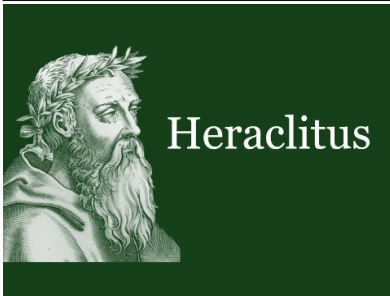


DAYSPRING DAYBOOK

Monthly Newsletter of Dayspring Presbyterian Church, 11445-40 Ave, Edmonton, AB, CAN, T6J 0R4

October 2023



Heraclitus

CHANGE

This issue is about change:

- change in how we think;
- change in how we act or react in our relationships with others.

One of the most common complaints in organizations and communities is: “We never used to do it that way!”

But then, the world we live in now is not the same as the world we lived in a few days, a few weeks, a few months, a few years or centuries ago. The world changes around us and sometimes we have to run to catch up.

Panta rhei, translated from the Greek as “everything flows” is one of the most famous philosophical quotes of all times. But what did the Greek philosopher Heraclitus mean by those words?

A bit more than 2000 years ago, in the Ionian city of Ephesus, one of the most important figures in the history of philosophy was born. Heraclitus taught that the universe is a constant becoming, a process of change. As the only book he wrote was lost, his work survived in fragments preserved in the writing of other ancient authors. Due to the cryptic and often ambiguous nature of these fragments, Heraclitus became known as the Obscure One.

Socrates, another ancient philosopher wrote this: “Heraclitus says ... that all things move and nothing remains still, and he likens the universe to the current of a river, saying that you cannot step twice into the same stream.”



Everything around us is changing just like fresh waters are ever flowing, renewing the stream. This is usually where most people stop their analysis. But Heraclitus did not simply say that the universe is moving and changing. He also said that we are changing with it. It is not just that you cannot step twice into the same river because the river is constantly changing. Even if the river remained static, there would never be two moments where you would be the same. The subject is not impartial to the universal process.

Source: <https://www.thecollector.com/panta-rhei-heraclitus/>



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

There is nothing permanent except change. ...

(Attributed to Heraclitus)

In This Issue

- Change
- Reformed and always Reforming
- Minister’s Message: Inevitability
- Presbyterianism and Representative Democracies.
- Decision-making in Reformed and Reforming Denominations

REFORMED AND ALWAYS REFORMING

The last Sunday of October is celebrated, in Protestant churches, as Reformation Sunday. the anniversary of the 1517 publication of Martin Luther's 95 theses. These were points of disputation with the theology and practice of the Catholic Church (in which he was a professor of Moral Theology).

The movement started by Luther grew like a wildfire in Western Europe and in the British islands.

In Switzerland, John Calvin, a theologian trained in theology and in civil and church law, became part of the Reform movement that initially swirled around Luther and another man named Zwingli. Calvin developed his own way of thinking about Christianity. He was the first of many who deconstructed Christian theology and then reconstructed it in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, a 2-volume work in the English translation.

Calvin and subsequent Reformers were always careful to point the reader of what they wrote to the relevant passage(s) of Scripture. Their theological writings are full of footnotes in which they indicate the biblical source of their assertions about the relationship between God and humans and about what it means to live the Christian life.

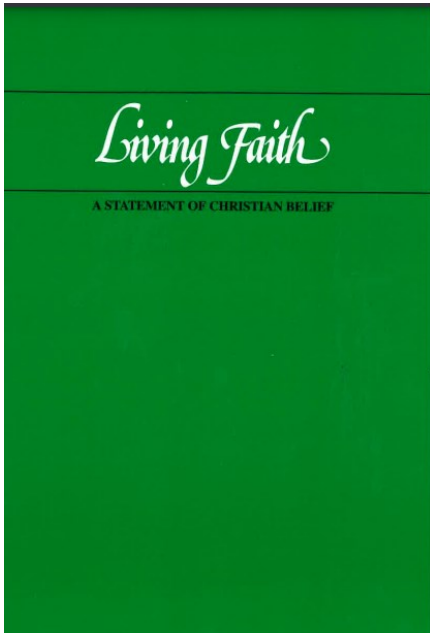
Presbyterians are part of the Reformed Christian tradition. For several decades, the document that guided Presbyterian beliefs and practice was the *Westminster Confession of Faith*. (1646)

Jodocus van Lodenstein coined the phrase "reformata semper reformanda" (reformed and always reforming) in a devotional booklet that first appeared in 1674. It is important that 21st century Christians understand that the changes in Christian belief systems and the practice of Christian faith that occurred in the 16th Century and subsequently do not determine forever what Reformed Christians believe or how they must act.

The mandate of the Christian Church is a constant: to proclaim and live out the Good News of Jesus Christ.

How we articulate that Good News and how we live it out, although grounded in what the Bible teaches, will always be influenced by the culture in which it is being proclaimed and lived out.

