

Message from the Curate

In the Lunar calendar, we celebrated New Year on 22nd of January. It is one of the biggest holidays in many Asian countries influenced by Chinese culture. And Chinese community will celebrate lantern festival on 5th of February.

I am not quite sure about the exact connection between the way we follow time and the way we think, but it is intriguing that Eastern philosophy can be symbolically visualized by the Moon. In the eastern way of thinking and living, there includes always changes, balance, connection in relation to the whole, and harmony. I imagine the wise men and women in ancient times, watching the moon waning and waxing while making an endless circle of life and death, entering into the world of yin and yang, variations and repetition, combinations of different elements and oneness as a whole.

One of the famous parables in the Asian literature is a story about an old man and a horse. In this story, a man loses his horse, the horse comes back bringing other wild horses, his son breaks his leg while riding one of wild horses, but escape being called into war since he was crippled. Every time something happens, his neighbors pity him on the accident or congratulate for the good event. However, each time, the old man shrugs saying “who knows whether it would be a blessing for misfortune?”

It is so true in our life. We tend to judge quick what is good or what is bad, and get obsessed with the good, and get trapped in misery. However, we really do not know how each dot of our lives is connected to make the full picture whole. What goes up must come down, and what comes down must goes up just like the changing phases of the moon.

When we see something end, it surely is a beginning of something else. When we see something begin, it certainly will have an end. We try to understand every single incident as and of itself, but maybe we would not get it until we see the forest beyond the tree. I am not introducing nihilism here. It is about embracing what we have, and move on along the flow of life. For us Christians, as the author of Ecclesiastes says, all is vanity without God, but all is a blessing as we walk with God, because every single step makes the story of yours, mine, and ours on our journey to God at the end.

Father James

Do you have a question about church, liturgy, Anglicanism, etc.? Is there something you've always wanted to ask but thought you should already know? Send those questions to Mother Terry at terry.dirbas@sjs.net. All questions will remain anonymous.

A letter from Dennis and Chris Magrega

Dear all who work and worship at St. John's Shaughnessy,

As January 2023 becomes history and we start into a month where we celebrate love on February 14, I thought I would like to share another type of love story with you.

On December 18, my wife, Chris and I were in Montreal waiting for our connecting flight that would leave there about 6:30 p.m. Eastern and bring us home by about 8:30 p.m., Vancouver time. When we booked the flights, we thought this was about as good as it gets. But of course, it did not happen.

After several notices that our flight was delayed, the last one saying we were due to leave Montreal at 12:55 a.m. December 19, the flight was cancelled. We got the notice at 11:19 p.m. as we made our way to the gate. But when we got there, there were two very long lines and we wondered what was happening. Then someone said, they were waiting to find out what the airline would be doing for them as we had also missed another announcement saying the airline would try to get all passengers who were not residents of Montreal hotel rooms. We looked at the line and figured there was no point standing way back in the queue, so we sat down. As we were grouching about all of this, we were overheard by a woman who I would guess was in her mid to late 40s. She said that she did not think there was any point waiting in a line since they had apparently said we were all re-booked on a flight in the morning at 9:00 and therefore we would have to be back to the airport early on. So, she volunteered to find an airport hotel, get a room for her and us and she had Uber on her phone so in the space of about half an hour, we had checked in to a hotel no more than 7 minutes from the airport. I remember the clock saying 12:28 as I hit the pillow. Up at 6:00 and back to the airport and mercifully the 9:00 flight left on time. And yes, our bags made it home with us.

But here is the love story I promised. Our new friend, Susan, is from Atlantic Canada. She is married with 3 daughters, only one of whom is still at home. Her husband also has a granddaughter by a previous marriage who live with them. In addition to childcare, Susan also works part time as a care aide. She was on her way to Vancouver to formalize the adoption of her sister's daughter, only four months old. Her sister is on the Downtown East Side. An addict. The baby had been born addicted, so Susan was adopting the child to give her a chance at life. She had been planning to have all of December 19th to fill out papers for the court date on the 20th but of course that was now impossible as her papers were in her luggage which was not going to be in her hands until the afternoon of the 19th.

After we landed in Vancouver, Susan went straight to her hotel, dropped her bags, went to the foster parents' home, picked up the baby, brought her back to the hotel and filled out the papers. The next day she went to court. The next evening, she was on a midnight flight back to Montreal, just her, the baby and two good sized suitcases. Landing

in Montreal in the morning, she was told her connecting flight home was postponed to Christmas Eve. Susan was not about to put up with that so she rented a car and drove 12 hours in ice and snow straight through to her car which she had left at the airport close to where she lives. By herself. With a four-month-old. And two good size bags. She made it home for Christmas.

Then things happened. The baby took ill. She developed the respiratory virus (RSV) that took down so many children leading up to Christmas, as well as pneumonia. This was serious. Susan's local hospital could not handle the complexity of the case, so the baby was taken to a larger centre for care. She was sedated and put on a ventilator. Susan was understandably a wreck.

