

L'Abri

Bowen Island, B.C. CANADA

October.2008.Issue 6

AT A GLANCE

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UPCOMING LECTURES

Oct 10 - Rachel Kitchens, "The Body is Spiritual: A Look at Modern Dance Pioneers Isadora Duncan and Alvin Ailey"

Oct 17 - Erin Thrift, "Counselling in Community"

Oct 24 - Andy Beaird, "A Geography of Nowhere: A Human Response to Placelessness"

Oct 29 (Wed) - Clarke Scheibe, "The Shack: What Would It Look Like If You Met God?"

Nov 7 - Taylor Siegreest, "Is Christ 'Wild at Heart'? Masculinity as Meaning in John Eldridge's Theology of Danger"

L'Abri Canada
2008-2009 Terms
September 8 -
November 10
February 2 - April 16

ANSWERS TO PRAYER

Many of you have prayed for our safe and smooth arrival. That happened two weeks ago, as we waited at the U.S./Canadian border. We had tried for our work permits in Seattle one week earlier, but for various reasons we were turned away. In the border waiting room, nervous but hopeful, we paced and chatted about our chances as we eyed the stern looking border guards. Our names were called, We went forward and answered three very direct questions about the nature of our work. We then waited anxiously for about an hour more and were given our permits - with a smile and no real trouble.

It was a great comfort as we returned to the car and moving van full of all our worldly goods - including two very disgruntled cats.

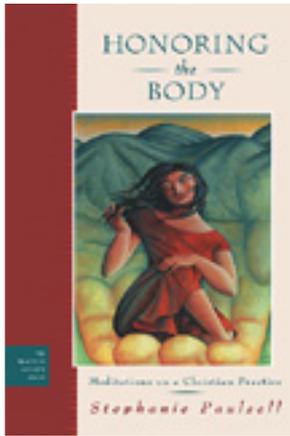
Stepping back into the moving van felt like stepping into a new life. It was a watershed moment, yet quite an ordinary one. It was the incarnation of over a year's worth of very specific hope and prayer, as well as the end of a four year journey of vocational discernment. In July of 2007, Carrie and I had attended a L'Abri Conference in Salem, Oregon. On the advice of my pastor, I had sought out Jerram Barrs and Andrew Fellows. The event was transformational, but we didn't see how we could possible make any real life changes - not yet. Still, if it were possible, we knew we must visit a L'Abri.

Within a week, we got an unexpected business account. The account would last until the end of the year and provide us enough additional money for two terms abroad at English L'Abri. In January, we boarded a plane. (continued on p. 3)

If you'd like to apply as a student please visit our website for more information about our branch and a broader treatment of what to be mindful of as you consider joining us on the island. Alternatively you may call or email us, but keep in mind that as we are often engaged outside of the office, email is usually the more effective form of communication.

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Honoring the Body: Meditations on a Christian Practice
Stephanie Paulsell (The Practice of Faith Series: Jossey-Bass, 2002)



Considering the lack of understanding around the physical body in our culture and especially in our Christian churches today, Stephanie Paulsell's *Honoring the Body* is a critical and timely book, and a rare one for Protestants. Paulsell, who teaches at Harvard Divinity School, adds this volume to the Practice of Faith Series, a series that seeks to promote a life lived with integrity in today's world. In this particular volume, through the use of Scripture, history, and experience, Paulsell calls us to see embodiment, the life lived in the body, as a sacred gift, not as a struggle between idolatry and hate. The book therefore seeks to demonstrate how the everyday activity of the body relates closely to its sanctity, and how the Christian faith seeks to honor the body in its own communal practices.

After establishing in the first two chapters the tensions between being a body and having a body, between integrity and relationality, between freedom and constraint, and between sacredness and vulnerability, Paulsell moves through seven physical activities, bathing, clothing, nourishing, eating together, exerting, sexual loving, and suffering in order to show how this sacred body is in motion and in dialogue with Christian practices.

Overall, the strengths of this book outweigh its weaknesses. As one attuned to the reader's senses, Paulsell uses concrete examples and evocative language in explaining how our physical experiences ought to be seen not in opposition to the pure and spiritual life, but in relationship to it. Such false opposition will only cause us to fail to recognize the proper care for and proper use of our bodies. For example, in one chapter, Paulsell says that in nourishing the body we seek to satisfy our hungers. Because of our fast-paced technologically driven culture, pushing us ever onward, keeping us solely in our heads, we often fail to recognize our true hungers, our true needs, and we tend to swing from over-eating to under-eating. We are not sure what our body needs. In coming to understand 'manna rhythms' biblically, we come to understand that we cannot live as we wish but we must depend on God's daily provision and receive such sustenance with thankfulness. This must be our starting point. Paulsell also does well to remind us of the communal nature of the body. We are never truly independent of our need of others; physically, we depend on others not only to thrive, but also just to live. We need others to talk with, to eat with, to love and to be loved by. Our physical bodies need it.

