

April 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 7am Men's Prayer Meeting	2 6:30pm English Conversation 6:30pm Bible Study Topic: <i>In the Wilderness</i> – <i>Singing Psalm 106</i> 7:15pm Prayer Meeting	3	4 7pm Youth: <i>Bowling!</i>	5 11am-12pm Easter Choir Rehearsal 1-4pm Baking Club
6 10am Worship – Pastor Yuri (Deuteronomy 32:1-43 – <i>Love's Anthem</i>) 11am Faith Formation 12pm BBYOL	7	8 7am Men's Prayer Meeting	9 6:30pm English Conversation 6:30pm Bible Study Topic: <i>In the Wilderness</i> – <i>Singing Psalm 106</i> 7:15pm Prayer Meeting	10	11 12:30pm or 7:00pm Naomi House Reception 7pm Youth	12 11am-12pm Easter Choir Rehearsal
13 PALM SUNDAY 10am Worship – Pastor Yuri (Deuteronomy 6:4-9 – <i>Love's Creed</i>) 11am Faith Formation 12pm BBYOL 6pm Hymn Sing	14 7-9pm College & Career band practice	15 7am Men's Prayer Meeting	16 6:30pm English Conversation 6:30pm Bible Study Topic: <i>In the Wilderness</i> – <i>Singing Psalm 106</i> 7:15pm Prayer Meeting	17	18 <i>GOOD FRIDAY</i> 10am Good Friday Service (Communion) NB: NO YOUTH	19 11am-12pm Easter Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm UGM
20 EASTER 10am Worship – Pastor Yuri (Luke 4:16-21 – <i>Love's Covenant</i>) – Baptisms 11am Faith Formation (KIDS) 12pm BBYOL	21	22 7am Men's Prayer Meeting	23 6:30pm English Conversation 6:30pm Bible Study Topic: <i>TBA</i> 7:15pm Prayer Meeting	24	25 7pm Youth	26 9:00-10:30am Men's Breakfast
27 10am Worship – Pastor Yuri (Luke 4:22-30 – <i>Love's Hard Truth</i>) 11am Faith Formation 12pm BBYOL: <i>BirthDay Sunday!</i>	28 8:30am-8:30pm ELECTIONS CANADA VOTING STATION	29 7am Men's Prayer Meeting 7pm Council Meeting	30 6:30pm English Conversation 6:30pm Bible Study Topic: <i>TBA</i> 7:15pm Prayer Meeting	1	2 7pm Youth	3 1-4pm Baking Club



Bethesda Church Newsletter

Congregational letter

April 2025

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning [...] I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my garments among them, and cast lots for my clothing.

This month, in anticipation of Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Easter, I thought it would be a good occasion to share some poetry with you. Many people are afraid of poetry. Or left cold by it. Most commonly, this is what I hear: *I just don't get it.*

But if the Bible is any indication, God loves a good poem! I think that's because, more than any other kind of writing, poetry takes words and tries to take us beyond them. I believe that God loves poetry because he wants us to think about him, and he is obviously beyond anything we can express in simple language. He is beyond our understanding. Most commonly, this is what we feel: *I just don't get him.*

God *is* rational. God *is* logical. But he is also beyond the rational and the logical. We, too, strive to be rational and logical. But as much as we don't like to admit it, what we think and feel and do often isn't! There's a big difference between our non-rationality and God's: his speech, his ways, and his thoughts are above words, above logic, above rationality. He begins with words (he is *the* Word, after all!), his ways encompass the rational, his thoughts subsume all logic, but he is wider, higher, deeper. We, on the other hand, are often at a loss for words, we're deficient in reason, we're largely incapable of logic. God has gifted us with poetry to help us to make a leap from our irrationality, past logic. To think beyond words. Sometimes even beyond feelings.

So it's not surprising that when we encounter poetry, our "rational" mind balks. (I'm putting the word in quotation marks to emphasize that what we think of as our reason is really a faculty that aims at that target, but mostly misses.) And it's not surprising that poetry that aims to get us thinking *supra*-rationally about God, will especially result in our thinking at first: *I don't get it.*

The mysteries of how God could be a man, why he had to die on the cross, and what it means to be taken up into his resurrection life are best expressed in poetic terms. So that's why I feel that thinking through poetry is especially appropriate for this time of year!

This month, read these poems slowly. Read them out loud. Read them again and again. Read them devotionally. Savour them. Pray through them. And...listen. How is God speaking, past the words, above reason, beyond your defenses??

Pastor Yuri

...all the families of the nations will bow down before him... They will proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn – for he has done it! – PSALM 22:1,17-18,27,31



BETHESDA CHURCH

Bethesda Church Office Information
Hours: Tuesdays (10-3) & Fridays (9-3)
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Palm Sunday

Now to the gate of my Jerusalem,
The seething holy city of my heart,
The saviour comes. But will I welcome him?
Oh crowds of easy feelings make a start;
They raise their hands, get caught up in the singing,
And think the battle won. Too soon they'll find
The challenge, the reversal he is bringing
Changes their tune. I know what lies behind
The surface flourish that so quickly fades;
Self-interest, and fearful guardedness,
The hardness of the heart, its barricades,
And at the core, the dreadful emptiness
Of a perverted temple. Jesus come
Break my resistance and make me your home.

