

## **MESSAGE FROM ST. JOHN'S CHURCH**



### **Newsletter for October 2022**

#### **Personal Message from Fr. Daniel**

##### **Leave of Absence**

On May 2<sup>nd</sup> of this year, I began a four month leave from the parish, granted by the diocese for reasons of mental and physical health. In February of 2020 I had approached our then bishop, Jenny Andison, about the Sabbath Year St. John's was proposing to take and in my conversation with her, asked if we could discuss a personal sabbatical for me, sometime later in the year. We planned to meet again in March to talk about it. Then COVID hit and I knew it would not be possible to take time off in the foreseeable future.

Two years later I was experiencing serious burn out. I was struggling with depression and increased anxiety over the future of the parish and this was manifesting in the resurgence of an eating disorder. Going through this while having to be "on camera" every week for a growing viewership increased the pressure immensely.

I officiated a funeral (often 2 or 3) every week between March and November of 2021 – many of them long time parishioners and friends. The pastoral needs of the congregation dealing with grief, sickness and financial strain increased exponentially in the pandemic even as our online community was also growing and placing greater strain on my time and energy. With fewer and fewer available volunteers, more and more work was falling onto myself. The closing of the church again on Christmas Eve last year was a kind of "last straw" for me.

In January, I approached our new area bishop, Kevin Robertson, about my struggles. He wished to give me a three month leave of absence to begin immediately, but I asked if I might wait until after April so I could celebrate Easter with the community. I also felt it would give more time to the Churchwardens to prepare for it and I wanted to spread most of my leave out during the summer when life is slower in the parish. I planned to take my holidays immediately after the leave of absence and return September 1<sup>st</sup>. As it turned out, I missed Easter anyway due to finally succumbing to COVID in Holy Week.

During my time away, I met regularly with my doctor and a therapist and addressed some of the issues leading to my burn out. I went on a retreat, which was spiritually grounding did some travelling with James and got to spend a lot of time with our beloved dog, Chester. It was healing and I returned feeling strongly that God is still calling me to be here, as your priest and pastor. I have however learned that I need much better boundaries regarding how much I can take on at any one time. I'm learning to be more comfortable saying "no".

## **Thank You**

I am deeply grateful and indebted to our Church Administrator, Lori Corbett, our Churchwardens, Edith Davis and Bobby Briones and our Deputy Churchwardens, Barbara Kane and Joanne Lubbock, for the incredible amount of work they did maintaining the ministry of the parish in my absence. They protected my time away by handling everything without needing to contact me and worked together through a number of issues that arose.

At the end of July, they were informed by the priest who had been scheduled to cover for me through August that she was not available. I was so impressed by their willingness to lead Morning Prayer each Sunday, providing reflections in the place of sermons. I am grateful to Thelma Carter and Walter Marshall for assisting in this ministry as well. I am also very appreciative to those members of the congregation who chose to remain open in August and supported those officiating with your prayers and presence during those Sundays.

I am grateful to Jeff McLeod, our Music Director and Janice Kretchman, our Children's Minister for continuing to lead their ministries with such dedication and skill and to Lori Bailey and Bobby Briones for managing the Sunday livestream each week.

Although stressful, this time was also an opportunity for the community to really come together and a reminder that the ministry of the church always depends on more than one person. We're in this together. We're in this with Our Lord.

## **Moving Forward**

As we move forward into a new programming year, I'm encouraged by our ability to come together for worship that feels much closer to what it used to be pre-pandemic. It was wonderful to gather again in the parish hall for the Church BBQ on Sunday Sept 25<sup>th</sup> – a reminder of fellowship events past, and a taste of what we will again enjoy with Christmas Dinners, Pancake Tuesdays and Maundy Thursday Soup-pers!

That said, the pandemic has changes us – as it has changed all churches and communities.

Our attendance is lower. Many have not yet returned to Sunday worship. For some, it is due to legitimate concerns about their health, or that of those they are caring for. Each of us must make our own choices regarding what is safe and comfortable. That said many seem to have returned to work, are attending other events, going to the mall or to restaurants all without concern, yet still won't come to church "because it's not safe".

It is as safe, or safer than many other events people are gathering for. You are still welcome to mask. The peace is still shared without touching. Communion will continue to be given without the common cup until further notice. I want people to be safe but I don't want you to use irrational fear as an excuse to stay away.

Live-streaming will continue. It is essential to maintain connection with those who cannot attend church, including a sizeable "online congregation" who continue to worship with us, take part in our zoom programs and financially support us, even though they do not live locally. The ability to live-stream weddings, baptisms and funerals has also become an expectation of most families, with relatives and friends who wish to participate but cannot be physically present.

Shutting down the live-stream won't "force people back to church". Those who aren't attending because it's easier to watch online, will simply find another online service to worship with or won't worship at all.

That said, **lives-streaming is an alternative means of attending worship for those who can't physically join us. It is not meant to be a replacement for gathering together as a church.** It is also not meant to be like Netflix...binge watching several services at once to "catch up". Worship isn't about checking off a box – "watched it". It's about intentional presence before God alongside your fellow Christians, in prayer, in praise and in service.

Please consider returning to regular worship in and with your church community. We have some wonderful new members I know you'd be delighted to meet and we miss you!

I miss you. I hope to see you again soon.

Daniel +

### **May they Rest in Peace and Rise in Glory**

#### **Dr. John Taylor**

Our parishioner John Taylor passed away in April and a formal celebration of his life was not able to be held at the time. John's family will be gathering on October 8<sup>th</sup> in Kingston where his ashes will be laid to rest in a family plot. A small family service will be held but John's wife Pat would like to share the link to the service for those who wish to join as well as a link to the obituary, where guests can leave condolences.

