

**The Rev'd Canon W. Lynn Dillabough** may be reached at 819-239-6902 or [lynn@dillabough@gmail.com](mailto:lynn@dillabough@gmail.com). If you would like a pastoral visit, please contact Jane Bishop at 819-887-6802 or Canon Lynn.

**News and events:**

**May we wish you a happy, healthy New Year filled with the peace, joy, and love of God.**

**Our happy birthday wishes to** Audrey Dougherty on Thursday, Margaret Lawrence on Friday, Steve Coates and Joyce Standish on Saturday.

**Our next Sunday services will be January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Service of the Word** in St. Paul's Church hall, Bury at 9:30am with Sunday School available, and St. Peter's Cookshire will be holding their winter services in the hall of Trinity United Church (just up the hill) at 11:15am. These services will be led by Layreaders.

**Wednesday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, Messy Church in Bury** will focus on the story of Epiphany with a camel/handprint craft and supper provided. Families are invited to attend together for song, worship, stories, crafts, and food. We begin at 5:15 and end around 6:45. Contact [lynn@dillabough@gmail.com](mailto:lynn@dillabough@gmail.com) to let us know you are coming!

**\*Lectio Divina\*** Tuesdays from 9 to 9:55 a.m. in the Upper Room at St George's Church, Lennoxville resumes on Tuesday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**January 17 – 24, 2016 Week of Christian Unity** - Ecumenical Bible Study / Partage biblique oecuménique Saturday, January 16 at 4 pm at Plymouth Trinity Church (380, rue Dufferin, Sherbrooke) Musical Festival / Chorale oecuménique et festive. Sunday, January 17 at 2:30 pm at Paroisse Notre-Dame de Protection (2050, rue Galt Est, Sherbrooke) Christian Unity Service / Célébration de prière pour l'unité chrétienne. Sunday, **January 24 at 2 pm at St. George's Anglican Church** (84, rue Queen, Lennoxville)

**Sentence (Christmas II):** *Glory to Christ who is preached among the nations, and believed on in the world. See 1 Timothy 3.16*

**Collect:** God of power and life, the glory of all who believe in you, fill the world with your splendour and show the nations the light of your truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

**Sentence (Epiphany):** *We have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him. Matthew 2.2*

**Collect (Epiphany):** Eternal God, who by a star led wise men to the worship of your Son. Guide by your light the nations of the earth, that the whole world may know your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

- We pray for God's people throughout the world; for Dennis, our Bishop, Lynn, our Priest, Coadjutor Bishop-elect Bruce, and for all in leadership, both lay and ordained. Grant them the gifts of wisdom and courage as they lead the church.

- In our Diocesan Fellowship of prayer, we pray for the congregations of St. George's, Ayer's Cliff, St. James', Hatley, St. Stephen's, Coaticook and The Epiphany, Way's Mills. We pray for our Companion Dioceses of Moray Ross and Caithness in Scotland and Bishop Mark Strange, and Bujumbura in Burundi and Bishop Eraste Bigirimana.

- In the Provincial Prayer Cycle, we pray for Bishop Ron Cutler and Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island; in the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, we pray for The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand & Polynesia.

- In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle we pray for Christian faith communities in Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

- We give thanks for the new year and its possibilities. We pray for our families, friends, and communities; and we ask blessings for Audrey Dougherty, Margaret Lawrence, Steve Coates, and Joyce Standish on their birthdays.

- We pray for healing and comfort all who are sick or suffering in any way, especially for Joan Dougherty, Robert Coleman, The Ven. Robert Bryan, and Dufferin Annesley.

- We pray for the Syrian refugees arriving to make a new home in Canada; we pray for a world of peace and justice for all. **Amen.**

**Chuckle: An old preacher was dying.** He sent a message for his banker and his lawyer, both church members, to come to his home.

When they arrived, they were ushered up to his bedroom. As they entered the room, the preacher held out his hands and motioned for them to sit on each side of the bed. The preacher grasped their hands, sighed contentedly, smiled, and stared at the ceiling. For a time, no one said anything.

Both the banker and lawyer were touched and flattered that the preacher would ask them to be with him during his final moments. They were also puzzled; the preacher had never given them any indication that he particularly liked either of them. They both remembered his many long, uncomfortable sermons about greed, covetousness, and avaricious behaviour that made them squirm in their seats.

Finally, the banker said, "Preacher, why did you ask us to come?"

The old preacher mustered up his strength and then said weakly, "Jesus died between two thieves, and that's how I want to go."

