



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

A Mission Church
Following Christ, Worshipping God, Serving Others
March 18, 2021

www.newstjames.ca

From the Publisher

What to expect and when to expect it: I anticipate that the newsletter this year will appear late May/early June, late August, around Thanksgiving, and pre-Advent/Christmas issue in late November. This schedule may change at any time as things change with the pandemic. Deadlines for submissions will be announced ahead of each issue, but I am happy to receive material at any time. I will simply hold it for the next issue. Let me remind you that since our new website was launched with the new URL – www.newstjames.ca – my New St. James email address is areid@newstjames.ca

From the Minister	page 2	Queen's Commonwealth Essay	
From the Session	page 3	Competition	page 10
From the Organ Console	page 4	House search	page 11
Mission and Social Action	page 6	For children of all ages 1	page 11
Easter Appeal 2021	page 6	From the Board of Managers	page 12
SA Kettle Campaign	page 6	Church School Birthdays	page 13
Website Corner	page 7	Condolences	page 14
Highland Group	page 9	For children of all ages 2	page 14
Northern Hospitality	page 9	Contact List	page 14
Women's Missionary Society	page 10		

From the Minister

Greetings in Christ:

As we mark one year since the pandemic was declared, we have much to remember before God: even as we lament widespread hardship and loss of life, we may also give thanks for the many people we have depended on daily. Amid our concerns at this time, I wish to reflect briefly on *the practice of patience amid the pandemic*.

Looking back, I notice how the pandemic has constantly required patience. In March 2020, as abrupt closures caused disruptions, it became evident that these conditions would demand continual patience. In the year that followed—amid delays, long lines, postponements, and cancellations—we have needed to be patient with one another, recognizing always that others are experiencing their own challenges.

However, even as our circumstances have made clear the importance of patience, it seems the pandemic has also exposed a pervasive lack of patience. Examples of impatience remain common; it is particularly disappointing that people working in the retail and service industries face impatient hostility for inconveniences outside their control.

As a Christian community, how might we become more patient with others? To start, we may gratefully affirm that God is patient with us. The Swiss theologian Karl Barth emphasized that God's patience is fundamental to God's life and being: God's "love bears essentially the

character of patience," he wrote.

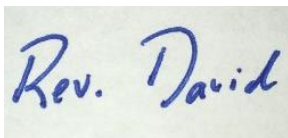
Indeed, according to Barth, patience is so central to God's identity that "everything that God is, is implied and included in the statement that He is patient." Barth describes God's patience, moreover, as God's "will [...] to allow to another [...] space and time for the development of its own existence." Put simply, God's patience is that God permits us time and space to grow and change. (See A. J. Johnston, *God's Being in Reconciliation*, 127-128.)

Since God is patient with us, could we then—out of gratitude—offer more patience to others? It may be helpful to consider the practice of patience in parallel with social distancing. In public settings, we diligently allow others the space they need to pass by us safely; in this way, we have learned to avoid impinging on someone else's needed space.

Similarly, patience is how we avoid impinging on someone else's needed time. That is, patience is how we grant others the time they need to rest and recover, to pause and breathe, to reflect and reconsider. Patience is thus a gift that we may give to others, in order to help them grow and flourish. These days especially, amid much impatience, our patience with others may bring them blessing and encouragement.

In our interactions with others, could we reflect the patience that God has shown us? As God in Christ remains patient with us, may we also offer patience to others.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rev. David". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

From the Session

Greetings from Session and our best wishes for a very happy and joyous Easter Season! Despite the ongoing pandemic, New St. James remains strong and continues to celebrate the love of Christ through our ongoing Worship Services which are streamed live from our Sanctuary on Sunday mornings. Also, the Session of New St. James continues to meet virtually through Zoom to conduct the business of the Church and met recently on March 16, 2021. This article provides some updates from that meeting.

First of all, a big thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of our first virtual Annual Congregational Meeting. We appreciate the work of our Office Administrator, Judi Le Blanc, and everyone else who contributed to the production of the 2020 Annual Report. Also, thanks to Charlene Beynon for managing the Zoom meeting and invitations, Steve Harris for overseeing the work of the Board of Managers, Jeff Goud for all of his work in managing the financial affairs of the Church, Lesley Harris for her thoughtful and well-spoken words of appreciation, and to Rev. David Clark for adeptly chairing his first Annual Meeting with us.