*Obituary:*

<https://jamesreidfuneralhome.com/tribute/details/14300/John-Taylor/obituary.html>.

*Service – Oct 8<sup>th</sup> (you must register with the website before viewing)*

<https://www.google.com/url?q=https://event.forgetmenotceremonies.com/ceremony?c%3D837f5417-f048-46f3-86ec-5296cba2fb4f&sa=D&source=calendar&usd=2&usg=AOvVaw3MOQ3YQ7d2zTFZFghoqlBZ>

## **Inez Clarke**

Our parishioner Inez Clarke passed away Sunday, Sept 25<sup>th</sup> surrounded by family at Credit Valley Hospital. A funeral service for her will be held at our church on Friday, October 7<sup>th</sup>.

*Visitation* Oct 6, 6-8pm, Oakview Funeral Home, 56 Lakeshore Road West, Oakville

*Service* – Oct 7, 10am-11am (Visitation); service 11am. Burial will follow after, at Glen Oaks Cemetery 3164, 9<sup>th</sup> Line, Oakville.

Service will be livestreamed on our YouTube channel.

## *Obituary*

<https://www.arbormemorial.ca/oakview/obituaries/inez-rebecca-clarke/92215>

## **Welcome Back to Church BBQ**

We held a BBQ after church on Sunday, Sept 25<sup>th</sup>, and it was a great success with a number of new parishioners joining in. We are hoping to begin holding more of our usual fellowship events that will allow us to gather as a community outside of worship. Thank you to Bobby Briones for organizing this event and to the many volunteers that helped make the event a huge success.

## **Pet Blessing**

We will be holding a Pet Blessing service on Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> behind the church at 2:00 p.m. under the large tree at the northwest corner of the church. Anyone may come with their pet – they don't have to be members of the parish. In the case of inclement weather, we will move into the Parish Hall. We welcome all creatures great and small, though we do ask dogs and cats to either be on leashes or in carriers.

## **Harvest Thanksgiving**

St. Johns will be collecting food donations for the Mississauga Food Bank on Sundays. The donation of food can be placed on the table provided outside the church.

Members of the Chancel Guild will also be at the church on Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. to accept your donations. We will then decorate our Harvest Thanksgiving altar and deliver the food to the Food Bank the following week.

## **All Ages All Saints Service**

On Sunday October 30<sup>th</sup> at the 10:00 a.m. service, we will be celebrating All Saints with a children's focus service for all ages. You are encouraged to attend and bring your grandchildren, nieces, or nephews. The service will be a fun, engaging service with traditional elements of our regular service presented in a simplified nature. Please plan to attend with a friend and join in the fun.

## **Layette Program**

Ethel Reid will be collecting for the Layette Program for delivery to the Trillium Health Centre by the end of October. A list of these items needed is available on the table outside the office. Cash donations are also welcome. If you would like to e-transfer to the church for layettes at church@stjohnsdixie.com, please indicate it is for the layettes.

If you have a donation that you wish to drop off during the week, we ask that you call the office (905–277-0462) to set up an appropriate time to do this.

### **Cemetery Board Meeting**

A meeting of the Cemetery Board will be held on Wednesday, October 26<sup>th</sup>. You should have received a formal invitation if you are on this board. If you have not received one yet, please reach out to the church office at 905-277-0462. If you are interested in serving on this board in the future, please let the church office know.

### **Canada Helps Donation**

Canada Helps has implemented QR codes for easy access to our donation site on their platform. If you want to donate to us through Canada Helps this is the QR code that you can scan into your phone and make your donation to St. John's.



### **On-Line Tuesday Bible Study Group**

The Tuesday Bible Study Group will continue meeting at the usual time of 7:00 p.m. (EST) on zoom with Fr. Daniel. All are welcome if you have not been in attendance before and want to see what it is all about, please feel free to join the group. Link included below.

### **On-Site Wednesday Eucharist Service & Bible Study**

St. John's resumed the Wednesday services at 10:00 a.m. in the church. A Bible Study follows in the Payton Room. All are welcome you may just want to come to the service only there is no obligation to stay for the bible study afterwards.

### **On-Line Prayer Group**

The Prayer group was opened up as a hybrid group, but all chose to meet over Zoom on Thursday mornings. If you would like to join them the link is located below.

### **Choir Practice**

Jeff McLeod holds choir practice on Wednesday evenings at 5:30 p.m. There is always room in the choir for new members. If you are interested in joining the choir even for just one season, please reach out to Jeff at jeffreymcleod@gmail.com or speak with him after a service.

### **Flower Listing**

We have spaces available for memorial flowers for the Fall if you would like to honour a loved one who has passed or celebrate an occasion by donating the flowers for a Sunday morning. Please contact Lori in the church office at church@sthjohnsdixie.com or 905-277-0462 to request a date. The cost has remained the same for the last few years at \$50.00. We are using a local florist who delivers the flowers.

## LINKS TO PROGRAMING ABOVE:

### **St. Johns Church website**

[www.stjohnsdixie.org](http://www.stjohnsdixie.org)

### **YouTube Sunday School link:**

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

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

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86499519439?pwd=cC8rVIFYMm4xRGRzd2RyQXhEejFMdz09>

Meeting ID: 864 9951 9439    Passcode: 754201

### **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>

The Rev. Daniel D. Brereton, B.A., MDiv. FSJ  
Incumbent Priest  
St John the Baptist (Dixie), Anglican Church  
719 Dundas St. E Mississauga, ON L4Y 2B5  
905-277-0462 (church office)  
416-527-7932 (mobile)

**\*Sabbath Day: I am not available Mondays**



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](mailto:church@stjohnsdixie.com)