



St. John the Evangelist, Niagara Falls
in our 206th year of ministry in this community

E-News for MAY 3, 2026

**THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER,
ALLELUIA!!**



8 AM - Morning Prayer - led by a LayReader,
with sermon from Rev. Allison

11 AM - Eucharist - led by The Rev. Allison Courey

The Facebook link for 11 am Sunday broadcasts can be found at: <https://m.facebook.com/stjohnstamford/>.

A message from Rev. Allison

Dear St. John's family,

On March 21, 23 of us gathered for a morning of listening and discernment. It is clear that St. John's is at a crossroads in our life together; much has changed since the pandemic. The purpose of this gathering was to hear from God about where our strengths and weaknesses lie as a community. We (the initial discernment team of Allison, Greg, Stephanie, Lydia, and Rob) believe that community crossroads can be times of great renewal and life, as God grows something new in our midst. But God never forces these things; we must listen and follow what God is doing if we want it to take root at St. John's.

Rob Duncan offered reflections on scripture passages for us to ponder and then we split into groups to talk about what we heard God saying to us in those passages. Much was said about the things which drew people to St. John's: welcome, especially when it was needed most at difficult times, was high on the list. This included open and accepting theology, kindness of fellow parishioners, and warmth when they were new. We talked about losses in the community too: full time clergy, children, the choir, more space to do ministry together. Folks who come from large, vibrant churches in Africa talked about missing these things as well.

Finally, we talked about what we hear God calling us to now. Folks talked about not being afraid because Jesus is the good shepherd who leads us; the sheep do not know where they are going exactly, but they trust that the shepherd will take care of them along the way. They spoke about the need to look outward as a parish more than inward, as Jesus calls the disciples to new places. They noticed that the disciples did not expect payment for their service, but saw themselves as planters of seeds which would one day be tended and harvested by

others.

We talked about the loneliness crisis in our society, where everyone is busy but few feel grounded and connected, and wondered how St. John's can step into that challenging gap. There was discussion about the need to learn how to love ourselves as God loves us, and then to share that love with one another. To follow Jesus the shepherd, we need to learn humility and listening and trust.

The purpose of this discernment process is to listen for what God is saying to our community, given the changes inside and outside our walls. It is an opportunity for setting an intentional, hopeful direction. We know that God is alive and at work at St. John's. And whatever God is doing here, we want to be part of it. This might sound vague - that's because it is! For now, that is the only agenda. We believe that if we continue to pray and listen together, God will make himself known to us.

Moving forward, a smaller group will meet together every couple of weeks to continue this process. The purpose of a smaller group is to be able to spend more time together in prayer and discussion (in homes rather than the big gym). We will update the wider community - especially those who have expressed a particular interest in the process - along the way. We have invited everyone who has expressed an interest in being part of this to join the smaller group because we have found that personal invitations are more effective than sign-up sheets. However, if you would like to be part of this group but haven't been able to join us yet for whatever reason, please do let me know. You are a valuable part of St. John's, and I look forward to our future together, wherever God is leading us.

Much peace and courage,

Allison+

DATES TO REMEMBER

At present, our calendar includes:

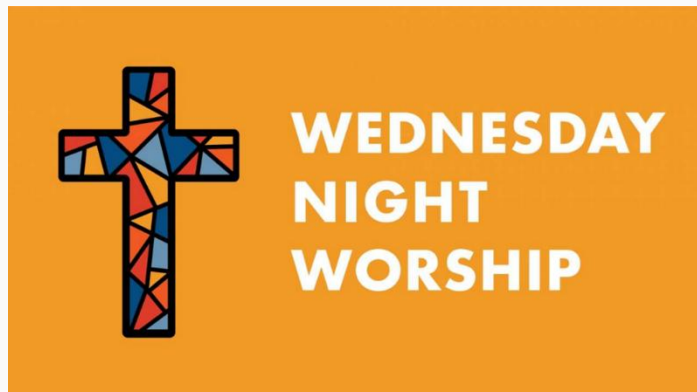
Sat, May 2 - Horticultural Society Spring Planter Workshop - noon until 2pm, \$50 (Registration is now full.)

Sat, May 9 - Celebration of Life for Valerie Williams at 1pm. Her obituary link can be found at <https://www.morseandson.com/memorials/valerie-williams/5670327/>

Sun, May 10 at 11am - Baptism

Sat, May 30 - Horticultural Society Plant Sale

Sun, June 28 - next Parish Council Meeting (approx. 12:30pm)



Our **Wednesday Evening Eucharists and Discussions** continue at 7 pm in the Church.



PRAYER LIST THIS WEEK

In the **Anglican Cycle of Prayer**, we pray for The Church of North India (United);
For all the **Bishops and leaders** of our Church.

In the **Diocese of Niagara**, we pray for St. Jude, Oakville, and the clergy and people of that parish.
For Rev. Allison, and all the clergy and people who share in the ministry of this place.

In our parish cycle of prayer, we pray for the following **people and their families**: Carolyne Robb, Phil Ross, Jane Runo, Sandra Sagert & Tony Savoury-Knight.
And in our **community** we give thanks and pray for those who volunteer and offer leadership to Project Share.

We remember those who are close to us, for **those who are ill**: Samantha, Tina, Jim, Chris, Jan, Ken, Sarah, Gail, June, Rick, David, Marvin, Cody, Barb, Naomi, Queeneth, Stephen, Leah, family of Lorraine, Mary, Moses, Christine, Amal, Melissa, Bob, and those on the parish prayer list at Holy Trinity.

We pray for **peace in our world**. We remember the people of Ukraine, Gaza and the West Bank, East Africa, Kashechewan, Tumbler Ridge BC, Iran, Mexico, and all others caught in conflict, violence, and disaster. We pray also for the people of Cuba, Venezuela and the Middle East facing shortages of energy and resources impacting all aspects of their lives. We remember our neighbours in need of shelter, warmth and food. May all in need experience God's comfort and

strength this day.

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Birthdays: James McIntosh (May 3), Bill Bynkoski (May 5), Bill Archambault (May 6)

## **Ways To Help our Community**

**Grace Pantry**: appreciates donations of non-perishable food, and prepaid gift cards to inexpensive food stores.

**Breakfast Club Red Jam**: is always needed for St. Georges/St Catharines. Please drop off red jam at the back of the Church.

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*St. John's - "A Community of friendship, faith, and care for our neighbours and all of creation"*

Written by our Parish Administrator, Val C.

The Church phone number is 905- 354-

1227. Email: [stjohn@cogeco.net](mailto:stjohn@cogeco.net)

Voice and email messages will be checked during office hours.

The office is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 10 AM - 2 PM

*The Rev. Allison Courey can be reached by emailing [allison.courey@gmail.com](mailto:allison.courey@gmail.com)*

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