

MESSAGE FROM ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

Newsletter for January 2024



Rev. Daniel's Message : “ I Will, with God's Help”

“To all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.” – John 1:12



The Sunday after Epiphany (Jan 14th this year) is always the celebration of the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, during which we not only reflect on Jesus' baptism but also recall our own baptism and renew our vows as followers of Jesus and members of the church.

Having made the choice to turn away from Satan and “the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God”, and turning to Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, we make the following promises:

1. *Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?*
2. *Will you persevere in resisting evil and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?*
3. *Will you proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ?*
4. *Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbour as yourself.*
5. *Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respecting the dignity of every human being?*
6. *Will you strive to safeguard the integrity of God's creation and respect, sustain, and renew the life of the earth?*

In marriage preparation meetings, couples are often surprised at the wording of the wedding service. The question asked is not “Do you give yourself to X to be their wife / husband?” but “**Will you** X...?” to which the response is not “I do” (as always heard in films) but “**I will**”. The reason is that it is not a decision you make once, on your wedding day, but one you will continue to make, again and again as you live out your wedding vows within the marriage. It’s an ongoing action.

The same can be said for our baptismal vows. Each one begins “Will you...?” because you’re not being asked to agree to them once, on the day of baptism only, but to continue making the decision to do these things, over and over, as long as you are living as a Christian.

The other thing I want to point out about these vows is the very first one: *Will you continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?* In other words, will you be part of the church community (the apostles’ teaching and fellowship) and participate in the community’s worship and liturgy (the breaking of the bread and the prayers)?

The reason that it comes first is to remind us that everything else we are promising to do, the way of life we are endeavouring to follow, is meant to be done as part of a community. Christianity is not a solitary path or an independent lifestyle.

We respond to each of these promises with “I will, with God’s help”, for we know we cannot keep any of them without the assistance of Christ’s Holy Spirit. But as I pointed out in December’s newsletter (“God with *us*”) we also need one another. Following Jesus without the fellowship of the church, without the communal offering of praise, thanksgiving and forgiveness, and without the teachings shared by Christians over centuries, there is a real danger in making our faith an entirely self-centred and self-serving thing.

We need the differences of our fellow Christians, to challenge our tendency to assume our way is THE way. We need the various gifts and skills of our fellow Christians to supply what is lacking in ourselves. We need the prayers and faith of our fellow Christians to support us when our own is weak and struggling. And we need our fellow Christians to carry out the service that God call us to offer, but which cannot be done by just one or two people.

So, as we enter a new year and as we prepare to celebrate Christ’s baptism, recalling our own and renewing the vows we made, it would be good to reflect on those six promises... to repent of our sin, to proclaim Christ, to love our neighbour and to care for creation. But think seriously about that first promise – the one that provides the context for the other five.

What is your connection with the community of St. John’s? How has it changed over the years and why? How do you participate in the worship of the church? How do you support its ministry and its witness to the wider world? What do you need from your church to better support you in your own life as a Christian?

Will you continue in our fellowship as we learn about and follow the Way of Jesus together?
With God’s help, I pray you will.

Daniel +

Pastoral Care – Thank you Susan Macdonald



A vital ministry of any church is the pastoral care of its members. The pastoral care of the parish has never been the sole work of the clergy but is shared with the whole congregation. Calling a fellow parishioner that you haven't seen in some time, is pastoral care. Offering to drive someone to and home from church, is pastoral care. Listening to someone share their concerns at coffee hour or when you run into them outside church, and offering to pray for them, is pastoral care.

As our congregation ages and there are more and more people unable to come to church regularly, the list of those who require a personal call or visit to keep them connected with St John's has grown exponentially and I cannot make all those contacts alone. That is why I am so grateful to our Pastoral Care Team and their ministry of calling and visiting those who are sick or homebound.

We are looking for additional members for the Pastoral Care Team. Some are willing to make short phone calls to check in on parishioners. Some are willing to visit the hospital or retirement homes. Teams of two may also wish to make scheduled home visits. If you feel called to such a ministry, please speak with me.

I want to say a special thank you to **Sue Macdonald** who has coordinated the Pastoral Care Team for a number of years. The support she has provided me, and the other Care Team members has been invaluable. As Sue steps down from this position we all owe her a debt of thanks for her compassion, concern and commitment to the people of St John's.

I am looking for someone who would be willing to take on this ministry of Pastoral Care Coordinator. It involves the scheduling of Team Members to take turns calling a certain number of parishioners each week and passing on to the church office any important information about the well-being and needs of those we contact. The Pastoral Care Coordinator meets with me to discuss and provide training and ongoing support for Team Members. As we move forward, I would like to train interested lay people to also take communion to shut-ins and to people in hospital.

If you are interested in being part of the Pastoral Care Team, taking on the role of Coordinator or would like more information, please speak with me as soon as possible or contact the church office.

Daniel +

Christmas Decorations - Thank you

We extend our sincere thanks to **Carol Finlay, Susan Finlay and Maggy Farnell**, who volunteered their time to assist Fr. Daniel in putting away the Christmas decorations. The help was very much appreciated.

Messy Church Children's Program

On Saturday Feb 4th, we will be holding our first "Messy Church" in the Parish Hall – a gathering of children and parents/ caregivers from 1pm – 3pm, for a time of play, learning and informal worship. Our present and previous Children's Ministers **Kate and Janice** will be working with Fr. Daniel to create an experience in which families can experience "church" together in a fun and child-friendly way.

