

# THE CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST MESSENGER

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January 2018



## New Year's Prayer

*Thank you Lord for giving me  
The brand new year ahead  
Help me live the way I should  
As each new day I tread.*

*Give me gentle wisdom  
That I might help a friend  
Give me strength and courage  
So a shoulder I might lend.*

*The year ahead is empty  
Help me fill it with good things  
Each new day filled with joy  
And the happiness it brings.*

*Please give the leaders of our world  
A courage born of peace  
That they might lead us gently  
And all the fighting cease.*

*Please give to all upon this earth  
A heart that's filled with love  
A gentle happy way to live  
With Your blessings from above.*

*From 'A New Year's Prayer', Charlotte Anselmo*

## PLEASE NOTE

If you have been in the habit in the past of designating part of your offering to be given to **Christian Action**, be advised that the Church of Saint John the Baptist can no longer issue tax statements for those amounts on behalf of that organization. Thank you.

**First, in the Sexes' intermixd connection,  
One sacred Right of Woman is, protection. -  
The tender flower that lifts its head, elate,  
Helpless, must fall before the blasts of Fate,  
Sunk on the earth, defac'd its lovely form,  
Unless your shelter ward  
th' impending storm.**

*Robert Burns, 1792*



## HELP WANTED

As the 2018 Vestry Meeting looms, the Nominating Committee, which has been searching for candidates for the church's officers for next year, has successfully filled most positions. Similarly, appointed responsibilities have also have largely been accommodated. However, we still need individuals for the following.

**1 Deputy Warden**

**1 Synod Delegate + 1 Deputy**

Less urgent, at this time:

**A new Coordinator for the Christmas Basket programme for next December.**

Please consider putting your name forward for any (all?) of the above four positions; you can do so by speaking to Marjorie Brayne, Val Delacretaz, David Paterson or, indeed, Incumbent Lorne.

## VESTRY MEETING

**February 11th, after the 10.00 a.m. Morning Service.**

Please be prepared to attend and, if you can, make a contribution of "finger food" – sandwiches, cake, cookies – for the light lunch which will precede the meeting.

If you wish to submit a motion at the Annual Vestry Meeting, your motion, duly proposed and seconded, must be submitted to the office in writing, by **Sunday, January 28th**. Only these motions will be discussed. Thank you.

## APPRECIATION

2017 is now over and while a new year is traditionally a time to look forward, we should perhaps take a few moments to reflect, remembering the many individuals who contribute regularly to keeping this church 'alive'. This is particularly true when we consider the recent busy Christmas season. At such a time, it is evident that the effort behind the scenes is ongoing since worship presents a 'seasonal' new face to parishioners. In this context, we should bear in mind those who beautify, those who provide the means to beautify and those who provide the musical backdrop which makes the season joyful.



We can elaborate on the above to include those who, throughout the year, attend to similar duties – the Altar Guild teams, the gardeners and other maintenance people. Then there are the teachers, the lay and occasional readers, sidesmen, sideswomen, the bank 'courriers', money 'launderers', administrators, other working 'worriers', and the media 'publishers' inside and outside of the Office!

The list could go on and never seems to get shorter. Suffice to say that, as the size of the congregation dwindles, inevitably some individuals wear many caps and continue, often for several years, to serve in whatever capacity they can, to make sure that the rest of us can count on Saint John the Baptist being the welcoming place that it is.

## From Barbara

*Just thinking of you all, praying that Christmas has brought happiness in celebrating the Hope, Peace, Joy and Love of the season.*

Bruce arrived in PEI, having traveled east by car on the shortest days of the year. So, even though daylight was at a premium, the weather, for the most part, was manageable; only a few centimetres of snow overnight in northern New Brunswick and foggy patches on Thursday morning. On Friday evening, we attended a Christmas extravaganza at St Dunstan's Basilica in Charlottetown; the programme was choral music, with



and without orchestral accompaniment, dedicated to "Mary Through the Ages", including various settings of the "Magnificat" and "Ave Maria", as well as excerpts from contemporary Christmas cantatas that included many well-known carols. The Basilica, that seats almost 1000 people, was packed to capacity, and many other attendees stood throughout the two-hour performance; this is apparently an annual event initiated by the Basilica's current Music Director, Leo Marchildon.

