

MESSAGE FROM ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

Newsletter for February 2024



Rev. Daniel's Message: "Glad Gifts" – What is Yours?

Workshop: Sunday, March 10th after the 10am service!

A recent poll done on Canadians revealed the following data: 9 out of 10 Canadians believe Canadian democracy "is a good thing" and "should be preserved by the active participation of citizens in the affairs of their nation and communities".

Only 6 out of 10 Canadians however vote in national or provincial elections. Only 2 out of 10 Canadians vote in municipal elections and only 1 out of 10 Canadians affiliate with any specific political party. The data also indicated that less than half of those polled could identify more than 2 recent news items of national or provincial concern.

All of this suggests that while most Canadians still believe in the principals of democratic government and community, far fewer are willing to engage in them, committing either their time or resources to things they claim to value highly. When pressed on this, many of those polled shared two main reasons:

- 1) I don't believe that *I* can make a difference in any meaningful way.
- 2) I don't know how to get involved or where to start.

I believe much of the same is true of congregations. Our members say that the Church remains an important part of their lives. Ways of participating in worship have certainly shifted with the advent of livestreaming and online ministry, but the overall number of identified members in our church and the level of financial support has remained steady, even rising slightly following the years of pandemic closure. This is a great blessing.

What *has* declined sharply however is the level of engagement in the ministry and work of the church by its members. Volunteerism has *not* recovered and while there are many reasons for this, I believe two of the main issues are those mentioned above: individuals don't believe they can make a difference (given their specific circumstances) and even if they want to, they don't know where to start.

Many churches tend to run as though they were staffed institutions with volunteer support. Yet, in her book *The Church as a Volunteer Organization*, Anglican Mary Stewart argues that this is completely backwards: "*the church is basically a volunteer organization with staff support.*"

Good leadership – from clergy and paid staff - is key to parish health, but without volunteers to amplify this leadership, not much can get done – churchwardens, outreach ministers, choir members, church school and youth leaders, leaders in the liturgy, pastoral care providers, chancel guild members...the list of opportunities to serve goes on and on.

The good news is we have the people in our congregation to fulfill the mission and ministry of St. John's. But do people recognize their own gifts? Do they know *how* and *where* those gifts could be best used? Probably not. That's why I'm inviting you to a luncheon on Sunday March 10th, in the parish hall, following our 10am service. A catered lunch will be provided while Elizabeth McCaffrey (Volunteer Resource Coordinator for the Diocese) and Cynthia Majewski lead us through a fun and informative workshop on envisioning ministry at St. John's Dixie, identifying our own gifts and discerning how God is calling each of us to serve.

New members, long-time members, every-Sunday attendees, those who mainly worship online and those who can only come occasionally – all are invited! I encourage you to save the date and give some time to this event. Not only will we learn about volunteering, but we'll also get to know each other better!

That's not about "going to church". It's about "being the church". I hope to see many of you there!

Daniel +

WORSHIP SERVICES



Ash Wednesday: An Important Day for Christians

Ash Wednesday begins the penitential season of Lent and is a Holy Day of Obligation for Anglicans. Unless prevented by illness or some other unavoidable reason, members of the church are expected to observe this important day by attending worship, during which we confess, on behalf of the whole church, our sins against God and seek God's forgiveness. The ancient symbol of penitence and resolution to change our ways is ashes, which are traced on our foreheads in the form of a cross. These ashes are made by burning the palm crosses handed out on the previous year's Palm Sunday. They become the symbol of all the ways we have ignored,

turned away from, or betrayed the will and way of Jesus since we welcomed him as Lord, waving those same palm leaves the year before.

As the ashes are placed on our foreheads, the priest reminds each person: "Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return." This stark but honest statement is followed later in the service by an invitation to receive communion: a reminder that while we may be made from the dust of the earth, and while everything we are and have will one day return to dust, God sees us as his beloved, and has given everything –including his own Son – to bring us home to his eternal love. God knows we are far more than dust! The problem is, we often fail to reflect this in our own behaviour and our commitments.

Make a commitment to join us on Ash Wednesday and begin your Lent with honesty, humility, and hope. For we are God's children, and to God we are called to return.

Lent Vespers

We continue our journey through Lent with two opportunities each week for worship: Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. Our Lenten Vespers return, each Wednesday in Lent at 7pm (Feb 21, 28, Mar. 6, 13, 20, 27). Vespers is approx. 30 min in length, with prayer, scripture, and hymns. Throughout Lent, Fr. Daniel will be speaking on the theme “Forgiveness,” focussing on a different aspect of forgiveness each Wednesday. These services will be livestreamed, but if you are able to attend in person, it is a wonderful practice to gather to “keep a holy Lent” together.

If you would like to attend but do not have transportation, please speak with Fr. Daniel, or call the church office to see if we can help organize a ride with someone else who is attending. If you are able to offer a ride to someone, please let us know.



Messy Church

Our first Messy Church will be held on Sunday February 4th from 1 to 3 p.m. in the Parish Hall. “Messy Church” is a program designed for children and their caregivers to worship, learn and have fun together in an informal church setting. Each Messy Church has three components: **Food** (a lunch or snack we share, over which we can get to know each other) **Fun** (games and crafts designed around a theme that adults and children can do together) and **Faith** (a short worship service with simple readings and prayer that the children can help lead).

