

Lenten Gifts

Smiths Falls is facing a food insecurity crisis. St. John's is commissioning a Lenten offering of support in both funds and prayers to address this issue.

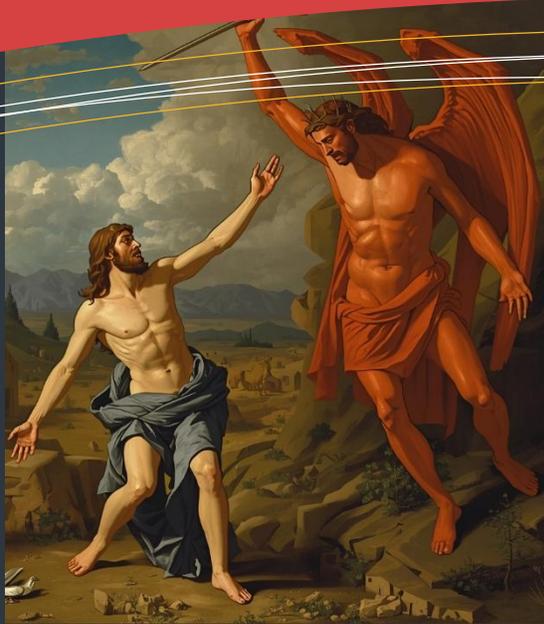
[Details on Pg. 4.](#)

Happenings

Happenings around the parish.

- **Holy Week** – March 30 – April 5. Services daily. See pg. 4 for details
- **Parish Council Meetings** – April 22nd and May 20th @ 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall
- **Coffee Hour** – Wednesdays, 11 a.m. Parish Hall.
- **Keenagers** – 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, every month at 10 to 11 a.m. – Civitan Hall.
- **Pray K7A** – March. 29th @ 7:00 p.m. Location Calvary Bible Church
- **Community Games Night** – April 10th, Food @ 5:30, Games start 6:30
- **Men's Worship Evening** - March 27th @ 6 p.m.
- **Women's Cursillo Weekend** – April 24-26. See pg. 4 for details

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.



The Temptation of Christ

As we move into the latter part of Lent, we are approaching the time when Jesus, having endured 40 days and 40 nights in the wilderness, would be tempted by Satan. After 40 days of sacrifice, hunger, and deprivation, Jesus should have been at his weakest. Yet, as we learn, he proved himself worthy of the task his Father had set before him. What can we learn, what can we take away from Jesus and how he persevered?

First Satan tempted the starving Jesus with food. "Turn these stones to bread and you will dine," he said. In Matthew 4:3-4 we hear the reply,

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word from the Mouth of God."

With this Jesus overcame the weakness of the flesh.

Again, Satan tempted Jesus. He took him to the very peak of the temple in Jerusalem and told him to throw himself down, so the angels might save him. In Matthew 4: 7, Jesus replied in no uncertain terms,

[\(continues on Pg. 3 – Overcoming Temptations\)](#)

This Issue

Temptation and Progress Part 2 [P.1](#)

Pause For the Pastor & Hall Update [P.2](#)

Budget Performance and Readings [P.3](#)

Last Lenten Call & Upcoming Events [P.4](#)

Projects Progress – Music and Media

As many are aware St. John's is working its way through several capital and facilities-based projects. Some of these projects have been thrust upon us by circumstances. Some of these are projects of opportunity. Yet others are unexpected blessings. With so much going on, it is incumbent upon us to keep everyone apprised as all of these projects move along at their very different paces. Some of the key projects include:

- ❖ Parish Hall Refurbishment
- ❖ Church Organ Replacement
- ❖ Expansion of the Music Ministry
- ❖ Evolution of Social Ministry

This month we focus on:

Organ Replacement

As many of you are aware this has been an ongoing project for most of 2025, and it continues into 2026. However, we are approaching conclusion. We have purchased the replacement organ from Phoenix Organs from Peterborough Ontario. (<https://phoenixorgans.com/>).

It is ready for delivery. We are expecting to have it installed later this spring.

[\(continue on Pg. 2 – Projects\)](#)

Pause with the Pastor

In both the Book of Common Prayer and the Book of Alternative Services the season of Lent begins with a call. Because Lent is the season of penitence and of fasting, the expectation is to begin the call with some declaration of our need for forgiveness, or of our obligation to the poor. But that is not where it begins at all. It begins at Easter.

You see, the call to live a Holy Lent, and indeed the call to live a Holy life, begins not in our brokenness, nor in our obligations. It begins in God's solution to both. By rising from the dead on Easter morning, having taken our sins, our guilt, our judgement, and our failures with him, Jesus left all our judgeable mess in the grave, and gave us a way to freedom. All we need to is to be honest about who we really are, about what we've done and what we didn't do that has caused suffering to others.