## Following and Listening

Oswald Chambers was born in 1874 as a Baptist preacher's son in Aberdeen, Scotland. In his twenties, he sought to portray the message of God's redemption in art, studying technique in London and Edinburgh. Gradually Chambers began to believe God wanted him not to pursue the arts for God's sake, but God for the sake of his will alone. His writings remain a source of devotional contemplation to the present time.

*We are not made for the mountains, for sunrises, or for the other beautiful attractions in life – those are simply intended to be moments of inspiration. We are made for the valley and the ordinary things of life and that is where we have to prove our stamina and strength... We look for visions from heaven, for earthquakes and thunders of God's power and we never dream that all the time God is in the commonplace things and people around us, If we will do the duty that lies nearest, we shall see Him...*

So, it is in "the valleys" of life where we will prove our mettle. When we think about Jesus' life, we see how for some Jews, the Messiah they were expecting was the future king of Israel who would deliver God's people from their oppressors and estab-

On Christmas Day, we attended a ten o'clock service wearing shoes and light fall jackets only to emerge from church into a winter wonderland of lightly falling snow. We returned home to prepare our Christmas feast, and although freezing rain fell later that afternoon, more snow fell before nightfall to ensure a White Christmas in Charlottetown. Since then, of course, Canadians, across the country, have been hit with colder temperatures and high winds that also caused serious power failures in Nova Scotia.

On the following Thursday, Bruce and I sang along at a "Messiah Sing-In" at the Presbyterian Kirk of St. James in Charlottetown. This is also an annual event, organized by the Confederation Singers in support of the Youth Choir's annual tour; this year, the young people are traveling to Florida. We were hoping that a small orchestral ensemble would also be participating, but the accompaniment was ably provided by Frances McBurnie, the Organist and Music Director at St. James', one double bassist and a percussion teacher from UPEI playing tympani.

Earlier in December, I rented a little house in Charlottetown located within walking distance of the public administration buildings where I am working. However, even though Charlottetown is an excellent city for walking, Canada Post hasn't yet recognized me as a resident worthy of a community mailbox key. I apologize for the mix-up that has returned snail-mail to several senders and am hopeful that the problem will be remedied soon.

*Bruce and I extend our very best wishes to all for a happy and healthy New Year!*

Barbara



lish a sovereign state in Israel through God's power. For others, he was a cosmic delivered from heaven who would engage in supernatural warfare with the enemies of the Jews and bring about a divine victory over their oppressors. Both notions had been around for some time by the 1st century A.D. both obviously were designations of grandeur and power, and hence why His own people could not recognize Him.

Throughout the history of Judaism, one of the most honoured positions for a Jewish man was the privilege of becoming a "follower" of the local rabbi. The story is told of an old rabbi who was seen walking, haltingly, past the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. The interesting thing about the aged rabbi was the five young men walking behind him. They too were walking bent over, limping – just like their rabbi. An Orthodox Jew watching them would know exactly why they were imitating their teacher. They were "followers." Followers sat at the rabbi's feet as he taught. They would study his words and watch how he acted and reacted to life and others. A follower would count it the highest honour to serve his rabbi in even the most menial tasks. And, because they admired their rabbi, they were determined to become like him. An honest person will

feel comfortable with the thought that Jesus knows them through and through. A dishonest person will feel uncomfortable. You can't pretend to be something you're not. God knows the real you and wants you to follow him.

