

# CORNERSTONE

Summer, 2015

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Kanata, Ontario  
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www.stpaulshk.org

**St Paul's**  
ANGLICAN CHURCH



“A growing community called to know Jesus Christ and make him known in the world by our presence.”

## Summer Sunday Services (June 21 to August 30)

8:00 a.m. – Holy Communion Said service

10:00 a.m. – Combined service with Traditional/Choral and Praise Music Holy Communion. Kids are invited to join the God Squad for children’s worship, crafts and games. Nursery care also available.

## Other Services

10:00 a.m Wednesday – Bible Study and Eucharist

2:00 p.m. Thursday – “Seniors’ Afternoon Out” Service and Social

## Inside this issue:

- Message from Father Craig
  - God Squad news
  - E100 update
  - Food Cupboard needs you!
  - Cornerstone Housing for Women
  - Cursillo upcoming events
  - Wine tasting at St. John’s
  - Men’s FLAME conference
- ...and more!

September edition deadline:  
Tuesday, September 8, 2015

Please send submissions to:  
cornerstone@stpaulshk.org



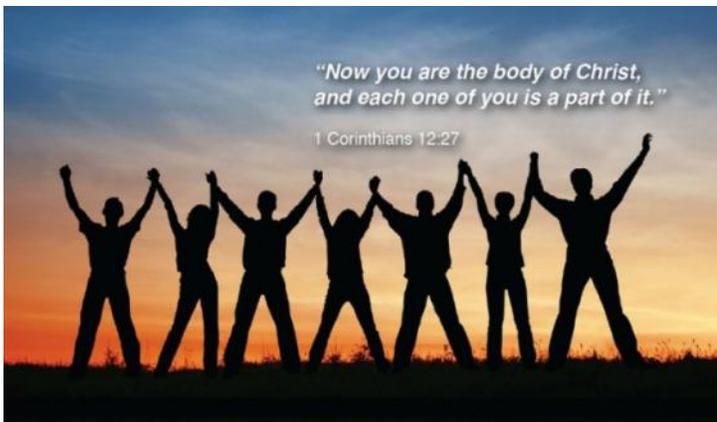
## From the desk of Father Craig

### Signs of the Kingdom...

Mark 4:26-29 He also said, *“The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.”*

It is amazing how often Jesus spoke of that which was coming to life around him. The metaphors of us bearing fruit, much fruit, abound in His teaching. It is such a gift to be able to be part of Jesus’ life-giving ministry: to be one of the saints of the church, one of the baptized, one of those who stand as Christ’s own.

Now some might be able to say they or I have borne a little of the Kingdom’s fruit, but saints? Yes, saints. As we say at the eucharist, “If we have died with him (baptism), we shall live with him. If we hold firm, we shall reign with him (resurrection life).” We all have the same baptism. There is but one Lord, one faith, and one baptism.



## A message from Father John

### Have a blessed summer

Father John is away for a short time, but sends his best wishes to everyone.

*Fr. John*

But aren’t the Saints above us? No! There is one body, the Church. In the Church we are surrounded by a crowd of witnesses, the saints. They are us and we are them! Now I understand that we have some we call saints, and they are those who were particularly faithful at living life here and now fully immersed in the Kingdom of God. But that is not beyond your calling or mine.

If we pray, practice forgiveness, and repent, we will certainly show signs of the Kingdom. But aren’t saints great miracle workers? Well, definitely some have done great life-giving works in Jesus’ name. But none would point to these acts as setting them apart. It is bringing the life of God to light in each act of humble service that reflects the self-giving life of Christ.

I have often told a story of a saint I grew up with. She had little in the eyes of the world, but she would gather up bits of yarn and cloth, and remember those around her with a small gift or word of encouragement. In fact, she was most concerned as she was dying that her friends knew she was praying for them and that they mattered to her. She had knitted many gifts to be distributed for Christmas. She wanted to make sure they all were received.

The saints in heaven and on earth sang God’s praise when she died.

If we live as though Christ truly reigns in each small act of care, truth and love we offer, maybe instead of a summer when ministry seems to go quiet, it will be a summer when more people learn of the love of God than we can ask or imagine!

In peace,  
*Fr. Craig*

## God Squad news

### Summertime, summertime, sum-sum-summertime...

Summer is on its way! **The two regularly scheduled Sunday school classes will be switching to a single class at 10:00 a.m. beginning on June 21!**

Once again, we are looking to encourage some additional teachers to help out over the summer months, so that our current dedicated team can enjoy a much deserved respite. We have prepared lessons to cover the summer Sundays, so no need to feel intimidated by the preparation work.

