

# The Montréal Lay Reader

## Le prédicateur montréalais

The newsletter for lay readers of the Anglican Diocese of Montreal

Le bulletin des prédicateurs laïcs du diocèse anglican de Montréal



OCTOBER 2012 OCTOBRE

### A Letter from Co-President, Linden Rogers

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ArtsCan founding member Mike Stevens distributes donated harmonicas.

#### Is God asking us to be the Church in new and different ways?

Dear Lay Readers

I trust that you all had a good restful summer, and are enjoying the rush of fall activities.

This summer was a very special one for me as I was able to do more traveling than usual. The highlight was spending 2 weeks in the town of Lunenburg at a B & B, where I met many wonderful people.

At a lecture called 'Music for Social Change in the North' given as part of the Lunenburg Folk Harbour Festival, I heard the stories of those who had been traveling or working in Northern Canada and who had been confronted by the terrible problems faced by first nations people, especially the young people. All of these people have committed their energy and talents to providing musical instruments and training and developing art and drama programs, for these kids.

One such person is Mike Stevens, one of the world's great blues harmonica players (a star in Nashville for many years) who spends most of his time organizing such activities for kids in Northern Ontario.

(See <http://www.artscancircle.ca> for his story and what he is doing.) Mike says that his goal is to give these really smart, challenged kids, a voice.

Another is a young Lunenburg woman, Julie Lohnes, who organizes the transportation of musical instruments to Baffin Island communities, and for music teachers to spend time with the kids. (Julie's website is

<http://www.musicforthefuture.ca>) The community choir in Riverport, NS (near Lunenburg) has regular concerts to raise money and solicit musical instruments for Julie's programs.

The efforts of the communities that Mike and Julie have initiated are having a huge effect, are even life-saving. What a ministry!

This fall, I attended two conferences in the church, both dealing with new directions of ministry in the church. The first was the Stewardship conference, entitled "Swift to Love", held at my church (St. Barnabas, Pierrefonds) on September 8<sup>th</sup>. This was a very inspired and inspiring day suggesting new possibilities for ministry in the Diocese.

The second was Provincial Synod, held Sept. 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Province of Canada is comprised of the seven dioceses of the Maritimes and Quebec. As you can imagine, it was a very energetic and deeply committed group of Christians but from a range of different, and often difficult, situations. We had legislation to work on, but we also had a lot of time together in discussion about our ministries.



Is God asking us to be the Church in new and different ways?  
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A common theme in both conferences was the sea-change that the church is going through – and we were trying to imagine what the church will look like in the future. Throughout the discussions, there was a great deal of energy around the idea of being more of a church reaching out to the communities around us. And I couldn't help but think of the stories I had heard this summer about the courageous people working in the North, and wondering if our churches can become stronger communities of commitment and courage in the world. Both the upcoming Diocese of Montreal Conference Synod which is titled "Making a Difference, and the Conference called "Becoming a Diaconal Church: A Visioning Conference" to be held November 23rd and 24th will explore these themes further. (Both conferences are to be held at St. James the Apostle Church).

Where are we headed as church? At this point it is hard to say exactly, but judging from the discussions in the church that I have been privileged to be a part of this past month, whatever way we decide to be church, we will be bringing our energy and our compassion along with us.

*Linden Rogers*



## **A Message from The Rev. Canon Tim Smart**

### **Cutting Prison Chaplains**

As you may know, one of my other hats is being a part-time prison chaplain at the Federal Penitentiary in Cowansville. It's been a rewarding experience over the past three years for me to listen and walk with so many men who are trying to turn their lives around. All the vocabulary that we regularly use in church – sin, repentance, pardon and grace – now take on a very real and immediate significance.

Last week, the Federal Minister for Public Safety, Vic Toews, rolled out of bed and decided to cut all part-time prison chaplains; 49 in all, Christian and other faiths. He now expects the remaining full-time chaplains to be all things to all people.

It's clear to many of us in prison chaplaincy that this government is purposely moving from a model of rehabilitation to one of longer incarceration and punishment. In cutting 49 part-time chaplains, inmates will have fewer opportunities to build relationships that foster a spirit of hope and redemption.

