



St. John's Dixie Quarterly

Volume 1, Issue 2
Fall, 2024

Welcome back to St. John's Dixie!

Welcome back to the Quarterly!

In this, the sophomore issue of our parish newsletter, we continue with our goal of getting to know each other.

We profile two families, one new (Juliet Nanzala and her children, pages 8 and 9) and one long-time (Carol Ann and Alan Morgan, page 10). And we have a whole bunch of getting-to-know-you sections. All four (!) wardens (pages 4-7), music director Surinder (page 2), and online member Liz (page 3).

And can I just say, my favourite question to ask in these has been, "You can (hypothetically speaking) invite three people, real or fictional, to a dinner party. Who would they be and what would you serve?" So many interesting people. So many wonderful menus. So many great ideas.

But there was so much I couldn't get to.

Online member Gael had a wonderful piece about how diverse and dispersed our online community is. And online member Caroline suggested a section explaining things people who didn't grow up Anglican might not know. What are the various roles people have in the worship service? How many wardens are there and do their roles differ? When do you take your first Communion? And I had so many ideas for fun design and layout things to do.



Wardens (l to r) Bobby, Melanie, Edith, and Maggie.

See, I'm in the middle of a move. And as anyone who's ever moved would know, it can be rather chaotic. And I don't handle chaos very well.

But then I interview Juliet, who's made a recent move from one continent to another. **WITH HER FOUR CHILDREN!** And she sees, so clearly, God's presence guiding her through that.

I know I didn't get done what I wanted to get done, but I pray I got done what God needed.

-Janice Kretchman, editor
(stjohnsdixie.communications@gmail.com)



Getting to know... Surinder Mundra, Music Director

When did you start working at St. John's?

December 1, 2023.

What's the best part of your job?

Talking to new people interested in joining choir; playing the organ, selecting hymns, working with the choir, practicing new music, writing music, and organising events. Basically everything!

What do you wish people knew about your job?

How hard I work to make the experience more edifying for them. There's a lot of preparation and background work involved that many people don't see.

What is your favourite hymn?

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling, to the tune of Blaenwern, and every hymn from the CP, Old Blue, Red Book, and New English Hymnal.

What is your favourite bible verse / character / story?

Matthew 22:37-39, Matthew 5:44, and John 15:13

Not necessarily my favourite, but the most profound and demanding, always lingering in my thoughts. Perhaps because if we all embraced those teachings, the world might one day reach true perfection.

You can (hypothetically speaking) invite three people, real or fictional, to a dinner party. Who would they be and what would you serve?

Dostoevsky, St Peter, and the Buddha. We'd go to The Mandarin.

Is there anything else you want to share?

I really want a pipe organ at St John's.

Matthew 22:37-39

37 He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." 38 This is the greatest and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'"

Matthew 5:44

But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you

John 15:13

No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.



Getting to know...

Liz Rivard, Online Member

Liz (centre) visiting online members Gael and Anders in Oxford. Please see Gael's contribution in our next issue.

How did you find St. John's, and roughly when did you start worshipping with us?

Early COVID, I believe. I encountered Reverend Daniel on Twitter and learned of St. John's there. I actually visited St. John's during COVID time and appreciated the warm welcome from the congregation.

What is your favourite hymn?

Amazing Grace.

What is your favourite bible verse / character / story?

This is really difficult for me as I've only just started studying the bible. Genesis and God's rainbow promise. And the Beatitudes.

You can (hypothetically speaking) invite three people, real or fictional, to a dinner party. Who would they be and what would you serve?

Jesus, C.S. Lewis, and to lighten the evening, Groucho Marx. I'd serve strawberry, pecan, and date salad, with blue cheese dressing; boneless chicken thighs from the Instapot; jasmine rice. And Key Lime pie for dessert.

Is there anything else you want to share?

I was raised an atheist, by a staunch atheist. I'm in awe as I learn about Christianity, God, and the Bible. It was difficult to become a believer when so much of my childhood was dominated by anger at the church. While it was easy for me to overcome many of the prejudices of my childhood, transitioning to a belief in God has been the most difficult. I'm very grateful for Tuesday Bible Study and listening to the wisdom and interpretation of the participants.



Getting to know... Bobby Briones, Rector's Warden

When did you become a warden at St. John's?

I became a Churchwarden in 2021, first, because I was asked by Fr. Daniel and second, I wanted to serve God, the Church and the community in a meaningful way.

What is the best part of your work here?

Hmmm... I guess I have to say that's interacting so closely with Fr. Daniel and the other churchwardens in the doing inner workings of the Church. I enjoy our meetings because so many ideas are formulated, discussed and executed, and we have fun while doing it. Yes, it is serious, but at the same time, we have a lot of laughter during the meetings.

What do you wish people knew about being a warden?

