



“Door of the Theses” in Wittenberg

On Tuesday, we observe Reformation Day—a day to honour the saints of the Reformation era who helped shape the Church we have inherited. The celebration falls every year on the anniversary of Martin Luther’s nailing of the *Ninety-five Theses* to the door of All Saints Church at Wittenberg on October 31, 1517.

Every year at Reformation Day, I find myself reflecting on the gifts the Reformers brought to the Church. They promoted an active and personal life of faith—one in which our access to God’s grace and forgiveness is not restricted to the sacraments but is available to each of us in prayer and in community. They insisted that public worship be held in a language that participants understood. They invited lay people

to receive the chalice, rather than reserving it solely for the priest. And they insisted that the Bible be translated into the vernacular, because of their conviction that it contains all things necessary to salvation.

It is easy for us, in 2023, to take all of this for granted. The Reformers’ work was so successful that these things are quite normal, even for most Roman Catholics. But Reformation Day is an opportunity to reflect on the transformation that has taken place in the Church, and to give thanks for the work of the Holy Spirit. It is also a time to consider where the Church is still in need of reform, and to pray that we may pursue an honest faith, rooted in love and justice.

Furthermore, it is an occasion on which we give particular thanks for the gift of Holy Scripture. Although we may not read it literally, and although if we are honest, we probably recognize that there are portions of it that are problematic from the standpoint of contemporary Christian ethics, Scripture is still the place we go to find the sacred story of our faith. As Anglicans, we affirm that it contains all things necessary to salvation. And what a blessing it is, that in 2023, we can read it any time, anywhere—from a book on the shelf, from the internet, or even from an app!

I encourage us all, as we approach Reformation Day, to give some thought to our relationship with Scripture. Do we give ourselves opportunities to encounter the Word of God outside of Sunday worship? Perhaps you'd like to read it on your own, or maybe you'd like to join our Thursday morning Bible study group after the 10am service. In whatever way makes sense for us in our own journeys, I encourage us to find a way to connect with the Bible. In doing so, we honour the faith and the sacrifice of those who gave their all to put Bibles in our hands, so that we could hear the Good News of God's love for all people and of salvation freely offered to us in Jesus Christ.

Mother Terry+

Dear Abbey,

I am looking forward to attending the All Souls evensong this Sunday, but I have a question. Why do we pray for the dead at all? Don't we believe that those who have died have already achieved their final resting place?

*Sincerely,
Just Curious*

Dear Curious,

Praying for the dead has ancient roots and has been part of the Christian tradition since its beginning. There is an inference to praying for the deceased in the second letter to Timothy. And there are historical documents which allude to the practice in the early church. These early prayers were intended to alleviate any pains and sorrows the departed may be experiencing so that they may come to receive the benefits of eternal life. (Incidentally, the early church also believed that martyrs of the church had already achieved the heavenly grace and thus martyrs were not to be prayed for but rather prayed to.)

In the Anglican Church, a prayer for "mercy and everlasting peace" for the dead was included in the 1549 *Book of Common Prayer*, but it was removed in the more Protestant revision of 1552. Prayers for the dead found their way back into Anglican liturgy over time and have been included in many BCPs and authorized liturgies since the 20th century. In fact, the funeral service in the 1962 Canadian *Book of Common Prayer* includes this prayer:

O Father of all, we pray to thee for those whom we love but see no longer. Grant them thy peace; and in thy loving wisdom and almighty power, work in them the good purpose of thy perfect will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

These prayers for the dead should not be conflated with the Roman doctrine of purgatory, which envisions the existence of a temporary and intermediate state between heaven and hell. Prayers are offered for those in purgatory to assist the departed in overcoming their deficits and defects in this world so that they may ultimately be found worthy of life everlasting. I once heard purgatory likened to an auto body shop: a place we go to work out the dents and the dings until we are found to be in perfect, unblemished, condition to be received into the heavenly kingdom of God. **Purgatory is not a doctrine of the Anglican Church.**

Instead we pray for the dead because we believe that in death, our life is changed, not ended. We continue in our journey toward oneness with the love of God. When is that journey complete? To whom is eternal life granted? What is the requirement for our inclusion in that heavenly kingdom and how is that achieved? These questions and so many others have no answer in this world. Rather, we place our steadfast trust and faith in the love of God through Christ Jesus, knowing that even with our imperfections and failings, we are redeemed through his saving acts.

So, we pray for those who have gone before us because we believe their life continues. Just as we prayed for them while they were on earth, we maintain that connection after they have died as we offer up our hopes and our love in prayer on their behalf. And we trust that the “good purpose of God’s perfect will” will be manifest in them as in us.

Finally, sometimes prayer is not so much about changing what God will do, but about changing ourselves. Praying for the departed is one way of shaping our faith in the eternal connection we have with one another as part of the whole communion of saints.

With joyful anticipation of our continued life in Christ,
Abbey

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.



Solemn Choral Evensong

for All Faithful Departed

with prayers for those who have been
laid to rest in the Garden of Remembrance

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29 @ 4 P.M.
ST. JOHN'S, SHAUGHNESSY
1490 NANTON AVE.**

Don't miss our service of evensong this Sunday! The choir is planning to offer some beautiful music, and we will honour loved ones who have died this year and those laid to rest in our memorial garden. A light reception will follow. Please invite your friends!