If you are interested in volunteering your time to this very valuable and rewarding position, but are unsure if it is right for you, please feel free to sit in on a Sunday school lesson to learn what it's all about. If you already know that this is your calling, please contact Tracy ([tracyalbert@rogers.com](mailto:tracyalbert@rogers.com)), or sign up on the sheet left in the Narthex.

God Squad is pleased to once again present the annual **St. Paul's potluck picnic**. We are working hard to make the day a fun one for kids of all ages. Please **join us on June 21 at 11:30 for games, fellowship and**

**great food.** Some of the activities we are planning include ring toss, face painting station, fishing game, bean toss, and a slip 'n slide. Please bring your favourite dish to share, and let me know what you are planning to contribute. We look forward to seeing you there!

*Tracy Albert*  
[tracyalbert@rogers.com](mailto:tracyalbert@rogers.com)



## Food Cupboard update

### We need you!

Can you spare a couple of hours once every 6 weeks? Please consider joining "Team St. Paul's." We need your help!

Every 6 weeks, St. Paul's provides a team of people for a week (5 days) on duty at the Food Cupboard to greet, be shoppers, pack food and do deliveries. You are needed for about 2 1/2 hours once in that week only. Greeters, packers and shoppers start at 4:45 p.m. Delivery people arrive about 5:45 p.m.

Our next week on duty is **this week (June 15 to 19)** and we could get you in to shadow what goes on and see if this is of interest to you. Please give me a call or send me an email.

Thank You!  
*Heather Colls*

613-509-1304 or [heather.colls@ncf.ca](mailto:heather.colls@ncf.ca)

## Cursillo upcoming events

### Hope to see you there!

**SUMMER ULTREYAS** at Andrew Haydn Park at 7:00 p.m. (Rain location St. Stephen's, 930 Watson St.):

June 17

July 15

August 19

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**, Friday, September 11, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. at St. Stephen's, 930 Watson St.

**MEN'S 121st WEEKEND**, November 5 - 8, 2015

**WOMEN'S 122nd WEEKEND**, November 19 - 22, 2015

**WELCOME BACK**, Sunday, January 17, 2016 at 3:00 p.m. at St. Stephen's, 930 Watson St.

*Ultreya!*



## EDUCATION EVENINGS

Education evenings were held during the Easter season and we were so blessed by our speakers:

Rev. Fred Milnes

Father Anthony Mourad

Jane Jones

Bishop Peter Coffin

Thank you to those who came out to support these evenings and to those who provided goodies.

## MID-YEAR CELEBRATION

On Sunday, May 17th we were pleased to have Bishop Peter Coffin as a guest homilist and to help us celebrate the mid-point in our year of readings.

## HAVE YOU FALLEN BEHIND ?!

If you stopped reading or have fallen behind in your E100 weekly readings, don't worry! Maybe summer is a good time to get back on board. You can pick up where you left off, or just start back up where we are now. The readings are listed in the bulletin each week and also e-mailed to those who signed up.



## UPCOMING READINGS

Old Testament - read about Samuel, Kings Saul, David and Solomon, and the prophet Elijah.

New Testament - read portions of St. Paul's letters to the Romans, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and to Timothy

## SUMMER GUEST SPEAKER

On Sunday, July 26th our guest homilist will be Huda Kandalaft from St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. If you are in town please come and listen to her share God's Word with us.

## SCRIPTURE UNION

Here is a Bible-reading method by the organization that developed E100:

Pray, asking God to help you understand and receive his Word.

Read the Bible passage for the day carefully.

Reflect on what you have read.

Ask yourself questions such as:

1. What is the main point of this portion?
2. What does God, Father, Son or Holy Spirit, reveal of Himself?
3. What insight am I given into myself and into my life situation? Is there an example of a warning to heed? A promise to claim?
4. What does Christ require of me now, in thought, word or action?



# Cornerstone Housing for Women

by Linda Keech

I visited Cornerstone Housing for Women at 314 Booth Street to deliver the gifts of money received from my request to support their fundraiser. It is a very homey building and atmosphere. Some of the ladies were waiting for a bus as they were going on an outing to Waupoos. St. Paul's also supports Waupoos. As I have been to Waupoos to help clean and restore one of the cottages, I knew these ladies would have a wonderful day. Lots of sunshine and fresh air, and farm animals, all a wonderful experience for them.

I want to again Thank you for your donations to this important mission. Your response has been outstanding. I was given lots of information and I will share some of it here.

Cornerstone consists of:

The Women's Shelter: 404 women stayed at the shelter in 2014 and the average length of stay was 59 days;

515 MacLaren: 25 women live here;

314 Booth Street: 45 women live here;

McPhail House: 6 women live here and they are women new to Canada and receive English language training and support to integrate into Canadian culture.