This leads to the second part of the call, to self-reflection. We are invited to examine ourselves and seek out our failings and failures. Through reflection and reason, we can discover where we have been the bad-guy in somebody else's story – and if we can't find a time when that might be true, then we are not being honest to ourselves, let alone to God. This reflection is not so that we can lay judgement upon ourselves, or upon others. It is not so we can feel bad about who we are and go around all sad and mopey. Not at all. This reflection is so that we can be real with ourselves about why we need Jesus; so that we can be aware of what we need to give up to him to take to the grave, to leave behind. And then, because we are forgiven, to raise us up to new life on our own third-day!

[\(Continued on Pg. 4 - Last Lenten Call\)](#)

The Deep Cleaning Begins!!!

Everything that was in the Hall basement had to be cleaned, packed up and stored. Shown here focused on the task are Kathy Porter, Brenda Ferguson and Deb Lewis.



Photo – L. Arkell

Projects and Progress

[\(continued from pg 1 – Projects\)](#)

Chancel Floor & Music

One of the opportunities that has arisen with the coming new organ is to address the health and safety hazard of the extra step from the Chancel to the altar rail. By raising the chancel floor by the height of the step in question that extra step is eliminated. This also has the benefit of leveling the chancel surface, offering a great deal of flexibility with how praise and worship are offered in that space. Whether a large choral choir or multi-piece band, we will be able to accommodate it. Just in time for the new growth in our traditional choir, the continued

growth and evolution of Beginnings, and the new opportunities for hosting outside musicians and singers.

Social Ministry

From our web page, our newsletter, and our Facebook account you can follow us online and in print. We are expanding these media outreaches on a couple of fronts. Coming soon will be videos of past homilies, and video blogs from the Pastor. Also, media related, the Games Night Crew will soon begin hosting Family Movie Nights and Matinees (shades of Soper Theater). Please stay connected as our social media presence expands. (D. Willis)

Hall Update

Our Parish Hall recovery continues to accelerate.

We are now at the stage of preparing for the removal of all designated substances and materials from the lower hall, basically a gutting and removal of everything to the bare bones.

Done are:

- ✓ Designated substance report reviewed.
- ✓ Lower hall sealed.
- ✓ Keepable items cleaned & stored; appliances offsite.
- ✓ Building permit application in with the town.

Thank you to all who helped with packing and storage. Next steps:

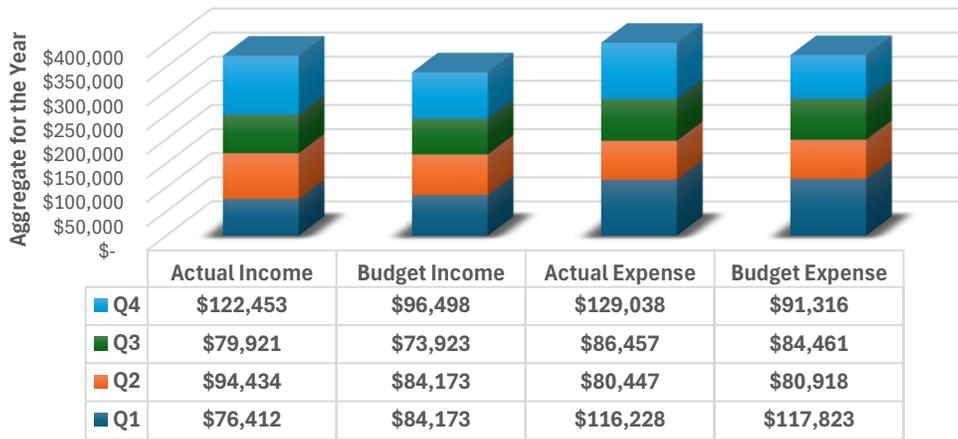
- ✓ RFP for demolition and substance removal work. (L Arkell)



Just some of the items cleaned and rescued from the Parish Hall Basement.

Photo: L. Arkell

Income and Expense / Actual vs Budget - 2025



(from page 1 -- Epiphanies)

“You shall not put the Lord our God to the test.”

Jesus had overcome pride.

Frustrated, Satan took Jesus to the top of the world, offering him dominion over all that he could see, if he would but bow down to him. In Matthew 4:10 Jesus commanded, **“Get away Satan! It is written: The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.”** In one rebuke, Jesus overcame the lust for power and won out over Satan and sin. Jesus was now ready for his ministry, as it would soon start in Galilee.

Lent is about introspection, self-assessment, repentance, and spiritual renewal. This is what

Jesus taught as he started his spiritual journey with the 40 days and nights of denial and sacrifice. Only when Jesus had passed through the soul trialing wilderness and proven to be without sin, was he ready to share his ministry, his faith, with others. By denying sin of both body and spirit and in proving his humility and love of God, Jesus began his leadership by example.

“Man does not live by bread alone but by the word of God.”

Two thousand years later, we still heed these words and follow in his example, undergoing 40 days and nights of self-examination and sacrifice.

Although we often prove weaker than Christ was, we endeavor to assess and renew our lives in light of the Gospel of Christ.

For the remaining few weeks of Lent, see how we can better ourselves.