New Parish Administrator!

We are delighted to welcome Deanna Ferguson to our team as our new permanent parish administrator. Deanna comes to us with ten years of experience in parish administration, most recently at St. James Anglican Church. She is in the office Monday through Thursday, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Please join us in welcoming her to St. John's!

Labyrinth is Open

The Labyrinth here at St. John's, Shaughnessy will be open for walking on Thursday mornings from 8am to 9:45am. For those who would like to stay, a service of Holy Eucharist with Healing Prayers begins at 10am followed by a low-key Bible Study.

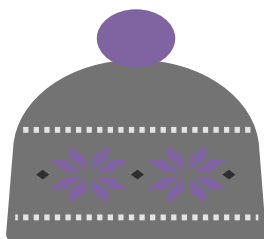


Westside Anglican Neighbourhood Ministry

As always, we are very grateful for the generosity of parishioners for packet materials that go out to the folks on the street.

Here's what we are a little low on at the moment:

- Socks (always socks, but especially as Fall is here and Winter is approaching)
- Meal Replacements (Ensure or Boost)
- Soft Granola Bars – not crunchy
- Fruit Cups
- Clothing: warm and waterproof jackets, shirts, sweaters, gloves, hats or toques





Wear a costume and go trick-or-treating this Sunday!

Children and “children at heart” are invited to wear costumes to church the morning of October 29. (Please keep costumes “family friendly.”) After the service, young people are invited to trick-or-treat around the church. Volunteers to host a station for trick-or-treating are needed. We would also be grateful for donations of candy for this event. **Please contact Father James to sign up or for more information.** Thank you!

!!HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR!!



The original organ for St John's, Shaughnessy was an 'organ transplant' from Canton, Ohio's CrossRoads United Church containing 1478 pipes crafted in 1920 by the Estey organ company for their opus 1869. By the early 60s this instrument was due for a significant overhaul, and it was determined more cost effective to replace with new, which also enticed the prospective organist Fred Carter to immigrate from Armagh Ireland to SJS. The \$85k (equivalent to 3 Shaughnessy homes at the time) contract was awarded to the Hallman organ company of Kitchner Ontario.

What was salvageable of the redundant Estey organ was incorporated into a hybrid house theatre style organ in Victoria. When the 3600 pipes of the Hallman arrived in 1968, it enjoyed the title of being GVRD's largest pipe organ until 2001. In addition to its grand size, it has several novel features: two sets of pipes which sound below audible range (16Hz); 9 sets of pipes sounding antiphonally from the gallery, a horizontal copper state trumpet, a gallery console and movable master console on the chancel. Though having had exceptional care for decades by local technician Marianne Huestis, by its 50th year, it too needed a significant overhaul.

Headed up by Music Director Michael Dirk and the exceptional talents of Steve Miller of Calgary, the electronics were updated from analog to digital, and several other enhancements including a few more ranks (oboe, clarinet, flute, and string), chimes, new silent blowers and swell expression motors.

Dedicated Oct 28, 1968 by Archbishop Godfrey Gower, the 55th anniversary will be celebrated the night prior on Friday Oct 27, 7:30pm by local members of the Royal Canadian College of Organists Vancouver Centre (for whom Michael Dirk serves as co-president). This free/by-donation recital features local organists dressing up in costume and offering the spookiest and scariest music written for the 'king of instruments' (Bach Toccata & Fugue in d minor, Phantom of the Opera, Böellmann's Suite Gothique etc). Costumes are encouraged, and there are Halloween treats for the kids and the young at heart!



CONCERT TICKETS

Our Organist Michael Dirk to make debut with VSO Friday, November 10, performing the Saint-Saens Organ Symphony (last performed 2001).

<https://www.vancouversymphony.ca/event/saint-saens-organ-symphony/>

Michael is offering to arrange group tickets at 15% savings – suggesting lower balcony regular \$70/seat for \$60. Please email office if you'd like to attend and how many tickets desired by Sunday, October 29.



Upcoming Events

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27

7:30 p.m. 18th Annual RCCO
Organ Spooktacular
Halloween Concert

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29

10 a.m. Trick-or-Treating after church
4 p.m. Choral Evensong
for All Faithful Departed

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11

10 a.m. Remembrance Day Service

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12

10 a.m. Consecration Sunday
Stewardship Luncheon
**Note: There is no 8:00
service this Sunday!

EVERY THURSDAY

8 a.m. Labyrinth Open for Meditation
10 a.m. Healing Eucharist and Bible Study

St. John's, Shaughnessy
1490 NANTON AVE.

Calendar

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.

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 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.

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@sjis.net
The Reverend James Hwang, *Curate* jhwang@sjis.net
The Reverend Dr. Marilyn Hames, *Honorary Assisting Priest*
The Reverend Karin Fulcher, *Honorary Deacon*
The Reverend Pitman Potter, *Honorary Deacon*
Michael Dirk, *Principal Organist and Artist-in-Residence* organist@sjis.net
Deanna Ferguson, *Parish Administrator* church.office@sjis.net

Trustees

The Rev. Terry Shields Dirbas, *Rector* terry.dirbas@sjis.net
Ken Pepin, *Rector's Warden* ken.pepin@sjsparish.net
Joan Stewart, *People's Warden* joan.stewart@sjsparish.net
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