I was given a tour of the 314 Booth facility and one lady that I met wanted me to see her room. It was lovely and you could see how proud she was of it. It was very clean and tidy.

The reasons for staying at these homes include: inability to pay market rent, lack of affordable housing, mental health challenges, hospital stays, partner violence, relationship breakdown, addictions due to chronic trauma and abuse, immigration/newcomer challenges, etc.

Support services provided to these women include: affordable housing, assistance with personal goals, managing chronic mental health conditions, medication assistance, healthy lifestyle activities, spiritual support, safety planning, computer training, employment counseling, crisis counseling, skills and resources for increasing independence. Cornerstone provided

emergency shelter for 413 homeless women in Ottawa and served over 140,150 nutritious meals last year.

There are many ways to help these residences and I will follow up in the fall with some ideas. The requirement for ongoing support is very necessary.

Some of the literature I received talked about "HOPE" and that is what these homes provide. It is a comfort to know that St. Paul's is helping to provide comfort to these women who need our help so much.



This is a picture of the Quiet Room, an area for prayer and spiritual consultation.

If you have any questions, please call Linda Keech at 613-592-5069.

# Six things to say on purpose

by Joyce Meyer, submitted by Diane Brown

Have you ever thought about God's wonderful gift of speech? **Proverbs 15:23** says A word spoken at the right moment—how good it is! God has given us the ability to bless, encourage, praise, sing and worship with our words.

But too often our mouths—and a tiny instrument called the tongue—get us into trouble. If you have an “unbridled” tongue—and I struggled for years in this area—there's no end to the havoc you can create in your own life and the lives of people around you.

*But the human tongue can be tamed by no man. It is a restless (undisciplined, irreconcilable) evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse men who were made in God's likeness!(James 3:8-9).*

Our words can do severe damage to our relationships, our careers and the world around us. But here's the good news: With the help of the Holy Spirit, they can also do great good. God can give us the wisdom we need to control our tongues and learn to speak life-giving words that reflect the love of Christ and what His Word says. Here are a few tips to help you tame your tongue and shape your life:

## 1. Use your words to bless.

Our words have the power to bless or curse. **Proverbs 18:21** says, *Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and they who indulge in it shall eat the fruit of it [for death or life].* We need to pay close attention to the way we talk about ourselves. People who have



not disciplined their mouths say some of the most awful things about themselves: “I can't do anything right. Nothing ever works out for me. Nobody loves me...” Instead of speaking out of our feelings or circumstances, we need to say the same thing that God says about us in His Word.

One of the first things I say when I get up in the morning is “God, I bless this day in Jesus' name. I bless my husband, children, grandchildren and myself in Jesus' name. I'm blessed when I come in and blessed when I go out.”

## 2. Be thankful and say so.

**Psalm 100:4** says we should “be thankful and say so.” Tell people you're thankful for what they do for you—and thank God for everything. Take a few minutes every day and thank God for everything you can think of—your family, your health, food, hot water... God has given us a mouth to glorify him!

When I have my blessing session every morning, I take time to thank God for working in my life. One thing I've learned is when we're waiting for a breakthrough, we need to thank Him for working on that situation behind the scenes. I also thank God for my husband, children and grandchildren as well as all of our partners and all of the people who work with us in spreading the Gospel.

## 3. Encourage, edify and build others up.

Encouraging people has not always come easy to me, but years ago I made a commitment to God to start doing it on purpose. Every day I ask the Holy Spirit to show me who I can encourage.

**Isaiah 50:4** says *[The Servant of God says] The Lord God has given Me the tongue of a disciple and of one who is taught, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him who is weary.*

Think about the people you already know you're going to be around and ask God to put something in your heart that you can say to them that will build

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them up.

#### 4. Tell the truth.

The Bible says in John 4 that true worshipers will worship God in spirit and in truth. If you're waiting for a promotion from God then you need to be committed to the truth. **Proverbs 23:23** says *Buy the truth and sell it not*. Holding on to the truth might mean losing a friend or your reputation. If you're going to be committed to the truth, there will be times when you'll have to make a sacrifice. Hang on to it no matter what it costs you. It is so rewarding—the Bible says then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free (John 8:32 NIV).

#### 5. Speak the Word of God.

**Jeremiah 23:28-29** says *He who has My word, let him speak My word faithfully. ... Is not My word like fire [that consumes all that cannot endure the test]? says the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks in pieces the rock [of most stubborn resistance]?* Keep hitting your problems with the hammer of God's Word. Speak the Word out loud faithfully. It'll break the hardest things you're facing into pieces.

