



E-News from the St. Mark's Pews 251st Edition February 14th, 2025



From the Rector

Filling in for Leighton is Michael Bloss.

LENT: A musical pilgrimage

Lent is the yearly penitential time when Christians prepare for Easter. Historically, those wishing to join the church, the *catechumens*, would take these 40 days to learn, mark, and inwardly digest the professions and renunciations that would result in their Profession of Faith at the Great Vigil of Easter.

The number "40" holds significant meaning in scripture, often symbolizing a period of faithful waiting. For instance, the Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 years in search of their deliverance, guided by Moses. Similarly, Jesus spent 40 days in the desert, enduring temptation. The latter is usually read on the first Sunday in Lent. So how might we mark this important time in the life of our faith community?

Some might renounce chocolate or other "vice". Some people choose to read a daily devotional, while others prefer to engage with commentary writings. These daily practices focus on soulful introspection during Lent. Music can provide a non-verbal access to the working of the soul in a similarly deep and emotionally introspective way; transcending the occasional distraction of the written word.

To facilitate this musical way to access a Lenten pilgrimage, I, through St Mark's, will present a daily musical performance, on video, to mark each of the 40 days of Lent. Debuting on Ash Wednesday, March 5th, and running through to the Eve of Palm Sunday, I will play a daily organ work based on Lenten hymns and scriptural themes written by composers from the early Baroque to contemporary times. You will hear and see the organs at St. Mark's and understand the context of the selection with my short introduction. It is my fondest hope that these musical vignettes can become a part of your Lenten practice; providing a daily moment of musical inspiration for your soul to navigate this liturgical season.

Sundays in Lent are imbued with a less "sombre" character because Sundays bear more allegiance to celebrating the Resurrection of our Lord. To represent this, you will experience organ music on a larger canvas as we visit some of the larger

churches and basilicas in London, Guelph, Toronto and St. Catharines.

These daily video presentations will be found on the St. Mark's website as well as our Facebook page. Would you consider leaving a comment about your response to the music? What emotions might the piece have stirred up in you? Did the music bring to mind a biblical story or a moment in your pilgrimage? Maybe the music reminded you of a story or experience you might feel comfortable sharing.

I look forward to encouraging our community's pilgrimage through Lent.

That's something to sing about.

Blessings,

Michael Bloss



MEN'S COMMUNION BREAKFAST

**We invite the gentlemen of St. Mark's to join us for the upcoming
Men's Communion Breakfast on Wednesday, March 5, 2025.**

**We will begin the morning with Holy Communion at 8:00 a.m., followed by a
delicious breakfast at
The NOTL Golf Club
around 8:45 a.m.**

**Your presence will make this gathering even more special. We look forward to
seeing you there!**

**We are thrilled to announce that the
St. Mark's Cherry Festival takes place on
Saturday, July 5, 2025.**





This year, we have organized a team to make cherry jam! This begins in late February.



We need volunteers to help make our famous cherry pies!

There will be 4 pie-making sessions held in **Addison Hall from 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM**

on the following

Mondays:

April 14th

April 21st

April 28th,

and

May 5th.

We do require volunteers. When contacted by Bev Lees or Sue Baxter, please respond with a **"YES"** if you can help.

We are also requesting **donations of Tenderflake lard in 1-pound packages. Donations of funds would also be appreciated.**

Please drop off the lard or your cash donation at the church office.

If you have any questions contact Diane Turner at 289-362-1827 or email at 19ab39@gmail.com.

Thank you for your support!



SHROVE TUESDAY MARCH 4 2025

Please come and enjoy a delicious Pancake Supper with us at St. Mark's from 5 pm to 7 pm.

What could be better than a stack of fluffy pancakes, sizzling sausages, syrup flowing like a river, and your choice of coffee or tea to warm

your soul on a cold **Shrove Tuesday** evening?

The answer is simple: nothing!

So come on over to St. Mark's for our **PANCAKE SUPPER** — where we don't just flip pancakes, we flip the script on boring weeknight dinners!

Sink your teeth into warm, fluffy pancakes, and perfectly cooked sausages, drenched in syrup, and sip on coffee or tea, all while enjoying time spent with the lovely people who make up the community of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Don't let this evening slip away—mark your calendars, gather your friends and family, and prepare for a night of good food, laughter, and friendship.

No advance tickets are required; just bring your appetite and cash, debit, or a credit card.

Only \$15.00 at the door.

Four Last Things

Women of St. Mark's, are you familiar with the concept of the **Four Last Things**?

Join Susan MacLaren's series on the **Four Last Things** and discover more!

Join Susan at St. Mark's Addison Hall to hear the fascinating and informative talks.

Session dates are:

March 13th, 10 am-12 pm
March 20th, 10 am-12 pm
March 27th, 10 am-12 and
April 3rd, 10 am-12 pm

Coffee will be served.



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

St. Mark's is seeking one or two people to participate in this year's World Day of Prayer event at Grace Church United on March 7.

A preliminary meeting for all local church participants will take place on Tuesday, February 18 at 1:30 pm at Grace Church.

Please call Jane De Munnich for further details at 905 468-9831 or 289 686-6010.



Did you know.....

...that the history of Valentine's Day is a bit different from the romanticized version of the holiday recognized today? While February 14th is widely celebrated with Valentine's Day sweets, gifts, and romantic dinners, few people are familiar with the true origins of this day.

The way Valentine's Day is celebrated has transformed over time. The modern iteration of the holiday, with its rosy hearts and kisses, has quite a bubbly feel compared to its origin, which is actually...a bit bloody. You won't find the real story of Valentine's Day in movies or romantic books— not only because it's a bit darker than most Hollywood fare, but also because it's a bit of a mystery!

