

THE MORNING STAR

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From left to right: Logan Hurst, Bp George Sumner, Bp Stephen Andrews

Does the Church Need Clergy?

By Stephen Andrews

We are in a season of ordinations. In January, we witnessed the ordinations of Logan Hurst, Alison Hari-Singh and Alexandra Pohlod, to mention three Wycliffe students. And soon Philip Gearing and Orvin Lao will present themselves to the bishop for the laying on of hands. There are more to come. We are expecting as many as seventeen MDiv graduates to cross the convocation stage in May. This season especially Wycliffe becomes a proud *alma mater*!

But with ordination comes the question, “Is there really a difference between clergy and laity?”

There is a difference—at least in the popular mind

I think everybody would agree that, at least in the popular mind, there is a difference. People have a different set of expectations when it comes to clergy. When I wear a clerical collar, people treat me differently. Cashiers are friendlier, hospital patients are quicker to confide in me, shop keepers are occasionally more generous, and customs agents are now and again more suspicious. I get blamed or praised for the weather.

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Am I somehow special by virtue of my office in the Church? We ought to recall that the word “clergy” is derived from the Greek word *klēros*, meaning God’s “lot” or “heritage”; and that the word “laity” is taken from the common Greek word *laos*, meaning “people” or “the people of God.” Now, the interesting thing is that in the New Testament these words are not contrasted in the way that we oppose them today. *All* Christians constitute God’s “share” or *klēros*. St Paul says to the Colossians that God enabled them “to partake in the inheritance (*klēros*) of the saints in the light” (1.12). We are *all* “clergy” in the sense that we are all God’s possession, and we receive the inheritance he has bestowed on those who live in faith. At the same time, all Christians are part of God’s *laos*. If an example is required, read 1 Peter 2.9: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people (*laos*).” All ordained clergy, therefore, properly belong among the laity, for they are laity as members of God’s chosen people.

We need to be careful

So we need to be careful in how we understand and employ the terms “clergy” and “laity.” The fact that both terms are used to describe all Christians irrespective of their office in the Church should alert us to the possibility of abuse. For the sad truth is that, in some situations, it seems as if the local church could not exist without the ordained minister. He or she is involved in every aspect of congregational life and “does everything” (and too many local churches are too happy to let him or her do everything). An equally dangerous error is to disparage the ordained ministry. Clergy are not just hired hands to do what no one else is willing to undertake. The sacred ministry is more than a “secretaryship, a sort of general manager’s job, a device to save trouble for the majority of the church members by concentrating nearly all their duties upon one or two,” as the Congregationalist Bernard Manning once put it. What we often think of as the ministry of the clergy is, in fact, the ministry of the whole Church.

So the notions of “clergy” and “laity” do not describe an ecclesiastical binary. Nevertheless there *is* an ordered ministry in the Church. St Paul talks in Ephesians 4 about gifts the ascended Christ gave to his people (v. 8). But what are these gifts? They are “that some would be apostles, some prophets,

some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” (vv. 11-14).

Whose servant?

Here we catch a vision where the minister is not merely the servant of the Church, but the servant of Christ. And it is from Christ that he or she derives authority, and it is to Christ that he or she owes allegiance. When one of my priests was ordained to the priesthood in Sudbury the guest preacher’s sermon included a masterful exposition of the meaning of “vocation.” But a definite crescendo was reached when, with a tone of defiance in her voice, she said to the congregation: “John *is* here to serve you. But make no mistake – you are not his masters. John’s call to serve you is part of his primary call to serve Jesus Christ, and he alone is John’s Master.”

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The ordered ministry is God’s gift to the Body. Those ordained are first and foremost servants of the Lord and then of the people they are called to serve; dedicated to the task of bringing them to Christian maturity, and anxious to ensure that every part of the Body is working properly, so that the whole Body can be effective in representing Christ to a wayward world. Those called to pastoral leadership ought to be treated as gifts to the Church, and their giftedness must be discerned and endorsed by the Christian community. May God give the Church grace to receive and use these gifts, to the edification of God’s people and to his greater glory.

ABOUT

Bishop Stephen Andrews is Principal of Wycliffe College.

