

# Newsletter

Thanksgiving 2017

## “Comfortable Words: The Influence of the Book of Common Prayer on Life and Literature”

To mark the 30th anniversary of its founding, the PBSC has sponsored the publication of a book that demonstrates the importance to English-speaking culture of the Prayer Book, by presenting excerpts from literary works from 45 different writers over four centuries, from Shakespeare to T.S. Eliot, including references to Charlotte Bronte, P.D. James, and Robertson Davies among others, all of whose quoted work shows Prayer Book influences. The book also demonstrates praise showered on the Prayer Book by such modern writers as C.S. Lewis, W.H. Auden, Rudolf Otto and Roger Scruton. It is not an academic study or a work of reference, but has been written as an historical survey that does not require any prior knowledge of literature or theology. It is an expanded version of a popular evening interest course taught in 2015 in Ottawa.



Peter Scotchmer

The author of the book is long-time PBSC member Peter Scotchmer, who is kindly donating all proceeds from the sale of the book to the PBSC. Peter was an English and E.S.L. teacher for 33 years, and until his retirement, Head of the English Department at Canterbury High School for the Arts in Ottawa. The book is available for \$15.00, plus \$5.00 postage and handling, from the Ottawa Branch of the PBSC. To order, please contact Ronald Bentley at (613) 822-1911 or [rwbentley@sympatico.ca](mailto:rwbentley@sympatico.ca). *The book would make a great Christmas gift!*

### INSIDE

2  
**A Response to Theological Division**

4  
**“Ephphatha” – “Be Opened”**

6  
**A Memorable 65<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary**

7  
**Choral Evensong in the Diocese of Huron**

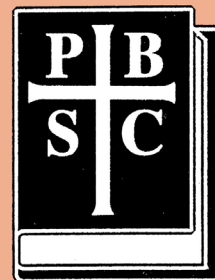
**622** | **YEAR 2: THE LITANY**

**STUDY SERIES FOR TEENS**



**NOW AVAILABLE!**

Now available for download on the PBSC website: [www.prayerbook.ca](http://www.prayerbook.ca).



## A Response to Theological Division

On March 25th of this year, the Anglican Communion Alliance sponsored a one-day seminar at Wycliffe College in Toronto, with the title “Where is Unity in a Theologically Divided Church? A Seminar on the Nature of the Church”. The aim of the event was outlined in the seminar flyer as follows: “With the passing of the first stage of the revision of the Marriage Canon at General Synod, the issue for many orthodox Anglicans becomes one of ecclesiology: what is the nature of the church? According to what theological principles should one think about one’s position within a church that is theologically divided and may hold positions that are contrary to Scripture?” Three keynote speakers addressed the gathering from different perspectives. The organizers described the event as “a time of learning, not a council of war”.

The first speaker was the Revd. Dr. Ephraim Radner, Professor of Historical Theology at Wycliffe College. His address focused on being faithful in the midst of pluralism. He began by outlining three presuppositions:

1) We live in a thoroughly pluralistic society. This is not going away.

2) Anglicanism is historically a pluralistic church – shown for example in the Toleration Act of 1689, which granted freedom of worship to Nonconformists.

3) We have been witnessing a failure of pluralism since around the turn of the millennium, evident in loss of community and rampant individualism.

So what can we do? How do we make sense of pluralism theologically, and engage with it faithfully? Historically there have been three varieties of Anglican responses to pluralism:

1) Comprehension, which aimed to find a basis for broad agreement in faith and hold people in one church. It focused on the key Christian doctrines (the centrality of the Scriptures, the two dominical sacraments, Jesus as Messiah) and regarded peace as paramount. It cultivated an attitude



*Dr. Ephraim Radner*

of patience and humility towards others, mirroring the Sermon on the Mount. Its theology was primarily practical, advocating patience, humility and forgiveness. But it failed politically; the container was not sufficiently strong and cohesive, and Roman Catholics and dissenters did not accept the paradigm.