Session approved a number of items at its March Meeting, including holding Communion services by electronic means, via videoconference, on the appointed dates set by Session, while the continuing COVID restrictions remain in place. In this regard, a Maundy Thursday Evening Communion Service will be held by Zoom video conference at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 1, (see more details in the notice included in this Newsletter). Also, a Good Friday Worship Service will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Friday, April 2,

streamed live from the Sanctuary.

It has now been one year since Torin Chiles started us on the road to live streaming our Sunday morning Worship Services. During the pandemic this has allowed us to connect with the Congregation and bring regular Sunday morning worship to our members and a broader community. We appreciate the work of Torin, and his sons, Nawton and Tennyson, often using their own equipment (e.g., camera, microphone and computer) to make this happen. Given that the ongoing pandemic will be with us for some time yet and the likelihood that there may need to be a future period of transition to full capacity in-person worship services, Session has taken action to properly resource the live streaming activity. In that regard, Session approved the establishment of "Live Streaming Working Team" (comprised of Rev. David Clark, Torin Chiles, Steve Harris, and Bruce Curtis) to determine equipment needs, obtain price quotations, investigate funding sources, and arrange for the acquisition, installation and implementation of such equipment, in consultation with the appropriate groups and persons as necessary.

Finally, as the pandemic continues, the COVID Response Team also continues to monitor the situation and appropriate governmental and health directions. After the recent lockdown, Church staff have returned to work on site but the building remains closed except for essential work and necessary maintenance. If there is a reason for you to attend at the Church, you must make an appointment through Judi LeBlanc, sign-in to the building, and be masked at all times.

NOTICE OF MAUNDY THURSDAY EVENING COMMUNION SERVICE

Session has approved a Maundy Thursday evening Communion Service to be held at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 1, 2021, and conducted by video conference on Zoom. In order to access and be part of this service, you must request an invitation to join the Zoom Meeting.

Requests to receive an invitation to the Communion by Zoom must be received (with your name and email) by Judi Le Blanc in the Church Office no later than 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 30, 2021.

In preparation for this Holy Communion Service, you are requested to assemble

Bruce Curtis, Clerk of Session.

From the Organ Console

Here we are, a year after an unimaginable but entirely necessary shift away from our normal face-to-face worship together in our beautiful sanctuary, and a year into the brave new world of gathering together online as a community of faith, to continue the acts of worship and mission that folks have doing at NSJ for over 185 years now. That shift has been in a constant state of evolution since March 15, 2020.

That first "broadcast" on March 15, 2020, consisted of me coming to church early on the Sunday morning as I am accustomed to doing, propping up my iPad in one corner of the organ console and merely playing and singing a few hymns as a way of maintaining some normalcy and bringing comfort and solace through a very strange time as we tried to understand our situation and what we were up against on that first Sunday of

some grape juice or wine and bread at your home to serve as the Sacramental elements for the Eucharist. If more than one person per household will be attending, please provide sufficient quantities for each person and if you wish to join the Communion Service but are unable to acquire the elements (grape juice/wine and bread) for the Eucharist, please contact your District Elder for their assistance in getting them.

If you have any questions about this Communion Service, please contact Bruce Curtis, Clerk of Session, at 519-850-6996. Questions regarding the use of Zoom video conferencing may be directed to Charlene Beynon at 519-473-1743.

the Pandemic lockdown. The format of those live-streams evolved through the lockdown as we moved to a live-stream from the Chiles living room and then, by the summer, back into the sanctuary and finally with the arrival of Rev. Dr. David Clark, into the current full "Virtual Service" with wonderful sermons, prayers, Ariel Harwood-Jones providing the singing and my son, Nawton, presenting the readings. Our Sunday morning bubble is still very small! Even as this format gives comfort through its familiar form, the technical aspects continue to evolve behind the scenes.

My younger son Tennyson has become quite adept at operating the camera and processing the final recording for publishing on Facebook and now YouTube. We have undergone many evolutions and upgrades to the technical equipment we have been using and we

anticipate a big upgrade coming soon that will allow for a high-definition video camera with a zoom lens which will let us to bring even more of the beauty of our sanctuary into your homes on Sunday mornings.

We have been streaming live to Facebook and we started on my personal FB page that Sunday a year ago. We have since migrated the live stream to the New St. James Facebook page, with a mirroring “share” to my Facebook page. Our next big evolution will be to migrate the live-stream to the YouTube platform. This will allow us to stream in higher definition video and more easily embed the recording after the livestream in our Website homepage. This shift will happen very soon and will mean that those of you used to watching on Facebook will now receive a notification that I or the NSJ Facebook page are “watching” a YouTube live stream. The notification will include a link for you to follow to be taken to the live-stream feed on YouTube. We think that we will also be able to include a link for the YouTube livestream on our church website homepage too.