The loss of chaplains also leads to a loss of volunteers who are brought into the prison by chaplains. I have a list of over 50 wonderful people who regularly come to our Monday evening chapel service or to our Friday afternoon literacy class. Losing these volunteers cuts the ties between inmates and the wider community into which they will one day return.

The end result of these cuts is not safer streets, but prisons and prisoners without hope, and streets which will be less safe when they finally are released.

Chaplains work to keep the vision of restorative justice alive in a system that is becoming increasingly punitive. Chaplaincy in prison serves the common good of both inmate and victim and society at large because it seeks to redeem that which seems hopelessly lost.

Pray for those who live and work daily in your prison system, that true justice may prevail.

***Tim Smart***

## Lay Reader Study Day and Commissioning Service

Saturday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Church of St. John the Baptist, 233 Ste.-Claire Road, Pointe Claire

Registration begins at 8:30 am.

**Speaker: Mark Dunwoody**

**Youth Consultant for the Diocese of Montreal**

**Topic: Leading By Example: Youth Ministry, Playing our Part**

*What is the first thought that comes into your head when you hear the words 'Youth Ministry'? Very few people deny the fact that we 'need' more young people in our church community. However people get very nervous when faced with the thought of actually working with young people, as most don't feel 'equipped' to work with young people. The Study Day will be an opportunity to explore how we can all play a vital part in our mission to young people. Together we will have conversations that will make us all realize that everyone has gifts and abilities that can be utilized to 'serve' both young people and their families' lives. I look forward to having a fun, inspirational and encouraging day with the fantastic Lay Readers of the Diocese of Montreal.*

Mark Dunwoody

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**Cost of the Study Day:** \$30 (includes refreshments and lunch and workshop materials)

**Order of the Day:**

8:30 Registration

9:00 Opening worship

9:15 Welcome and Introductions

9:30 First session and small groups

10: 30 Refreshment Break

11:00 Second session and small groups

**12:00 Lunch**

1:00 Third session and group work

3:00 Refreshments and preparation for Evening Prayer

4:00 Evening Prayer and Commissioning

5:00 Bishop's Reception for All, including family and friends



*Please see next page for map*





## Greetings and News from the Lay Readers of the Diocese of Quebec

As of this spring, I've had the pleasure of being the liaison lay reader with the Montreal Lay Readers' Association. The parish I serve is St. John the Evangelist, Portneuf, which I share with and am under the mentorship of Canon Graham Jackson.

The Quebec Diocese Annual Lay Readers' Conference took place on Saturday October 6, at St. George's Lennoxville. Following a Holy Communion Service, we benefited from two sessions on Liturgy given by the Ven. Edward Simonton, Rector of St. George's, Lennoxville.

The workshops two elements were:

1. Principles of Liturgy – an introduction to basic liturgical principles: an exploration of the underlying guidelines of the way we worship;
2. The Eucharist, Services of the Word and Morning Prayer – the meaning of what we go in services and how we reflect that in our worship.

This was a wonderful opportunity to fellowship with other Lay Readers from across the vast territory of the Diocese of Quebec.

Our Montreal Lay Readers' Study Day & Commissioning of November 17 was announced. Let us hope and pray that some guests from Quebec can attend.

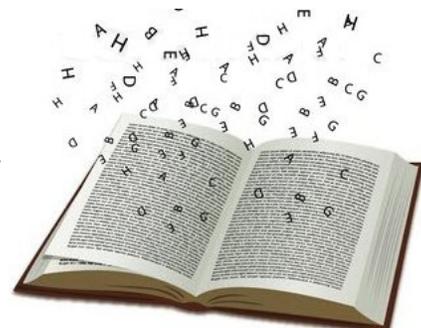
Take good care of yourselves and God Bless,

**Glen Marcotte**

**St. John the Evangelist  
Portneuf**

## REFLECTIONS

It was a lazy, hazy summer day and I was slowly rocking on the swing on our backyard deck, wool-gathering, the book that I had been reading lying opened and, for the moment, forgotten, on my lap. White marshmallow clouds floated weightlessly in a calming blue sky. Summer sounds prevailed; crows cawed, squirrels chattered and a mom and pop wood pecker communicated their positions through the canopy of branches overhead. Butterflies and bees flirted from blossom to blossom doing their best to keep things in balance. Only the sounds of passing cars and children's voices at play breaking the heavy silence. My eyes were drawn to my book, not really reading the words so much as studying them. Black marks on a white page brought me back to that day a lifetime ago, when, clutching my mother's hand on one side and my brand new school bag on the other, I stepped gingerly into my new reality. This was my first day of school; a day that would begin my lifetime love affair with the written word.



