



The In Touch

Volume 51, Issue 3

Our Mission: To Seek, Know, Love and Serve Christ in all Persons and in all Creation

Ramblings from the Rev



Next month marks the 5 year anniversary of my ordination to the diaconate. I remember Bishop Prior telling me, as the processional music began, "Everything changes today." It was unclear from his tone at the time whether he meant that as a warning or a promise. I chose to understand it as the latter. He was oh so blessedly correct.

I try to make a habit of re-reading my ordination vows around my ordination anniversary. It seems to help me to stay grounded, focused on the things that have changed, the ways I still need to change, or the ways I need to change again, having inexplicably changed back. This year, one question in the ordination vows caught my eye: "Will you be faithful in prayer, and in the reading and study of the Holy Scriptures?"

Prayer is spiritual life-blood to me - I cannot imagine not praying, in one way or another. On the other hand I find study of scripture, if I am not doing it with a specific goal, far easier to forget.

Scripture is the underpinning of our worship, our creeds, and our traditions. I found, however, when I tried to read the bible in its entirety - front to back - that I experienced more sense of accomplishment at successfully completing one more chapter, one more book, than any sense of connection or learning. I offer you, therefore, the advice from author and theologian Frederick Buechner that I wished I had read before I started that project:

1. DON'T START AT the beginning and try to plow your way straight through to the end. At least not without help. If you do, you're almost sure to bog down somewhere around the twenty-fifth chapter of Exodus. Concentrate on the high points at first. There is much to reward you in the valleys too, but at the outset keep to the upper elevations. There are quite a few. There is the vivid, eyewitness account of the reign of King David, for instance (2 Samuel plus the first two chapters of 1 Kings); especially the remarkable chapters that deal with his last years when the crimes and blunders of his youth have begun to catch up with him. Or the Joseph stories (Genesis 39-50), or the Book of Job, or the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). Or the seventh chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans, which states as lucidly as it has ever been, stated the basic moral dilemma of man and then leads into the eighth chapter, which contains the classic expression of Christianity's basic hope.

2. The air in such upper altitudes is apt to be clearer and brighter than elsewhere, but if you nevertheless find yourself getting lost along the way, try a good Bible commentary which gives the date and historical background of each book, explains the special circumstances which it was written to meet, and verse by verse tries to illumine the meaning of the difficult sections. Even when the meaning seems perfectly clear, a commentary can greatly enrich your understanding. The Book of Jonah, for instance—only two or three pages long and the one genuine comedy in the Old Testament—takes on added significance when you discover its importance in advancing the idea that God's love is extended not just to the children of Israel but to all mankind.

3. If you have even as much as a nodding acquaintance with a foreign language, try reading the Bible in that. Then you stand a chance of hearing what the Bible is actually saying instead of what you assume it must be saying because it is the Bible. Some of it you may hear in such a new way that it is as if you had never heard it before. "Blessed are the meek" is the way the English version goes, whereas in French it comes out, "Heureux sont les débonnaires" (Happy are the debonair). The debonair of all things! Doors fly open. Bells ring out.

4. If you don't know a foreign language, try some English version that you've never tried before—the New English Bible, Goodspeed's translation, J. B. Phillips's New Testament, or any other you can lay your hands on. The more far-out the better. Nothing could be farther out than the Bible itself. The trouble with the King James or Authorized Version is that it is too full of Familiar Quotations. The trouble with Familiar Quotations is that they are so familiar you don't hear them. When Jesus was crucified, the Romans nailed over his head a sign saying "King of the Jews" so nobody would miss the joke. To get something closer to the true flavor, try translating the sign instead: "Head Jew."

5. It may sound like fortune-telling, but don't let that worry you. Let the Bible fall open in your lap and start there. If you don't find something that speaks to you, let it fall open to something else. Read it as though it were as exotic as the I Ching or the Tarot deck. Because it is.