On December 31st, I told her I would be putting her on the prayer list at SJS. Her response, that same night read in part ".....we need all the prayers we can get.....they are hoping to be able to take her off the ventilator out tomorrow and slowly bring her out of sedation." On January 1st, I put her on the prayer list. On January 7th, she was discharged home. A note from Susan dated January 20 said, again in part, ".....the baby is doing great. She had a checkup today and is doing fine."

So as we start a new month, Susan and Alice will come off the prayer list. But thanks to all for hearing their names on Sunday morning at the 10:00 service and sending your prayers of love and support. Job well done.

But it also struck me that this is a real Christmas story. Christmas, the time when we welcome a child into the world, who was born in difficult circumstances. Our Christmas celebrates love in its highest form. Someone I was sharing this story with said it has all the elements of a Hallmark Christmas movie. I do not know about that, but I do know that there was a baby who was in medical distress who is now well removed from danger. And SJS had a role in that. For me this is a love story. Thank you to all and thanks be to God.

Upcoming Parish Events

- February 5 at 3 p.m. - Choral Evensong
- February 6 at 11 a.m. - Property Committee Meeting
- February 7 at 7 p.m. - Outreach Committee Meeting
- February 19 after 10 a.m. service - Pancake Breakfast (in anticipation of Shrove Tuesday)
- February 22 - Ash Wednesday (services at 9:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.)
- February 26 after the 10 a.m. service - Annual Vestry Meeting

Choral Evensong, February 5 at 3pm

Our Choral Evensong will be held this Sunday at 3pm. Please feel free to extend the invitation to friends and family for a chance to enjoy beautiful music together!

Outreach Committee Meeting Tuesday, February 7 at 7 p.m. “What’s in a name?”

Zoom Link: [Click Here](#)

This Tuesday we will hold our monthly outreach meeting. We will make time and space to discuss service and social justice topics, as well as how we engage with and reach out to our immediate neighbours. We recognize that these two objectives are both vitally important to the church’s mission, so beginning in March, we will hold separate meetings to address each topic. If time allows, perhaps we would like to brainstorm possible names for these ministry groups.

Notice of Annual Vestry

Our annual vestry meeting will be held on Sunday, February 26, following the 10 a.m. worship service. Please mark your calendars for this important gathering.

All those with reports to submit for vestry are asked to send those to the parish office no later than February 15, to allow time for the vestry booklet to be compiled. Your timely submissions are greatly appreciated!

WNM items for Homeless Needed

Thank you so much for your kind donations! We are a little low on pudding cups, protein (small cans of tuna or chicken), fruit cups and as always socks.

We are quite well stocked at the moment for other items.

Send us your sign suggestions!

We are looking for suggestions for messages to put on our sign board on Granville Street throughout the year. Please email the office (church@sjs.net) with your ideas!

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.

Organ Virtuoso Loreto Aramendi

Saturday, February 4th, at 7.30 pm : St James’ Anglican Church, Vancouver

St James’ Music Series presents Loreto Aramendi, an international concert artist and main organist of the Basilica of Santa María del Coro in San Sebastián, Spain. She has given numerous recitals in Europe, Argentina, Japan, Russia, and the United States, and her extraordinary skill and musicianship have been highly praised. What sets Loreto Aramendi’s concerts apart are the symphonic transcriptions of works by Liszt, Fauré, Rachmaninoff, and Saint-Saëns, which show off the rich tonal colours of the organ necessary for interpreting orchestral music, which are otherwise unheard in strict organ repertoire. As well, the organ transcriptions require a musician of exceptional virtuosic and artistic skill – and that, Loreto Aramendi has in spades.

This will be the first time for this Spanish virtuoso to perform on Canada's West Coast as she embarks on a tour in Canada and the USA. A rare opportunity to hear this extraordinarily-talented musician perform on the mighty pipe organ at St James' Church, this is a concert not to be missed !

The Gesualdo Six Return

Friday, February 10th, at 7.30 pm : St James' Anglican Church, Vancouver

This outstanding choral group from the UK made their Canadian debut at St James' in 2018, and it was glorious. Now, five years later, The Gesualdo Six return to Vancouver to present a programme of music from their most-recent Album, including selections by Cristóbal de Morales, Josquin des Prez, William Byrd, Howard Skempton, Donna McKeivitt, Eleanor Daley, John Tavener, and Richard Rodney Bennett.

The 2018 Gesualdo Six concert at St James' was a sold-out, and the same is expected for their 2023 appearance.

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.office@sjs.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.

ST. JOHN'S, SHAUGHNESSY STAFF AND LEADERSHIP

Please contact the parish office if you would like to be added to our mailing list, so that we may let you know about upcoming events.

Clergy and Staff

The Reverend Terry Shields Dirbas, Rector terry.dirbas@sjs.net
The Reverend James Hwang, Curate jhwang@sjs.net
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Maggie Sanders, People's Warden
Mike Dezell, Property Trustee
Donald Wood, Treasurer



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