Now, so many years later, looking at those words lying so innocently on that page, reminded me of the blood, sweat and sometimes tears of frustration that went into being able to understand their meaning. Remembering the hours spent at our kitchen table, with whichever family member I could convince to help me, struggling over those markings that so

## REFLECTIONS

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sentences, sentences then paragraphs and, finally, paragraphs formed chapters. As my reading ability improved, I discovered a whole new world; the world of books! I loved them! By just opening the cover of a book, I could be frolicking in the forest with Bambi and Flower, sailing the seven seas with Sinbad or solving a mystery with Nancy Drew. It was magical!

Returning to the present, I pick up my book and gaze over the written page, reliving those feelings of so long ago, sitting at the kitchen table, while I struggled to master this precious skill. Somehow over the years, I had lost that feeling of marvel. How sad! I had ceased to appreciate this special gift, something that not everyone has the opportunity to learn. When had the glow begin to wear off reading? Was it when it turned from difficult to easy, when I forgot the struggle it took to learn, or when, after accepting that I could read, I just took the ability to decipher the written word for granted? I'm not sure; but, one thing that I do know is that something that is won can also be lost. That was when I remembered my mother. She had a stroke when I was ten years old and had to relearn how to read and write. Memories of that time flooded back and made me appreciate the things that I have learnt, things that today I can do automatically, without effort.

Looking back on that day, I realize that that was definitely a God Moment; one of those rare and special times when it seems that we are completely opened to our Father and, an appreciation of all the gifts and abilities He has given us. Thank You !

*Geraldine Frances Kavanagh*

## Summer of Goals

This summer Meg and I decided to travel out west and see places that we had only dreamed of. We witnessed the gushing of Old Faithful in Yellowstone Park, marveled at the views of the Grand Canyon, and walked amidst the redwoods of the West Coast. The size and shape of nature stood out for us, and we were awed by the majesty of God's world so relatively close to us.

It was also a summer to strive toward inward goals. I have a boxed set of C.S. Lewis books on the shelf, looking good but never read, until this year. In the past I had read "Screwtape Letters", and most of the Narnia series. But "Mere Christianity"? Never! It is quite a classic, of course, and I discovered that its style of argument takes some getting used to. However, it took only a few days of practice and I was reading the 1950's prose with ease.

There were a few surprises. "Mere Christianity" starts with what we believe about Jesus and then proceeds to a large middle section on





morality – Christian behavior. Some is a bit troubling and thought-provoking. For example, “How is it that people who are quite obviously eaten up with Pride can say that they believe in God and appear to themselves very religious? I am afraid that it means that they are worshiping an imaginary God.” Ouch! The book ends on the remaking of people – into not just nice people but “new men” – a process that Lewis likens to turning a horse into a winged creature.