— MALCOM GUTTE, *from: Sounding the Seasons, Canterbury Press 2012*

Good Friday

Am I a stone, and not a sheep,
That I can stand, O Christ, beneath Thy cross,
To number drop by drop Thy blood's slow loss,
And yet not weep?

Not so those women loved
Who with exceeding grief lamented Thee;
Not so fallen Peter, weeping bitterly;
Not so the thief was moved;

Not so the Sun and Moon
Which hid their faces in a starless sky,
A horror of great darkness at broad noon –
I, only I.

Yet give not o'er,
But seek Thy sheep, true Shepherd of the flock;
Greater than Moses, turn and look once more
And smite a rock.

— CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

1. By Christ redeemed, in Christ restored,
we keep the memory adored,
and show the death of our dear Lord
until he come.

2. His body, broken in our stead,
is here in this memorial bread,
and so our feeble love is fed
until he come.

3. The drops of his dread agony,
his life-blood shed for us, we see;
the wine shall tell the mystery
until he come.

4. And thus that dark betrayal night
with the last advent we unite,
by one blest chain of loving rite,
until he come.

5. O blessèd hope!
With this elate,
let not our hearts
be desolate,
but, strong in faith,
in patience wait
until he come.

— MARGARET CLARKSON

"I thirst"

Fodder for *scoffers*:

Once, he,
Arresting officers with a Warrant
Bid them only admit it.

*"If anyone thirsts ...
out of his heart will flow
rivers of living water."*

Once, he,
prodded progeny
Flush with water,
Flushed: wine.

*"Woman, what does this
have to do with me?"*

Once, he,
prodigal prodigy
Asked at Jacob's well.
And answered.

*"If you knew the gift of
God, and who it is..."*

Now he finds his tongue
Glued.

*Now then,
How's about that drink?*

Yet she,
Of seven husbands,
Admitted it,
Admitted him.

"Can this be the Christ?"

Yet she, virginal
Widow, well-wisher,
Admitted him,
Admitted it, all: sour wine, bitter gall,

*"And a sword will pierce
your soul also"*

Water of life.

But they,
Arrested,
Wouldn't.
Couldn't.

But I

...to fulfil the Scripture
thirst.

— YURI HOOKER

Easter Wings

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,
Though foolishly he lost the same,
Decaying more and more,
Till he became
Most poore:
With thee
O let me rise
As larks, harmoniously,
And sing this day thy victories:
Then shall the fall further the flight in me.

My tender age in sorrow did beginne
And still with sicknesses and shame.
Thou didst so punish sinne,
That I became
Most thinne.
With thee
Let me combine,
And feel thy victorie:
For, if I imp* my wing on thine,
Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

— GEORGE HERBERT

*"Imping" is a term falconers use. It is the art of mending a feather by attaching another one to it. Video on my FB page!

April 2025

Bible Reading Plan

- Ps 47
- Deut 32:48-33:29
- Acts 8:1-25
- Ephesians 1
- Deut 34
- *Joshua 1
- Acts 8:26-40
- Ps 86
- *Eph 2
- Eph 3
- Joshua 2
- Acts 9:1-19
- Ps 65
- Joshua 3:1-5:12
- Acts 9:19-31
- Eph 4:1-16
- Joshua 5:13-6:27
- Ps 96
- Eph 4:17-32
- Acts 9:32-43
- Joshua 7:1-8:29
- Acts 10:1-8
- Eph 5:1-14

- Joshua 8:30-9:27
- Acts 10:9-23
- Eph 5:15-33
- Ps 43
- Joshua 10
- Acts 10:23-48
- Eph 6
- Jeremiah 1:1-10
- Ps 39
- Joshua 11-12
- Acts 11:1-18
- Ps 87
- Joshua 13
- Jer 1:11-19
- Ps 108
- Acts 11:19-30
- Jer 2:1-3:5
- Joshua 14
- Ps 62
- Jer 3:6-4:2
- Joshua 15:1-19
- *Ps 63
- Acts 12:1-19
- Jer 4:3-31
- Joshua 15:20-63
- Acts 12:19-25
- Ps 114

- Jer 5:1-6:8
- Joshua 16:1-4
- Acts 13:1-12
- Ps 7
- Acts 13:13-52
- Joshua 16:5-10
- Ps 98
- Jer 6:9-30
- Joshua 17
- Jer 7:1-8:3
- *Acts 14:1-20
- Psalm 124
- Jer 8:4-9:16
- Joshua 18
- Acts 14:21-28
- Joshua 19:1-9
- Jer 9:17-10:25
- Acts 15:1-21
- Acts 15:22-35
- Joshua 19:10-16
- Jer 11-12
- Ps 125
- Joshua 19:17-51
- Jer 13
- Acts 15:36-16:5
- Ps 66

Memory Verses:

#1. Joshua 1:8-9

"Do not let this book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

#2: Eph 2:8-9

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not of yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.

#3: Psalm 63:1,6-7

O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. [...] On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night. Because you are my help, I sing in the shadow of your wings.

#4: Acts 14:15,17b

"...turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them. [...] He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy."