



**News from**  
**New St. James Presbyterian Church**

***A Mission Church***  
***Following Christ, Worshipping God, Serving Others***  
***June 10, 2020***

*From the Publisher*

On Under the Influence on CBC Radio, Terry O'Reilly quoted from the book Spiders in Space, by Todd Hirsch and Rob Roach. It tells of an experiment that NASA ran on the Skylab space station in 1973, to see how spiders would spin a web without the effects of gravity. The first web looked like it was built by a drunk spider, but after a couple of days they figured it out. O'Reilly said, "The arachnid astronauts adapted to the unwanted change. Their essential nature didn't change. They were the same spiders, but they learned how to spin their webs under a disorienting new condition." Talking about the disorienting new condition that we are facing, he quoted from the book: "Successful adaptors find ways to thrive under the new conditions, rather than merely learning to tolerate them . . . Adaptors will see the new normal as an opportunity. Non-adaptors will give up. It pays to be a spider in space." Read on to see how New St James is adapting to, and learning to thrive in, these disorienting new conditions.

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## Sabbath Memories

When I was a child, 'old people' sometimes called Sunday 'The Lord's Day'. (Mind you, they were roughly the age I am now. So, not very old at all.)

Sunday felt different then. Shops were closed. No one went to work, though household chores were done. Children played indoors and out. But the evening meal was special, more formal, more solemn than weekday suppers. It was Sunday, the Lord's Day, the Sabbath Day.

The first allusion to the Sabbath is in the first book of the Bible. But it's the last day of God's creating work. "God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it" (Genesis 2:3).

God rests on the seventh day. Why? God doesn't need a nap. God has spared a day, built into the very structure of creation, to be still and behold what he has made, to contemplate its goodness and beauty, and then delight in it. This delight is the point of God's creating work.

On those long-ago Sunday evenings, I'd sometimes make a village with houses made from Lego. I'd populate it with Matchbox cars, contraptions made from my Meccano Set, a plastic dinosaur, and a model train purloined from my brother. This was all play, sheer play; yet it was serious work too. There was the labour of setting it up just so. Then there was the 'fun work' of playing with it for hours, getting lost in the world I'd made, pretending it was all real.

Rev. Andrew Fullerton  
The Interim Moderator Who Just Won't Go Away

Summoned to bed, I'd stand up, but stall. I wasn't yet finished my play (are we ever?). My parents didn't understand this, but I couldn't say good night to the little world I'd made without first gazing upon it, and to take my time doing it. I drank it all in with a feeling of supreme happiness, as if from a God's eye view.

God's 'seventh day' is something like that.

We could, if we wish, look upon this pandemic as the chance for an extra long Sabbath, a.k.a. 'sabbatical'.

I know. We scramble and fret and moan, missing things we loved about 'normal' life: eating in restaurants, singing in a choir, embracing a friend, attending a concert, comforting the sick, and worshipping in the pews of New St James Church. We want these back, all of them, and we want them right now.

But there's an opportunity embedded in this crisis. It could be a rare, protracted chance for the quiet 'rest' of the Sabbath. Have we forgotten life's point and purpose? Have we forgotten how to rest in the divine source at the root of our being? Have we lost the ability to revel in God's image within us, to be creative, playful, loving, and free?

"Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers," wrote William Wordsworth. Life is not just 'doing' but 'being'; not just 'making stuff' but gazing on life with joy.

The world was made to be delighted in. So were we. That's why the last Day of Creation was the first Sabbath Day.

## *Mark – My Words*

About a year ago, Susan and I took a two-week trip to England and the Channel Islands. It was a wonderful experience – good flights, great weather, tasty food, interesting people.

We did a bunch of the “touristy” things:

Stonehenge – an intriguing rock formation  
Visited a Cornish farm – sheep, Cornish pasties, Cornish dancing, narrow roads  
Salisbury Cathedral – we saw one of only four copies of the Magna Carta, considered the foundation of individual rights and privileges as we know them today.

We toured two churches built in the 11th century – over 900 years ago! In one of those churches we heard a six-voice “a capella” group, singing everything from ancient canticles to Billy Joel, in 30 minutes.

We visited the Jamaica Inn – the setting for some of the novels by Daphne du Maurier.

