

Saint Mary's Newsletter: Aug 2016

Vicar: David Smithson 027 4213200 Fridays

07 8492761 Afterhours

Peoples Warden: Sally-Ann Riddell 07 8243850

Vicars Warden: Roger Jennings 07 8243712



SERVICES FOR AUGUST

Sunday 7th:

10am Family Communion & Baptism service with Children's Church & Junior Youth

Refreshments - Adrienne Calderwood

Sunday 14th:

10am *Patronal Festival of St Mary:*



Family communion Service

Refreshments - Majella Heaton

Sunday 21st:

10am Praise Service with Children's Church & Juniouir Youth.

Refreshments - Diane Gordon

Sunday 28th:

10am Family communion Service.

Refreshments - Kim Simpson



Salt & Light Bible Study meets every second Sunday after the church service and morning tea. It is a very simple yet very profound and deep study. Bring along your "purple book".

Children's Church/Juniour Youth:

This month -Children's church/Juniour Youth is on the 7th and the 21st.

Youth Group (Year 9+): Combined churches youth Meet Fridays 7pm at Oaks Church Gordonton.

Scripture for the month:



Prepare chains

**because the land is full of bloodshed
and the city is full of violence.**

EZEKIEL 7:23

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Thoughts on **Ezekiel 7:23** God hates it when the innocent are afflicted with violence and bloodshed. He hates evil and political corruption. He hates courts that are false and leaders who are abusive of their power. We need to rest assured that one day He will provide deliverance for His faithful followers and administer justice to those who have abused or harmed other people — if not in this life, for sure in the life to come.

TWELVE WAYS TO GET TO KNOW GOD:

Jesus defines eternal life as knowing God (John 17:3). What are the ways? In how many different ways can we know God, and thus know eternal life? When I take an inventory, I find twelve.

1. The final, complete, definitive way, of course, is **Christ**, God himself in human flesh.
2. His **church** is his body, so we know God also through the church.
3. The **Scriptures** are the church's book. This book, like Christ himself, is called "The Word of God."
4. Scripture also says we can know God in **nature** see Romans 1. This is an innate, spontaneous, natural knowledge. I think it would be very difficult for one who lives by the sea, or by a little river, to be an atheist.
5. **Art** also reveals God. I know three ex-atheists who say, "There is the music of Bach, therefore there must be a God." This too is immediate.
6. **Conscience** is the voice of God. It speaks absolutely, with no ifs, ands, or buts. This too is immediate. [The last three ways of knowing God (4-6) are natural, while the first three are supernatural. The last three reveal three attributes of God, the three things the human spirit wants most: truth, beauty, and goodness. God has filled his creation with these three things. Here are six more ways in which we can and do know God.]
7. **Reason**, reflecting on nature, art, or conscience, can know God by good philosophical arguments.
8. **Experience**, life, your story, can also reveal God. You can see the hand of Providence there.
9. The **collective experience** of the race, embodied in history and tradition, expressed in literature, also reveals God. You can know God through others' stories, through great literature.
10. The **saints** can reveal God. They are advertisements, mirrors, and reflections of Christ. Their lives and witness can be very effective in convincing and converting people.
11. Our ordinary daily experience of **doing God's will** will reveal God. God becomes clearer to see when the eye of the heart is purified: "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God."
12. **Prayer** meets God—ordinary prayer. You learn more of God from a few minutes of prayerful repentance than through a lifetime in a library.

Unfortunately, Christians sometimes have family fights about these ways, and treat them as either/or instead of both/and. They all support each other, and nothing could be more foolish than treating them as rivals—for example, finding God in the church versus finding God in nature, or reason versus experience, or Christ versus art.

If you have neglected any of these ways, it would be an excellent idea to explore them. For instance, pray using great music. Or take an hour to review your life some time to see God's role in your past. Read a great Christian book to better meet and know and glorify God. Pray about it first. Add to this list, if you can. There are more ways of finding and knowing God than any one essay can contain. Or any one world.



Parish Giving

Please consider giving to the parish via Automatic Payment. Did you know that St Mary's has to pay for our vicar and all other costs of running a parish, as well as giving a proportion to the Diocese? Please help us to be sustainable by giving via Automatic Payment. It is an easy way to give and is useful for the parish in running its budget. The Parish Bank Account is:

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CHEQUES TO ST MARY'S:

If you are writing a cheque out for the parish, please ensure it is made out to: "Gordonton Anglican Church"

This Month in Christian History:

8 Aug 1539: German professor and monk Martin Luther remarked in a sermon: "Reason does not know that salvation must come down from above; we want to work up from below so that the satisfaction is rendered by us."



Hall Building Fund:

Keep an eye on the "thermometer" in the church porch. We have raised approx. \$30,000.00 thus far! The hall building committee have met with the District Council in regards to planning consent around a heritage listed building. The new hall must be sited 10m away from the church building. Our architect does not see this to be a problem.