#### 6. Don't talk too much.

A lot of times, we just need to be quiet. **Proverbs 10:19** says *In a multitude of words transgression is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is prudent*. I think it's interesting that we have two eyes, two ears, two nostrils—and only one mouth. We need to be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to get angry.

**Galatians 5:16** says if you walk by the Spirit you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. If you'll concentrate on God's goodness, and encourage others along the way, you will experience more joy. God loves you so much, and with His help you can control your tongue and be led by the Spirit daily.

*Joyce Meyer*

Adapted from the Power of Words Action Plan Personal Application Workbook. Copyright © 2014 by Joyce Meyer Ministries.

## Cruise info wanted

Thinking about taking a cruise this winter?

We (Bill & Heather Colls) are thinking we might take a Caribbean cruise in early 2016. We would like to talk to anyone who has recently been cruising about your experience. Which line? Departure point? Ports of call? If you were to do it again, what would you do differently (if anything)?

If anyone else is thinking along these lines, would you be interested in joining an informal group for the trip?

Please speak to one of us at church, call us at 613-509-1304, or e-mail us at [william.colls@ncf.ca](mailto:william.colls@ncf.ca) or [heather.colls@ncf.ca](mailto:heather.colls@ncf.ca).

*Bill and Heather Colls*

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## Wine and bread tasting

### Sunday, June 21, 3-5 p.m.

Attend the National Capital Region's first Communion Wine & Bread Tasting Event, Sunday, June 21, 3-5 p.m.

The Church of St. John the Evangelist (Elgin at Somerset St W) will celebrate the Summer Solstice with a Communion Wine & Bread Tasting Event.

Led by sommelier Asha Hingorani, we invite you to sample the finest vintages you'll ever sip at the altar rail. Indulge in gourmet breads to cleanse your palate between tastings.

Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door and include your souvenir Tasting Glass and two wine tastings.

For more info or to purchase tickets: (613) 232-4500 or email [office@stjohnsottawa.ca](mailto:office@stjohnsottawa.ca).

*Kim Chadsey*

Parish Administrator

St John the Evangelist Anglican Church  
154 Somerset Street West

# The Bible and my four anthems

by Johan de Jong

*My anthems differ in that the first is dedicated to a person, the second to an institution, the third to a land and sons, and the fourth to a land, its seasons and fathers. But they have one thing in common, they all invoke God's grace!*

## The Dutch National Anthem

Source of lyrics & music unknown

1 - William of Nassau, scion of an old German line,  
I dedicate undying faith to this land of mine.  
A prince of Orange, I am, undaunted and free,  
To the King of Spain I've granted a lifelong loyalty.

8 - O David, thou soughest shelter from King Saul's  
tyranny.  
Even so I fled this welter and many a lord with me.  
But God the Lord did save him from exile and its  
hell,  
And in his mercy gave him a realm in Israel.

15 - Unto the Lord his power I do confession make,  
That ne'er at any hour I'll of the King ill spake,  
But unto God, the greatest of majesties I owe  
obedience first and latests for justice will it so.

The Dutch national anthem, "Wilhelmus van Nassau", is unusual in several aspects. The song consists of 15 stanzas which are acrostic in that the initial letters spell "Willem van Nassov", a contemporary spelling of the name of the hero of the song. It is also sequential in the sense that the meanings of the first and six following stanzas (2-7) and those of the last and six preceding stanzas (14-9) converge to the basic message of the song contained in the centre stanza, number 8. The lyrics were written by an unknown author (1568) as an apology for the "Vader des Vaderlands" - Father of the Fatherland - William count of Nassau, prince of Orange, stadtholder of Holland, Zeeland and Utrecht. Initially William was one of the principal councilors of King Philips II of Spain, and the only Dutchmen among the Spaniards. He became the leader of the Dutch Revolt after it became clear that the interests of his country were no longer served by the King.

The song appeared first in the "geuzenliedboek"

(1581) as "een nieuw christelijk lied" or "a new Christian song" and indeed the words are steeped in images of the biblical strife for the land of Israel and borrow generously from the psalms. Yet the music was of worldly origin, since it was based on a then popular French soldiers song, "Autre chanson de la ville de Chartres, assiégée par le prince de Condé." Ironically the song was first popular among the Catholic citizens of Chartres, beleaguered by the Protestant prince of Condé, before it became popular among the Calvinist rebels in the Netherlands against the King of Spain. It acquired its present stately musical form in a collection of national songs, called "Nederlandtsche gendenck-clanck" (1626) or "Netherlands Memorial Sound", by the Dutch poet Adrianus Valerius (1575-1625). The anthem is recognized as one of the older national anthems. Yet, I was surprised to discover that the ancient song, so intimately associated with the birth of the nation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, was officially adopted by the Netherlands as recently as 10 May 1932.