The outreach of these services has surprised us! We regularly read comments from around the world, and people tell us how these services have been important to them throughout this pandemic. It reminds us that surprising, good things can emerge from adversity. It reminds us that the internet is a powerful tool for outreach and that the more we all “comment”, “like”, “subscribe” and “share”, the more people these live-streams can reach. It’s not the same as our real, face to face worship; it

will never replace our normal gathering on Sunday mornings. But it’s the best we can do under the circumstance, and we are continuing to reach people within our congregation and well beyond each Sunday morning.

Each evolutionary change in our virtual services, each step, takes time to organize, test very carefully, and then consolidate into the new normal of our Sunday morning broadcasts. I continue to be very grateful for the dedication and technical skills of my two sons, Nawton and Tennyson, as we keep these streaming services coming, Sunday by Sunday, and keep them evolving and improving. The Worship Committee continues to oversee these services and continues to offer support, encouragement and guidance as we navigate public health recommendations and respond creatively to the reality of worshiping as a community of faith in the time of COVID-19.

Finally, we are grateful for the feedback we get – sometimes even mid-service! This feedback helps us improve, and your suggestions are all considered very carefully as we work to try to improve the form, content and medium of our worship time together week by week. We look forward to this continued evolution, and hope that as public health recommendations change our service can evolve to include more people in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings, more reliable and better-quality technical equipment, and a more meaningful worship experience for all in our church family.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Torin", with a horizontal line underneath.

Mission And Social Action Committee

The Committee's budget of \$10,000 for 2021 was approved at the annual congregational meeting in February. Money is deposited monthly into the account from various trust funds.

Members will have a virtual meeting at the end of March to discuss disbursement of available money. Special consideration will be given to helping children and the homeless.

Non-perishable food items have been delivered twice this month to St. Paul's Cathedral for its Social Services program.

Lyn Hill, Convenor

Please consider stocking up on canned goods and basics like toothpaste and toothbrushes. The need for this service is greater than ever. Give Lyn a call (519-472-8353) for pick-up or drop off items at the church when Judi is there.

Pete van Geest, Director of INDWELL, an affordable housing initiative, will host a virtual meeting for members of the Committee in the coming weeks. INDWELL residences are "sustainable, affordable, and accessible" and are "permanently available" and "permanently affordable".

Easter Appeal 2021

Watch your mailbox in the coming weeks for a special Easter Appeal letter. As we journey through the time ahead, we ask that you remember the ministry and work of the church through your special offerings and prayers. God has been abundantly graceful and giving -- and may we, in our own way and as generously as we can, offer the same in return.

Board of Managers

2020 Salvation Army Kettle Campaign



The Salvation Army 2020 Christmas Kettles campaign was, unfortunately, ended early this year due to the pandemic. Their goal for London of \$550,000 was missed but they were able to raise over \$450,000 to make a difference for thousands of families and individuals that look to the community for help during Christmas and throughout the year.

Fortunately, New St. James was able to complete our commitment to the hosting of the kettle in the Valumart at Oxford and Richmond the last weekend of November. We are advised that \$1,265 was raised over the course of our three days. The people of our neighbourhood were most generous in this year of great challenges.

Thanks go to Susan Vallas, Pat Goud and Theresa Walsh for ringing the bells this year.

This was the third year that New St.

Frank Walsh

James has supported the Christmas Kettles. The Salvation Army has advised that they are most appreciative of the hard work that our church has graciously given over these years.

Your Website Corner www.newstjames.ca

Our First Anniversary

As we look back, what a year it has been! And in terms of the website, this time last year, a group of volunteers were “test driving” our redesigned and updated site. Fast forward to April 11, 2021 and we will be celebrating the first anniversary of the “new” site. Much has happened since the launch and much continues to happen. We are most fortunate that plans to revitalize the site got underway when they did. The website and the Facebook posts have offered us a new way to feel connected and to feel part of New St. James. And for many of us, it has been a new way of keeping in touch and worshipping together.

Check Out Our New Look

Your feedback has been most helpful during the past year. Some items could be easily addressed, while others not as easily fixed. Nonetheless, the Ad Hoc Committee continues to work towards improving the site.

