ISSUE
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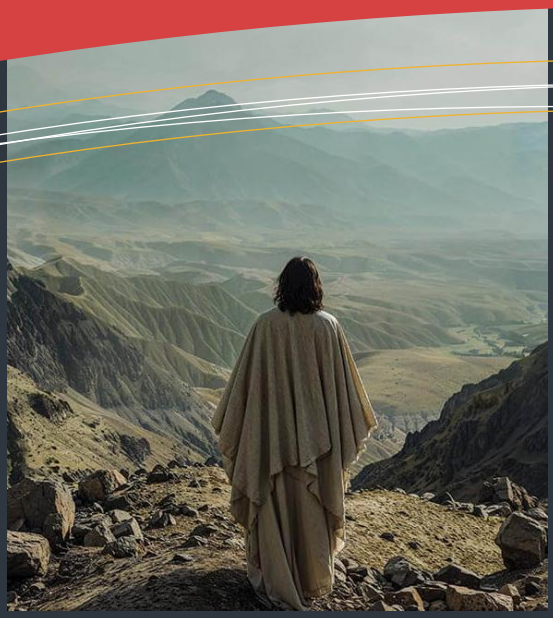
2025

YOUR REGULAR SOURCE OF EVENTS, HAPPENINGS, AND INFORMATION

St. John's Today



This Issue

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Passings

Over the last few months we have lost some special people. Our prayers go out for the souls of the departed and their families including: Violet Marie Churchill, Sherry Elizabeth Derbyshire, Rheal Joseph Chouinard, Ronald John New, Matthew Christopher David Walker, Norma Greta Laffin, and John Wanless.

Happenings

Happenings around the parish.

- **Parish Council** Meetings –Mar. 19th and Apr. 9th.
- **Keenagers** – 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, every month at 10 to 11 a.m. – Civitan Hall.
- **Pray K7A** – March 30th @ 7:00 p.m. – Calvary Bible Church, Smiths Falls.
- **Community Games Night** – April 4th, Food @ 5:30, Games start 6:30.
- **Spring Tea** – April 26th, Sip, Snack & Song @ 1:30, Parish Hall

If you have any events you would like to have posted here you can drop us a line at:
stjohns.smithsfalls@gmail.com
"Events" in the title.

Lenten Thoughts

Traditionally Anglicans who observe the forty days of Lent leading up to the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord use the time which corresponds to the Israelites wandering in the wilderness for forty years after miraculously leaving Egypt, and the forty days Jesus was in the wilderness to give up something. Often this will be chocolate, coffee, alcohol, or even television.

The purpose of any fast in Christian circles is to use the time that would have been taken in said activity, to draw closer to our Lord. Yet, a fast seems like a negative idea. We give up something we like. But we know there is no negativity in the Kingdom of God.

So maybe we could "renew our minds" (Romans 12:2) to consider this time of Lent as a time of feasting? Feasting on the goodness of God, His love, any aspect of His character that will draw us into a deeper and more meaningful relationship with Him as we forego an activity that has brought us pleasure.

So, He has a space to reveal something new to each of us renewing our minds and understanding of Who He is!

(continue on Pg. 2 – Lenten Focus on 40 Days)

Vestry Summary

From the CBR (Canons, Bylaws, and Regulations) of the AOD (Anglican Diocese of Ottawa) –

"Vestry means a meeting of the members of a congregation which is chaired by the Incumbent.".

The parish held our annual Vestry on Sunday, February 23rd. Spirits were bright as it was called to order shortly after 11:30 a.m. with a full house. All voting participants were required to sign a circular declaring their eligibility to participate and to vote. Opening with a prayer, the meeting was chaired by our incumbent, Reverend Dr. Thomas Brauer.

The first order of business was the selection of the Vestry Clerk. Tammy Mulrooney was nominated, accepted and unanimously voted into the position.

With the simple formalities out of the way the meeting proceeded with the Financial Report. The report was presented by Robert (Bob) Mulrooney – the Corporate Treasurer. Bob expressed his gratitude to the parish for their trust and God for the opportunity to be of service.

The report began with a review of the

(continue on Pg. 3 – Vestry Summary)

Pastor Pause – Lent Means Spring!

The English word, "Lent" is a shortform of the Old English word "lencten" which means "Spring Season." In other languages, like Latin and Greek, the name for this season of the Christian year is something like "forty" or "fortieth". This comes from the fact that the season begins forty days (not including Sundays) before Easter.