For me, the anthem is associated with many personal memories: the invasion of the Netherlands by the Germans on 10 May 1940, the 8<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formal adoption of the song, the outbreak of the war in the Pacific on 8 December 1941, and the surrender of the allied forces on Java to the Japanese on 12 March 1942, when we were imprisoned and had to sing the oldest national anthem, the "kimi gayo,"<sup>2</sup> at early morning parade. But, above all I remember the joy with which we sang the Wilhelmus on 22 August 1945 after we had been told that the Tenno Heika had surrendered and we were free again! The song still has a special place in my heart whenever I return to the old sod or see the red-white-blue flying from ships at sea or in the harbour, often accompanied by the bright orange banner honouring the descendants of William the Taciturn.

The only stanzas I, and most Dutchmen for that matter, knew by heart were number one and number six, which was very popular as a hymn sung in the Dutch Reformed Church.

6 - My shield and my reliance, O God, Thou ever

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wert.

I'll trust unto Thy guidance, O leave me not ungirt.  
That I may stay a pious servant of thine for aye.  
And drive the plagues that try us and tyranny away

### **The Royal British Anthem**

First published 1744 in *Thesaurus Musicus*  
Source of lyrics & music unknown

God save our gracious King/Queen,  
Long live our noble King/Queen,  
God save the King/Queen.  
Send her victorious,  
Happy and glorious,  
Long to reign over us;  
God save the King/Queen

Unlike the national anthem of Canada, the Royal British anthem, featuring a “noble King” when I first heard it, was well-known to me before I arrived in Canada. During the first year of the war in the Pacific (1941/2), the British national anthem was often heard in the Dutch East Indies. Great Britain was one of our allies in the war against Japan and the old city of Batavia (now Jakarta), where we lived at that time, was swarming with Australian, English, New Zealand and South African troops, who in addition to our own forces were preparing to fend off the expected Japanese attack. Often members of these forces visited us at home and it was no accident that I learned their anthem by heart and had retained the song well before I arrived on Canadian soil in 1956.

### **The Canadian National Anthem**

Lyrics: Adolphe-Basil Routhier (1880) &  
Robert Stanley Weir (1906)  
Formally adopted in 1980  
Music: Calixa Lavallée

1 - O Canada, our home and native land!  
True patriot love in all thy sons command.  
With glowing hearts, we see thee rise,  
The true North, strong and free.  
From far and wide, O Canada, we stand on guard for  
thee.  
God keep our land glorious and free.  
O Canada we stand on guard for thee!  
O Canada we stand on guard for thee!

4 - Ruler supreme, who hearest humble prayer,  
Hold our dominion in thy loving care.  
Help us to find, O God, in thee a lasting rich re-  
ward.

As waiting for a better day, we ever stand on guard.  
God keep our land, glorious and free.  
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee!  
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee!

After landing in Halifax on 26 September 1956, I was introduced to a new anthem, composed of four verses, of which the first became part of my life in Canada and the lyrics of the last evoke a church hymn whenever I hear it on rare occasions. When I swore allegiance and was granted Canadian citizenship in Vancouver on 2 March 1962 the song had not been formally adopted but was already in regular use as national anthem. Since then the sound of the first verse of the new anthem has enriched many memorable occasions in my life without replacing the special place of the old one.

### **The Ode to Newfoundland**

Lyrics: Sir Cavendish Boyle (1902)  
Music: Hubert Parry (1902)  
Formally adopted in 1980

After I arrived in Newfoundland in July 1975 I became aware of another anthem that gradually adopted a place in my heart, the “Ode to Newfoundland”. Being an early riser I usually turn on CBC radio before 6 PM, just in time to hear an orchestral version of the National Canadian Anthem followed by all four verses of the Provincial Anthem, sung by a children’s choir. Over time I have come to love the song because it so beautifully reflects the ambience of place and people. Unlike the other anthems, it does not speak of heroes, royalty or patriotism but simply describes the beauty of the landscape throughout the cycle of the year and the love generations of Newfoundlanders have felt for their land.

1 - When sun rays crown thy pine-clad hills,  
And summer spreads her hand,  
When silvern voices tune thy rills,  
We love thee, smiling land,  
We love thee, we love thee  
We love thee, smiling land.