When Jesus called His disciples to follow Him, it was an invitation to be changed by Him, to become like Him, and to share His passion for those who need a Saviour. The high honour of being His follower should show in our lives as well. We too have been called to catch the attention of the watching world as we talk, think, and act just like Jesus – the rabbi, the teacher of our souls.

*The great word of Jesus to his disciples is abandon. When God has brought us into the relationship of disciples, we have to venture on his word; trust entirely to him and watch that when he brings us to the venture, we take it... The most important aspect of Christianity is not the work we do, but the relationship we maintain and the surrounding influence and qualities produced by that relationship.*

God is telling us that true value must be placed not in what we have but in who we are. As Paul wrote to the Phillipians (translated here in modern language):

*Think about what we have in Christ: the encouragement he has brought us, the comfort of his love, our sharing in his Spirit, and the mercy and kindness he has shown us. If you enjoy these blessings, then do what will make my joy complete: Agree with each other, and show your love for each other. Be united in your goals and in the way you think. In whatever you do, don't let selfishness or pride be your guide. Be humble, and honor others more than yourselves. Don't be interested only in your own life, but care about the lives of others too. In your life together, think the way Christ Jesus thought. He was like God in every way, but he did not think that his being equal with God was something to use for his own benefit. Instead, he gave up everything, even his place with God. He accepted the role of a servant, appearing in human form.*

From a sermon by Angela Deslauriers, January 2018

## The Word of the Lord

Regular worshippers may have noticed that some readers of the lessons and epistles appointed for the day do not end their reading with the phrase prescribed in the B.C.P., namely:

*"Here endeth the lesson"*

Some facts may explain why they do not do so. When the seventy-two books which compose the Catholic Bible were chosen by the Bishops and three Popes at the several sessions of the Councils of Trentino held in 1545-1563 they declared that they not only *contained* the Word of God but *were* The Word of God.

Protestants later removed seven books, so that Anglicans now have sixty-five books. The two Bibles have the twenty-seven books of the New Testament in common, but parts of the text differ. Some minor nuances have been changed in translation from Aramaic, Hebrew, Greek and later, Latin.

The books in the Bible were written between 900 B.C. and 100 A.D. and include legend, tribal laws, moral standards, history, genealogy, poetry, prophesy, and works of religious vision. The writings reflect the time and nature of the society from which they came..

Two thousand years have passed and our society has adapted or ignored some of the tribal laws and moral standards. We work on the sabbath, we accept divorce and cohabitation without marriage, we ignore dietary restrictions, and we do not stone people to death although some societies still execute criminals for evil acts but seldom for moral offences.

Perhaps this explains the dilemma of our church readers who, not wanting to proclaim that they have just spoken *The Word of God*, prefer to follow Archbishop Cranmer's text and end with the simple

*"Here endeth the lesson"*

## For All the Saints

Those of us who have been fortunate to travel in the biggest province in the second-largest country in the world, have religious education thrown in for good measure. Who for instance, was St. Téléphore, or his neighbours, St. Zotique and St. Polycarpe, whose names we pass on any trip to Cornwall?

Quebec, distinct in so many ways, certainly cornered the market in towns named after saints. They are found from St. Eugene-de-Chazel in the Abitibi to St. Godefroi in the Gaspé – the map is dotted with five hundred and seventy-eight of them, glorious (as saints should always be) in their diversity. However, the gender distribution is one-sided, with four hundred and fifty-five male saints dominant over the one hundred and twenty-two female saints, plus one town named after all the Canadian saints – just to be on the safe side? There is a temptation to assign heavenly duties to some of them. Perhaps St. Téléphore looks after communication, St. Méthode runs the heavenly computers, St. Ours looks after the eternal zoo, and who else but Ste-Marie-Salome would handle the aerobics classes?

When the Loyalists came into the Townships to farm (and inform of American invasions), they gave British names to their new villages. Over time they migrated to the cities, selling their farms to francophones, who added the names of available saints, giving us a rich landscape of scores of saintly towns, only a few of which are St. Alphonse-de-Dudswell, St. Ephrem-de-Tring, St. Remi-de-Tingwick, St. Grégoire-de-Greenplay – and to take the jack-pot, the one and only St. Jacques-le-Majeur-de-Wolfstown.