2) Contestation, which aimed to debate the truth from diverse perspectives and discover the truth over time. It held that all are prophets, and pointed to the example of Gamaliel (Acts 5:33-39); the need for heresies to show the truth (1 Cor. 11:19); and St. Paul’s exhortation to test everything (1 Thess. 5:21). The basic assumption was that Providence would allow the truth to emerge if contentious issues were discussed with charity and openness, pointing to the debates during patristic times which led to the clarification of doctrinal questions. William Tyndale, one of the earliest English reformers, considered it an evangelical demand that we debate everything; he accepted pluralism.

3) Evangelical transformation, in which the church is changed into the image of Christ by dealing with the constraints and failures of approaches 1 and 2. It requires engagement with the other two and open-endedness. Its primary proponent was historian Gilbert Burnet (1643-1715). He saw the previous two approaches as inadequate, observing that pluralism led to power politics. He was committed to social solidarity. He saw the church’s history as being parallel to that of Israel: successive cycles of obedience, disobedience, punishment, repentance and renewal. In his view the true Church was one whose pastoral witness was most like Jesus’ – charity leading to the Cross. He pointed to the teaching that persecution is the mark of the true Church, and advocated approaching opponents with evangelical gentleness, seeing the church not as a stable entity but as

-Continued on page 3

-Continued from page 2

“a people on its way”. He advocated peaceful self-ordering in the face of truth’s contestation, holding that “contest is inevitable, but its character is transformative”.

Dr. Radner concluded by listing five normative elements of Anglican pluralistic ecclesiology:

- Christoform – our order, structure and discipline emerge from this.
- Penitentially humble – non-strategic, open to what is not yet known, seeing obedience as an end, not as a means.
- Ecclesially fallible – quoting St. Augustine, *Ecclesia semper reformanda* (the church is always in need of reform).
- Contested and contesting – viewing the Scriptures without closure, with patience and courage.
- Missionary – existing for the sake of the church and the world.

The second speaker was the Revd. Dr. Catherine Sider-Hamilton, Priest-in-Charge of St. Matthew’s Church, Riverdale (Toronto) and Assistant Professor of New Testament and Greek at Wycliffe College. Her address explored the vexed question of unity. Salvation is a making whole – a restoration of unity between humanity and God. Thus unity rests in Christ, and the gathering up of humanity happens in the church – the body of Christ, knit together in Christ (Eph. 4:5-6: “One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all”). Unity is integrally connected to mission, and is the harbinger of a new creation – reconciliation for a divided and warring world. Failure of unity does damage to the nature and purpose of creation. In a divided church, our task is repentance and reconciliation.

In this context, she stressed that the current divisions over

marriage go to the heart of who we are and our mission. Many in the church hierarchy are claiming that we have succeeded in creating a “big tent”, but this is not true. The facts on the ground show that we are not one big happy family. The stark lesson experienced by other churches has been that when the definition of marriage is changed, people leave. It has been claimed



*Dr. Catherine Sider-Hamilton*

that this issue is not communion breaking – but it has in fact resulted in broken communion, in a tearing of the body of Christ. The division is not theological only, but is embedded in our life of worship: the new marriage rite is liturgical in nature; the changed canon is doctrinal in nature; the consecration of a bishop in a same-sex relationship is structural in nature. Jesus gives us peace in his cross and resurrection, but given our present division as a denial of unity, surely we reject afresh his peace and his cross. We are all caught up in this division, stemming from the change to the canon.

Some have claimed that our brokenness is a sign of Christ’s brokenness. However, this is problematic because the cross of

Christ is not about brokenness alone but about being taken up into the love of God and healed, through the perfect union of the Son and the Father. Christ’s brokenness, unlike our divisions, was self-giving: death swallowed up in victory. Moreover, the brokenness of Christ was a brokenness of obedience in the face of a disobedient world, whereas our division is a sign of our disobedience. Obedience and unity are two sides of a single coin, mirroring the shape of the cross. In conclusion, she urged that we need to show forth and model faithfulness even if the church is not faithful. If obedience results in persecution, that is a sign of faithfulness. Heterosexual matrimony is unequivocally upheld in Scripture by the word of Jesus himself. When the church does not keep his word, we are called to stand against it. We are called to steadfast obedience even when it puts us in conflict with parishioners and bishops.