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2 - When spreads thy cloak of shimm'ring white,  
At winter's stern command,  
Thro' shortened day and starlit night,  
We love thee, frozen land,  
We love thee, we love thee  
We love thee, frozen land.

3 - When blinding storm gusts fret thy shore,  
And wild waves lash thy strand,  
Thro' spindrift swirl and tempest roar,  
We love thee, windswept land,  
We love thee, we love thee  
We love thee, windswept land.

4 - As loved our fathers, so we love;  
Where once they stood we stand;  
Their prayer we raise to heaven above,  
God guard thee, Newfoundland,  
God guard thee, God guard thee,  
God guard thee, Newfoundland.

Newfoundland may be one of the few places in Canada where all three anthems, the National, the Royal British and the Provincial are often performed on formal occasions and usually in that order. This custom is probably due to the fact that Newfoundland was an independent colony until 1949, in fact Britain's oldest colony hence its own anthem was well enshrined and loved before the colony joined the Canadian Federation.

*May God guard and gather all nations!*

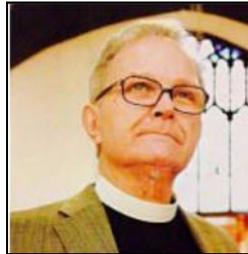
*Johan de Jong*

#### Notes

1. 'Songbook of the Beggars' – After Netherlands noblemen petitioned their cause before the court of Margaret of Parma the governess of the Spanish Netherlands in Brussels they received the nickname "des Gueux" - the Beggars – the name stuck and became the popular name "Geuzen" in Dutch.
2. The lyrics of the anthem, "May your reign (the Emperor's) continue for thousands of years, until the pebbles grow into boulders, lush with moss." are estimated to have been written before 900 CE.

## Men's FLAME conference October 30 to November 1, 2015

FLAME presents a weekend of spiritual enrichment, refreshment and fellowship for men, with guest speaker **Rev. Canon Gene Packwood**, recently retired rector of St. Barnabas' church in Medicine Hat, AB, and director of Anglican Renewal Ministries.



The topic for this weekend will be:  
**Power Tools for Fruitful Christian Living**

Ermitage Ste Croix  
21269 Gouin Blvd West  
Pierrefonds QC H9K 1C1

We invite and encourage you to attend this weekend of fellowship and spiritual refreshment which begins on Friday night and winds up after lunch on Sunday afternoon. Our activities focus on prayer, music, and a series of talks, followed by small group discussions. You are always free to take time by yourself whenever you wish. All activities are built around an easy timetable designed for men to share and discover more about life with one another, in the brotherhood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### The deadline for registration is October 16th

The registration table will be open between 4 and 7:30pm on Friday. Dinner is served between 5:15pm and 6pm.

To ensure that participation in this weekend is available to everyone interested, the weekend's expenses are covered primarily through a "free-will offering" approach. Please include a cheque for \$70 with your advance registration. During the closing service on Sunday morning, participants will be asked to help defray the costs of this event through a private free-will offering. Our total cost per participant is expected to be \$180.00, for accommodation, meals, snacks and materials. We invite each participant to contribute as he is able and feels led.

Contact *Roger Spack*

514-684-4356,

[roger.spack@sympatico.ca](mailto:roger.spack@sympatico.ca)

or *Andre Hammond*

514-694-9567,

[andrehammond@videotron.ca](mailto:andrehammond@videotron.ca)



FELLOWSHIP &  
LEARNING  
FOR ANGLICAN  
MENS  
ENRICHMENT

## A Marine dad's most important duty

I was a Marine, an officer, a lifer — until Patrick came to test my faith

by Ray Kimbrell, as appeared in *Guideposts*

I'd been on plenty of marches in my time as a Marine, but never anything like this. My platoon today was undisciplined, stopping to kick at twigs, talking and laughing as we hiked through the woods, no one paying attention to the sound of rushing water ahead.

Then again, I expected that from a bunch of 10-year-olds.

I was about as far from the battlefield as I could get, accompanying my son, Patrick, and his fifth-grade class on a three-day field trip at Camp Classen in the Arbuckle Mountains of southern Oklahoma.

I looked down at Patrick, sitting in the three-wheel jogger I pushed in front of me. My son has cerebral palsy and 10 years ago doctors didn't think someone with his brain damage would live, much less be hitting the trail with his classmates.

Before Patrick, the biggest challenge I had was achieving my dream: becoming a Marine officer. My dad was a Navy man, and I knew I wanted to serve in the military. In college at The Citadel, I chose the Marines. To me there was no greater honor than leading the most elite fighting force on earth.

