

Prayer: The Foundation of Our Life Together

As we find ourselves in the season of Lent it seems appropriate to dwell on prayer as we prepare to celebrate Holy Week and Easter next month. If you'd ask most churchgoers what was one thing that was important about the Christian life, I would expect the majority would single out prayer as one of the most defining features of what it means to be a Christian. Our worship is saturated with prayer, we even call two of our services "Morning and Evening Prayer." We pray to God for one another, for ourselves; we pray in thanks; we pray in sadness and anger; we pray in confession of the ways we have wandered away from God.

Despite all this praying, many people are still not always comfortable if asked what prayer is, and why we do it. Why do we pray?

Even here we could probably have a million different answers, but first and foremost I want to encourage you to think of prayer as the place where we learn that we are loved by God. Prayer is the core of our relationship with our Heavenly Father, just as prayer played a central role in Jesus' relationship with the Father. In prayer God says to us "you are my beloved son (or daughter), with you I am well pleased." As such, prayer is the foundation for our life of faith; it is the foundation of our relationship for our life of discipleship following Jesus. As we return again and again to the well of God's love, in prayer we are transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit, our lives are opened up to the possibilities that God has in store for us.



Just as prayer is the foundation of our lives of discipleship, it is also the foundation of our life as a community of faith. Our life together is founded and knit together by our common prayers for one another and for the ministry and mission of the church. Everything we do as a congregation – from singing the praises of God in the Choir, to serving soup at the community lunch, or knitting and quilting on a Wednesday afternoon – is founded in prayer, in our common relationship with God and his immense love for us.

As such, it is vital that we continue to develop and expand our prayer ministries at the church. My hope and vision is that every ministry or leader in the church would have two or three people committed to pray for them throughout the year. Each of us is capable of prayer, each of us has a calling to participate in the work of prayer for the sake of the Kingdom, in our own lives but also in the life of Grace Church. Over the coming months everyone will be encouraged to sign up to pray for specific ministries in the

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church. Please consider this a privilege and responsibility – a privilege to be part of God's work at Grace Church and the responsibility of upholding the various members and ministries of this parish in prayer.

May you have a blessed and prayerful Lent.

Yours in Christ

Rev. Graham

Weekly Services

Sunday	8:45 a.m.	Sung Eucharist
	10:30 a.m.	Sung Eucharist
	7:00 p.m.	First Priority Prayer Service (1st of the month)
Wednesday	10:15 a.m.	Said Eucharist

Children's and Family Worship: Messy Church Saturday, April 15, 3:00-6:00 p.m.

Beginning in April we will be planning monthly opportunities on a Saturday afternoon for families with children to engage in worship that is geared for the whole family. Our hope is that as we engage in these opportunities we can learn more about incorporating children and young families into our worship.



Each month we will gather in the lower hall on a Saturday afternoon, to celebrate a Biblical theme; do activities, games, crafts; hear a biblical story; sing songs together; and celebrate communion. After our messy worship we will share a meal together.

Our pilot Messy Church will take place on Saturday, April 15 from 3:00-5:00 p.m., with dinner beginning at 5:00 p.m.

A Hymn for Lent

"Three Tall Trees"

Text by Herbert O'Driscoll

Tune by John Henry Hopkins –
Grand Isle



Three tall trees grew on a windy hill
Close by a Hebrew town;
And oft they thought what the hand of man
Would do when he cut them down.
"A cradle," said one, "for a child I will be."
"As a ship," said another, "will I sail the sea."
"I will stay," said the third, "I will stand
strong and free,
And point men to God on high."

One day man walked on that windy hill,
Came where the tall trees stood;
And one by one did he work his will
As he sought for the best of wood.
From one did he fashion a manger stall,
From another the keel of a fishboat small,
But the third he lay by the workshop wall,
So straight did it stand, and high.

The seasons passed on the windy hill
Close by a Hebrew town;
That manger cradled a baby still,
And a star in the east looked down.
And when as a teacher he spoke on the
shore,
That boat was brought and the Lord it bore,
And across the waters he taught them more
Of love, and a God on high.

A voice cried "Halt" and a prisoner stood,
Bleeding and bound and still.
While they chose for his cross the last of the
wood
That had grown on that windy hill.
It had cradled a baby asleep and awake,
It had held the sail on the stormy lake,
Now it bore him aloft for the whole world's
sake,
The Son of God most high.

from The Unshakable Kingdom

by Herbert O'Driscoll

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1977?

Holy Week



Sunday, April 9 Palm Sunday

8:45 a.m. Sung Eucharist
10:30 a.m. Sung Eucharist

Monday, April 10 Monday in Holy Week

7:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross

Tuesday, April 11 Tuesday in Holy Week

7:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross

Wednesday, April 12 Wednesday in Holy Week

10:15 a.m. Said Eucharist
7:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross

Thursday, April 13 Maundy Thursday

7:00 p.m. Foot Washing, Eucharist, &
Stripping of the Altar

Friday, April 14 Good Friday

9:00 a.m. Prayer Walk
11:00 a.m. Meditation on the Cross

Saturday, April 15 Holy Saturday

3:00 – 6:00 p.m. Messy Church (Family &
Children's Worship)
9:00 p.m. The Great Vigil of Easter

Sunday, April 16 Easter Day

8:45 a.m. Sung Eucharist
10:30 a.m. Sung Eucharist followed by Easter
Egg Hunt

This is Your Newsletter

We hope you will contribute to the articles. If you have attended a conference or an event either inside or outside the parish, tell us about it. Tell us in what activities your group is engaged. Send us information about upcoming events. Feel free to send photographs or clipart, and we will try to include them. Submissions can be sent to communications@gracechurchscarborough.com (be sure to have "Newsletter" in the subject line).