Nevertheless, in recommending this book, I must call forward three interrelated weaknesses. One, in perhaps in an attempt to counteract the devaluing of the human body, Paulsell appears to idealize or romanticize human activity more often than not. Had she spoke more thoroughly of the difficulties of living into our redemption physically, the book would have been stronger for it. Yet, in saying that, she does conclude well with the suffering body, speaking not just for the one who tends to the suffering body, but also for the one who endures it. Two, while Paulsell desires to see one's life incorporated into the biblical narrative, she tends toward a more pragmatic approach toward Scripture. Perhaps this is a battle against theological abstraction in order to show how the Bible responds to our senses and to our physical needs, not just to our spiritual selves; yet, in my mind, it ends up subordinating Scripture to human usefulness. Three, Paulsell, as the other weaknesses show, tends toward a liberal view of theology, particularly in relation to the body. While her view of sexuality is profound and beautiful, it is at moments flawed. For me, at the end of the sexuality chapter, it relies too heavily upon the 'rights' of the individual, specifically in light of her comments on pre-marital and same sex activity. While sexuality is integral to one's identity, and while mutual loving care between two people should be respected, it must ultimately be shaped by trust and by obedience in God's

ANSWERED PRAYER Cont'd.

Nearly seven months of prayerful searching, and hopeful questions, and long conversations have led us to this place. Almost all of it represents very concrete answers to prayer along the way.

It is both humbling and exhilarating to depend upon a God of infinite resource, and to serve in this place where he has brought us. Our reception here has embodied the hospitality and care that the Schaeffer's made a hallmark of L'Abri. We look forward to extending that same welcome to all who come through our doors.

After two weeks on the Island, we are finally settled and sorted. Even our cats have adjusted - well, mostly. The weather has been sunny and cool, perfectly conducive to the times of reflection that Autumn always creates in me.

And that, if I pay attention, always gives me opportunities to say thank you. As the rhythms of the term have begun to intentionally shape our days, we take this moment to say just that - "thank you" for all who prayed for us.

Jeff Adams

HONORING THE BODY Cont'd.

redemptive intentions in a now misshapen world. All in all, considering the lack of theological thinking around the body in conservative Protestant theological circles, I heartily recommend this book. It presses us to think about the body in ways that we often neglect. It also spurs on the imagination to see the physical body in relation to our spirituality. While I personally do not make the same theological connections as Paulsell does, Honoring the Body is a much-needed reminder that the Christian faith does take in account the body in its practices, especially if they are seen in the context of the whole biblical narrative and in the understanding that God loves each human person, having been intimately made in God's own image.

-Clarke Scheibe

Fall Lectures @ The Snug Cafe 8:00 PM Fridays

- Oct 10 The Body is Spiritual: A Look at Modern Dance Pioneers Isadora Duncan and Alvin Ailey
Rachel Kitchens - Dance Teacher
MCS Regent College
- Oct 17 Counseling within Community
Erin Thrift - Masters in Counseling
UBC
- Oct 24 A Geography of Nowhere: Human Response to Placelessness
Andy Beaird - Master in Community and Regional Planning, UBC
- Oct 29 (Wed) The Shack: What Would It Look Like If You Met God?
Clarke Scheibe - MDiv, Regent College
L'Abri Canada
- Nov 7 Is Christ 'Wild at Heart'?
Masculinity as Meaning in John Eldridge's Theology of Danger
Taylor Siegreest - MCS, Regent College

Visit this YouTube link done by a summer student! (Watch it in High Quality.)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tIhpieCFFww>

Or type in on YouTube: Canadian L'Abri Slideshow

Praying Through October 2008

"I call on you, O God, for you will answer me."
Psalm 17:6

Please join with us as we mindfully bring ourselves and our cares to God our Father. Each day is marked with a specific prayer suggestion. Our serving families appear regularly as a reflection of our deep and continuing need for God's daily provision of grace that we might be more like His Son, Jesus.



			October 1	2	3	4
			Students	Adams Family	Bowen Island Churches	Canadian Board
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Scheibe Family	Day of Prayer for L'Abri England	Fall Term Helpers	Students	Adams Family	Bowen Island Community	Canadian Trustees
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Scheibe Family	Day of Prayer For L'Abri Netherlands	Fall Term Helpers	Students	Adams Family	Bowen Island Churches	Canadian Board
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Scheibe Family	Day of Prayer for L'Abri Canada	Fall Term Helpers	Students	Adams Family	Bowen Island Community	Canadian Trustees
26	27	28	29	30	31	
Scheibe Family	Day of Prayer for L'Abri Switzerland	Fall Term Helpers	Students	Adams Family	Bowen Island Community	