

COMMON SUPPLICATIONS

Proclaim | Engage | Reach Out | Open Doors

Re-opening

On August 1st we welcomed people back to attend in-person worship at St. John's for the first time since November 2020.

Presently, according to public health and diocesan guidelines, we are re-opening in a slow and measured way.

We are offering two Sunday liturgies: 9am outdoors (weather permitting, bring your own lawn chair) for a said communion service using the Book of Alternative Services; 11am indoors with a quartet for a modified choral service of communion or choral matins from the Book of Common Prayer.

The 11am liturgy continues to be live-streamed on the St. John's Elora YouTube Channel.

According to Diocesan Guidelines, we are all required to wear face masks indoors and when we are outdoors and cannot maintain a 2m physical distance between people in different households.

For the purpose of contact tracing and screening you are required to register online on our website each week, or if you do not have a computer you can call the Parish Office before Friday to indicate your intentions to attend. Thank you to Thomas, Jon, and Jane for their work on the Re-opening Team to help us all gather safely. Christ Church Drayton is preparing a re-opening plan for the fall.



Rector's Word

Belonging to one another and to something larger than ourselves is what gives us meaning and shapes who we are. After watching one of the Parish Choir's productions from their "Unplugged" series, Ken Thompson called me to offer his punt as a recording location. "Let's do it," I said. A week later there I was floating on the Grand River recording mid week morning prayers for our online liturgy. I was on one of the punts at Elora Raft Rides with Ken and Fred Thompson (photo above). It was a sheer delight. Not only was it perfect summer conditions early in the morning on the river, but it provided me with a deep sense of belonging to a community. Each of us had a role to play: I led the service, Ken skippered the boat, and Fred provided the running commentary on the sights and offered the liturgical responses. The whole experience was a rich gift that was over before it barely had begun.

What the Water Rat said to the Mole in *Wind in the Willows*: "Believe me, my young friend, there is nothing - absolutely nothing - half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats." In part, that's what we were doing together and the whole time we were offering it to the glory of God.

Paul Walker +

Order of Niagara

Our deepest congratulations and thanks to Rod and Colleen Murray and Chris Houston who are all being admitted to the Order of Niagara on September 19th for their faithful service to the church. Rod and Colleen have worked in tandem to create a vital presence with online liturgies and social media posts at St. John's during the pandemic. They both have participated in Parish Council and Colleen has provided leadership in the visioning process.

Chris has provided leadership in the new Niagara School of Missional Leadership, which is a part of the diocesan Mission Action Plan. This new school will help equip clergy and lay leaders with the skills and tools they need to lead the church today and in the next generation.

There will be a service of institution on September 19th on Zoom, and the Bishop will hand deliver their medallions and certificates to their homes on September 16th.

Thank you Rod, Colleen, and Chris for all you give to the glory of God.

Vision Approved

On June 15th almost 60 people gathered on Zoom for a Special Vestry to approve the findings of the Vision Report which was published on Pentecost Sunday.

It was a historic opportunity to uphold one another, affirm what we are learning about ministry in the pandemic, and claim a direction for the parish for the next decade. This meeting was a result of the prayer and wide consultation that engaged almost 100 people since January in a visioning process.

Here is what we approved:

St. John's Statement of Intent and Purpose

St. John's Elora is a Christian community within the Anglican tradition with a strong history of liturgical worship and choral music. In a spirit of service, self-giving, and thanksgiving, we offer to the glory of God, ourselves, our souls and bodies, endeavouring to foster a faith in Jesus Christ and facilitate human flourishing. We strive to be a thriving, spiritually nourishing, healthy, welcoming and missional community. Reaching out and reaching in, community engagement, and partnerships are all critical as we build on our past and present strengths. Our ministry together depends on factors such as spiritual authenticity, intellectual integrity, respectful behaviour, the ability to listen attentively, and community hospitality. We move towards the 2030s in a spirit of love with thanksgiving for what we have been given.

There are four areas of ministry that we want to focus on in the next decade:

- 1. Proclaim the love of Christ:*** *We are being called to foster faith and human flourishing in others by authentically celebrating who we are and what we have done and not to imitate others programming.*
- 2. Engage and Involve:*** *We are called to partner with the community and engage broadly through a hybrid of in-person and expanded online programming.*



Coffee with the Primate on July 11th.

- 3. **Musical Outreach:** *We are being called to invest in our music programming to foster faith for people from all geographies, age groups, and those thirsty for spiritual engagement and fulfillment.*
- 4. **Open Doors:** *We are being called to create a new accessible and welcoming space for all.*

This vision has been vitally important as we seek a new Director of Music, make plans for re-opening, develop new platforms for the Parish Choir like "Parish Choir Unplugged", and offer speaker series and mid week liturgies online.

