



THE PATHWAYS CENTRE

A FORUM FOR THEOLOGICAL INQUIRY

10209-123 STREET, EDMONTON, ALBERTA, T5N 1N3
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Fall 2008

An educational centre for thought-provoking, cutting-edge, progressive Christian faith and theology.

Message from the Chair of The Pathways Centre...

In this "season of mists and mellow fruitfulness", Greening our Spirits with Sally McFague is a distant memory. It is time to turn our thoughts to upcoming Pathways events.

We welcome back Bruce Miller, the founder of Pathways. Bruce will offer two lectures entitled *The Parables of Jesus and Post-Christian, Post-Modern Spirituality*. Each lecture will allow us to see how Jesus "being-in-the-world" parables are as fresh and relevant today as they were when heard by his very first followers. The dates for Parables are *November 27 and December 4*.

The tour of the lands of the Bible in March 2009 will be of special interest to Pathways members, because the tour leaders are none other than the above-mentioned Bruce Miller and his wife/partner Rhea Jansen. Bruce's knowledge of the Christian Scriptures and Rhea's eye for colour and detail make them ideal hosts. More about this Rostad tour is contained in this newsletter.

Eclipsing Empire is a twelve-week DVD series featuring Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg. Filmed in Turkey, Greece and Italy, it follows in the footsteps of Paul as he criss-crosses the Roman Empire. Although not part of the

official Pathways program, no doubt Pathways members will want to attend.

Our theme for 2009 is Discipleship in the midst of empire, and the programming culminates next Fall with the visit of Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg... but more about that later!!

In the meantime, see you at *Eclipsing Empire* and *Jesus' Parables*.

Nancy Heule
Chair
Pathways Learning Centre



Farewell to Lynn Elliott

"Animateur for Edmonton Presbytery? That's not something you see ads for in the Career section of the newspaper!!", we said, when coordinator *Lynn Elliott* advised Pathways Board that she had found permanent employment.

Lynn was an excellent coordinator, and her sixteen-month sojourn with us was all too brief. We reluctantly say goodbye, then wish her well. *Thanks for everything, Lynn!!*



A Fresh Look at the Parables of Jesus - with Dr. Bruce Miller

In keeping with the Pathways Centre's purpose to provide cutting edge theological thinking, *Dr. Miller's* lectures will summarize new directions in theology today and demonstrate how the parables of Jesus continue to be relevant and important for today.

Dates: **Thursdays, November 27 and December 4, 2008.**

Time: **7:30 p.m.**

Location: **Memorial Hall
Robertson-Wesley United Church
10209 – 123 Street**

Members: \$30 for both lectures or \$15 each
Non-members: 35 for both lectures or \$20 each.

Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg!!!

**Friday October 30, and
Saturday October 31, 2009**

**Set aside these dates NOW!!
More information in next newsletter.**

Eclipsing Empire

***October 16 to November 20, 2008 and
January 8 to February 12, 2009***

As you may have heard already, Pathways is teaming up with Christ Church Anglican Parish and St. Stephen's College to bring Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan to Edmonton in October of 2009. In preparation, we wanted to let you know about an upcoming program being offered at Robertson-Wesley United Church entitled "Eclipsing Empire." It is produced by the folks who brought us "Living the Questions" and features none other than Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan. The details follow:

Join renowned New Testament scholars Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan on location in Turkey as they trace the Apostle

Paul's footsteps throughout the Roman Empire.

The 12-session DVD & web-based study explores fresh insights into Paul's message of the Kingdom of God, its challenge to Roman imperial theology, and the apostle's radical relevance for today.

Filmed in High-Definition across Turkey, Greece, and Italy. Participant Guide written by John Dominic Crossan.

When: **12 Thursday evenings at 7:00 pm
Oct 16 - Nov 20, 2008 and Jan 8 - Feb 12, 2009**

Where: **Robertson-Wesley United Church, 10209 123 St.**

Cost: **\$20** (for the resource booklet for all 12 weeks).

Registration: Contact the church office (mail@rwuc.org or 780-482-1587) to register.

Recommended Reading: ***Paul's Letters and Acts***



Countering Pharaoh's Production-Consumption Society

Walter Brueggemann is without a doubt a favourite Biblical scholar. We dreamt of bringing him to Edmonton as a conference speaker but he is someone who does not like to travel far from home in the United States of America. Now we can have the next best thing – his DVD series: "*Countering Pharaoh's Production-Consumption Society*". This study comes with a warning: *This program may be hazardous to your church, society and the (American) way of life and could potentially help restore the meaning of covenant.*

Date and time TBA



19 Day Tour: Bible Lands Discovery
March 2-20, 2009
Tour Hosts: Rev. Dr. Bruce Miller & Rhea Jansen

Everyone wants to travel to the Holy Land at least once. Since the 4th century Christians have been traveling to Bethlehem and Jerusalem as pilgrims to see the many holy sites. The first time my Air Canada flight landed in Tel Aviv I was filled with emotion. Finally I can walk in the land where Jesus walked.