First, I had to go through officer candidate school—two six-week courses of the most grueling physical and mental tests I'd ever faced, including the Confidence Course, a race through 11 obstacles with names like "Slide for Life" and "Jacob's Ladder."

I scaled tall barriers and swung from monkey bars high above the ground. Our commanders urged us on. Nothing was beyond our capabilities, they said.

In 10 years I rose through the ranks, becoming company commander. I served in Operation Desert Storm, then led my men in Somalia. Our mission was humanitarian: get food to starving people, rebuild roads and disarm the warring local factions.

But we came under fire. When times got tough, I

prayed. God always saw me through. At the end of my six-month deployment cycle, I returned home to Camp Pendleton in California. I'd have six months to spend with my wife, Nancy, just in time for the birth of our first child.

Nancy was a Marine too. We planned to alternate deployments so we could raise our child and maintain our military commitments. I was convinced that being a career Marine—a lifer—wasn't just my plan but God's plan too.

My knees buckled when I saw our son, Patrick, for the first time. I was love-struck. I tore myself away from the hospital around midnight two days after his birth to get some rest.

The ringing phone jarred me awake at 4:00 a.m. Patrick was sick. Meningitis. I rushed to the hospital. He'd gone into septic shock.

"We're taking him to the NICU in San Diego," the doctor said. "He may not have long."

The Camp Pendleton community rallied around us. The base chaplain baptized Patrick. I prayed, harder than I had even under fire in Somalia. Patrick clung to life like a little warrior and after a month in the hospital, he was discharged.

The doctors couldn't give us a solid prognosis, but a sonogram showed anomalies. His motor skills and learning ability could be impaired, perhaps severely. We'd have to closely observe his behavior.

At the base daycare center, we noticed differences. Other babies moved more, rolling over and lifting their heads. Patrick was often still, and couldn't keep his head up. Nancy set him in an Exersaucer and needed to put a pillow in to keep him upright.

After five months, it was clear Patrick lagged behind his peers. I put my finger in his right hand and he

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gripped it tight, but when I tried his left, Patrick's hand and arm hung limp. Nancy read up on the symptoms. Everything pointed to cerebral palsy.

One afternoon I tucked Patrick in his crib for a nap. I went to the window to lower the blinds. Outside, a group of Marines ran by in tight formation, getting ready for deployment. My time home was almost over, and the process had begun for my promotion to Major, which would bring new responsibilities.

It was my dream...but it wasn't possible anymore. Nancy was medically discharged after suffering a mild stroke after Patrick's birth, and she couldn't care for him alone. *I have to quit too*, I thought.

I turned back toward Patrick. He looked peaceful, already asleep. I was terrified. *Get it together, Marine*. After Iraq, Somalia, how could this shake me? But war I knew. Raising a son with disabilities? *I hope you have a plan, Lord, because I sure don't*.

We left Camp Pendleton and Nancy and I found jobs in Texas, where her family is located. We worked opposite shifts so one of us could be there for Patrick.

We settled into a routine. Nancy put Patrick to bed at a sitter's house and went to her night-shift job at a snack food company while I got some rack time. I'd pick Patrick up in the morning, get him dressed and spend the day with him.

I tucked Patrick in his crib for his afternoon nap and went to my second-shift job managing the processing line at a hot dog plant. Nancy had the evening shift. Our time with him was exhausting. I needed to hold

him the whole time he played, retrieve every toy he wanted.

Other kids display some independence after a year, but Patrick couldn't do anything by himself. One night, before I dropped off in an exhausted sleep, I turned on the news and saw a report of Marines being deployed.

That could have been me. I missed the camaraderie, the 170 men in my unit, all looking to me for answers. My life was all about Patrick now, and I didn't have any answers.

Our neurologist finally diagnosed Patrick with cerebral palsy, and entered him in early intervention therapy. Physical, occupational and speech therapists came to our house. The stretching and balance exercises reminded me of the training I'd gone through at Marine OCS—for Patrick, they were just as grueling.

The occupational therapist put a hairbrush in 14-month-old Patrick's hand, and I expected him just to hold it. Instead, he started brushing Nancy's hair!

Patrick started speaking little by little. And after three years of intensive physical therapy, I watched him take his first, slow, unsteady steps with the aid of a walker. He'd still need a wheelchair for longer distances, but...he's standing on his own!

We had two daughters, Katie and Nicole. We didn't hold back on family activities for Patrick. He loved our trips to the lake, where he'd sit in a tube while I towed him in our boat. He sang along with the girls to any song on the radio.

When Patrick was six, we found a program that allowed him to be mainstreamed into some classes and activities. One day I took Patrick with me to the supermarket. In the checkout line, I saw a little girl, standing with her mom, staring at him.