What I wish people knew is that the Churchwardens are truly stewards of not only the Church, but also the community the Church serves. I also wish that people realize the Churchwardens have a fiduciary responsibility when it comes to the Church's finances and that the act of weekly monetary giving is the lifeline of the Church.

What is your favourite hymn?

Abide With Me. We could sing this song every Sunday and I would not get tired of it. Not really a hymn, but The Lord's Prayer, especially Barbara Streisand's version.

What is your favourite bible verse / character / story?

So many, but if I were to pick, it would be Psalm 1. "Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, ... They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yields their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper." Funniest verse, I think, is Proverbs 6:6. "Go to the ant, you lazybones." The story that surprises me every time I read it is Genesis 1. I love the simplicity of the words.

You can (hypothetically speaking) invite three people, real or fictional, to a dinner party. Who would they be and what would you serve?

I would actually love to have dinner with Jesus when he was spreading the Word. Would I believe it? Would I follow him because of his actions? I don't know. Another person would be Rosa Parks. Actually, I would love to have dinner with women and men who lived through that period of American history.

Is there anything else you want to share?

I encourage people to really think about serving as Churchwarden even just for a term. It is short (only 2-years) and it is rewarding. I know it is not for everyone, but you never know.



Getting to know... Melanie Powell, Deputy Rector's Warden

When did you become a warden at St. John's?

I was sworn in as a Deputy Rector's Warden on March 17, 2024.

What is the best part of your work here?

The best part of being a warden to me, is the involvement at a broader level regarding the church property, activities and future.

What do you wish people knew about being a warden?

Being a warden requires commitment and responsibility not only of yourself but to the congregation and church communities.

What is your favourite hymn?

My favourite hymn is Love Divine.

What is your favourite bible verse / character / story?

My favourite verse is Matthew 19:26 "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible"

You can (hypothetically speaking) invite three people, real or fictional, to a dinner party. Who would they be and what would you serve?

For my dinner party I would invite Cesar Milan (the Dog Whisperer) Tom Selleck who I have always admired and Dr. Andrew Jones, a holistic veterinarian from BC. I would serve Mexican food!



Getting to know... Edith Davis, People's Warden

When did you become a warden at St. John's?

I was appointed by Fr. Steven Mackison in the same year he resigned. I served as Rector's Warden until the end of 2021. In 2023 I was recalled as People's Warden and remain in this position until today.

What is the best part of your work here?

Being a participant in the overall decision-making process affecting the property and financial affairs of the church and cemetery and maintaining a collaborative relationship with team members. Wherever the Lord leads me I will follow.

What do you wish people knew about being a warden?

As wardens we act jointly to provide core leadership in collaboration with the priest, and in taking care of the "temporal" affairs of the congregation, e.g money and property. I never feel alone because I work closely with members of a team. Occasionally one must react to impromptu situations. This is usually challenging but it also can be fun. I accept and carry out my role with the same interest and responsibility as any paid position.

What is your favourite hymn?

I have many. I'll just mention two. "Immortal Invisible God only wise" and "The Old Rugged Cross" These songs are well written and reminds me of God's omnipotence and Omnipresence. Whether they are being sung by a vocalist or myself it has a deep spiritual impact.

What is your favourite bible verse / character / story?

"Take off thy shoes from off thy feet for the place on which thou standest is holy ground." This is God speaking to Moses from the burning bush. Sometimes God calls us from the most unusual places. We must always be aware of God's presence among us.

You can (hypothetically speaking) invite three people, real or fictional, to a dinner party. Who would they be and what would you serve?

I would like to invite the Archbishop of Canterbury to deliver a live sermon on "The Burning Bush," relating this to God's call to save humanity."

Angela Merkel, who served as German Chancellor from 2005-2021. What is her message for young women and men?

The President of El Salvador, Nayib Bukele, who has transformed his country into a safer society. He is young, a successful leader, and has attributed his success to his belief in God.

All meals and beverages will be prepared and served by qualified chefs and waiters. The guests will select their own menu.



Getting to know... Maggie Farnell, Deputy People's Warden

When did you become a warden at St. John's?

March 17th, 2024.

What is the best part of your work here?

Being involved with the parishoners.

What do you wish people knew about being a warden?

There is more to everything than meets the eye, and this is true of the wardens positions.

What is your favourite hymn?

Psalm 23 set to Crimond, with a descant.

What is your favourite bible verse / character / story?

The Ten Commandments, as it tells us how to live

You can (hypothetically speaking) invite three people, real or fictional, to a dinner party. Who would they be and what would you serve?

Because I was the youngest born on both sides of my family and none of my grandparents ever saw me, I would like to invite my four grandparents who never met each other but were from the same city. They were all born between about 1850-1870. I would have professional help to serve oysters, followed by roast beef and Yorkshire pud. Because I think this is what they would enjoy, ending up with a very British Trifle.