These were all special moments, and tremendously moving in their own way, but one that really made an impression on me was a plaque on the parish church in Windsor, literally two blocks from the gates of Windsor Castle. The church dates

Blessings,  
Rev. Mark

back to 1011, but this building was completed in 1822. On a stone wall beside the main entrance, there is a plaque:

This Church Welcomes  
People of all faiths  
And people of none  
All races  
All genders  
All sexualities  
All disabilities  
All nationalities  
All are welcome in  
this place of prayer

This plaque begs the question – if we do not do as it proclaims, what are we doing? If we are not welcoming as it suggests, why do we exist as a congregation?

I hope we do, and we are.

It occurred to me that these thoughts, which I wrote last year, are worth speaking again this month.

Maybe when we can be together physically, we could talk about this – and maybe put up such a plaque on our church property.

Be well.  
Stay safe.

## *From the Clerk of Session*

Hello from the Clerk of Session as we head into the early days of Summer. Though we continue to be in the period of physical distancing and isolation orders, we know that our efforts are working to flatten the

curve and help reduce the community spread of the COVID-19 virus. We do hope that you are able to stay safe and healthy and still connected to others in the congregation.

As we have asked before, please help to ensure that the Elders and Church members reach out to others in our Church family to offer support and a friendly voice, assistance where needed and to check in with people to see how they are doing. Keep the lines of communications open through the various electronic means available.

To borrow a phrase from another Presbyterian Church in Chicago, just because the building is closed does not mean the Church is closed. Church is still happening! We continue to have weekly worship services, prayers, sermons and reflections from Rev. Mark McLennan. These are posted weekly on the New St. James website ([newstjames.ca](http://newstjames.ca)) and we are working with Rev. McLennan to record his weekly sermons for posting on our website. Stay tuned for this.

As has been the case over the past few months, the Congregational leaders (including the Moderator, Rev. Dr. Andrew Fullerton, Clerk of Session, Chair of the Board of Managers, Human Resources Convenor, Treasurer and other Committee Convenors as necessary plus regular contact with staff) continue to meet electronically to manage the affairs of the Church. All of this is to keep the Church in order, manage financial affairs and address other matters as they arise. A number of matters have been considered and actions taken to move forward. You may read elsewhere in this Newsletter about some of these, but we would like to keep you up to date on some of these items as follows:

1. Worship – Public worship services continue to be suspended for the foreseeable future and this will most likely go through the Summer and into the Autumn period. Rev. Mark McLennan will continue to provide written services,

sermons and prayers, and we are working to post recordings of Rev. McLennan's sermons. Church weddings and funerals are also suspended during this time.

2. Church Program Activities – There will be no on-site Church program activities during the Summer as the building remains closed to non-staff or essential Church workers.

3. Outside Use Activities – The Church building continues to be closed to outside users of our facilities, as required by public health requirements and also to protect our staff.

4. Staffing – Staff have continued to be paid during this period and plans are underway for Rev. Mark McLennan and staff (Judi, Mark and Torin) to return to work on site at the Church. The building will remain closed and access by others to the building will be restricted to those responsible for essential functions and will be very limited. Appointments will need to be made in advance. Rev. McLennan and staff will be following protective public health measures and increased sanitizing of the premises will be instituted. Compliance with these difficult and extraordinary measures will determine next steps and our ability to safely move forward. It is critical that we protect the health and safety of Rev. McLennan, Judi, Mark and Torin. Help us ensure that this first phase is successful.

You will continue to be able to call the Church Office 519-434-1127 (Monday to Thursday 9-12 and 1-3) or leave a message. You can also be in touch by email:

Rev. McLennan –

[mmclennan@newstjames.ca](mailto:mmclennan@newstjames.ca)

Judi Le Blanc and Mark McDonald-  
[admin@newstjames.ca](mailto:admin@newstjames.ca)

Torin Chiles- [tchiles@newstjames.ca](mailto:tchiles@newstjames.ca)

5. Financial – We continue to apply to the Federal Government for wage subsidy assistance to help us with our finances during the suspension of public worship.

6. Website – Our new website, [www.newstjames.ca](http://www.newstjames.ca) (thanks to Charlene Beynon and the ad hoc Website Committee members Steve Langham, John Malone and Andrew Reid) is working well and is a great addition to our

communications during the COVID-19 period.

So again, we ask everyone to be patient, stay home as much as possible, and practice safe distancing. Our future planning will be guided by sound public health practices and knowledge that our actions will intend to protect the most vulnerable in our community. Until then, please stay safe and healthy.

Bruce Curtis, Clerk of Session.