"Why are you in a wheelchair?" the girl blurted. The mom's face turned red. "I'm so sorry," she said.

"It's all right," I said. Patrick needed to learn to deal with situations like this. "Let him answer."

Patrick did...but he didn't stop there. "You want a

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ride?” he said. The two of them spun around the checkout area, laughing and squealing. If I were still in the Corps, I would have missed this.

Then Patrick reached fifth grade. “Guess what?” he said after school one day. “I’m going to be in the talent show!” He was still behind his peers academically and he needed a walker for balance if he was on his feet for long. Had I given him too much confidence? I didn’t want to set him up for failure.

I thought about a song Patrick and I loved to sing together: “The Greatest” by Kenny Rogers, about a boy who dreams of being a baseball player. The song’s message was perfect for Patrick: Be proud of what you can do. Could he sing it?

Every day after school I played the song and helped Patrick memorize the words. Nancy and I rehearsed his routine with him. The day of the show, he wheeled to center stage wearing a baseball cap, carrying a bat and ball.

While he sang, he threw a ball in the air with his right hand, his bat across his lap. I waited for the end of the song, anxious. Patrick beamed and sang the last verse in a full, loud voice, “I am the greatest, that’s a fact, but even I didn’t know I could pitch like that!” The auditorium erupted.

Patrick came offstage and into my arms. I hugged him tight. I may not have been leading 170 men anymore...but I was leading the one who mattered most to me. He’d come to me for an answer, and he paid me back with love. That was better than any “Sir, yes, sir.”

Now, on the trail at Camp Classen, I ruffled Patrick’s hair. We emerged from the woods and reached the water. I stopped cold. We were at a dam holding back a lake. A rush of water fell six feet to the river below.

The only way across was a row of round cement pillars spaced out along the edge of the falls. No way could I wheel Patrick across. “We didn’t know there wasn’t a bridge,” his teacher apologized.

I stared again at the pillars. They reminded me of something I’d seen a long time ago. The Confidence

Course. “No one stays behind!” I yelled. I hoisted Patrick onto my back. “Hold still,” I said, stepping onto the first pillar.

Halfway across, he started laughing. His laughter echoed across the lake, a sweeter sound than I could ever have imagined. Maybe God did have a plan for me all along. The Marines were just a part of it, training for the most important duty of my life: being Patrick’s father.

This article was published online in *Guideposts*: <http://www.guideposts.org/comfort-hope/health-well-being/caregiving/special-needs-children/a-marine-dads-most-important-duty>

## What makes a Dad

God took the strength of a mountain,  
 The majesty of a tree,  
 The warmth of a summer sun,  
 The calm of a quiet sea,  
 The generous soul of nature,  
 The comforting arm of night,  
 The wisdom of the ages,  
 The power of the eagle's flight,  
 The joy of a morning in spring,  
 The faith of a mustard seed,  
 The patience of eternity,  
 The depth of a family need,  
 Then God combined these qualities,  
 When there was nothing more to add,  
 He knew His masterpiece was complete,  
 And so, He called it ... Dad

*Author Unknown*

<http://www.fathersdaycelebration.com/fathers-day-poems.html#what-makes-a-dad>



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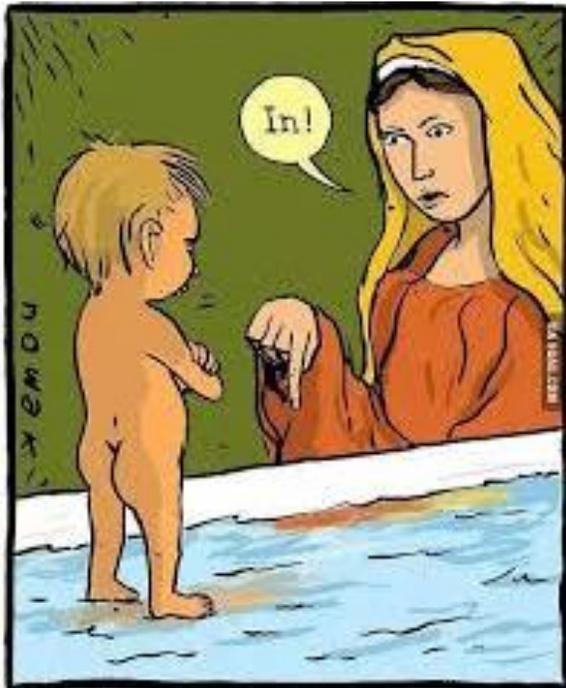
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Young Jesus at bath time

Submitted by Becky Titcombe



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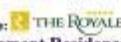
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