The third speaker was the Revd. Dr. Gary Thorne, chaplain and faculty member at the University of King’s College, Halifax. His address focused on the distinction between the invisible and the visible church. The true, invisible Church is the mystical Body of Christ, “the blessed company of all faithful people”, whose members are known only to God. The visible church consists of all those who profess Christ and receive baptism. Thus the visible church is a mixture of members of the invisible Church and others who outwardly profess Christianity. Article 19 of the Thirty-Nine Articles warns us not to put unreserved confidence in the visible church, pointing out that churches throughout history have erred. The church has been charged with divine authority but humans are

-Continued on page 4



-Continued from page 3

fallible: “we have this treasure in earthen vessels” (2 Cor. 4:7). The church can only be trusted when she points beyond to the Scriptures, which contain all things necessary to salvation.

This leads to the question of who determines what is contrary to God’s word written. No individual has the whole counsel of the Spirit. The mind of the Church, the *consensus fidelium*, is shaped by the Holy Spirit and formed by devotion to and submission to the word of God. It takes time for truth to be discerned. The *consensus fidelium* is anything but dogmatic adherence to the past – otherwise we would never have abolished slavery, for example.

The visible and invisible Church must be clearly distinguished. There is no participation in the invisible Church without participation in the visible. Divine authority is mediated through human means. The visible church must be brought

fully into conformity with the invisible, but that will not be accomplished in this life. Article 26, formulated in response to the



*Dr. Gary Thorne*

Donatist controversy (which held that the church must contain only holy people) affirms that evil ministers do not hinder God’s grace

or the efficacy of the sacraments. St. Augustine distinguished between the present and the future church. The visible church must again and again be corrected and refined. The visible church points beyond itself to the invisible Church; the Eucharist and the Church are inseparable. We cannot seek separation from sinners, but must speak to them and challenge them. The church may not dissociate itself from human infirmity. The writings of St. Augustine, Richard Hooker and Michael Ramsay all urge us to use patience, and bear with those who have power. The Spirit often works in hard and messy ways. We must work hard at understanding more deeply the meaning of the Scriptures, the *consensus fidelium*, and our tradition. We need to lead lives of repentance, and seek the life of Christ. Christ refused to come down from the cross; if we are thinking of leaving, we must consider whether we are simply deciding to save ourselves.

## “Ephphatha” – “Be Opened”

*(A sermon for the twelfth Sunday after Trinity, delivered on September 3<sup>rd</sup> at Christ Church, Windsor, NS, by the Revd. Dr. David Curry, parish rector and Vice-Chairman of the PBSC.)*

It is an Aramaic word translated by Mark into Greek and by extension for us into English, all the while keeping before our hearts and minds the original word, *Ephphatha*. Aramaic was probably the language which Jesus himself spoke. The Christian Scriptures

as a result retain a handful of Aramaicisms.

The story in which it occurs is unique to Mark, though the Greek word translated into English as “Be opened” is the same word used by the other Evangelists, especially by Luke in the Resurrection accounts about how Jesus opened the minds and opened the understanding of the Scriptures to the disciples. And so too something is being opened to us.

*Guarda è ascolta*, “Look and listen”, Beatrice tells the pilgrim Dante in the poet’s great poem, the “Purgatorio” of the Divine Comedy. Look and listen to what? The pageant of Revelation in a sacramental form. It is not too much to say, perhaps, that Mark’s story here is the scriptural *fons et origo* of such imagery. For here is a story which speaks directly to the meaning of the Scriptures and in a way that is inescapably sacramental. In other words, we are being reminded of an essential feature of our own

-Continued on page 5

-Continued from page 4

Catholic and Reformed Christian tradition, namely, the interplay between Word and Sacrament, the Word audible and the Word visible.

There is a kind of wonder in encountering this story in the midst of the Trinity season. It is one of the few Gospels from St. Mark in the classical eucharistic lectionary during the Trinity season; there are only three Gospel passages from Mark out of twenty-four or twenty-six Sundays. It speaks, I think, wonderfully and directly to our current confusions and uncertainties which are really about a kind of closing of our hearts and minds. "Ears have they and hear not; eyes have they and yet they see not."

Here we are being opened. Opened to what? What is it that we do not hear and see? What is it to which we are closed in our hearts and minds? To the presence and truth of God in our lives. We are closed to the very principle of all life, God. Here we have a powerful story about what God seeks and wants for us: our being opened to his transforming grace in our lives.