### *From the Music Director*

Can it be that we have been separated from each other for over 10 weeks now? How strange and solitary the sanctuary must seem – the organ and piano unplayed, the pews unoccupied for so long, the sound of our collective singing silent for two and a half months! It was an unimaginable thought at the beginning of March, and a new way of life by the end of March. We are undergoing the same agonizing process at the university. There is a recognition that some things can be done very well virtually - lecture courses and committee meetings come to mind – but there is also an understanding that some things MUST happen face to face. The Music faculty is working hard to find that balance of safety but still being able to do the things that cannot be done as well virtually.

We are trying to find our way too as a congregation and Lesley, Nawton and I have been so gratified and pleased to receive feedback that our Sunday morning Devotionals on FaceBook Live at 10:30am on Sundays have been meaningful and useful to many of you in the New St. James family. We have also been amazed at the outreach it has had. Friends from Switzerland (remember Susan Hug who sang in our Choir for two years a decade

ago?) and Germany (former students) and China (Huiping Tan tunes in regularly) and Indonesia and London England and cities all across North America. It seems to me that people are craving that time of devotion and connection combined with reverence, gratitude and solace.

We must keep reminding ourselves that this will not last forever. We will be together again, and our voices will rise again in praise and community. We must keep our community kindled in these dark times supporting our church, supporting each other and those people we meet in our daily lives who are dispirited and facing the very real challenges of hardship and worry. We can each reach out into the world and spread light and hope and comfort in our daily interactions – even if it is talking to colleagues, friends and family in a ZOOM meeting or to our fellow Londoners at the socially distanced checkout line at the grocery store. There are many who need our message and our love, and it is in the very mission statement of New St. James to continue to be about this important business.

The university is already making plans for a phased reopening and some of our planning for the fall is very encouraging

indeed. We do not yet know what the future will bring for a reopening of the Sanctuary of New St. James – perhaps a similar phased and careful return to normalcy – but we do know what our mission is at the corner of Oxford and Wellington and beyond. I am proud to serve in such a community as NSJ. It may seem as though we are struggling these days but I trust in the strength of our mission and our leadership and our community and in the Risen Christ who leads us on out of a remarkable Easter and

Torin Chiles

### *Financial update*

Thanks to the continued support of New St. James' members, and assistance from the Canadian Emergency Wages Subsidy (CEWS) program, we have, so far, been able to meet our financial obligations, including payroll. Donations have been coming every week by Pre-Authorized

Jeff Goud, Treasurer

### *From Women's Council*

I can't believe I am talking about the Christmas Marketplace on a beautiful sunny day in June, but I am. However, given the current pandemic situation, we will not be hosting our traditional bazaar where many people come and have an amazing breakfast and then shop 'til they drop.

Instead we will offer curbside pick-up or delivery for our baked goods, deli items and jams.

To be perfectly honest, we are not exactly sure how, when or what this sale will look like. We do know we want to offer these items for sale to our church community as

Ascension this year and into Pentecost, which is after all the season of going out into the world and sharing our story and our love with everyone we meet!

Please join me (and Lesley and Nawton too!) each Sunday morning on FaceBook Live. Leave your comments and share it on your pages and share and like on the NSJ FaceBook page and on our newly revamped Website too – that's a way to move out into the world these days in witness and in love.

Remittance (PAR), mail, Interac e-transfers and Canada Helps. If you have any questions on how you can continue contributing to New St. James, please feel free to email me at [jrgoud@hotmail.com](mailto:jrgoud@hotmail.com) or call/text me at 519-851-8709. Thank you again for your support.

a much-needed fundraiser and it will probably take place in November.

We will ask for your help:

- 1) Are you interested in making items?
- 2) Are you interested in purchasing items?
- 3) Do you have suggestions on how this sale can take place?

Fresh strawberries will soon be ready for picking so we are asking for your help in making jams for our sale. This is just the beginning of another amazing growing season....

Please call or email Deb or Karen with your ideas, donations and orders. We look

forward to hearing from you and even more to the time when we can have fellowship together.

Deb Noble-Van Hees 519-471-6857 or [denvh1@hotmail.com](mailto:denvh1@hotmail.com)  
Karen Buchwald 519-641-6742 or [karenbuchwald@hotmail.com](mailto:karenbuchwald@hotmail.com)

### *Northern Hospitality Meals Carry On*

New St James' commitment to feed the less fortunate continues with another take out meal on Monday, June 15. Attendance fluctuates but last Monday (May 25) approximately 40 folks were in need of a meal and they did not leave empty handed.