Asked for a favourite, my choice saintly town has to be Ste. Émélie-de-l'Énergie! She must surely have run the Women's Guild in her earthly life?

M.L., from the MESSENGER archives

# Time Machine



In recent weeks, although not part of any New Year's resolution, we have been scouring through a bunch of file boxes, shelves and assorted drawers with the intention of getting rid of some of the junk which tends to accumulate over the years. This included out-of-date tax forms, old concert programmes, newspaper clippings and assorted stationary items long forgotten and dog-eared. Some were destined for the shredder, others went straight to recycling purgatory, wherever that may be.

However, among these "treasures", some were granted reprieve long enough to provide some fodder for the MESSENGER mill. Among these was an ancient copy of the Radio Times, a weekly publication of the BBC (of which some parishioners will still be aware), home to some interesting articles but mainly the means by which viewers and listeners were able to see which TV or radio programmes might catch their fancy during the "broadcast" week. Sold for the princely sum of 12p, this particular issue was dated 6–12 August 1977; why it should have found a home with us for forty years, I have no idea. Nevertheless, even after all that time, it still sparked some interest other than the mere novelty of its age. Take these letters, for example, two of many found in two pages of letters commenting on various BBC broadcasts.

*"I have just returned from the United States, and was greeted by The Black and White Minstrel Show (Tuesdays, BBC 1). I am thrilled at seeing such a super programme on British television: it made American television look very dull indeed. For my money, the Minstrels outshine any American artists – and that includes the Muppets.*

*Richard Smith-Worsley, York."*

Then again:

*"With the ever-increasing lowering standards of morals in this country, surely there has got to be a line drawn at some time or other? As a family, we have always watched Top of the Pops as we all appreciate good music. I am particularly fond of rock music but I believe that the BBC has finally hit 'rock bottom' by allowing the Sex Pistols punk group to appear on the programme. Ever since the Rolling Stones made their debut on our screens, the standard of music and its presentation has deteriorated. At least the Beatles looked presentable and seemed to be well behaved at the height of their success. Our children are influenced by what they see on television and a punk group, known to behave outrageously in public, can have a detrimental effect on their attitudes by appearing on their favourite television programme. It makes one wonder how far things will go on television before the powers that be will have to call 'halt', if ever.*

*Ken Headon, Plymouth, Devon"*

How far indeed! And yet the distance is less one of degree than of changing mores and expectations. Today's entertainment world is hardly less "shocking".



*"Top of the Pops, with its high viewing figures, became a significant part of British popular culture. Although the weekly show was cancelled in 2006, the Christmas special has continued. It also survives as Top of the Pops 2, which began in 1994 and features vintage performances from the Top of the Pops archives... It was traditionally shown every Thursday evening on BBC One, except for a short period on Fridays in mid-1973 before being again moved to Fridays in 1996 and then to Sundays on BBC Two in 2005."*

*Wikipedia*

# Burning Bright

*Tyger Tyger, burning bright,  
In the forests of the night;  
What immortal hand or eye,  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?*

As many will recognize, the above lines are the first verse of a poem by William Blake, *The Tyger*. The "Burning Bright" quotation is part of the heading found in the same issue of Radio Times mentioned at the left, in an article marking the 150th anniversary of Blake's death.



According to the article's writer (Michael Shepherd), Blake, the poet-artist-philosopher-visionary, who died in 1827, was "at the peak of his popularity" at the time of the article's writing (1977). Shepherd wrote, "neglected in his time, considered as an isolated English eccentric throughout the 19th century, Blake has become a figure of interest right across the spectrum. The bubble-cut 'tough angel' look, taken from his character Orc, has become a cult figure, particularly in America." This is a fact lost on most

of us, I imagine, and Orc's look would probably look pretty unremarkable by today's standards.