Here is a story, too, which reminds us of both the power and the limitations of language. You might say that the power and the truth of language actually is found in our recognition of its limits. Such is the meaning and nature of translation. Translation opens us out to the Word behind the words, if you will. It is an

important feature of Judaism and Christianity that there can be and must be translation. And yet that doesn't excuse us from appreciating and even learning other languages, even ancient languages. It means, however, that truth is not the sole property of any one language.

This helps us to recall that the languages of the cultures and peoples of the world are all part of the pageant of creation and redemption. The story of Babel properly speaking is about the

engage properly and respectfully with others. It challenges us about how and what we say. That can only happen when we are opened to truth, the truth which cannot be the captive of a particular political or social agenda but is always more and greater than ourselves and our cultures.

Here is the deep point. Through the particularities of cultures and languages we are opened out to the deeper truth of God for our common humanity.

This is shown to us in a most powerful and poignant way in this story. It is not simply about what happened to the "one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech" – don't we all, really? It speaks to our being deaf to God and his word in our lives and confused in our speech about the truth and wonder of God.

It happens, well, sacramentally, by which I mean that Jesus uses the things of the world to open us out to the things of God. It is wonderfully graphic, even medical though without the contemporary tendency to medicalize every aspect of the human experience which is often at the expense of a moral discourse. In the manner of a physical examination – our bodies in all of their parts matter – Jesus "put his fingers into his ears, and he spit" – okay we might be a bit uncomfortable about that! He "touched his tongue", all very direct and



attempt to impose one language, one culture upon the God-given differences between cultures and peoples and languages. In other words, we have in the story of the Tower of Babel, the attempt by some – a ruling elite – who are in power to control the use of language and by extension to exercise a kind of thought-control; in short, a form of tyranny. The same tendencies play themselves out in our confused and conflicted world. We are closed to the wisdom which this Gospel story presents to us; namely, the power of language to open us out to the truth and presence of God with us that in turn allows us to

-Continued on page 6



-Continued from page 5

intimate. But then, and this is a wonderful moment, “looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, ‘Ephphatha’”. There is a total and complete engagement of Jesus with our humanity and for what end?

A healing, to be sure, but that healing reveals what God seeks for our humanity – our ears being opened, our tongues being

loosed that we might speak plain. Not just to hear anything or to say whatever, but to hear the Word of God’s truth and to speak that word in our lives, it seems to me. “He hath done all things well”, the multitude proclaims. It is a witness to the truth of God in Jesus Christ with and in whom all is more than good for all is well and we are made whole.

We are opened to the truth and presence of God in our lives. The Word proclaimed and the Sacraments celebrated help us to live with a greater awareness of that truth and presence. It is the counter to all our distresses, to all our fears and anxieties. Look and listen, but above all, “Ephphatha”, Be opened!

## A Memorable 65<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary



*The Revd. Canon Robert Greene was a founding member of the PBSC, and has been instrumental in helping to re-start the PBSC Calgary Branch over the past year. He and his wife Marion celebrated their 65<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, surrounded by family and friends. The numerous candles on their cake set off a fire alarm and the fire department came out, as shown in the picture above. Matthew Perrault, a member of the PBSC Calgary Branch executive, quipped, “After 65 years of marriage, Fr. and Marion Greene’s love for one another is still as hot as ever!”*

## Choral Evensong in the Diocese of Huron



St Paul's Cathedral in London, Ontario has had a choir for most of its 170-year history. Currently it is a fully-auditioned, professional adult choir with a two-fold responsibility – firstly to lead the music and worship at the liturgies held at the cathedral throughout the year, and secondly to lead the family of the Diocese of Huron when they are gathered for annual Synod and for Ordinations.

In 2009, it was decided not to hold weekly Sunday evening services at the cathedral. This freed the Cathedral Choir to sing BCP Evening Prayer in parishes of the diocese, a project initiated in 2012 – to date the choir has been invited to visit some 60 parishes, about 9 or 10 each academic year. Currently, BCP Choral Evensong is sung at St Paul's on the third Sunday of each month. St Paul's Cathedral Choir is grateful for continuing support provided by the A.E.J. Fulford Trust, administered by the Anglican Foundation of Canada, towards the costs of its touring and outreach programmes.