Only 3 of the 5 Northern Hospitality churches are participating at this time but we are hopeful once this pandemic is over, they will return to serve. I am proud to

Cathy Taylor

say your Northern Hospitality team is totally committed to this outreach mission and will be there whenever needed.

We have no idea when in-house hot meals will be served again but hopefully early fall. In the meantime, thank you for your prayers and continued financial support.

Wishing you all a safe and healthy summer.

### *From the New St James Gardening Team*

The NSJ gardening team gathered at 9am on Tuesday, June 2 to spruce up the church gardens. Our hands were busy, and our hearts were filled with joy while we visited. It was the first time we had been together since the beginning of the pandemic. Of course, we socially distanced in our plentiful gardens, weeding, deadheading, edging and pruning. 6 hours later and about 12 bags of brush and debris were taken away. However, we all agreed to come back the following Tuesday because there is so much more to do.

The roses will be magnificent this year,

already so many buds on all the bushes and even on the ones we thought we were going to replace. I just can't wait to see their glory and I hope you have a chance to stop by and see them.

As a team we decided that we wouldn't plant geraniums as we won't be frequenting the church as often. Instead we will use our talents to keep what we have looking beautiful and tidy.

Our thanks to Tim for letting us use his truck to cart the very full garden bags to the recycling depot and helping to empty the bags too.

Deb Noble-Van Hees on Behalf of the NSJ Gardening Team: Theresa Walsh, Nancy Roach, Liz Emmerton, Karen Buchwald, Cathy Taylor and Deb Noble-Van Hees

Lots continues to happen on the website front! We hope that you have become a regular visitor and are enjoying the site's many features. Please let others know about the site and continue to share information with others that don't have internet access. Watch for Rev. McLennan's mid-week meditations and the sermons, which are posted each Sunday by 8:00 AM.

How is the Website Doing?

Are you wondering how the website is doing since the April 11, 2020 launch? Let us share just a few statistics. Due to privacy restrictions, it is not possible to tell how many visitors are from NSJ and how many are from the broader community. However, we do know that as of June 2, 2020, we have had had 594 visitors in the last 30 days. The top three pages that were visited most often were the "Worship" page (our home page), followed by the "Sermon" page and the third most sought out page was "Get Involved". With church activities on hold, it is not surprising that the least visited page was our Calendar of Events. This is just a snapshot, yet we are encouraged by these early results. It will be important for us to look at trends over time and make "mid-course" adjustments as needed to ensure that the site remains engaging. We are also using our social media presence via our NSJ Facebook page to engage our congregation and community. The Facebook page works in tandem with our website to share all the great things happening within New St. James. We now have over 134 followers of our NSJ Facebook page and growing!

The Prayer Board: A New Feature

For many years, NSJ has been very fortunate to have a confidential Prayer Chain with a group of dedicated

volunteers under the leadership of Mary Lou McCrimmon. The Prayer Chain can be activated by calling the Church Office at 519-434-1127.

A new feature on the redesigned website is an electronic Prayer Board. The Prayer Board offers you another option to reach the NSJ Prayer Chain. You have the option of submitting your prayer request electronically from the website so that once it is approved it will appear on the site or your prayer request can be treated confidentially and not appear on the site.

Recognizing that the electronic prayer requests can come from anyone, anywhere with internet access, the approval process ensures that prayer requests are appropriate, respectful and consistent with NSJ's mission and values.

The Prayer Board offers an important outreach ministry and may be especially welcomed by those not associated with a faith community. It also offers NSJ another opportunity for us to feel connected as a Congregation.

We're Launching a New Committee and Looking for Volunteers

Plans are underway to launch a Media Advisory Committee. Intended to serve a coordinating role re NSJ print and digital forms of communication, much of the committee's work will be done on line following an initial face to face meeting - most likely by video conference considering our current reality. Members will include the Newsletter Publisher, the Website Administrator, a representative from the Facebook Team and one to two Session members. We are also looking for one to two volunteers from the Congregation.



Do you have an interest and /or expertise in this area? Would you like to be part of a team that effectively coordinates and enhances digital and print media at NSJ? If you would like to volunteer or would like further information, please contact Andrew Reid [areid@newstjames.ca](mailto:areid@newstjames.ca)

Winner of Our Website Draw!