In the fall we will begin to shape the four areas of ministry and make plans for investing in these four areas for the future. If you are interested in participating in any of these areas, please contact the clergy or one of the Wardens



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Vaccine Equity Fund

PWRDF invites you to support their efforts to assist nations who need access to vaccines. Mark your donation to PWRDF "Vaccine Equity" to help those who need vaccines in the world.

Knitters and Quilters

This group met every week on Zoom through the pandemic, and now they meet outdoors (weather permitting) at Station Square Park in Elora on Wednesday at 10:30am. You are welcome to join them. They provide prayer shawls, teddy bears and quilts for people; and now they make poppies. It is a wonderful and supportive group. Contact Barb Dunsmore for more information.

Givings

St John's is trying a new software application called Tithely to track all givings and maintain our data base. Your summer Givings Statement is the first one that has been produced using this software.

You may notice a few changes on your statement. For example, if you contribute monthly using Pre Authorized Givings (PAG), some of the earlier contributions are shown as "Cheques", while later ones are shown as "Auto Direct Debit". This is how things were transferred over from our previous Givings software program. Tithely is a secure cloud based software endorsed by several dioceses across Canada and is updated regularly.

If you don't already use Pre-Authorized Giving (PAG) to support St. John's, you may want to consider it. PAG is secure, consistent, and eliminates the need for envelopes or cheques. You can target your donation to General Fund, Choir Fund, Restoration Fund, PWRDF and change the amounts at any time. With PAG, you can rest assured that your donation will always get to us, even if you are busy, or on vacation. A PAG form is available on our website or by contacting our Givings Secretary, Steve Hornett at givings.stjohnselora@gmail.com.

Curate's Column

What does it mean to be a priest in a pandemic?
How do we live our vocation?

This is a question that I heard often in the early months, as my colleagues grappled with an enormous shift in how to practice one's vocation 'in a strange land'. I had been ordained a priest exactly three weeks before the 'shut down' so, my vocation has been lived out (so far) almost entirely in Pandemic Times.

In the many roles I have taken on in this unusual journey of pandemic pastoral ministry, one that I love is the role of video producer/videographer. It began with weaving together audio visuals to create a deeper experience of evening prayer, and help lift the words off the page into daily life. That extended to adding visuals and creating video interpretations of choral works for Choral Thursdays in the fall. A more recent project has been collaborating with members of the parish choir to produce two videos (a third is coming in August) for "Parish Choir Unplugged". (All these videos are on the St John's Elora YouTube channel). As we worked together, I became aware that the process of videography is in many ways like the ministry of preaching and teaching.

The role of the preacher is to interpret a text, connect it to the lived experience of the community, and offer up metaphors, images, or words that connect people back into their own story in deeper ways. The same, I found, is true of the videographer. Taking a piece of music, interpreting it, and through images, settings, angles, metaphorical movements and even facial expressions, tell people the story of lamentation, redemption, renewal, encouragement, hope and joy. Like the sermon, where the words are heard by different people in different ways, so too in a video the viewers see different things, and make their own interpretations. And, just like a sermon or a video, people see and hear things that I didn't even realize! It's all how it speaks to our own individual stories.

Holding up a vision of hope and redemption, and giving reassurance that we are not alone in our sufferings is what I strive to do in my ministry. We have learned new creative ways to do that. We have built new relationships, discovered new things about ourselves and about being God's people in the process. Sharing good news and bringing God's love and light to our community and beyond is a ministry we all share together. I'm so grateful to be on that journey with you.

- Rev'd Judy Steers



New Chaplain at SJK

We are delighted to hear that Rev Judy Steers has been appointed as the new Chaplain (part time) at St. John's Kilmarnock School starting in August. As she takes on her new role at the school working with students and staff, Judy will continue to work as the Assistant Curate at St. John's providing liturgical and pastoral leadership alongside the Rector. This joint appointment upholds the long-standing relationship between the parish and the school and our vision to partner with the community. St. John's Kilmarnock School offers an international baccalaureate program for students from JK to Grade 12 and was founded in 1972 at St. John's Church, Elora.

Wardens' Column

We are very pleased and excited that the Director of Music Search Committee has, out of long list of applicants, invited a short list of very well qualified candidates to the next stage of the selection process, following all diocesan guidelines, in September. Following this, all being well, a final decision will be made in the fall.

Many thanks to the members of the committee for their diligent work, and many thanks to Jurgen Petrenko who has capably led our music program during the pandemic as guidelines allow.

