



E-News from the St. Mark's Pews 198th Edition - February 2nd, 2024



From the Rector

Last week I mentioned that while the secular calendar marks today as Groundhog Day, the Church calendar marks it as Candlemas—the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple (which, in older "kalendars" was called The Purification of St Mary the Virgin—but that's a topic for another day!) Suffice it to say that it commemorates the time recorded in Luke's gospel when Mary and Joseph brought the new-born Jesus to the Temple.

It's a feast is rich in symbolism. It falls exactly forty days after Christmas Day and forty is an important number in the scriptural tradition (the story of the flood tells of forty days of rain, the Israelites were in the wilderness forty years, Jesus' temptation lasted forty days—and so forth.) The number is a shorthand way for denoting a long time.

We've been waiting a long time for sunshine and spring, too. That's part of what today is about. February 2 falls exactly midway between the winter solstice and the spring equinox. The Celts divided the calendar into quarters (marked by the equinoxes and solstices) and these quarters were in turn marked by "cross quarter days" of which today is one. So it's a turning point, a day when the light begins to grow stronger and the new birth of spring is so close we can almost see it.

Candlemas is about the coming of light into a darkened world. But it's also about waiting. In Luke's story we meet Simeon and Anna, both of whom had been waiting a long time for God's promises to come true. Anna was an habitu  of the Temple; she'd seen it all and had known more than her fair share of grief. But she knew how precious it was to look—if only for a second—into the face of sheer, unadulterated, and redeeming love. She knew that the future was not contingent on her response but on love's initiative.

And Simeon knew that history and humanity are renewed in the birth of every baby and that our wintry mood can be lifted simply by the gurgle and laugh of a new-born. Yet he also told Mary an uncomfortable truth. It's one we need to remember in these perilous times: If you love somebody—or something—let it go. Because how else can it rise to new life?

This is not to be sentimental or glib; and though it's true, that doesn't make it any easier to do. The Candlemas story, with its interplay of light and shadow, expectation and fulfilment,

joy and pain, reminds us of the kind of life we must lead, and where that life will lead us: away from the familiar and the comfortable into an unknown and even unsettling place of waiting and watching.

So that's it?—we can only wait? For people like us, who are so used to doing things, achieving results, and minimizing risk and loss, that's crazy advice. Except none of us is called to be a saviour. God doesn't need us to do a thing except to be faithful. And the best—the only faithful response—is to wait and watch for God to show up. And he will.

How long we must wait, or in what form his coming will be revealed I don't know, but I do know this: that unless we have committed ourselves to the radical act of faith that is waiting, we will be in danger of missing him when he comes, be it in a blaze of light or in a whisper. For this radical act of faith that is waiting also teaches us to watch, to pay attention for the unexpected flicker of light way off in the lingering dark, for the gift of new life that is as precious and lovely and miraculous and life-giving as a new-born baby in a mother's arms.



Praying Together: Today marks the beginning of a new way of being intentional about praying for the needs of the community. I had thought of setting up a dedicated email for prayers, but this adds an unnecessary layer of complication. Please send prayer requests to me [my church email address](#). You can simply give me a name (your own or someone else's. If it's someone else's please make sure you have their permission.) If you wish to include a reason (recovering from abdominal surgery—or whatever) please do, but that's also not necessary. In order to make sure the list stays up to date, all prayer requests will be kept on the list for two weeks unless they are renewed for another two week period. We will begin having the concerns of the community spoken aloud in the Prayers of the People.



Grace and peace,
Leighton

***From the Wardens**

February! Only 11 months until 2025 and so much to do! We better get started. The Men's Breakfast is on February 7, let Greg know if attending. Jam making is getting started soon, followed by pie-making in April. The Cherry Festival is July 6. Planning for new events is under consideration by Parish Council. We have a few weddings booked and we are pleased that once again Music Niagara will be presenting its concerts starting in June. However, before that Music Niagara and St. Mark's are working together to present a concert by the Cantilon Choir from Alberta, a children's choir. The concert is March 26 at 7 p.m. in the church. Tickets are \$15 and will be available online through Music Niagara or at the door. Let's support these children and ensure the church is full for their performance. Please share with friends and family.

Sunday February 25 is the Annual Vestry. Please mark your calendars for this very important event. It will start right after a cup of coffee and a muffin at 12 noon and will last about 45 minutes. A reminder that 90% of what we do at St. Mark's is done by volunteers. In previous E-News communications we mentioned the committees that make our church function. Be part of this!

The facilities at St. Mark's are ideal for outside events. We have a commercial kitchen, accessible facilities, and a spacious well-lit Addison Hall. Please consider us for family events and celebrations, group meetings or study groups.

2023 tax receipts will be mailed out by February 15th.
Remember where there is a will there is a way to support St. Mark's.

"Make peace with your past so it won't screw up the present".

See you in church!

As always, a reminder to advise the office of anyone who requires assistance, including a phone call, food delivery or some companionship. Even a chat over the fence!

Called to Life-Compelled to Love

Allan Magnacca
Andrea Douglas

Parish Updates

In-Person Sunday Services

8:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist
10:30 a.m. Sung Eucharist

On Duty this Week

February 4, 2024 - Greeter(s) - Chris Bjorgan and Jo-Anne Hill

Reader - Wes Turner

Intercessor - Diane Turner

Server - John Shaver

Altar Guild - Virginia Mainprize, Jennifer Smith and Dorothy Walker

Order of Service

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

Church Bells

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

Staying Up to Date!

