

From the Rector

You may recall that in Easter season, I took some time in a newsletter article to try to help us make sense of Revelation, since we read it throughout the season but we rarely preach on it. I think the time has come for me to do that with our recent Old Testament readings.

In the Revised Common Lectionary, the readings in Ordinary Time from the Old Testament are no longer linked thematically with the New Testament lesson or the Gospel. (Occasionally we get some overlap, but it's just luck.) Instead, the emphasis is on reading parts of the Hebrew Bible "in course" so that we get a better sense of the overall context of the stories we hear. There are pros and cons to this approach. I'll let you form your own opinion.

Lately, we've been reading from Amos, and this week we move into Hosea for a while. These prophets were active concurrently in the Northern Kingdom of Israel, and both predicted the fall of Israel to the Assyrians as a result of their unfaithfulness to the covenant. Hosea lived in the Northern Kingdom and spoke to his own people. Amos was from the Southern Kingdom of Judah, but he was called by God to go to the Northern Kingdom to prophesy. Both prophets warned of the impending consequences of the people's rejection of the ways of God, as they had turned to the worship of idols.

While they have a great deal in common—both concerned with the people's unfaithfulness—they emphasize two sides of the coin of the people's covenant failure. Amos is primarily concerned with the exploitation of the poor. ("You buy the poor with silver and the needy for a pair of sandals.") He calls their attention to the hypocrisy of empty worship of Yahweh while building their lavish lifestyle on economic injustice and materialism. For Amos, such a loss of their core values is a direct result of their idolatry, and it will bring about their destruction.

Hosea, too, is concerned about the people's idolatry, but his focus is more on the severely broken relationship between God and God's people. Hosea depicts God as a husband, wounded by the betrayal of his spouse. The sexual language comes across as harsh and perhaps even misogynistic to our contemporary ears, but it is intended both as a metaphor for the people abandoning God in favor of Baal, and also a description of the kinds of practices they would have engaged in as part of Canaanite cultic religion.

Hosea is a highly emotional book, and we are intended to feel those emotions. We are intended to resonate with God's grief over the spouse who has not only cheated, but who continues to do so—even as God continues to love Israel and desire a better outcome. God even grieves and questions the path forward—"How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel?" God is devastated to have to send the people into exile, but this is the direct result of their egregious violation of the covenant.

There's so much more to say about these books. I'd encourage you to read them on your own to get a better sense of the prophets' messages. They aren't long texts. But they are poetic, and moving, and they have much to offer us today, particularly as we seek to stave off hypocrisy in our own life of faith.

Blessings,
Mother Terry+

SJS Prayer List

If you request that someone's name be added to the prayer list, please keep in touch with us. At the end of each month, all names will be removed, so you will need to add the names again at the end of each month. Please also let us know if you want someone removed from the list. Email the office (church@sjs.net) anytime! Thank you.

Greeting volunteers needed at the 10am service

We could use several more greeters. Please contact the office(church@sjs.net) for more details if you are interested in greeting on Sunday mornings.

SJS Garden Club Needs New Volunteers

It is time for the Garden Club to renew their efforts at St Johns. We hope we have some new volunteers who could join us from time to time. Or every week! Weather permitting, we meet on **Monday mornings**, but the day/time can be adjusted to accommodate other schedules. We do watering, light pruning (no saws or ladders), weeding, dividing, planting, etc. We enjoy wonderful chit chats in the safety of the outdoors. You can bring your own gloves and tools if you want to, or you can borrow ours. If you have old tools in your garage that you don't use any more, please let us know. **We are accepting donations of old garden tools.**

WNM items for Homeless Needed

Winter clothing, raingear, boots, sleeping bags, socks, pudding cups, granola bars (soft with no fruit/nuts), & juice boxes.

Financial Support - Stewardship

If you would like to make a financial contribution to help support the worship and ministry of St. John's Shaughnessy, please do! You can use this QR code (point your phone's camera at it) and it will take you to the donation page of our website. If you have recently made a contribution online or by cheque, thank you so very much! If you currently give by Pre-Authorized Donation, thank you! Our church has been affected by COVID-19 in many ways and financial giving is certainly one.



If you would like to give via monthly Pre-Authorized Donations (easy to change and easy to cancel), please contact Cynthia in the office (church@sjis.net or 604-731-4966). If you would like to give to the church using a credit card, please use the DONATE button on our website (Canada Helps on top of page one, and Paypal on the bottom of page one). Cheques may be mailed or dropped through the church mail slot.

Sunday in-person services 8am and 10am

Sunday online service

10am Holy Eucharist live-stream

Wednesday online service

8pm Midweek Meditation

Rector The Reverend Terry Shields Dirbas terry.dirbas@sjs.net
Assistant Priest The Reverend Elizabeth Ruder-Celiz erceliz@vst.edu
Vestry Clerk The Reverend Karin Fulcher

Music Director Michael Dirk organist@sjs.net
Rector's Warden Judith Downes
People's Warden Maggie Sanders
Treasurer Donald Wood
Property Trustee Michael Dezell
Pastoral Care Team Coordinator Helen Kline
Altar Guild Susan Firus
Parish Administrator Janet Hamilton (Cynthia Jutras, acting)

Please email the office if you would like to have newsletters sent to you.
Newsletters, leaflets and online videos are posted on the website.

St John's Shaughnessy Anglican Church

Diocese of New Westminster

Anglican Church of Canada

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Offices are open by appointment only.
Email and voicemail are checked regularly and often,
so please reach out.