Recently, we sang a new hymn set to the familiar tune, *Thaxted*, which was written by Gustav Holst at the beginning of the 20th century. The words of the version in our Blue Hymnal (#805) was clearly patriotic, penned in 1918, with the British sacrifice of the First

World War in mind. As such, it is rarely sung nowadays, certainly in Canadian churches. After a choir rehearsal a week or two ago, *Thaxted* prompted a conversation about another hymn from the same era, Sir Hubert Parry's, *Jerusalem*. In a tradition of long standing, the words of this hymn are sung vigorously by the flag-waving 'promenaders' each year at the final concert of the BBC Promenade Concerts in the Royal Albert Hall.

*Bring me my Bow of burning gold;  
Bring me my Arrows of desire:  
Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold!  
Bring me my Chariot of fire!  
I will not cease from Mental Fight,  
Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand:  
Till we have built Jerusalem,  
In England's green & pleasant Land.*

The entire hymn is #655 in our Blue Hymnal. As can be seen from the above, the words smack a little too much of "Empire" in the post-Thatcher era in the UK. More to the point, however, is that they were written by William Blake – which brings me back to Shepherd's essay in 'my Radio Times'.

A little digging on the internet concerning *Jerusalem* produced the usual array of informative articles, a couple of which are of interest, including one from 2008 by Sophie Borland in *The Telegraph*.

### Cathedral Bans Popular Hymn

*Jerusalem, one of the country's best-loved hymns and the favourite of former Prime Minister Gordon Brown, has been banned from services at one of Britain's foremost churches.*

*The verses, which were written by William Blake more than two centuries ago, cannot be sung by choirs or congregations at Southwark Cathedral because the words do not praise God and are too nationalistic, according to senior clergy. Last week, the Dean of Southwark, the Very Rev. Colin Slee, advised guests at a private memorial service that the hymn would not be sung... The Dean of Southwark does not believe that it is to the glory of God and it is not therefore used in private memorial services."*

*The hymn, which begins with the words*

*"And did those feet in ancient time", was first composed by William Blake in 1804 as an introduction to one of his most famous poems, Milton. The words were later set to music in 1916 by Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry.*

*The verses are thought to have been based on a legend that Jesus came to England as a young boy and visited the town of Glastonbury, Somerset, where he established a second Jerusalem. Christians have subsequently interpreted the meaning of the hymn in different ways and some believe that the word "Jerusalem" could be a metaphor for heaven. It has been suggested that the hymn refers to Jesus coming to England and creating heaven amidst the "dark satanic mills", the line at the end of the first verse, which has been interpreted as the Industrial Revolution.*

*Jerusalem has been banned before by clergymen who do not believe Blake's poetry to be Christian. In 2001 it was banned from the wedding of a couple in Manchester because the vicar deemed it to be too nationalistic and inappropriate to a marriage ceremony... Meanwhile, St Margaret's, in Westminster, the parish church of Parliament has refused to allow the hymn in the past because its clergy deemed the "dark satanic mills" discriminated against people living in the city. In 2000 the hymn was made the official anthem of the England football team in the Euro 2000 tournament in Belgium and the Netherlands.*

(Sophie Borland, *The Daily Telegraph*, April 2008)



The fact that the hymn was chosen as "the official anthem of the England football team" suggests that the sentiment it expresses has not entirely died away – and may even offer an early clue as to why Britain is now in a "post-Brexit" period! Its 'unpopularity' in more recent times is not surprising, reflecting as it does the declining influence of Britain in

the world, certainly as a "soccer power", if nothing else. (England did poorly in Euro 2000, the final game being contested by France and Italy, France winning by one goal after extra time!) If Blake was 'looking on' from "the heavenly place which occupied so much of his mind while he was alive", he must have been quite bemused by the fervor of the spectacle - both on and off the field!