But the more poetic, English name of Lent strikes me as holding more meaning than the utilitarian "forty". When my family and I lived in South Africa or New Zealand, the seasons were reversed compared with the Canadian seasons. Easter occurred in the early Autumn. Lent occurred at the end of summer. Lent (which means, Spring) at the end of summer – it felt very strange. I had to re-think what this season could mean:

In the season of Lent we are invited to take time to prepare the soil of our lives as we might prepare the soil of our gardens in spring-time. Through fasting, we prepare our minds and bodies to endure delayed gratification and to understand the trials of deprivation. Through prayer, we prepare our spirits to receive the presence, guidance, and gifts of the risen Lord. Through penitence, we prepare our minds and hearts to offer and seek forgiveness for when the obligations of love and care have been broken.

And by preparing the soil of our lives through fasting, prayer, and penitence, we are ready for the fruit of the Spirit and the wheat of the Gospel to grow in and through us for the year to come. *(T. Brauer)*

Lenten Contemplation – Pushing 40

(continued from page 1 – Lenten)

As we feast on the Goodness of God, let us consider his forty days in the wilderness. Focusing on forty opens a whole new set of opportunities for reflection and repentance in Lent.

Have you heard of 40acts 2025, or the Hallow Lent Pray40 Community Prayer Challenge? Both are freely available online to any who wish to participate.

40acts includes a daily devotion right to your inbox which will inspire one to engage in and choose an act of generosity which will be suggested daily but one is free to create one's own acts or be led by the devotion.

Each participant is encouraged to have a 40acts buddy to keep one accountable; to reflect on the blessings one receives, how to thank those who have blessed or return the favour.

It is encouraged to make a journal to document the 40acts experience. And that however Lent is chosen to be done generously every day, whether with acts of kindness or generosity, they are to be done wholeheartedly, creatively and even surprisingly. And can be posted on social media connected to the app if desired.

Prayer is just as important as acts.

(Continue on Pg. 4 – Focus on 40 Prayer)

Our Syrup Floweth Over

Tuesday, March 4, 2025, was Shrove Tuesday, also known as Mardi Gras, or as Fat Tuesday. It was our last day of feasting before Lent. Over time a tradition arose that we celebrated with pancakes and syrup or sweets, hence Pancake Tuesday.

Before the Pandemic, we at St. Johns celebrated this day with a traditional Pancake dinner. In our 175th Year we revived the tradition. And this time it was for a worthy cause. It was our first event to raise funds for the revitalization of our organ.

It was a relaxed, informal event with much in the way of pancakes, sausages, butter and syrup. People were free to come, feast, chat and visit or go as they pleased. Taking your food To-Go was also an option. Roughly 120 came out and joined us.

Free-will donations were encouraged but not required. All were welcome. No attendees were turned away empty.

Our thank you to the team who volunteered, helping with preparation, serving and cleanup.

In all $900+ was raised for the organ by this event. Thank you to our donors. *(D. Willis)*

(continued from page 1 – Vestry)

financial statements from 2024. In summary, the parish did track within the planned budget for the year. It was noted that offerings had increased over this past year. Between that generosity and the dividends from the CTF, the parish was able to meet the needs of the deficit budget, as planned. Our thanks to parishioners past and present for their support. After brief discussion, the statements were formally accepted by Vestry.

With the acceptance of our 2024 performance, Bob presented the planned budget for 2025. Briefly, it remained consistent with the past few years. It is expected to be a deficit budget. But the deficit will be covered by nondilutive dividends from the CTF.

"… stay the course on the budget."

It was also observed that we anticipate significant expenses beyond those in the budget, for special items such as the Parish Hall and the organ. These items when they arise will be resolved through special vestry meetings, as needed. This 2025 operating budget was adopted as presented. Bob was thanked for his continued support and stewardship as Treasurer.

Subsequent motions which were discussed and accepted included, the acceptance of appointees and elective candidates for the 2025 Sunday School, Parish Council, Synod Delegates, and Wardens, a new policy to support succession planning and continuity through term limits for these governance roles, and acceptance of each of the organizational reports. Also adopted was "Thriving in the Future" our vision statement – It will be detailed next issue. *(D. Willis)*

This Month's Interesting Read

Prayer in the Night

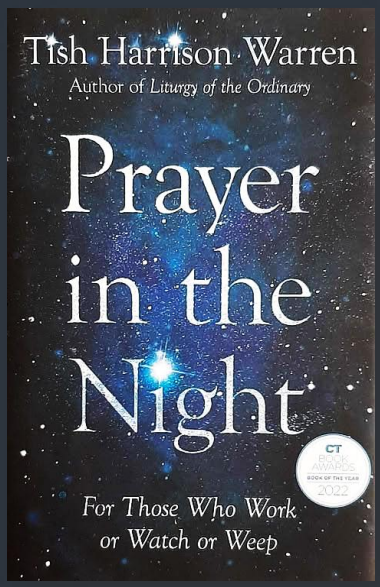
For Those Who Work or Watch or Weep

Authored by Tish Harrison Warren

Author Tish Harrison Warren is an Anglican Priest in the United States. In this book she reflects on Compline, the last prayer office of the day from the Book of Common Prayer. She illustrates how Compline offers us hope and peace during dark and difficult times in our lives.