St. John's re-opened for in-person services on August 1st. We continue to observe all the guidelines and the 11am liturgy continues to be live-streamed online. Sincere thanks to the Re-opening Team and Technology Team.

The Sacristy is receiving a long overdue and much planned renovation in August to provide new storage of the frontals, vessels, linens and candles, and apply a fresh coat of paint.

At the same time the chancel walls will be painted but will not affect the artistic wall stencils that are prominent in the chancel. Access for these projects will be governed by all COVID safety protocols.

The Sacristy project is funded by generous gifts from some donors.

Many thanks to the gardeners and our custodian, Patrick Ellis, who look after our property and keep it looking attractive and safe.

*Thank you for your continued financial commitments to support the operating costs of ministry at St. John's - for the **General Fund** and **Choir Fund**. If you have a question about **Givings**, please contact Steve Hornett, our Givings Secretary.*

We wish that each of you stay safe and enjoy good health over the balance of the summer and beyond. We also look forward to a time when we can all gather to worship together at St. John's in-person as we so cherished prior to the arrival of the pandemic.

- Jeff Ostic, Pam Gradwell, Diana Spearn, Peter Barr - Wardens

Poppy Project

The St John's Poppy Project was inspired by two other similar art installations. In 2018, the Anglican Cathedral Church of the Redeemer in Calgary created a display of over 10,000 knitted and crocheted poppies which were displayed that year on the cathedral grounds to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War. In 2021, the Cambridge (Ontario) Poppy Project,



in commemoration of 100 years since the adoption of the symbol of the poppy, aims to create a display over three civic buildings with up to 20,000 poppies (at the time of writing this, they have received 23,721 poppies!)

The St John's Elora Knitters and Quilters group learned of these projects and were inspired to create a similar art installation at our church in Elora.

The poppy has different meanings for people - for some, it recalls the sacrifices that were made, for others, a remembrance of the costs of war, for others, a symbol of the importance of striving for peace in the world, and to not repeat the mistakes of the past. Whatever your inspiration, we invite you to participate in this community project if you wish, and contribute poppies to the outdoor art installation in November. Our goal is 1,500 poppies and already we have received over 700. The art installation will be a cascading river of poppies flowing out of the church tower on to the lawn.

Patterns are available on our website and patterns and kits are available in the "Poppy Bin" outside the Henderson Street entrance of the Parish Centre.

Completed poppies can be delivered before September 30th by leaving them in the container on the porch of the Parish Centre marked "Completed Poppies." In October we will be assembling all the poppies on garden netting; so if you want to assist with this, let Barb Dunsmore know. This project has been approved by the Elora Legion and the National Poppy Campaign Coordinator.

Walking in Right Relations

In response to the uncovering of unmarked graves at residential schools we are all learning more about our history and asking what actions we can take towards reconciliation with indigenous peoples in Canada. For many of us this is about growing our awareness through education and taking steps towards reconciliation. The 94 actions identified in the Truth and Reconciliation Report is a good place to begin. When our Primate, Archbishop Linda Nicholls, was with us last month, she expressed that all Anglicans in Canada need to learn at least four basic things:

- The Primate's apology for physical and sexual abuse in 1993.
- The Primate's apology for spiritual harm in 2019.
- The documentary film, "Doctrine of Discovery: Stolen Lands, Strong Hearts."
- Participate in the Mapping exercise or Blanket exercise. (more on this in the fall).

In 1993, Archbishop Michael Peers said, "I accept and I confess before God and you, our failures in the residential schools. We failed you. We failed ourselves. We failed God. I am sorry, more than I can say, that we were part of a system which took you and your children from home and family."

This is part of a moving and full text which you can read, along with a Tool Kit for Reconciliation, at www.anglican.ca/tr/reconciliation-toolkit/

The "Walking in Right Relations" group at St. John's is preparing some resources and activities to help increase our awareness and take some actions. You are welcome to join the group by contacting Rev Judy Steers at curate.stjohnselora@gmail.com. Part of being on a journey of right relationship is learning the truth about what happened. These are resources to help you start that journey or continue it.

Assisting with In-Person Liturgy

We need your help to assist with any of the following ministries on a Sunday morning:

Readers - read the scriptures during a service. Contact Paul Walker or Judy Steers.

Greeters - welcome people attending worship, ensure people are on the registration list, and clean up after a liturgy. Contact Thomas Littlewood.

Altar Guild - prepare the vessels, linens, and frontals for any of our liturgies. Contact Pam Gradwell or Susan Hirst.

Flower Guild - prepare the flowers for the chancel. Contact Dawn McClure.



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Note: The Rector is on holiday August 9 to Labour Day. The Curate on holiday August 19-24. Rev John Lockyer will cover during August 19-24.