Questions for reflection:

- ❖ Am I on the path I should/need to be on?
- ❖ When was my last act of true, anonymous charity?
- ❖ What three things can I change for the better?
 - In my spiritual life?
 - In my secular life?
 - For the benefit of others

From these thoughts, spin out words and deeds to realize your true potential. (D. Willis)

2025 Another Budget Success

Having just completed our Annual Vestry Meeting, this year on March 1st following the 10 a.m. service, it is important for the congregation to know how the Parish fared last year. For those who could not attend here is a summary of the 2025 business of the Parish.

At the meeting Vestry was presented with and approved the proposed budget for 2026. We will cover this budget in a forthcoming issue. First we will review our finances and how we performed according to the plan from last year. The chart on this page summarizes this performance, showing quarter-by-quarter how we actually did compared to the budgeted plan for both income and expenses. It was pretty close.

According to our Treasurer, Bob Mulrooney, **“The parish is broadly on track.”** Our income exceeded expectations by \$34,453, due in-part to the focused fund raising for the organ update. Unfortunately, our expenses were also higher than planned by \$3,200. The parish is financially healthy; income reflects engagement and generosity. It is also noted that our facility/project costs outpaced the original 2025 budget, a sign of conservative budgeting, *not financial weakness*. Worth considering is whether future budgets should include more realistic facilities reserve elements. Something to watch in 2026.

In 2025 we tracked well to the budget. Let’s continue this in 2026. (B. Mulrooney, D. Willis)

Lent Pray40 - 2026

A Lenten Prayer App

Publisher: Hallow.com

This app is originally offered for the Catholic church but from a Christian ecumenical perspective, it applies equally well for Anglicans. As Christians we share a common faith with respect to Lent and Easter.

This app elicits and encourages the power of prayer and faith. It offers a prayer schedule well-suited to Lenten devotions.

Find it on the web at Hallow.com

(D. Willis)



Last Lenten Call

(Continued from - Pg. 2)

The final call is the call to observe a Holy Lent. This call doesn't mean make sure you are especially nice, or especially good or kind during the weeks before Easter. Not at all. 'Holy' means set apart and special. This is a call to make these short weeks specially important as you reflect upon yourself, as you take your questions and your sorrows to God in Jesus Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit. This is a call to devote extra time and extra effort to knowing yourself, and to knowing your God. And adding even just 15 minutes of reflection to your day, or 15 minutes of extra care and love for someone else, will make this season Holy, set apart for us all to know better our need for Jesus, for the cross, and for the resurrection.

And all this so that when that blessed day comes, that glorious third day of the resurrection, the eighth day of creation, when that day of celebration and triumph comes at last, our joy and thankfulness will be all the greater because what we needed to get rid of got left in the grave, and what we needed to save us has risen from it.

Amen

(Rev Dr. Thomas Brauerf)

Upcoming Events

- **Men's Hymns and Worship Evening.**
On Friday, March 27th @ 6 p.m. An evening of praise, song, worship, and fellowship. Hosted at St. John's by our brothers of Evergreen Bible Chapel.
- **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 29th starting at 7 p.m. at Calvary Bible Church, 15 Beech St. Smiths Falls.
- **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 10th, starting with food at 5:30 and games at 6:30 p.m.
- **Parish Council Meetings.**
Next council meeting is in April, the meeting will be on Wednesday, April 22nd and May 20th at 7 p.m. in the Parish Hall.
- **Mid-Week Coffee Hour!**
A relaxing hour of sips and fellowship. Wednesdays at 11 a.m. in the Parish Hall. This is a weekly event.
- **Food Insecurity.**
Food insecurity is at an all-time high in Smiths Falls, impacting up to 25% of our community. St. John's is organizing a parish-wide Lenten fast collective offering to the Smiths Falls Foodbank. Parishioners are invited to make a donation and/or commit to offering prayers of support for those in need. For details, please contact Karen Bryan or Trish Warren.
- **Keenagers.**
Hosted by the First Baptist Church, this is a fellowship time of prayer, scripture reading, music and guest speakers for individuals 55+. At The Smiths Falls Civitan Club Hall. 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.
- **Upcoming Events – Spring Potluck.**
Winter Potluck dinner. April 2026. This one is with a twist. All dishes brought to the dinner must be from: **Feeding the Flock.**
- **Upcoming Cursillo – Women's Weekend**
April 24th to April 26th, Women's Cursillo Weekend, at the Galilee Centre in Arnprior. Interested parties can contact Trish Warren (613)206-1405 or Kathy Porter (613)283-7605 for more details.

Times of Worship:

Sundays:

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

Wednesdays:

- 10:00 a.m. spoken eucharist.

Holy Week: (March 30-Apr 5)

- Mon.-Wed. :
Devotional Services –
7:30 pm
- Maunday
Thursday 7:30
pm – Parish
Hall
- Good Friday:
10 am Solemn
Prayer;
Noon – Walk of
the Cross -
Ecumenical –
From St.
Francis
- Holy Saturday,
7:30 p.m. -
Easter Vigil –
St. James
Carleton Place
- Easter Day:
8 and 10 am
services.

Parish Office:

- 9 a.m. to noon,
weekdays;
excepting
Thursday.
On Thursdays,
1 to 3 p.m.
(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.