The deadline for the next newsletter will be May 14.

Our Leadership

Incumbent

The Rev. Graham McCaffrey

Associate Priest

The Rev. Ronald Duncan

Honorary Assistants

The Rev. Julie Golding-Page
The Rev. Steve Page

Lay Pastor

Andrew Kaye

Secretary

Doreen Brown

Choir Director

Morris Ellington

Children & Youth

Jonelle Douglas

Churchwardens

Nadia Murray
Ryan Ramsden

Deputy Churchwardens

Margaret Crossman
Jonelle Douglas

Alpha at Grace – Fall 2017

Beginning in September we will be running a session of Alpha on Friday evenings. Alpha is a series of interactive sessions that explore the basics of the Christian faith.

Typically run over 8-12 weeks, it allows anyone to explore life, faith, and God in a friendly, open, and informal environment. In each session there's food, a short talk, and discussion in small groups. Our goal with offering Alpha is to engage people in the community and connect to our church who have yet to explore the Christian Faith and offer an open and non-judgemental opportunity for them to explore, ask questions, and begin to wonder at the Christian story. If you are interested in supporting the parish in offering Alpha please speak with Rev. Graham. More information to come in the Spring and Summer.



From the Quilting/Knitting Club



Sharing Stories of Grace

Last year as part of our 9-month series on Knowing, Living and, Sharing the Story of God, members of the parish were invited to share their personal stories of Grace, the stories of their experiences of God's activity in their lives, whether mundane or extraordinary. For many of the participants and for the congregation it was a wonderful opportunity for us to deepen our understanding of God and his work in our lives. During the Easter Season, beginning on April 23, we will be offering time once more for members of the parish to briefly share their stories of Grace with the congregation, at both the 8:45 and 10:30 services as desired. Please speak with Rev. Graham if you are interested in sharing your story.



Upcoming Events

Spring Tea

Saturday, April 22

Good Friday Prayer Walk

Friday, April 14, 9:00 a.m.

Easter Concert

Sunday, April 30

Mother's Day Brunch

Saturday, May 13

Garage Sale, BBQ, & Bake Sale

Saturday, May 27 or June 3

Young Adults at Grace

We will be planning events throughout the year. Please see the Sunday bulletin for dates and details.

Ministry Beyond our Local Community: World Vision

Over the past two years it has been wonderful as we have expanded our outreach into our local community, identifying areas where we could live out our call to serve and be with our neighbours – meeting Christ in our neighbours and being his hands and feet in service of the Gospel here in South Scarborough.

World Vision



While we continue to explore and grow our opportunities to serve our local community, it is now also the time to expand our horizons and set our gaze beyond our local community and recognise that God's call to love our neighbours stretches beyond community or national boundaries and is a truly global call.

Throughout this year we will be exploring a partnership with World Vision, a non-profit organisation that seeks to help impoverished communities around the world transform through local partnerships. Throughout the year we will have opportunities to learn more about World Vision, and to see the impact of their work. The hope is that we as a church can begin to incorporate this sort of global focus into our parish life for the years to come.

Worshipping with Children and Young Families

I have often heard it said in the church that children are the future of the church or that to grow and thrive we need more young families and children in our congregation. While it is true that children are part of the future of the church and that connecting with more young families would be wonderful for us at Grace, neither of the first two statements is entirely true.



First and foremost, children are not just the future of the church; they are integral members of the church here and now. Children are as much God's children, as

much members of the church, as any one of us who attends or serves at Grace Church. Certainly, children worship and learn differently from the majority of adults but they continue to be a vital part of the church even now, not merely the future of it.

Secondly, more young families and children will not inherently save the church. Growth can happen in many forms, chief among those forms is growing in our discipleship and commitment to the Gospel of Jesus, and growth in the joy that is experienced when we worship our great God. As we grow in these ways, we will naturally see the fruit that God produces in the church. Let us each strive to grow in Christ, and see what comes from our commitment to live out Gospel-shaped lives and ministry.

Finally, as we see an increase in young families and children engaged with our community, we need to understand that our expectations need to shift. Children naturally make noise, they cry, they laugh, they speak loudly, and sometimes they wander around. This is all part of how children engage and learn in the world. There was a time when children were expected to be quiet and reserved everywhere in society and so it made sense that there were expectations for the same in church. As the culture has shifted around us, there are almost no areas of life where young children are required to be so reserved and quiet – expectations in church need to be shifted as well.

My hope is that children can feel at home at Grace to worship respectfully as they see fit and that we as a congregation can adapt and celebrate the vibrancy of our younger members even if it means that our worship is a little noisier as a result. Children can teach us so much about approaching the world with joy and wonder, and children need to be brought up with the knowledge that they are welcome in the community. I pray that we might find a healthy balance between reverently worshipping God and the exuberant joy and wonder of our children.

Rev. Graham