

Greetings Beloved Community,

In my sermon last Sunday January 18, I reflected on the moment when the first disciples asked, “Where are you staying?” Their question was not merely about a roof over their heads; it was a yearning for a place of belonging, a desire to dwell with the One who calls them. Jesus answered not with a map, but with an invitation: “Come and see.” That invitation is about relationship. It is about abiding—staying close enough, long enough, for love to shape us and for grace to take flesh in ordinary, faithful ways. Discipleship, as we reflected together on January 18, is not first about having everything figured out. It is about showing up. Remaining. Offering what we have, trusting that God’s steadfast love and faithfulness—*hesed* and *emet*—are already at work among us.

As we prepare for our Annual Vestry Meeting, I want to invite you into a time of prayerful discernment. Not pressure. Not obligation. But a gentle listening for how God might be calling *you* to serve the shared life of this parish we love.

Our Anglican way reminds us that leadership and service are not carried by one or two people alone. Parish Council and the Wardens exist to help the whole community share in God’s work—to discern the movement of the Holy Spirit among us, to care for both the spiritual and practical life of the parish, and to enable the gifts of God’s people to flourish for the sake of the Gospel

We are grateful for those who currently serve, and we are also aware that God is always calling new voices, new hands, new hearts into the work of beloved community. Some of these roles are visible; many are quiet and faithful. All of them matter. Many hands make community.

In the coming year, we are especially seeking people who feel called to:

- **Parish Council** – to pray, listen, discern, and help shape the life and mission of St. Mary’s with wisdom, patience, and love. You can find the Guide for Parish Council [HERE](#):
- **Wardens** – to share in the stewardship of our parish’s well-being, caring for its people, property, and resources in collaboration and trust. Both Blaine and Joel are stepping down, and we are seeking two new wardens. Please note that Blaine wears at least 5 hats in our parish, so don’t think that the Warden’s role is everything that Blaine does! I know that’s a strange word, but it comes from hundreds of years of history. The word “warden” comes from the Old English *weardian*, meaning to guard, watch over, or keep safe. From its earliest use, a warden was someone entrusted with care, oversight, and protection rather than command or control. In Anglicanism, this preserved a distinctive balance:
  - **Clergy** were responsible for **spiritual leadership and sacramental life**

- **Wardens** were responsible for the **temporal and communal life of the parish**
- Both were accountable to the **bishop**

This balance is sometimes described as “**mixed governance**”—a system that honours ordained ministry while affirming the vital leadership of the laity. You can find the Warden’s Handbook [HERE](#).

- **Altar Guild** – to prepare the holy space where we gather, tending the vessels, linens, and beauty that support our worship.
- **Preparing the Church for Sunday** – opening, setting up, and helping ensure our shared space is ready to welcome all who come.
- **Greeters** – greeting people as they enter, giving them the leaflet and hymnal, collecting the offering and managing the audio system.
- **Counting the Offering** – a quiet, trustworthy ministry that supports the integrity and care of our shared resources.
- **Holy Helpers** – Assisting Judy with Sunday School. As our Sunday School grows, Judy could use another set of eyes and hands to ensure all our children are included and safe.
- **Coffee Time Ministry** – helping with set-up, clean-up, bringing baking, or simply creating a space where conversation and connection can unfold after worship.
- **Building and Grounds Care** – offering time, skill, or willingness to help maintain the physical home that shelters our worship, outreach, and community life.
- **Fundraising** – helping nurture generosity and funding the mission of St. Mary’s through creative, community-building ways of supporting our shared life.
- **Social Events** – helping plan and support gatherings that foster connection, joy, and a sense of belonging within the parish and wider community.

### **How might God be calling you?**

1. Listen in Prayer – Set aside a quiet moment this week to ask God, “Where are you calling me? What place of service are you inviting me to inhabit?”
2. Reflect on Your Gifts – Consider the gifts you already use in daily life—teaching, listening, organizing, caring for the vulnerable. The handbooks note that wardens and council members bring diverse gifts to bear on the life of the parish.
3. Seek Community Insight – Share your reflections with a trusted fellow parishioner or myself. The handbooks encourage collaborative discernment; the council’s principle of “representative” ministry reminds us that we are called to serve the whole body, not just a segment.
4. Pray for the whole parish—that we might collectively hear God’s voice, discern His direction, and walk together in faithful service.

If, after prayer and conversation, you sense God's gentle tug toward one of these avenues, I warmly invite you to step forward. Whether you feel called to join the parish council, to serve as a churchwarden, or to support the council's work in another capacity, your participation enriches the whole community. Please reach out to me [incumbent@stmarysmetchosin.ca](mailto:incumbent@stmarysmetchosin.ca) or speak to our current wardens, Blaine and Joel.

May the steadfast love (*hesed*) and faithfulness (*emet*) of our God guide you as you consider this invitation. As the Psalmist declares, "Your law is within my heart," may the law of love settle deeply within yours, prompting you to serve with humility, joy, and perseverance.

With gratitude for each of you and confidence that the Holy Spirit moves among us,

Yours in Christ,



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