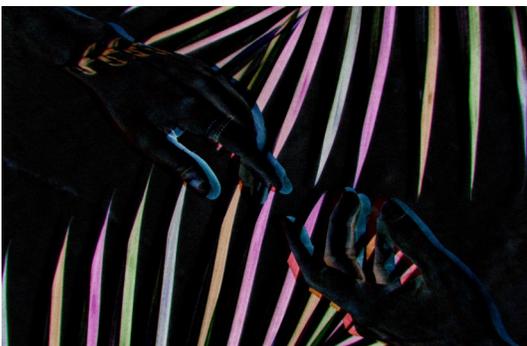
Public Events at Wycliffe



PREACHING DAY—THE PSALMS: SONGS OF HEALING

Tuesday, February 18, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at Wycliffe College

Preaching Day is an annual event at Wycliffe College. This year we welcome Dr. Ellen Davis from Duke Divinity School, whose research interests focus on how biblical interpretation bears on the life of faith communities and their response to urgent public issues, particularly the ecological crisis and interfaith relations. For this event, Dr. Davis will be exploring preaching from the Psalms in the context of some of the traumas we experience in life and in ministry such as the opioid crisis, PTSD, and the global refugee crisis. Purchase your tickets at wycliffecollege.ca/preachingday.



THEOLOGY PUB NIGHT: BEYOND THE EVOLUTION AND CREATION DEBATE

Friday, February 28, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Wycliffe College

Denis Lamoureux, Professor of Science and Religion at St. Joseph's College in the University of Alberta, will be our special guest at the Theology Pub Night in February. This is a free, public event. Bring your friends! For more information: wycliffecollege.ca/theologypub.

Ash Wednesday Reflection

Wednesday, February 26, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. in the Chapel

On Wednesday, February 26th, Bishop Peter Mason will lead an Ash Wednesday Reflection at 3:00 p.m. in the Chapel. Bishop Mason will also preach at Eucharist that day.



Student Fellowships & Events

The following information is subject to change. Student Council and group leaders post the latest information on Wycliffe College Students Community Facebook group and the Student Council bulletin board.

ASIAN STUDENTS' SPOUSE FELLOWSHIP AT 4:30 P.M. IN WEST LECTURE ROOM

Every Wednesday at 4:30 p.m. in West Lecture Room —This weekly group meets for fellowship, Bible study, and receiving the bread and wine together at the community service. Friends, babies and toddlers are welcome!

WOMEN IN MINISTRY—DINNER AND DISCUSSION

Monday, February 10 at 6:00 p.m. in Cody Library —The group was formed to encourage women currently and aspiring to be in ministry. It meets on most Mondays and this week's guest is Bishop Jenny Andison.

From the Registrar's Office



Dear Wycliffe Students,

If you are hoping to convocate in May 2020, please return the Graduate Information Form to the Registrar's Office as soon as possible and no later than February 17; otherwise you will have to wait until the May 2021 ceremony.

Tax forms will be available during the month of Feb and can be printed from ACORN if you are in a conjoint program and will be mailed to non conjoint students. Now is a good time to check that your address on ACORN is correct.

Barbara Jenkins, Registrar, Director of Enrolment Management

Some key academic dates

- Feb. 28: Last day to submit ThM (II) extended essays for examination for spring convocation.
- Mar. 2: Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS) application due. <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/awards/ontario-graduate-scholarship/>
- Mar. 27, 2020 - Last day to defend theses (Spring Convocation)
- Apr. 3, 2020 - Absolute deadline for TSpace submissions to be approved for Spring Convocation (Note: students are given individual deadlines based on defence date)
- For more academic dates, visit <https://www.tst.edu/academic/key-academic-dates>.

Attention: MDiv students

For MDiv students beginning their 1st Field Education Placement next September, there will be an organization meeting this Thursday, 1-2 pm West Lecture Room. Pizza lunch will be provided!

Please let Annette Brownlee, the Dir. Of Field Education know if you are coming abrownlee@Wycliffe.utoronto.ca

Lenten Devotionals

Lent is a time of solemn reflection leading up to the celebration of Christ's resurrection at Easter. As a tradition, Wycliffe College reflects on the self-sacrifice of Christ together as a community through weekly Lenten devotionals written by our students.

You receive them in your email inbox only (starting Feb. 26) if you sign up specifically for these devotionals. Sign up at <https://www.wycliffecollege.ca/newsletter> and check the "Weekly Lenten and Advent Devotionals" option.

Merchandise



Purchase your Wycliffe Ties for \$10 each at the Front Desk! You may also order them from the UofT Bookstore. Go to www.wycliffecollege.ca/merchandise for more details!