



THE MONTRÉAL LAY READER

LE PRÉDICATEUR MONTRÉALAIS

The newsletter for lay readers of the Anglican Diocese of Montreal
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SPRING RETREAT AT MANOIR D'YOUVILLE

Ile St. Bernard, Chateauguay

Friday, April 26 (5:00 pm) to Sunday, April 28, 2019 (after lunch)



Eli Evans is a priest from Heart's Delight in Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador. He will lead our retreat this year. Eli was the Prolocutor of The Provincial Synod in the ecclesiastical province of Canada. He is a wonderful story teller, and a faithful minister. He will be accompanied by his wife, Tracey.

Eli has sent the following message to prepare us for this time together:

The Changing Church ... Changing The Church

Our church has changed, our church is changing and the church will continue to change. That sentence expresses a truth that has held true in every generation and yet it remains to be asked, if a group of people are so engrossed in change all the time, why does it still seem like the most difficult and divisive thing we handle?

Change of all size and shape creates lively discussion in most parts of our lives. However, change in the church somehow always seems more dramatic. From suggesting to move a piece of furniture within the sanctuary to adjusting the entire day to day life of a congregation, all change can escalate into a major source of stress. Together, at the retreat, we will look in the scriptures at times when God's people endured great change and hopefully shed some light on the nature of change within our church. Specifically, I will reference the Exodus story and stories of the Church in the first century to look at change and the effects of change. Hopefully we will discover a greater understanding of surviving and leading in the church through change.

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Helpful passages to read before the retreat would be the Exodus journey (Exodus 3.1 – 17.7), although the details of the plagues themselves will not be of importance (Exodus 7.14 – 12.30). From Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, chapters 3 and 12 will be significant to understanding the impetus of change within my Parish from four congregations to one.

I look forward to being a part of your Spring Retreat and hope that our time together will be prayerful and beneficial in some way to all.

In Christ's Service,

Eli Evans

CONNECTING TO THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

THE REV. LORNE EASON



For about 10 days in November of last year, I, along with my wife and several other people, went to St. George's Anglican College in Jerusalem to take a course titled, "Introduction to Bible Lands." The course involved traveling to various significant sites throughout Israel that mark the place of an event in the life of Jesus. Our group's perspective was to take this course as pilgrims, those desiring to have their faith transformed and renewed.

I had been to Israel once before, in 2009, but more as a tourist than anything else. Nonetheless, even as a tourist, the places I had seen, and the things I had experienced, at the very least, changed the way I read the bible. In 2009, I was particularly awed by the rugged beauty of the country, the desert, the Sea of Galilee, the Dead Sea, the Jordan River, the mountainous terrain, the deep ravines, the Mediterranean Sea and so much more, and that has stayed with me to this day.

At the beginning of this second trip, this pilgrimage, I happened to mention to the course facilitator that I had been to Israel once before and that I had found that the land and the geography of the place seemed to "speak" to me much more than the historical buildings and monuments we visited. She simply replied, "Well, perhaps the buildings will speak to you more this time around."

Although I was still impressed and moved by the geography of this wonderful place on this my 2nd trip, the historical buildings did speak to me more than I had expected.



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What I began “hearing” was the story of faith being told through the pages of bricks and mortar, paintings, artwork, mosaics, architecture, relics and decorations of various and elaborate kinds. I began to understand a little more clearly that the historical structures I visited were intentionally designed and decorated to tell a narrative of devotion, dedication and hope as told from one generation to the next. Even though I was somewhat overwhelmed by all there was to see and take in, I began to sense, and even feel, a connection to the community of faith who had gone before me, those whose belief in, love for, worship of, and dedication to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit was perhaps not very different from my own.

What I was hearing and perhaps sensing a little more clearly on this pilgrimage was the story of the “communion of saints” proclaiming the Gospel as best they understood it in their time and in their way and realizing in a more concrete way that I am connected to that larger and historical community.

My experience in Israel this time around wasn’t just about my own private and personal story and experience of faith anymore. It is a much bigger story than that. We are part of the past, present and future story of God being told throughout the ages by a great cloud of witnesses in various ways, even through church buildings.

As I think about the witness of the past and my connectedness to it, I wonder what legacy of faith we, in our time and place, will leave. Will our legacy also tell of the greater story of God’s love and grace in a way that future generations of the community of faith will understand, and find themselves connecting to it.

Yours in Christ,

Lorne +



THE LAY READERS’ ASSOCIATION

OFFERS BURSARIES

Every active Lay Reader who participates in courses of ongoing religious studies is entitled to \$100 or \$150 per year to assist with the cost of their study.

Please send a request to our treasurer, Ann Cumyn, acumyn@sympatico.ca

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

ANNE CLAUDE GEOFFRION



Surviving the Storms of Life

As some of you may know, in early December I spent 2 weeks in Haiti on a food security learning tour. We visited agricultural projects in rural communities which had been supported by Canadian Foodgrains Bank, a PWRDF partner.

A few days before Christmas, I left warm, sunny Haiti and came back to face our Quebec Winter. So far, this Winter has been a weather roller coaster with arctic temperatures and thaws alternating with snow, freezing drizzle, ice pellets or just plain rain.

This is the time of the year when many Quebecers dream of warm blue seas and sun-drenched sandy beaches with a few palm trees for shade. I too think fondly of Haiti and wish I didn't need to worry about whether my car will start or if I can make it to the store without mishap.

You may wonder what my trip to Haiti has to do with our weather conditions here in Quebec? Weather and life are pretty similar. There are ups and downs, warm sunny days which lull us into thinking life is breeze until a sudden storm, calamity or disaster comes out of nowhere and hits us without warning.

Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. It is also a country where greed and corruption reign among the rich and well off. 99% of Haitians are poor, and suffer daily hardships. However, the Haitians I met were proud, resilient, courageous and beautiful people. They were survivors who have faced storms, calamities, oppression, and natural disasters for decades, yet they pick themselves up and manage to keep going.

How do they do it? Where do they get this strength?

It became obvious to me that faith, prayer and trust in God play a large role in their ability to survive. At every meeting, the village leader would open in prayer and a hymn. Everywhere, on the outside of their stores, tap-taps (taxis) and trucks you see slogans praising God or asking for His protection. While we were there, the December 8th Feast of the Immaculate Conception was celebrated in great pomp with church services everywhere and massive street parades with floats and statues venerating the Virgin Mary. The Haitians build their Faith on solid rock. Their foundations are deeply embedded in Prayer and Hope that are an integral part of their daily lives.

None of us is immune to the storms of life. We have all been there at one time or other and will likely experience such situations again. When Jesus concluded his famous Sermon on the Mount, he taught us that we need to build the foundations of our homes, and of our life, on solid rock, not on shifting sand. Of course it is easier to build on sand, with no hard digging or

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breaking of rocks. But the house built on rock does not sink or collapse and is made to last forever. We too, if we follow Jesus, dig deep foundations in Him and are assured of eternal life.

My prayer for each one of you is that even though you may experience the weather shifts of life, you remain comforted knowing that you are rooted in and surrounded by God's love. He is the only one who can calm the storms of life.

- Ke Bondye beni vou - May God Bless you - Que Dieu vous bénisse -



LAY READERS' ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, MAY 22, 2019

6:00 - 8:30 PM

Fulford Hall, Cathedral Place

1444 Union Avenue

Montreal

Speaker: Rev. Ryan Cook

Incumbent, Christ Church Beaurepaire

Topic: The Dinner Table as a Vehicle for Ministry

Mark your calendars now for this time of fellowship, dinner and our annual business meeting.

- 5:30 pm Gathering and Registration
- 6:15 pm Dinner (\$10 for a delicious dinner prepared by Simply Wonderful)
- 7:30 pm Business Meeting (Annual Reports and Elections)
- 8:30 pm Closing Prayer and Dismissal

Please bring your thoughts and ideas for our year ahead! We look forward to seeing you all at this important meeting!

MY JOURNEY INTO NEW MINISTRY

RANDY GATES

Whew... while winter has had some beautiful and serene moments, with the freshly fallen snow and the encompassing and welcoming warmth of a wood fire and the smell of soup simmering on the stove; it has also brought with it times of chilling deep freezes, major snow storms and an overall sense that sometimes we just wanted to hibernate from it all until it was over.

I would imagine by now that I am not the only one looking ahead with great anticipation to our season of rebirth, renewal and of course resurrection.

My personal journey on that path intensified five years ago when I began a focused, educated and in-depth journey towards a deeper relationship with God; developing a more mature, enlightened and personal faith that is ever growing, imperfect, alive and my source of gratitude, hope and love.

At that time I had no idea that the Education for Ministry program would be one of the most enriching and rewarding experiences of my life as well as lead me to become a lay reader within the Anglican church.

I remember the first time that I was asked by my priest, Tim Smart to assist in leading Morning Prayer and to deliver my first homily... The panic that set in, wondering if I would be able to do justice to the scriptures – could I interpret them in a way that was meaningful, relevant and thought provoking? (Translation – Was my faith solid enough? Was my grasp clear enough? Was I good enough?)

Through the help and guidance of many people (especially Rev. Rhonda Waters and Rev Tim Smart) 3 weeks later I had the first draft of what would become my first homily. I may add that there were still many questions, revisions, and bouts of nervousness.

In the end everything was ok – the service went well and my homily was well received. I think that it was mainly due to the fact that I belong to a wonderful congregation at Grace Church in Sutton; and that I was talking about reaching out in love and how God loves us for who we are and for where we are at all times in our lives. That, all we really need is to have a desire to be close to Him/Her and to open our hearts and to allow Him/Her to enter into our lives.

Within the last two years in my capacity of lay reader, I have had many opportunities to continuously learn, grow and to develop my knowledge, skills and in the end deepen my faith with hands on experience: at Grace Church, at various workshops and trainings offered through the Lay Readers Association, our annual retreat or additional workshops sponsored by other parishes or organizations.

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And one of the greatest lessons that I have learned this far is that we are not perfect and we will never have all of the answers. Only God has that title. The important thing is to continue to ask the questions, seek the answers, to be the strength, guidance and support for others; to offer your hands and your hearts to those who need them – in humility, without judgment, restriction or limits.

I am very grateful for the many wonders and the gifts that God has abundantly given us and that are so evident if we just take the time to look with an open heart and spirit and not just with our eyes. I can only look forward to what is around the next corner.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Tim Smart and Lorne Eason for their continued guidance and support and as well to each and every one of you who welcomed me into your group of Lay readers and lives with open arms and hearts. I truly feel blessed and grateful to be among you and to share your experiences and ministries.

To close I would like to leave you with this poem that was written by Rainer Maria Rilke and can be found in his book, ***Rilke's Book of Hours: Love Poems to God***. It goes like this:

God speaks to each of us as he makes us,
then walks with us silently out of the night.
These are the words we dimly hear:
You, sent out beyond your recall,
go to the limits of your longing.
Embody me.
Flare up like flames
and make big shadows I can move in.
Let everything happen to you: beauty and terror.
Just keep going. No feeling is final.
Don't let yourself lose me.
Nearby is the country they call life.
You will know it by its seriousness.
Give me your hand.

God Bless you all,
Randy





Study Day, November 16, 2018,
A leg up for Graham Singh and Lorne.
Weaving Reformation and Revival in Montreal Churches



Connie Middleton-Hope
joins Sue Winn as Volunteer
Citizen on Patrol in Baie D'Urfé

LAY READER WORKSHOPS



Study Day 2018



Carol Johnson and Barbara White with Bishop Mary at the Manoir D'Youville



Bishop Mary and Martin Brokenleg at Synod June 2018



Hugh Mitchell and Gail Turnbull enjoying Study Day

**2019 LAY READER STUDY DAY AND
COMMISSIONING SERVICE**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2019
9:00 AM - 3:30 PM**

**4:00PM EVENING PRAYER AND COMMISSIONING
FOLLOWED BY THE BISHOP'S RECEPTION FOR ALL
FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

Church of St. John the Baptist
Pointe Claire
233 ave Ste. Claire
Pointe Claire

Speaker: Dr. Jason Crawford

**Topic: Human Suffering: Moral, Spiritual and
Practical Considerations**



Jason B. Crawford is an active (lay) member of the Church of the Epiphany in Verdun where he assists in leading worship and facilitates adult education programs. He is an Instructor in the Humanities Department at Champlain College in Saint-Lambert where he teaches courses in critical thinking, gender and sexuality, social justice, and ethics. He earned a PhD in Interdisciplinary Humanities from Concordia University with expertise in religion, sexuality, and social activism.

A BOOK EXCHANGE!

At the retreat in April, Lay Readers are invited to bring books that support our ministry, preaching, teaching, and books of prayers to give to or exchange with other Lay Readers. Study bibles and commentaries are always helpful. Christian novels would be welcome. A table will be provided for this exchange.