Rostad Tours, based in Calgary, was founded by a Lutheran minister in 1980 and has specialized in tours to the Holy Land. This "Bible Lands Discovery" tour is their classic tour. It begins in Cairo, Egypt and focusing on Hebrew Bible stories the tour proceeds from Egypt across the Sinai Peninsula to Saint Catherine Monastery and the mountain where Moses received the Ten Commandments.

One of the highlights of the trip is a visit to the hidden city of Petra in Jordan, and the Knights Templar castle at Kerak. Other Jordan stops include Mt. Nebo where Moses had a glimpse of the promised land, and the capital city of Jordan, Amman.

The most moving experience for me was touring the sites around the Sea of Galilee in Israel. Nazareth was Jesus' home town, but Capernaum was the centre of Jesus' public ministry. Walking in this beautiful pastoral setting brings Jesus' parables alive for us again. And traveling in a small wooden fishing boat across the Sea of Galilee reminds us of Jesus' disciples who left their fishing boats to follow Jesus.

The culmination of every tour to the Holy Land is to visit Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the spiritual center for three Abrahamic faiths: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. How inspiring it is to stand beside the Wailing Wall, the huge stones of the Temple built by King Herod, and then to proceed to the

Temple Mount to the Dome of the Rock so revered by Muslims, and then for Christians the ultimate experience is to walk along the Via Dolorosa to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the traditional site of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection.

I skipped over other important experiences such as a visit to Masada, the last holdout of the Jews against the Romans in the first century, and Qumran where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, and who can forget the experience of floating on the Dead Sea, the lowest point on the earth's surface.

On our last trip to the Holy Land Edith Memnook, an elder from Goodfish Lake traveled with us, and for her the highlight was to visit Bethlehem and the Church of the Nativity, the site of Jesus' birth. Gathered together we sang "Silent Night, Holy Night" and I asked Edith to say a few words. We were all inspired by her words. She emphasized the fact that Jesus' message of love was for all people. Indeed, at Jesus' birth a light had shone into our dark world, and she was supremely happy that finally she had reached the culmination of her pilgrimage. It was an unforgettable moment.

One added feature of our tour is that as your host I will draw on my experience as a fellow of the Jesus Seminar since 1990. I will endeavor to provide for you additional information about the historical Jesus which will enrich your visit to the Holy Land.

If anyone is interested in joining Rhea and me for next March's tour please contact us at 780-439-6153 or ptolemy7@shaw.ca or check out our itinerary on line at www.rostad.com

Bruce Miller



Inspiring Message from Dr. Helen Caldicott: "We're all physicians to a sickly planet."

In the evening of Wednesday, October 8, the Horowitz Theatre at the University of Alberta was packed, everyone waiting in anticipation to hear Dr. Helen Caldicott, producer of the film *If You Love This Planet*. She was in fine form, quipping that as she revised her book of the same title, she noted that all of the predictions about climate change had come true in the 16 years since it was published. She was tempted to rename the book *I Told You So*.

After venting a bit following her meetings with Alberta's Environment and Energy Ministers, she explored the impending consequences of continued global warming, underlying the role that Alberta's energy resource sector has in this worldwide problem. The Nuclear Energy industry claims to be a solution to global warming but we should not be tricked by their spin, she warned, highlighting the tremendous amount of greenhouse gases released in the mining and enrichment of uranium. The consummate teacher and physician, Dr. Caldicott gave everyone a basic biology lesson in regard to the impacts of radiation and the oft-forgotten risks of nuclear power and the ongoing connection between nuclear power and nuclear arms.

We are led to believe by many in political and business leadership that fossil fuels are the best stable fuel source and that nuclear power is the viable alternative but a significant study reveals that North America could go carbon and nuclear free by harnessing solar and wind power along with other renewables. For more information about this check out the website for the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research (www.ieer.org).

As a fence-sitter on the issue before I went to hear her speak, I am glad to have had the opportunity to hear her passionate call to action. The Pathways Centre is pleased to have had the opportunity to partner with Sierra Club, Prairie Chapter, Project Ploughshares Edmonton, APIRG, Council of Canadians Prairie Region and the Parkland Institute in making Dr. Caldicott's visit to Edmonton such a tremendous success.

James Ravenscroft



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