That's the essence of the meaning of the phrase "Reformed and always Reforming."



You may have seen the booklet *Living Faith* in the Dayspring pew racks . This was published in 1984 as an expression of the Presbyterian and Reformed commitment to constantly reform the way in which we express the beliefs by which we live out our lives. (*Living Faith* is also available in French, Korean, and Mandarin translations.)

This booklet is written both as a summary of church doctrine and as a devotional guide. That is, its language is not highly technical and the text often reads more like poetry than prose.

But keep in mind that nearly 4 decades have passed since *Living Faith* was published.

During that 4 decades, our denomination has continued to wrestle with how to relate the Scriptures to life in the 21st century. That has resulted in changes in our statements about several issues, including matters such as marriage and human sexuality. ... Keep reading!



FROM OUR MINISTER: Inevitability

Inevitability is the word that comes to mind when I hear "change". As Ecclesiastes 3 says, "There is a season for everything under the sun." And while as Hebrews 13:8 proclaims, "Jesus is the same yesterday today, and forever."

Though change is integral to life our responses to change should take into account the reliability and comfort one finds in the unchanging nature of God. While the world shifts and powers collide and waves crash our God is a stable fortress (Psalm 46).

Life shifts are unsettling, and yet many can be embraced. Like Moses who was completely unprepared for the journey ahead, we too can grow and learn and stretch and transform. Trials can make us more dependent on the One and ones we most love. It can purify our lives of clutter or be just the right medicine for life. Like a little Shepherd boy who can become a king by merely walking with the Lord, some change can be for the best.

In Proverbs 3:5-6 it tells us, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; but in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight." When we trust in God's sovereignty, we can find peace and guidance in the midst of change, knowing that He has a purpose for every season of our lives. Of course, we must also admit that some change is much harder to accept than others. Not all change is equal.

(The Rev) Brad Childs



PRESBYTERIANISM AND REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

Until the 16th century civil government in Europe and in the British Isles was monarchical. That is, kings ruled with absolute power although they were sometimes "booted" out of office by other claimants to their throne.

Mirroring the practices of European culture, the Christian Church was also structured as a "monarchy" with the Bishop of Rome (the pope), also known as the Vicar of Christ," Cardinals (then and now) were referred to as "princes of the church." One of the Cardinals would eventually become the Pope.

In civil society, the monarchical system was beginning to break down and the privileged classes were laying a claim to some of the power that had long been exercised by monarchs.

That movement progressed quite rapidly in Scotland in the civil society and in the newly emerging Reformed (Presbyterian) Christian Church.

Soon, the people of privilege won the right to choose who their leader would be.

Eventually all of the men in the country (and in the Church) won the right to vote for their political leaders. Eventually, women won that right also.

A similar progression was occurring in the decision-making processes of the Church.

That has evolved, in the Church of Scotland and in that church's "daughter" denominations (including the Presbyterian Church in Canada) into a system that we call a representative democracy.

Congregations elect Elders and the Elders, gathered in the Session, elect a representative to the local governing council, called a Presbytery.

All of the Elders and Minister in a Presbytery are members of the Synod (in our case, of the Synod of Alberta and the Northwest).See Page 4

DECISION-MAKING IN REFORMED AND ALWAYS REFORMING DENOMINATIONS

Occasionally, one hears people saying that decisions are made “up there” or “in Toronto” (where the offices of the Presbyterian Church in Canada are located).

The perception is not totally inaccurate. Sometimes others make decisions that affect us

However, those decisions are usually made on the basis of policy-decisions in which the members of Sessions across the country are involved. The outcome of decision-making processes may not always satisfy particular individuals or Sessions but there is a carefully observed practice that governs the making of decisions that affect all Presbyterians.

Members of Session can tell you that, throughout the year, they receive documents describing various issues, documents that have been sent to all Sessions of the PCC.

Sessions make their decisions about those documents and send them back to the officers of the General Assembly, where they are given due consideration as decisions are made. But those decisions are made by the General Assembly, not by individuals.

General Assembly, meeting annually in early June, comprises an equal number of Ministers and Elders from every Presbytery across the country. Each Session within a Presbytery has a regular turn, in rotation, at naming Elder Commissioners. Likewise, ministers in the various presbyteries take turns being Commissioners.

There are many complexities that have not been covered but the co-editors hope that we have covered helpful information.



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DayBook Deadlines

3rd Sunday of the month

SESSION

Moderator: Brad Childs

Session Clerk: Gina Kottke

Deputy Clerk: Iris Routledge

Roll Clerk: Darlene Eerkes

Other Elders

Jane de Caen

Sam Malayang

Peter Eerkes

Heather Tansem

MINISTER

The Rev Brad Childs

CHURCH STAFF

Church School Coordinator

Lynn Vaughan

Youth Coordinator: Position Vacant

Music Director

Binaifer (Binu) Kapadia, B.Mus.

Administrative Assistant: Linda

Custodian: Jim