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

Click on this link to view our Calendar: [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".

Pancake Supper

St. Mark's on Shrove Tuesday, Feb. 13th 2024

5 pm-7 pm

\$15.00

Enjoy pancakes, maple syrup, sausages and your choice of coffee or tea

Gary Burroughs has kindly offered to lead the event, and must assemble a team to ensure its success.

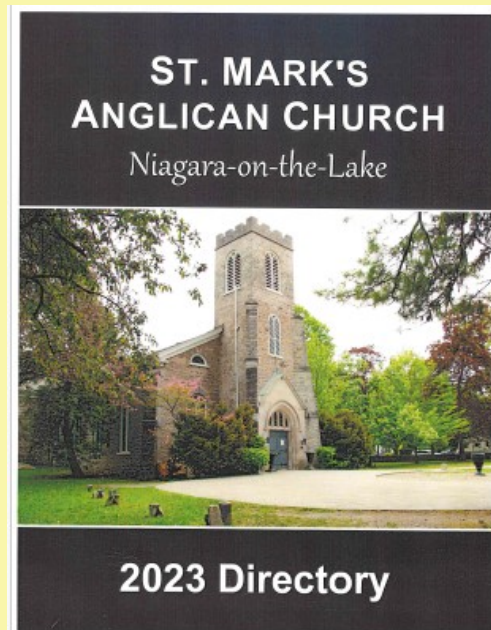
If you would like to **volunteer** please contact Gary at bookkeeperstmarks@gmail.com or call Erin in the office at 905-468-3123.



The St. Mark's Anglican Church 2023 Directory has arrived!

Please come to the office to pick up your copy.

(A reminder that the office is open Monday-Friday 9 am-2pm.)



You are entitled to receive a directory if you had your photograph taken by Universal Studios.

We have only a few copies for purchase at \$20.00.

**The printed donation envelopes for 2024 have arrived.
Please come to the office for pick up.**

MEN'S COMMUNION BREAKFAST

**The next Men's communion Breakfast is scheduled for
Wednesday February 7, 2024
and the first Wednesday of each month going forward.
Watch for details here.**

**Gary Burroughs' Kitchen
made a fresh batch of delicious lasagna and cottage pies!**

Be sure to get yours before they are gone!

**Delicious items for sale also include
Chicken-Vol-Au-Vent and Pea Soup, Stewed Tomatoes
and
Cottage Pie**

****Pop into the office to get your meals****

SOUPS ARE AVAILABLE - INQUIRE IN OFFICE



In the parish cycle of prayer, we pray for Jennifer Smith, Gene Anne Smith, Wendy Steel, Trevor Straker, and Barbara Stratton and their families.

We pray for the sick, especially remembering Joan Bourk.

In the Cycle of Prayer for the Niagara Diocese we pray for St. John, Port Dalhousie, The Reverend Robert Towler, Rector, and the people of that parish.

In the Anglican-Lutheran Cycle of Prayer we pray for the Rt. Rev. John Watton, Bishop, and the people and clergy of the Diocese of Central Newfoundland; the dean, council, and congregations of the Two Rivers, Nith Valley and Niagara Areas of the Eastern Synod; and for a growing openness to dialogue and encounter with people of other faith traditions during World Interfaith Harmony Week.

Did you know ...

... that St. Mark's third rector, The Reverend William McMurray's first wife, was the granddaughter of the head Chief of all the Chippewas? Charlotte (Ogenebugoquay Johnston) McMurray (1806-1878) was an Irish-Ojibwe woman who lived in Dundas in the mid-1800s.

She was the daughter of Irish fur trader John Johnston and Ozhaguscodaywayquay, an Ojibwe leader from Sault Saint Marie, daughter of Chief Waubojeeg.

Charlotte's mother and grandfather were both renowned storytellers, and the children were raised with this tradition along with Christian teachings from their Irish father.

In her youth, she served as an interpreter for missionaries and translated sermons to Anishinaabemowin, later assisting her husband similarly. Although he is credited with writing the first Ojibwe catechism of the Church of England, published in 1834, his letters indicate he never truly mastered the language. Likely, credit should be given to, or at least shared with, Charlotte.

Charlotte and The Reverend William McMurray moved to Dundas in 1838. They fundraised for and oversaw the construction of St. James Church, built on Hatt St. in 1843, following William's promotion to Deacon of Dundas and Ancaster.

They served Dundas for 20 years before moving to Niagara-on-the-Lake when William became the rector at St. Mark's in 1857. Charlotte was instrumental to her husband's work in Dundas, and also provided Anishinaabemowin Church services to Indigenous communities in and around Sault St. Marie.

Charlotte is buried in St. Mark's cemetery. The inscription reads:

***Sacred To The Memory Of Charlotte Johnston, Wife Of William McMurray D.D.D.C.L.
Archdeacon Of Niagara And Rector Of This Parish Who Died On The 17th of January 1878.
Aged 71 Years Asleep In Jesus, Blessed Sleep.***

Chippewa County Historical Society



Charlotte McMurray

Bible Study via Zoom

We are sending Zoom invites via Constant Contact to those who regularly join the Bible Study group. If you would like to attend Bible Study via Zoom, please contact the Rector to have your name added to the distribution. rector.stmarks.notl@gmail.com

Please note if you unsubscribe from any email sent from St. Mark's Church via Constant Contact, you will no longer receive any emails or information from us. If you wish to unsubscribe from a specific mailing list (ie, Bible Study, E-News), please email the office at stmarks@cogeco.net Thank you.

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



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