"Pity" by William Blake, 1795

Michael Shepherd ended his article, "William Blake confirms three truths in particular, often forgotten in the Western tradition: that joy is experienced by accepting the senses, not by denying them; that the Creator lives in each of us, actively; and that the spiritual world is real, the material world unreal. Some have journeyed to India to be told this: Blake discovered it for himself, and we are his spiritual heirs by that."

DLP, Editor



As the bells toll in another new year, individuals and families often resolve to make certain changes to their future way of living. We do this in the full knowledge that it is unlikely that we will be able to live up to our expectations; it may even seem to be part of a game, but one in which we are willing to participate. Many newspapers, magazines and online blogs publish suggested lists of personal improvements which we can make – if only we would try!

The list below is culled from a longer list of fifty resolutions aimed at the readership of a popular women's magazine. It is indeed possible that none of these could apply to readers of the MESSENGER personally; however, as Editor, I would like to suggest that a few at least could be adopted by the various parishioners, – elected or appointed – who will take the reins of office in any capacity during the coming year. To those lucky individuals, please feel free to modify or interpret as you see fit.

1. *Get in shape.*
2. *Start eating healthier food, and less food overall.*
3. *Stop procrastinating.*
4. *Improve your concentration and mental skills.*
5. *Meet new people.*
6. *Become more active.*
7. *Learn to be happier with your life.*
8. *Watch less TV and read more.*
9. *Become tidier.*
10. *Become more organized.*
11. *Spend more time with the people that matter.*
12. *Start drinking in moderation or quit drinking altogether.*
13. *Volunteer and give more to charity.*
14. *Pick up useful skills or fun hobbies.*
15. *Learn more about art, music, culture.*
16. *Start being more creative.*

17. *Learn a new language.*
18. *Let go of grudges and avoid moping.*
19. *Learn to control your emotions.*
20. *Stop being late all the time.*
21. *Start being more responsible.*
22. *Spend less time on social media.*
23. *Start remembering important dates.*
24. *Become more social.*
25. *Face your fears and insecurities.*

Guidance and good fortune to all!

David L. Paterson, Editor.



## No nursing home for us.

With the average cost for a nursing home care costing \$188.00 per day, there is a better way when we get old and too feeble. Just check on reservations at the Holiday Inn.

For a combined long term stay discount and senior discount, it's \$59.23 per night in our area. Breakfast is included, and some have happy hours in the afternoon. That leaves \$128.77 a day for lunch and dinner in any restaurant we want, or room service, laundry, gratuities and special TV movies. Plus, the Inn provides a spa, swimming pool, a workout room, a lounge and washer-dryer, etc. Most have free toothpaste and razors, and all have free shampoo and soap.

Spread around \$10 worth of tips a day you'll have the entire staff scrambling to help you. They treat you like a customer, not a patient. There's a city bus stop out front, and seniors ride free. The *handicap bus* will also pick you up (if you fake a decent limp). To meet other nice people, call a *church bus* on Sundays. For a change of scenery, take the airport shuttle bus and eat at one of the nice restaurants there. While you're at the airport, fly somewhere. Otherwise, the cash will keep building up.

It takes months to get into decent nursing homes. Holiday Inn will take your reservation today. And you're not stuck in one place forever – you can move from Inn to Inn, or even from city to city.

TV broken? Light bulbs need changing? Need a mattress replaced? No problem.. They fix everything, and apologize for the inconvenience. The Inn has a night security person and daily room service. The maid checks to see if you are ok. If not, they'll call an ambulance . . . or the undertaker. If you fall and break a hip, the provincial or federal plan will pay for the hip, and Holiday Inn will upgrade you to a suite for the rest of your life.

And no worries about visits from family. They will always be glad to find you, and probably check in for a few days' mini-vacation. The grandkids can use the pool.

What more could anyone ask for? So, if you've reached that golden age, face it with a grin!

With thanks to I.P.