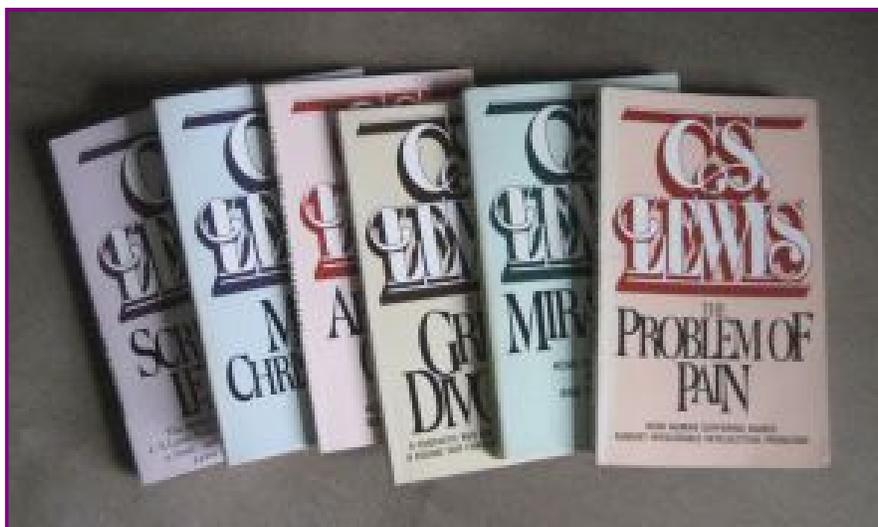
There were four other books in the set. “The Abolition of Man” feels like a digression on the effect of poor education on people’s sense of morality. Avoiding poetry and imagining that we have conquered nature has placed us in a vulnerable position as a society, ships without rudders.

“The Great Divorce” is an amusing tale of an imaginary heaven where even the blades of grass can’t be bent by the ghost people. Many of these “ghost people” felt so out of place that they wanted to leave heaven and take the bus back to hell, where they could have anything they wanted – any books, any houses – except a share in the journey with others toward God’s awesome presence.

“Miracles” is a book of hope for one looking for God to intervene in human affairs. At least, it offers a host of possibilities for His presence in our lives, starting with our own consciousness. The arguments for cause and effect, for nature versus “super-nature”, are logically presented and difficult to condense. The punch-line nevertheless remains –the Grand Miracle is that the one true God, He whom the Jews worshiped as Jahweh, descended and rose again in the person of Jesus.

The last book that I read in this summer go-around was “The Problem of Pain”. It’s an example of how C. S. Lewis took on the most difficult of problems – how can a God of love allow His creatures to experience pain the way they do? His argument, again, is difficult to condense, but part of it may be summed up in the memorable statement, “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts in our pains.” Yet we can still say, “God is good”, and ultimately we rest in Him.

**Ian Sinclair**

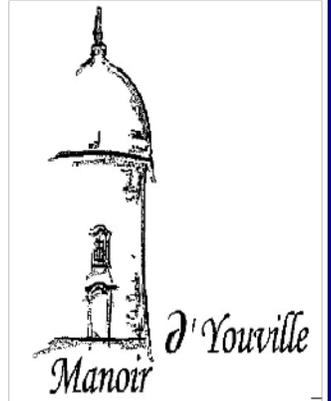


# Spring Retreat at Manoir d'Youville, Chateauguay

Friday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> to Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013



**Speaker:**  
**The Right Reverend**  
**Mark MacDonald**  
National Anglican Indigenous Bishop  
**Topic: Gospel-based Fellowship**



The Manoir d'Youville is under management by the city of Chateauguay. It is a popular conference center, used by many organizations as well as churches. For this reason, renovations are ongoing.

The costs of the rooms have increased this year, with all meals included in the room rates. The costs include two nights and six meals, beginning with dinner on Friday evening and ending on Sunday after lunch.

All clergy will be requested to consider giving financial support to Lay Readers who wish to attend the Retreat. Lay Readers may want to alert their church leaders to this request so that these funds can be part of the Church budget for 2013.

Costs for this retreat will be as follows:

**Single room with bathroom, \$265**

**Twin beds in a room with bathroom, \$165 per person**

**Single room, bathroom in corridor, \$200**

Members with mobility difficulties and medical concerns will be given priority for single rooms with bathrooms.

Deposits of \$50 will be received on Study Day, November 17<sup>th</sup>, for Lay Readers wishing to reserve a room. Final payments should be received by March 25<sup>th</sup>.

Registration will remain open until the first week of April if rooms are still available.

**Registrar: Susan Winn:**

For questions and information:

[swinn2006@sympatico.ca](mailto:swinn2006@sympatico.ca)

514-457-0736

*Save  
the  
Date*

**Please mail registration forms, and cheques dated no later than March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013, to:**

**Sue Winn**  
**680 Victoria Drive,**  
**Baie D'Urfe, QC H9X 2K2**

We're on the Web!  
[www.layreaders.org](http://www.layreaders.org)