Warren includes discussion questions and practices, perfect for a book study.

Available on Amazon.ca and on Indigo.ca *(B. Ferguson)*



Holy Terriers Strike Again!!

On February 22nd, for an hour in the early afternoon, a ragtag group of intrepid warriors took to the field (ok lanes) of battle at Gratton Lanes in Smiths Falls. The Holy Terriers were there to represent St. Johns in the Big Brother Big Sister Lanark County fundraiser.

We had some returning veterans and some rookie members on the team, but all did their share. Even our beloved Pastor gave it a try. (And he did not come in last).

Fun and strikes were had by all. And we raised over $600 for this worthy cause.

Organ Fund Kicked Off!

Many are not aware of it, but our wonderful pipe organ is in dire need of attention. That you do not hear any issues as we loudly praise the Lord, is a testimony to the talent of our organists, John and Sterling.

Whether you hear it or not the organ, particularly the keyboards, pedals, and the whole console have an abundance of issues. And they will only get worse.

We have had a professional evaluation of the equipment and the news was not positive. Most of the damage is likely due to standard wear and tear over time. Whatever the cause, it is not a matter of if it fails, but when it fails. In point of fact some parts have already ceased to work and our talented musicians have had to play around them.

A team is exploring our options and will present them soon. Regardless, we know there will be a cost. So we have started the Organ Fund. And we are off to a great start as we are already nearing $15,000.

Pushing 40

Through Prayer

To focus on 40 through prayer you might consider the Lent Pray40 Community Challenge. It began on Ash Wednesday and is guided by several people including Jonathan Roumie who played Jesus on the Chosen.

The prayers include Bible verses and reflections, some fasting ideas on what to give up in Lent, to spend time feasting on the Lord!

Hallow, the app's name, also provides resources to help people prepare for Easter. It is offered as a free trial.

Sometimes having a daily reminder fed to our inbox keeps us focused on our purpose during these 40 days leading up to the climax of our faith in the death, burial and glorious resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It's a journey developing our quiet times with our Lord, being fed, hopefully in a fresh way by scripture, developing a greater understanding of the Word and acting on what we are learning by sharing love with our greater community.

There are many significant 40's in the scriptures. The number 40 appears more than 150 times. The phrase "40 days and 40 nights" appears 24 times. The number 40 is often used to symbolize periods of testing, preparation, and change.

How many can you find?

(C. Kerfoot)

Upcoming Events

- **Parish Council Meetings.**
  Next council meeting is Wednesday, March 19th at 7 p.m. in the Parish Hall. In April, the meeting will be on Wednesday, April 9th at 7 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

- **Food Bank Baskets.**
  Every third Sunday of the month, we will be collecting donations of non-perishable food items for the food bank. Please leave your contributions in the baskets at the base of the chancel steps.

- **Keenagers.**
  Hosted by the First Baptist Church, this is a fellowship time of prayer, scripture reading, music and guest speakers for individuals 55+. The Smiths Falls Civitan Club. Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month from 10 a.m.-11am. All are welcome. Anyone needing a ride may contact Eric Wills 613-283-7007.

- **Pray K7A.**
  On the last Sunday of each month, the local Christian community gathers together for shared fellowship and prayers. It will be held on March 30th starting at 7 p.m. at Calvary Bible Church, 15 Beech St., Smiths Falls, ON K7A 3V3.

- **Games Night.**
  Games nights happen regularly each month, starting at 5:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. The next games night is on Friday, April 4, starting with food at 5:30 and games at 6:30 p.m.

- **175th Anniversary Events – Social Tea**
  Spring Tea! Come out and Sip, Snack, and Sing – To be held April 26th, 2025, starting at 1:30 in the Upper Parish Hall.

- **175th Anniversary Events – Anniversary Finale.**
  The 175th Anniversary Grand Finale Event – Date May 4th, details to follow.

- **Future Editions.**
  April 2025 – Spring into Spring Easter Edition, 175th events and more.

- **Mens Cursillo Weekend.**
  A weekend retreat with a focus on Christian Living. If you desire to live y our faith in the world around you, Cursillo may be right for you. See Trish Warren for details - Date May 9-11th.

Times of Worship:

Sundays:
- 8 a.m. spoken eucharist.
- 10 a.m. sung eucharist.

Wednesdays:
- 10 a.m. weekday eucharist.

Parish Office:
- 9 a.m. to noon, weekdays (613)283-1261

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Disclaimer: The thoughts and opinions expressed herein are those of the contributors and are not meant to represent the views or positions of the Parish of St. Johns or the Anglican Church of Canada.

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THE EVANGELIST
SMITHS FALLS | 175 YEARS | 1849-2024