The theme for this first Messy Church will be "Love" – just in time for Valentines Day! What does God mean by "love"? What does love feel like and look like? How do we show love to others? We'll share food, do crafts, and participate in child-centred worship. Sunday School members are encouraged to invite friends and neighbours. If you find it hard to make church on Sunday mornings – or you'd like a chance to get to know some of the other young families – this is a perfect opportunity.

Our plan is to hold Messy Church each month on the **last Saturday of the month** (February is a bit different!) Watch for an upcoming schedule of dates and themes!



Tax Receipts

Tax receipts will be mailed out at the end of January. If you require a detailed summary of your donations, please call the office to have one provided. **Fr. Daniel cannot provide tax receipts on Sunday mornings.** If you have questions or concerns about yours, please contact Lori in the office.

Chancel Guild Schedules

Schedules for Chancel teams have been produced for the New Year and are located in the Sacristy. If you are a member of the chancel guild, please be sure to get your copy.

New Memorial Flower Listing

There are still spaces available for Memorial flowers in 2024. If you didn't get a chance to sign up please contact the office to see if space is available for your date. This is for the dedication of memorial flowers which are used each week in the church. The name of those you wish to commemorate are printed in the bulletin and they are prayed for in the Prayers of the People. The cost for the flowers is \$50 dollars. The flowers are provided by a local florist and are delivered and arranged the Friday before.

Plant Care

We are looking for someone to assist with the watering and care of the plants inside the church building. This could be done on a Sunday or on a mutual agreed upon time during the week.

Palm Crosses

Please bring in the palm crosses you received last Palm Sunday (or in previous years) to be burned for the upcoming Ash Wednesday service. There is a basket provided at the back of the church to put them in. **We need them no later than February 11.** We need them prior to Ash Wednesday – NOT on Palm Sunday!!! (this is when new ones are given out).



SERVICE INFORMATION

Ash Wednesday Services

Ash Wednesday services will be held on February 14th at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. with Holy Communion and the imposition of ashes at both services. Ash Wednesday is a day of obligation for Anglicans and unless prevented by illness or some other reason, members of the church are expected to mark the beginning of Lent by attending.

Lent Vespers

Lenten Vespers will take place on Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m. beginning February 21 through March 27th. The theme of the Lenten vespers will be “The 6 R’s of Forgiveness.”

Feb 21 – Reality (acknowledging the feelings and the impact of what happened)

Feb 28 --Recollection (turning to God for help and guidance)

Mar 6 - Repentance (turning away from doing or desiring more harm)

Mar 13 – Release (letting go of the past for our mutual benefit)

Mar 20 - Relationship (setting new boundaries and establishing a new way of relating)

Mar 27 -Reconciliation (a possibility but not a requirement)

These brief services of scripture readings, prayer and reflection help keep us grounded in the season of Lent as we journey towards the celebration of the Resurrection at Easter. The final Vespers will take the form of Tenebrae – a traditional Holy Week service. These services will be livestreamed but if you are local and able to join us in person, there is something especially profound in being able to worship together.

EVENTS INFORMATION:

Pancake Supper

We are looking to have someone assist with the coordination of the annual pancake supper on Shrove Tuesday, February 13, 2024. This person would be in charge of organizing people to shop for the event and organizing the preparation and serving of the pancakes and sausages. The church will reimburse for costs of materials needed. Please speak with Fr. Daniel or our Office Admin ASAP if you can help.



PROGRAM INFORMATION:

Open Door

Each month, we are collecting for either the Open Door or the Food Bank Mississauga. Each month we alternate between the two, **January is Open Door.**

The Open Door is looking for warm clothing for their clients (women, men and children of all ages). They also accept personal hygiene products, paper towels, toilet paper, diapers for adults and children, and cleaning supplies.

E-Transfer/ Canada Help

Please keep in mind that if you are in the locate area a donation to us through e-transfer means that we receive all your donation. If you donate through Canada Help they apply 4% of your donation to administration fees. When you donate by e-transfer you will receive from the church an acknowledgement of receipt of the transfer, and we will provide a tax receipt at the end of the year as well. We appreciate some people may not be comfortable with e-transfers, but we wanted you to be aware of the charge. We appreciate all donations however they are sent to us.

Donating to the church

We have many options in order to ensure your contributions get to the church when you can't. We do accept e-transfers now. You just have to use the email address of church@stjohnsdixie.com There is no need for a password we have auto deposit. You can also donate through Canada Helps there is charge for administrative fees taken off your donation. Their website is www.canadahelps.org or you can use the QR code provided. Of course, you can always mail in the offering at St. John's Anglican Church, 719 Dundas Street East, Mississauga, ON L4Y 2B5.



LINKS TO PROGRAMING ABOVE:

St. Johns Church website

www.stjohnsdixie.org

YouTube Sunday School link:

<https://bit.ly/3ah5XpW>

Online Coffee Hour Zoom Link: Zoom Meeting at 11:30 a.m Jan

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83962667012?pwd=UGljbnZ2WUIMaVlzNlRtU0Q5SmxxZz09>

Meeting ID: 839 6266 7012

Passcode: 112233

Online Bible Study Zoom Link: (Zoom Meeting only Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82570649568>

Online Prayer Group – Thursday at 10 a.m.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86710167010>



719 Dundas Street East

Mississauga, ON L4Y 2B5

Incumbent: The Reverend Daniel Brereton

If you would like to receive this Newsletter by email, please call 905-277-0462 or email church@stjohnsdixie.com