Is there anything else you want to share?

I would like to encourage the congregation to approach the wardens with questions, and also suggestions as to their visions for the future of our Church.

St. John's through the eyes of new parishioner Juliet Nanzala

How long have you been at St. John's?

As long as we've been in Canada, I think about 10 months now. We came from Uganda. In my thinking, when I get to Canada, one of the things I need to identify is church. Where do I go to pray from?

What do you remember from your first visit?

So we happened to arrive when it's maybe 5 or 10 minutes to the end of the service. My thinking about church is to come and thank the Lord for bringing me this far. It's been a long process, and there's a lot He's done in the background.

So we get to the service, and it's about to end. The gentleman at the entrance, he says "Oh, you're late, but it's fine. Stay behind, and meet our Father and introduce yourself."

The Reverend was very welcoming and made us feel at home. It was the beginning of me thinking, so I have not come to Canada alone with my children, I think I have met family.

Do you have any favourite bible stories or characters, or verses?

There are maybe two that I put forth in each and every thing that I do.

Psalm 23, that says: For God is my shepherd. You are not alone. For he puts you on the green pastures. He will walk you through the still waters. And it goes ahead to say, surely goodness and mercy shall follow me for all the days of my life. It is spiritual and very practical in my life. I have never been alone for God stands with me. He is always working in the background.

And you said there was another?

Yes, Colossians 3:23, that says for everything that you do, do it like you're doing it for God. Not to impress someone, not in anticipation of any reward. God will reward me, in His own ways.



But wait! There's more! We get to know Juliet's four children on the following page.

Jasmine, 10 years old

Favourite thing about the Bible? Moses. Also John 3:16 – “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.”

Favourite thing about St. John’s Dixie? Learning songs, getting Holy Communion, and coffee hour.

What would you change? Maybe a shorter sermon, maybe different people each time?

[editor’s note: Jasmine did add she might be willing to share a sermon one day.]



Jeanice, 9 years old

Favourite thing about the Bible? Adam and Eve. It teaches us to always trust God and obey His commands.

Favourite thing about St. John’s Dixie? I get to pray and God always answers my prayers.

What would you change? everything is really good. Oh! Maybe carry the cross.



Jaden, 9 years old

Favourite thing about the Bible? Noah building the Ark.

Favourite thing about St. John’s Dixie? Learning more about the Bible.

What would you change? Hold stuff for Fr Daniel.



Janelle, 4 years old

Favourite thing about the Bible? The nativity story.

Favourite thing about St. John’s Dixie? Jesus, cake, and toys.

What would you change? More music!



St. John's through the eyes of long-time parishioners Carol Ann and Alan Morgan

How long have you been members at St. John's?

Carol Ann: We came in the Fall of 1973.

Alan: 73, yeah. We bought a house out here and that's the only move we ever made.

What was the first visit like? What were your impressions?

Alan: Quite good. It was a very friendly place to be. The minister was Reverend Billingsley. We've been through about five ministers.

Any events stand out from your earlier time here?

Carol Ann: We used to have chicken and corn barbecues. What's the parking lot, used to be just mounds of hills. The sexton's house was in the middle of what's now the parking lot.

Alan: And it was neat. We'd have these big racks, and we'd put chicken on one rack, and another rack on top, stick it over the open pits, then just flip it. The corn, we'd just barbecue it with the husks on.

Carol Ann: We used to do the Christmas dinner as well. We'd have a list of people to cook the turkeys.

Are you enjoying a few years of resting here now?

Alan: Well, we're not resting. We're greeters.

Carol Ann: I read. Alan and I both count the collection. I enjoy coming for the fellowship. I was in the choir at one time.

When you're travelling, do you go into a local church there? What is it like when you do?

Carol Ann: We went on a cruise a couple of years ago, and we were in Mexico at Easter. We went there as it was having a service.

Alan: This was quite a big church we went into. It was quite ornate. Probably Catholic. And when we go down East, we have an Anglican church.

Do you have any favourite bible stories or characters or verses

Carol Ann: I like to sing the old hymns. When we used to go home in the summertime, I'd go to visit a sister, we'd get these hymnbooks out and we'd all sing.

Alan: When the roses never fade. There's a lot of them. But as time goes on, there are people writing new songs, and they want to sing them. That's understandable.

Anything you'd like to do differently here?

Alan: You can't say we want to do it this way all the time, and then that excludes everyone else. So you have to accommodate them as well. It's nice to have a mix. I think we do this very well here. Daniel is good at making newcomers feel welcome. And the sidespeople are good. If they see someone new come in, they introduce themselves. And that's important, because they're the first people you meet. If you have a good experience when you walk in the door, you'll talk to people there. That's an important job that they do, and if they do it right, people will come back.

