

**Parish of Central Saanich
St. Stephen's & St. Mary's**

**Lent 2017
Bible Study Series**

"The Psalms:

***Tools for Being
& Becoming"***¹



The Rev. Dr. Brett Cane
Tuesdays at St. Stephen's - 7:00 p.m.
Wednesdays at St. Mary's - 11:00 a.m.

A Series of Studies on the Psalms...

*The Psalms*² were the hymnbook of ancient Israel; Jesus himself quoted more from them than any other Old Testament book. For centuries in the Church, they were the primary source for hymns and much of traditional Anglican liturgy is built around them. There is great variety in the 150 psalms which range from poems of wisdom and lament to songs of praise and thanksgiving. Many psalms are written in the first person while others are songs of the community.

The value of the Psalms is that they enable us to channel our emotions (negative and positive) before God, to express our praise and pain, and to receive his word of comfort, hope and challenge. This Lent, St. Stephen's and St. Mary's will have the opportunity to look at six different types of psalms. The psalms themselves will be presented in various and creative ways. The goal is to grow in how we relate to God emotionally and truthfully and to allow the Holy Spirit to form within us the One who is reflected in so many ways within them, even Jesus Christ our Lord.

Week-by-week summary:

Feb. 28, March 1

#1: *"The Pursuit of Happiness"*

Psalms 1 & 2: Wisdom Psalm + Royal Psalm - introduction to prayer – how to avoid distraction and intimidation; prayer (and psalms) as the language of intimacy – tools God can use; true happiness found in God not self.

March 7, 8

#2: *"God's View of Reality"*

Psalm 8: Psalm of Creation and Praise – God is in charge; human identity – as partner and co-ruler with God; stewardship of all creation.

March 14, 15

#3: *"The Agony and the Ecstasy"*

Psalm 13: Psalm of Lament (see also Psalms 6, 2, 51, 77, 102, 103) - the Psalmist's view of suffering - suffering and happiness not mutually exclusive; avoidance of suffering is not realistic (culture/ advertising calls us to avoid pain); suffering is not necessarily a sign of unfaithfulness.

March 21, 22

#4: *"From Death to Life"*

Psalm 30: Psalm of Thanksgiving (after illness) – how God moves us from over-confidence to mourning to joy; God's "hiding his face" brings power to live and passion for praise.

March 28, 29

#5: *"A Time to Love and a Time to Hate"*

Psalm 137 - The Imprecatory (cursing) Psalms (see also Psalms 35, 69, 109; see also 10:15; 11:16; 17:14; 21:12; 53:5; 58:6; 69:28; 83:15; 109:18; 110:6; 139:22); reflects our own resentment; sense of indignation at evil; helps us acknowledge our own sin.

April 4, 5

#6: *"Jubilant and Judgement"*

Psalms 149 & 150: Psalms of Praise – God's people are called to be jubilant and militant; adoration as our ultimate destiny; the where, why, how, and who of praise!

No registration required - just turn up - even bring a friend!

¹ Title from Eugene H. Peterson, *Answering God, The Psalms as Tools for Prayer*. (San Francisco: Harper, 1991), pg. 2

² From the Greek "Psalmoi" meaning "songs sung to a harp"; collectively, they are called "The Psalter"