**Easter Newsletter -March- 2024 -Archdeacon Bill Gray**

**Anglican Parish of Bobcaygeon, Dunsford & Burnt River**

**Faith is not Blind**

Faith is not blind, particularly our faith in God. Blind faith in something or someone for no good reason is even dangerous. Blind faith can result in an allegiance to someone or something that is unwarranted and can even cause harm. The followers of the infamous cult leader Jim Jones while living in Guyana were so blindly devoted to him, that upon his instructions they drank poison on Nov. 18, 1978, knowing it would harm them, which became known as the Jonestown Massacre. Their misguided self destruction was the result of extreme paranoia fostered by their cult leader Jim Jones and his promotion of unfounded conspiracy theories. Sound familiar with today?

Nor is faith the same as certainty. The companion of faith is doubt accompanied by a natural necessity to question and test our beliefs. Faith is sound when based on good reason, perceived consequences that are comprehended and understood and the preponderance of the evidence.

Our faith in one another is not based on certainty but rather a developed trust resulting from a preponderance of the evidence. Our faith in our significant relationships and our significant others is not without basis. But on some level, it requires a faith that can transform us beyond what we can absolutely know. We cannot test love as if it was a laboratory experiment. Our trust in such emotions as love are based on outward signs, gestures, and symbols that are indicators of what we perceive to be the other’s interior life, emotions and motives which are invisible.

The evidence upon which we rely for faith in God is our collective experience as well as our confidence in the reliability of the bible. The entirety of scripture has a great variety of different books and literature including at various times poetry, hymns, allegories, symbols, metaphors, parables as well as history. While not all biblical accounts are necessarily literally and factually true there is nevertheless truth about life and reliable insight and understanding regarding the truth about God in all of scripture. I have also come to believe that the biblical record of the person and work of Jesus the Christ as well as other significant biblical figures are sufficiently supported by archeological evidence and other historical sources to have sufficient historical credibility as to be reliable and authentic. The preponderance of the evidence and the testimony of reliable witnesses is that Jesus did indeed live, die and was resurrected from the dead. Upon that we can rely.

I have also come to an understanding that science and faith are compatible, rather than antithetical as many would have us believe. Faith in natural law as expressed by original scientists such as Sir Issac Newton was the result of his belief in the divine law giver and belief in God. Religion gave birth to science and provided the platform for faith in scientific inquiry.

**Natural science provides some interesting pointers to God, resulting in the evidence that atheism is the least rational option.** Francis Collins, famous scientist, and geneticist from Cal Tech University, offers the following examples of scientific pointers to God.

1.The fact that there is something instead of nothing (no reason that should inevitably be)

2. Wigner, Nobel Laureate in physics, argues that the unreasonable effectiveness of mathematics (also physics and chemistry) in describing nature points to a finely tuned universe indicating a grand designer or creator that exists beyond space and time. (John 1, in the beginning was the Logos, and there was nothing made that was made without the Logos)

3. John Lennox-the Big Bang (a singularity or force) verifies the universe was created.

4. There is no reason to believe that random selection can produce the precise tuning of the physical constants in the universe (gravity) -why didn’t big bang result rather in a big crunch, rather than in the improbability of our existence. Evolution may account for the agency of reproduction but does not account for the origins, agent or meaning of the universe.

5. Moral Law - there is something called right, and something called wrong. Natural selection resulting in what’s best for the survival of the tribe or community does not explain radical altruism which are truly sacrificial acts of human nobility. True sacrifice cannot be explained in terms of what’s good for the community who share your DNA thus ruining the re-productive fitness opportunity theory. (Oscar Schindler, Mother Teresa, Jesus Christ, etc.) **Therefore, the risen Christ and biblical morality provides the only rational basis for moral law.**

**Holy Week and Easter In Person Public Worship Services:**

**Palm/Passion Sunday-**March 24/24- St. John’s Dunsford 9:15 am, Christ Church Bob-11 am.

**Good Friday Parish Service**- March 29/24-Christ Church, Bobcaygeon, 11 am.

**Easter Sunday**-March 31/24- St. John’s Dunsford 9:15 am, Christ Church Bob-11 am.

**Please use the enclosed Easter envelope** to support our church’s ministry to our community. Donations can be made using this envelope and brought in person during public services of worship or mailed to the following addresses for each parish congregation. Donations can also be made online by using e-transfer or Canada Helps. Please follow the directions that can be found on our parish website. [**www.christchurchbobcaygeon.com**](http://www.christchurchbobcaygeon.com)

Christ Anglican Church St. John’s Anglican Church St. Luke’s Anglican Church

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