**A Reading from the Book of Isaiah...** But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.<sup>2</sup> When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.<sup>3</sup> For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour. I give Egypt as your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.<sup>4</sup> Because you are precious in my sight, and honoured, and I love you, I give people in return for you, nations in exchange for your life.<sup>5</sup> Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you;<sup>6</sup> I will say to the north, "Give them up," and to the south, "Do not withhold; bring my sons from far away and my daughters from the end of the earth—<sup>7</sup>everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made." *Isaiah 43:1-7*

### **Psalm 29 BAS page 738**

**A Reading from the Book of Acts...**<sup>14</sup> Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them.<sup>15</sup> The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit<sup>16</sup> (for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus).<sup>17</sup> Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. *Acts 8:14-17*

**The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke...**<sup>15</sup> As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah,<sup>16</sup> John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.<sup>17</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."<sup>21</sup> Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened,<sup>22</sup> and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." *Luke 3:15-17, 21-22*

**Short Reflections:** The Old Testament reading comes from a portion of Isaiah that scholars call Second Isaiah. It was written near the end of the Hebrews Babylonian exile. Through this text, God is speaking directly to us, the readers, assuring us that he is with us, reminding us that he created us and redeemed us. God will gather us from all corners of the earth – from all places of physical, spiritual, and emotional exile – because we are precious to him. "Fear not, fear not." God continues to tell us - we were created for his glory. This is a powerful and saving Creator God – but even more, this is an intimate God who calls us by name and claims us as his own.

At first reading it appears that the reading from Acts is the only Scripture today without a reference to water. But reading more closely, the Samaritans had been baptized – but the manifestation of the Holy Spirit so tightly linked with the receipt of baptism in the early church was not present. Peter and John had to come and lay hands on the already baptized Samaritans. Baptism is a one-time event when a person is united with Christ and his church. Through the baptismal waters we are united with Christ in his death and resurrection. The power of sin is broken and we receive a new identity in Christ. No second, third, or fourth baptism is required! But because as human beings we are tempted to sin, to live the self-absorbed rather than "God-

absorbed" lives, a 'second' baptism of sorts may be needed. This "second touch" can be understood as the conversion of our hearts, a process that begins with the  
In Luke, John the Baptist is quick to clarify his identity. The people had misidentified him as the Messiaiah, the longed-for King and Son of God who would transform their lives and their world. No says John, I only have water – a mere symbol of cleansing – while the Messiah who is to come will be manifest by Spirit and fire. The scene at the Jordan River is the first manifestation of the three-in-one persons of the Godhead: God the Father's voice spoke from heaven, God the Son was baptized, and God the Spirit descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove. It is here that God the Father not only proclaims Jesus' identity to the world but also God the Holy Spirit is sent to empower Jesus for ministry.

**Chuckles: It was a few days before Christmas.** The trip went reasonably well, and he was ready to go back home. The airport on the other end had turned a tacky red and green, and loudspeakers blared annoying elevator renditions of cherished Christmas carols. Being someone who took Christmas very seriously, and being slightly tired, he was not in a particularly good mood. (Almost a scrooge) Going to check in his luggage (which, for some reason, had become one suitcase with entirely new clothes), he saw hanging mistletoe. Not real mistletoe, but very cheap plastic with red paint on some of the rounder parts and green paint on some of the flatter and pointer parts, that could be taken for mistletoe only in a very Picasso sort of way. With a considerable degree of irritation and nowhere else to vent it, he said to the attendant, "Even if we were married, I would not want to kiss you under such a ghastly mockery of mistletoe." "Sir, look more closely at where the mistletoe is." "Ok, I see that it's above the luggage scale which is the place you'd have to step forward for a kiss." "That's not why it's there." "Ok, I give up. Why is it there?" "It's there so you can kiss your luggage good-bye."

**Johnny went to his mother demanding a new bicycle.** His mother decided that he should take a look at himself and the way he acts. She said, "Well Johnny, it isn't Christmas and we don't have the money to just go out and buy you anything you want. So why don't you write a letter to Jesus and pray for one instead." After his temper tantrum his mother sent him to his room. He finally sat down to write a letter to Jesus. *Dear Jesus, I've been a good boy this year and would appreciate a new bicycle. Your Friend, Little Johnny* Now Little Johnny knew that Jesus really knew what kind of boy he was (Brat). So, he ripped up the letter and decided to give it another try. *Dear Jesus, I've been an OK boy this year and I want a new bicycle. Yours Truly, Little Johnny* Well, Little Johnny knew this wasn't totally honest so he tore it up and tried again. *Dear Jesus, I've thought about being a good boy this year and can I have a new bicycle? Signed, Johnny* Well, Johnny looked deep down in his heart, which by the way was what his mother was really wanting. He crumpled up the letter and threw it in the trash can and went running outside. He aimlessly wandered about; depressed because of the way he treated his parents and really considering his actions. He finally found himself in front of a Church. Little Johnny went inside and knelt down, looking around not knowing what he should really do. Little Johnny finally got up and began to walk out the door and was looking at all the statues. All of a sudden he grabbed a small one and ran out the door. He went home hid it under his bed and wrote this letter. *Jesus, I've broken most of the Ten Commandments; shot spit balls in school, tore up my sister's Barbie doll and lots more. I'm desperate. I've got your mama. If you ever want to see her again, give me a bike. Signed, You know who*