6. If somebody claims that you have to take the Bible literally, word for word, or not at all, ask him if you have to take John the Baptist literally when he calls Jesus the Lamb of God. If somebody claims that no rational person can take a book seriously which assumes that the world was created in six days and man in an afternoon, ask him if he can take Shakespeare seriously whose scientific knowledge would have sent a third-grader into peals of laughter.

7. Finally this. If you look at a window, you see fly-specks, dust, and the crack where Junior's Frisbee hit it. If you look through a window, you see the world beyond.

Something like this is the difference between those who see the Bible as a Holy Bore and those who see it as the Word of God which speaks out of the depths of an almost unimaginable past into the depths of ourselves.

-Originally published in *Wishful Thinking* Frederick Buechner

Samantha Crossley



- 3/6 ~ **Jay Noland** (son of Mike & Caryn)
- 3/10 ~ **Mike Brennard**
- 3/13 ~ **Laura Smith** (daughter of Waiva)
- 3/15 ~ **Gary Davison**
- 3/22 ~ **Sharon Wood Leali** (daughter of
Flossie Knutson)
- 3/22 ~ **Matthew Jenkinson** (grandson
Byrne & Carole Johnson)
- 3/26 ~ **Linda Krieger** (daughter Wilbur &
MaryAnn Tveit)
- 3/28 ~ **Diana Russiff** (daughter Donna Day)



3/28 ~ **Jim Briggs**



3/26 ~ **Robin Manahan &
Becky Lucas**



"Making Change"


6:00 p.m. Soup 7:00 p.m. Worship

Mar. 2nd Faith United ~ Change of Heart

Mar. 9th Zion Lutheran ~ Change of Season

Mar. 16th St. Thomas ~ Change of Plans

March 2016 Sunday Service Lay Responsibilities

Dates	Celebrants	Acolytes	Lectors & Lessons	Greeters
6 Holy Eucharist 10:00 am 4 th Sunday in Lent	Rev. Samantha Crossley Deacon: Melanie Mattsen	Melanie	Ragna Godtland Melanie Mattsen	Kay Herman John Shewchuk
13 Holy Eucharist 10:00 am 5 th Sunday in Lent	Rev. Samantha Crossley Deacon: Lee Grim	Lee	Georgeann & Andy Wright	Georgeann & Andy Wright
20  Holy Eucharist 10:00 am Palm Sunday	Rev. Samantha Crossley Deacon: Melanie Mattsen	Melanie	Melanie Mattsen Kay Herman	Donna Day & Karen Walls
24 Holy Eucharist 7:00 pm Maundy Thursday	Rev. Samantha Crossley Deacon: Lee Grim	Lee		
25 7:00 pm Good Friday	Rev. Samantha Crossley Rev. Lynn Naeckel Deacon: Melanie Mattsen	Melanie		
27  Holy Eucharist Service time TBD Easter Sunday	Rev. Samantha Crossley Rev. Lynn Naeckel Deacon: Lee Grim	Lee	Mike & Tricia Brennard	Gary & Carolyn Davison



March 2016



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5 Altar Guild
			Soup Supper 6:00pm Faith United			Carolyn Helen
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 Altar Guild
Holy Eucharist 10:00 a.m.		9:30am Coffee Landing  Team meeting 6pm	Soup Supper 6:00pm Zion Lutheran			Tricia
13 Daylight Saving	14	15	16	17	18	19 Altar Guild
 Holy Eucharist 10:00	Ruby's Pantry Register 4:30 Dist. 5-6:30		Soup Supper 6:00pm St. Thomas			Tricia
20 Palm Sunday	21	22	23	24	25	26 Altar Guild
 Holy Eucharist 10:00 a.m.	Vestry 7:30	Newsletter Deadline		Holy Trinity's Community Café Volunteer Day Maundy Thurs. Service 7:00 pm	Good Friday Service 7:00 pm	Georgeann Donna
27 Easter	28	29	30	31		
 Holy Eucharist Service Time TBD			Messy Church 5-7pm			