This is a great way to introduce new families to our church. If you have friends, relatives, or neighbours with young children you would like to invite, please do! If you do not have children yourself but would like to get to know our young families, please come along!

The theme for our first Messy Church will be “Love” (just in time for Valentine’s Day!)

Messy Church will be held again on March 24th (Palm Sunday), April 28th, May 26th, and June 30th.



FELLOWSHIP AND PARISH EVENTS:

Pancake Supper: Tues. Feb 13th, 5:30 – 7pm

We will be holding our annual **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper** on Tuesday February 13th from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. Tickets are currently being sold at both services for \$5 per person and a family for \$15 (regardless of how many members). If you are unable to make it to the services to purchase tickets, we ask that you let the church office know before February 7th that you plan to attend and how many will be with you, so we are prepared. This is always a fun event.



Please invite your friends and neighbours!

Thank you to Ann and Hunter Wilson (sister and brother-in-law of our Children's Minister, Kate) for donating all the syrup from their own maple syrup farm!



Family Day: Feb 19th

Family Day is celebrated on **Monday, February 19th** and the church office will be closed. The phone lines will be monitored so if you have an emergency, please leave a message and we will get back to you.



Vestry Sunday: Feb 25th following the 10am service.



**Annual
Vestry
Meeting**

Our annual Vestry meeting will be held on Sunday, February 25th after the 10:00 a.m. service. We are going to be holding a potluck luncheon before the meeting. A sign-up sheet will be posted shortly in the Parish Hall to indicate attendance and if you can contribute food. We are blessed with a diverse congregation...let us celebrate that diversity with favourite dishes from our various communities (sandwiches are also just fine!)

OUTREACH AND GIVING

Mississauga Food Bank

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



The Food Bank is looking for non- perishable food items. We request that you **check the expire date** on items to ensure that the items are good for the next month. The Food Bank can not accept expired items.

The Open Door

On behalf of the Church, thank you to Covey and Thelma Carter for delivering all the items to the Open Door. Everyone was very generous, and a huge carload was delivered to them which they very much appreciated.

E-Transfer/ Canada Help

Please keep in mind that if you are in Canada a donation to us through e-transfer means that we receive the full 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, just as Canada Helps does. We appreciate that some 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.



Hymn Requests



Our Music Director, Surinder would love to incorporate YOUR favourite hymns into our Sunday worship. Please add yours to the lists provided in the lobby (outside the church office) or on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall. Or if you are part of our online community, feel free to send us an email with your request.

Hymns are chosen in consultation with Fr Daniel and must reflect the scriptural or seasonal theme of that Sunday, but we will do our best to include as many of your favourites as possible. The only catch is, you have to SING them, with fervor and joy!

Letter from Surinder Mundra

It is a pleasure to work with, and get to know you, the members of St John the Baptist Church, Dixie, as your new Minister of Music.

During my brief time here, I was greeted by almost every single one of you with warmth, delight, and genuine interest. This engagement was exemplified by your overwhelming input at my request for you to offer hymn suggestions. (We are dutifully endeavoring to incorporate these suggestions into our planning for the upcoming weeks and months)

Assuming a new role in a new church can be an exciting challenge, especially at the very beginning of a new liturgical year. Sometimes, music ministries that face challenges in growth, are cautious of change, even when change leads to improvement.

One of the many reasons I have chosen St John's Church to be my home is the saint after whom this church is named. St John the Baptist was the voice in the wilderness crying for change. This call to change was necessary because the world in which he lived grew too comfortable in its ways, a phenomenon ever more relevant today.

In past newsletters before my arrival, Fr. Daniel had commended the small volunteer choir for its commitment, though it had "dwindled in size." He had also challenged the choir to grow, so that it may tackle a greater variety of music.

Music ministry involves so much more than playing the organ and waving one's hands in front of a choir. It involves among other things, inspiring its members to broaden its scope, and strive for excellence, while drawing its circle wider. Before that however, it involves connecting with its members.

As Music Director, it is my role to galvanize my ministry. I want pride, dedication, commitment, respect, tolerance, encouragement, and a sincere welcoming spirit to flourish.

If you have ever considered learning music, I encourage you to see what our music ministry involves. You will learn proper vocal technique, and music. Many of my choristers, both professional and amateur, have told me that singing in choir has been one of the most joyous and transformational experiences in their lives.

I thank Fr. Daniel for entrusting me with this very important ministry. I look forward to getting to know you better.

Tax Receipts

Tax receipts have been sent by Canada Post. You should be receiving them shortly. If, for any reason you do not receive them by mid-February, please feel free to contact the church office. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your tax receipt, we request that you deal directly with the church office. Fr. Daniel has nothing to do with the recording or preparation of tax receipts and will not be able to assist you with them on Sunday mornings.



New Memorial Flower Listing

There are still Sundays available to give Memorial flowers in 2024, if you did not get a chance to **sign up**, please contact the office to see if space is available for your date. The flowers at the altar are dedicated in the memory of your loved ones. Their names are printed in the bulletin, and we pray for them during that Sunday's services. Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee specific colours or flower types. Each arrangement is \$50 dollars. The flowers are provided by a local florist and are delivered to the church the Friday before.



Old Palm Crosses



Please bring in your old palm crosses to be burned for ashes to be used at the Ash Wednesday services. There is a basket provided in the narthex of the church to put them in. We need them no later than **Sunday, Feb. 11th**.

ONLINE MINISTRIES - LINKS

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.

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

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>



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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