### **To date, the Choral Evensong schedule for 2017-2018 is as follows:**

4pm September 17 - St Paul's Cathedral, Queens & Richmond, London  
 5pm September 24 - St Peter's Church, Dorchester  
 4pm October 15 - St Paul's Cathedral  
 5pm October 22 - St John the Evangelist, Strathroy  
 4pm November 19 - St Paul's Cathedral  
 4pm December 17 - St Paul's Cathedral - Nine Lessons & Carols  
 4pm January 22 - St Paul's Cathedral  
 4pm February 18 - St Paul's Cathedral  
 5pm March 4 – Grace Church, Brantford  
 4pm March 18 - St Paul's Cathedral  
 4pm March 25 - St Paul's Cathedral - Music and Readings for Passiontide  
 4pm April 22 - St Paul's Cathedral

# The Prayer Book Society of Canada

## National Officers and Local Contacts

### OFFICERS

#### National Chairman

The Rev'd Gordon Maitland  
1983 St. Mary's Gate  
Windsor, Ontario  
N8Y 1J8

#### Episcopal Visitor

The Rt. Rev'd  
Dr. Stephen Andrews,  
Bishop of Algoma

#### Past Chairman

The Rev'd David A. Harris  
Reading, England

#### Vice Chairmen

The Rev'd David Curry,  
Anglican Rectory  
531 King St,  
P.O. Box 2661  
Windsor, Nova Scotia  
B0N 2T0

Mr. Michael Edward,  
R.R. #1, Belfast P.O.,  
Prince Edward Island,  
C0A 1A0

The Rev'd Dr. James I. Packer,  
Regent College,  
5800 University Blvd,  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
V6T 2E4

#### Recording Secretary

Mr. Ronald Bentley  
737 Hot Springs Way  
Gloucester, Ontario  
K1V 1W8

#### Treasurer

Mrs. Anne Chisholm  
P.O. Box 713  
Charlottetown, P.E.I.  
C1A 7L3

### Local Contacts

#### St John's

Mr. Michael Donnan  
(709) 753-5193

#### Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

Mr. Benjamin Lee  
(902) 431-9899

#### Ottawa

Mr. Wesley Warren  
(613) 726-6341

#### Toronto

Dr. Diana Versegby  
(905) 303-4490

#### Grand Valley

Mr. Brian Munro  
(519) 756-3053

#### Windsor

Rev'd Gordon Maitland  
(519) 564-5989

#### North Bay

Rev'd John Stennett  
(705) 498-6549

#### Saskatoon

The Ven. Richard Spencer  
72 Sparling Crescent,  
Saskatoon S7H 3M2  
(306) 649-3448

#### Calgary

The Rev'd Robert Taylor  
Fr.Rob@shaw.ca  
(403) 612-5721  
Branch website:  
www.bcp-calgary.ca

#### Edmonton

Mr. John Matthews  
43 Stirling Road  
Edmonton, AB  
T5X 4C2  
(780) 457-2207  
cjmatth@shaw.ca

#### Vancouver

Mrs. Norah Johnston  
(604) 224-8986

#### Vancouver Island

Mrs. Heather Herbison  
Heather797ca@yahoo.ca

Opinions expressed in this  
Newsletter do not necessarily  
reflect those of the Prayer Book  
Society of Canada.

#### PBSC Web Site

[www.prayerbook.ca](http://www.prayerbook.ca)

### PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY OF CANADA NEWSLETTER

#### Editor

Dr. Diana Versegby  
12 Sherbourne Drive  
Maple, Ontario  
L6A 1G8  
diana.versegby@sympatico.ca

#### Editorial Committee

Mr. Desmond Scotchmer  
The Rev'd G. Maitland  
Dr. Diana Versegby

#### Mailing Address for Donations

P.O. Box 713, Stn Central,  
Charlottetown, PE  
C1A 7L3

**For address changes,  
or if you wish to join the  
PBSC, please contact our  
Membership Secretary:  
the Ven. Richard Spencer,  
72 Sparling Cres.,  
Saskatoon, S7H 3M2,  
(306) 649-3448  
E-mail: [kentvic@gmail.com](mailto:kentvic@gmail.com)**