The volunteers who reviewed the entire pilot website before we launched were eligible for a draw. The prize, made

Until next time, your Website Committee: Steve Langham, John Malone, Andrew Reid and Charlene Beynon

### *From the Facebook Team*

Be sure to check out the New St. James Facebook page and click Like and Follow.

This is a place where you will find lots of exciting content and hear how members are doing and the many ways they are contributing to our congregation and the community around us. It's a great way for us to stay connected, even if we're not yet meeting in person. Please contribute to the page, including announcements, event notices, and posts to inspire and uplift. Submit them to [facebook@newstjames.ca](mailto:facebook@newstjames.ca)

Special thanks to Charlene Beynon, Steve Langham and Christine (Goud) Tisdale for getting this project off the ground. We now have several people on the admin team to keep things running smoothly.

Here's a brief introduction to your new Facebook team members:

Hi, I'm Blu Say and I'm a part of the New St James Facebook Team. I am delighted to be a part of a wonderful group of people with goals of keeping us – NSJ - connected through social media during this difficult time as well as years to come. I have

possible by an anonymous donor, was a \$50.00 restaurant gift card. We are very pleased to announce that Charles Hoo is the winner! Charles has very generously donated the \$50.00 back to NSJ with a request that the money be used to fund a special coffee time when we can all celebrate our return to NSJ and our ability to worship in the Sanctuary. Thank you, Charles!

Watch for future updates!

positive experiences with staying connected and communicating with my loved ones through Facebook and I hope that we can also bring you (the congregation) the experience. Although we are always in each other's hearts and prayers, staying connected through social media is a bonus.

I'm Monica Sass and I'm joining forces with this amazing team to bring New St. James closer to our local and global community. People are increasingly spending time on their devices, and social media continues to occupy valuable space in peoples' day. Our church has so much to offer others. Facebook and Instagram are just another way we're going to share the work of New St. James and Christ's love with the world! Thank you for your suggestions and prayers as we embark on our journey of sharing and posting!

Nawton Chiles studies Philosophy at Huron College and is our tech resource for the page. You'll find him in the baritone section of the choir.

I'm Lesley Banks and I'm excited to be part of this great team of people and

looking forward to connecting with our congregation in this digital forum. I have a passion for prayer (and I am deeply grateful to the tech resource guy).

Your Facebook team: Blu Say, Lesley Banks, Nawton Chiles, Monica Sass

### *Congratulations . . .*

To Donna and John Aziz who celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on April 16.

To Pat Taylor, bagpiper extraordinaire, who celebrated his 90th birthday on May 11.

And to John Manhertz, Ann Milling's dear friend, who celebrated his 90th birthday on June 5.

### *. . . and condolences*

To the family of John Arnett, who died on Monday, June 1 at the London Health Sciences Center after fighting the COVID-19 coronavirus. Because of the pandemic, no public funeral service will be held. Donations in John's memory can be made to the LHS Foundation COVID-19 Response Fund or to another charity in support of the COVID-19 pandemic response.

And to Laura Summers-Crozier and the family of Sam Crozier, who died in Parkwood Hospital on Saturday June 6. Arrangements were not known when the newsletter went to print.

### *Contact List*

Interim Moderator	Rev Dr Andrew Fullerton <a href="mailto:afullerton.elmwoodchurch.ca@gmail.com">afullerton.elmwoodchurch.ca@gmail.com</a>
Supply Minister	Rev Mark McLennan <a href="mailto:roundrev@rogers.com">roundrev@rogers.com</a>
Clerk of Session	Bruce Curtis <a href="mailto:bruce.curtis6@sympatico.ca">bruce.curtis6@sympatico.ca</a>
Music Director	Torin W. Chiles <a href="mailto:tchiles@uwo.ca">tchiles@uwo.ca</a>
Office Administrator	Judi LeBlanc <a href="mailto:admin@newstjames.ca">admin@newstjames.ca</a>
Custodian	Mark McDonald <a href="mailto:admin@newstjames.ca">admin@newstjames.ca</a>
Newsletter publisher	Andrew Reid <a href="mailto:areid@newstjames.ca">areid@newstjames.ca</a>

New St James Presbyterian Church  
280 Oxford Street East, London, Ontario N6A 1V4  
519.434.1127 [www.newstjames.ca](http://www.newstjames.ca)

And finally . . . It couldn't possibly be as simple as this - could it???



**WE ARE THE SAME ANIMAL**



**RACISM IS STUPID**