As you know, the day is named after St. Valentine—but the holiday's origin might stem from the ancient pagan festival of *Lupercalia*, which predated Christianity. Similar to the modern Valentine's Day holiday, the Roman festival was celebrated in the middle of February and involved feasting and pairing off partners.

However, *unlike* Valentine's Day, it was a bit of a raucous celebration filled with debauchery, blood, and sacrifice. For example, it was tradition for the hide of a sacrificed goat to be cut into strips and dipped in blood. Then, priests would go around slapping women with the strips. The practice was supposedly welcomed, as it was believed to make the women more fertile in the coming year.

As Romans turned away from their pagan beliefs and embraced Christianity, the holiday evolved into one honoring St. Valentine. Lupercalia was eventually outlawed at the end of the 5th century, at the time Pope Gelasius declared February 14th as St. Valentine's Day.

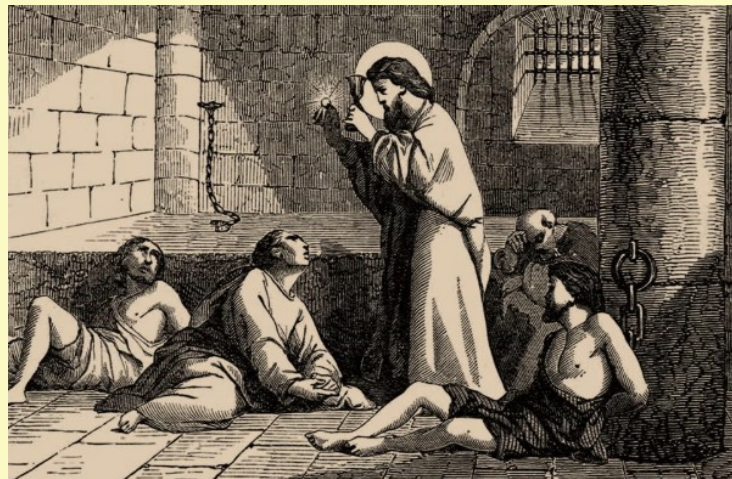
The identity of St. Valentine is also up for debate. Emperor Claudius II of Rome is said to have executed two different men named Valentine on February 14th (in two different years) during the third century. One account of St. Valentine says that he was a priest who was arrested for defying a Roman decree that forbade soldiers from marrying. He was executed for the crime of continuing to wed lovers in secret.

Another story contends that it was all to do with an imprisoned priest who fell in love with one of his visitors and began writing letters to her. The

priest supposedly sent the woman a letter before his execution that he signed off, "From your Valentine." Both of these stories have romantic undertones and cannot be officially verified. All we can say is that Valentine's Day was named for a martyred St. Valentine.

Valentine's Day's transformation into a holiday about romantic love can be attributed to the Romantic English poet Geoffrey Chaucer, credited for modern ideas about Valentine's Day. There was no significant written record linking romantic tradition to St. Valentine's Day until Chaucer wrote his 14th-century works "The Parlement of Foules" and "The Complaint of Mars," the former of which is a poem about birds choosing their mates on "Seynt Valentynes day."

By the mid-18th century, it was routine for friends and lovers to exchange small tokens and notes on Valentine's Day. In the 19th century, the Industrial Revolution helped make printed Valentine's Day cards the hot new thing. The explosion of love continued in the 19th century with the creation of the first heart-shaped box of chocolates—a quintessential symbol of Valentine's Day—by Richard Cadbury. To make things even sweeter, the New England Confectionery Company (Necco) started to produce the earliest version of Conversation Hearts, which are still popular to this day. Finally, in 1913, Hallmark Cards of Kansas City, Missouri, began mass-producing valentines. The rest, as they say, is history!



Parish Updates

In-Person Sunday Services

8:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist

10:30 a.m. Sung Eucharist [Watch the live stream on YouTube](#)

On Duty this Week

February 16th - Greeter(s) - Trudi Watson and Earle Waugh

Reader - Penny-Lynn Cookson

Intercessor - James Mainprize

Altar Guild - Peggy Walker, Susan Baxter, and Diane Turner

Server - Virginia Mainprize

Order of Service

The Order of Service can be found on our website: [Order of Service Website Page](#)

Church Bells

A reminder to all that the Church Bells play on Sundays at 12:05 p.m. Enjoy!

Staying Up to Date!

Click on this link to find this and recent copies of our E-News: [Visit our recent E-Newsletters](#)

Click on this link to view our: [Visit our Calendar](#)

[Click here to access St. Mark's Anglican Church Facebook Page](#)

You can also access our Facebook page when on our website by clicking on the Facebook icon that looks like an "F".

Prayer Cycles - We pray for:

In St. Mark's parish: Roxanne MacBeth, Roy and Susan MacLaren, Donald MacLeod, and Allan Magnacca and their families.

In the Niagara Diocese: St. Saviour the Brock Memorial, Niagara Falls, The Reverend Janet Cashin, Priest-in-Charge; and the people of that parish.

In the Lutheran-Anglican-Moravian Cycle of Prayer: The Rt. Rev. Sam Rose, Bishop, and the people and clergy of the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador; the Dean, council, and congregations of the Central Toronto Area and Greater Toronto Areas East and West of the Eastern Synod; and the people and ministries of Rio Terrace Moravian Church in Edmonton.

[St. Mark's Anglican Church Website](#)



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