, rather than having to adhere to the Law first.
- ✧ Be kind to yourself as you read this very confusing passage from Romans. The greatest of scholars ✧ translators wrestle with the logic ✧ meaning of Paul's words.
- ✧ Paul takes the story of the Garden of Eden, particularly the life of Adam ✧ compares it with the life of Jesus.
- ✧ There are two different Greek words translated as "Free Gift" (v. 15-17). One is Charisma, the other is Dorea. Charisma is related to the Greek word Charis which means Grace. Dorea is something that has been given. The translators put in the modifier "Free" to emphasize that nature of the Giver of the gift. God does not give gifts out of need, compulsion or debt, but simply out of God's own generous nature.
- ✧ Grace is the gift of God which is the foundational gift of life, being, goodness, justice, etc. Grace is like spiritual air. Without grace there is no life. Even though humanity is under the "sentence of death", God has not abandoned us, but made a way for us to be aware, breathe ✧ receive the gift of life.

I wonder if you have ever received a gift ✧ felt the need to give a gift in return.

I wonder if you have ever received a "Free" gift.

I wonder how Jesus has given you life.

I wonder how Jesus turned the human situation around with the free gift of his life.

PSALM 32 – THE SONG OF THE FORGIVEN

Notes on the reading:

- ✞ This psalm is a beautiful reflection on the psychological & spiritual impact of admitting our need for healing & forgiveness.
- ✞ The word we translate as Happy (v. 1) is Esher in the Hebrew which is translated as Makarios in the Greek. Makarios is the same word that begins Jesus' Beatitudes (Blessed are the poor in spirit, etc.). Another translation of these words can be Blessed, Lucky, or Fortunate.
- ✞ Happiness, Blessedness or Fortune comes when we acknowledge our sin (v. 5). Conversely, when we bottle our brokenness up, we do harm to ourselves (v. 3 & 4).
- ✞ The God we try to hide ourselves from is the only one who can forgive (v. 5), protect, preserve, & deliver us (v. 7).
- ✞ Joy (v. 11) comes from our willingness to admit the deserts of our lives. Confession is an ancient spiritual practice that brings about our personal spiritual healing & growth.

*I wonder if you ever felt lucky (blessed) that you could share your pain or need of healing.
I wonder if you have felt the sadness from keeping a secret.
I wonder how you can practice confession in your life & therefore find life again.*

ISAIAH 35 – GOD CAN PLANT A GARDEN EVEN IN THE DESERT

Notes on the reading:

- ✞ The extra reading chosen for this week to help us in our study comes from the great Prophet Isaiah. This reading is usually read in the season of Advent as the early church saw the words of the prophet fulfilled in the birth, death & resurrection of Jesus.
- ✞ Isaiah writes at a time of imminent violence & exile by a foreign army. His people were suffering & wondering where God was during it. Isaiah, likely with the exile of humanity from the Garden in Genesis in mind, writes words of hope that the suffering of their present time is not worthy to be compared with the future glory of life that God will bring to God's people.
- ✞ Deserts are real. But more real than deserts is the hope of life that comes from the free gift of God, the Gracious author of life.

*I wonder if you are on the brink of disaster, exile or suffering.
I wonder if you know someone who is afraid due to their own personal deserts.
I wonder how God has come to you to bring life in your pain & fear.
I wonder how God has sent you to someone in need & what life you can offer them.*

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 2. Readings include: *The Book of Genesis 12:1-4a, Paul's Letter to the Romans 4:1-5, 13-17, John 3:1-17*



The Parish of St. Dunstan

3025-264th Street, Aldergrove, B.C. V4W 2W4

604-856-5393 st.dunstans@telus.net

ST-DUNSTANS.CA



The Parish of St. Dunstan, Aldergrove



Office Hours

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

Wardens

Theresa Tancock 604-614-7145

Katherine Murray katherine.murray22@gmail.com

Music Director

Carol Tindall 604-866-6125

Archbishop

the Most Reverend Melissa Skelton
vancouver.anglican.ca

Priest

the Reverend David Taylor
778-987-0530 dmatthew.taylor@gmail.com