The homepage has undergone a major upgrade in the past few weeks. You will find the homepage looking much more inviting and less cluttered whether you are using your desktop or a mobile device. The Google Calendar is more prominent and much easier to read; you don't have to scroll down so far to find the Facebook page and access to Sunday worship; and you will note that NSJ now has its own YouTube Channel! More about

that in a moment.

You will find the information about groups, activities and committees that previously appeared on the homepage can still be found under the “Get Involved” heading. With the help of having Leads for each section of the website, work is continuously underway to keep the website as up to date and engaging as possible. Your help in letting us know when information needs to be updated is most welcome. How exciting it will be when we can open our doors once again and give the website a good test run to determine its effectiveness in engaging newcomers and congregants too!

Another New Development

Not so long ago, when we arrived for Sunday worship, we checked out the bulletin to see what was new and happening at NSJ. Now you will find announcements and upcoming events posted on the Google Calendar and on the Facebook Page, both of which are posted “front and centre” on the homepage. This is a great way to reach out to those looking for a church home and to share with others in the community what is happening at NSJ even during a pandemic! Your help in keeping the Calendar up to date is invaluable.

If the Google Calendar is new for you, if

you click on an event, “more details” will pop up and you will find everything you want to know. Even though the building is closed except for essential functions, lots of activities and opportunities are underway, so you won’t want to miss out on anything.

As an example, watch the Facebook page for upcoming posts about an exceptional resource for Holy Week that you won’t want to miss. This resource includes something for everyone of all ages including devotions, videoed children’s Bible Stories, crafts, recipes, devotions, guided meditations and music. Special thanks to the Christian Education Committee for making these resources available and to the Facebook Team - Blu Say, Lesley Harris, Monica Sass and Nawton Chiles - for posting.

If you would like something posted on Facebook, please contact the team at facebook@newstjames.ca

Just as a reminder, a Facebook account is not needed to access the NSJ Facebook page.

We invite you to let others know what is happening at NSJ, especially those who do not have internet access or are unfamiliar with the website.

Our Own NSJ YouTube Channel

Special thanks to Steve Langham who set up our YouTube Channel and to Torin Chiles, Nawton Chiles and Steve Harris who are serving as the Channel Administrators. You will find the YouTube Channel right on the website homepage. Check out some videos already posted of past services. Don’t miss the “trailer” that Tennyson Chiles videotaped. Virtually experience walking in the Oxford Street doors, enter the Narthex, enjoy the beautiful stained-glass windows, and tour

around the Sanctuary from many different angles, while Torin Chiles, our Director of Music plays the organ so expertly! You will experience once again what it feels like to be in the Sanctuary. (Note: if more videos have been posted and you do not see the “trailer”, click on the arrow at the bottom of the YouTube feed, scroll down and you will see the “trailer”).

Having our own YouTube Channel offers many new possibilities and opportunities, including making it easier to access virtual worship services through the Channel. This is a major priority. The goal is to make this transition as smooth as possible. It is also important to ensure that everyone at NSJ knows about this change well in advance as well as others in the broader community who have been worshipping with us. Like any new venture, there may be some glitches along the way, yet the goal is to make the transition to accessing worship using YouTube in the coming weeks as seamless as possible. Stay tuned and watch for further information as we move closer to this very important milestone.

In addition to accessing virtual worship services through our YouTube Channel, we will also be able to post videos so others can learn more about NSJ. Are there things about NSJ that you would like others to know about? The possibilities are truly endless. This will be both a new venture and an adventure for us. In the spirit of demystifying the experience and encouraging many to take the plunge and create a video, some tips have been developed to consider when making YouTube videos. This will remain work in progress as we move forward and benefit from the experiences of others.

Something for You!

Plans are underway to distribute magnets

to all households to celebrate the website's first anniversary. The magnets include a photo of the church, along with the address, phone number and the website address. If you would like additional magnets to distribute to family, friends and colleagues, please contact Judi Le Blanc, in the Church Office at admin@newstjames.ca or 519-434-1127.

Keep in Touch

Any feedback, questions or comments about the website, please contact web@newstjames.ca

Watch for future updates in upcoming editions of the Newsletter.

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

The Highland Group of New St. James

Over many years, the Highland Ladies have spent one weekend in April at Crieff Hills nestling in the Dove House. This year we are getting together virtually on Saturday, May 15, gathering together from our own homes.

It will not be the same. It will be different. We learned this past year that nothing can be taken for granted. But one thing is for sure—the power of Hope can heal each of us. The power of Hope can bring us joy and excitement and anticipation for the future. The power of Hope is a gift from God through the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13).

Saturday morning is free time to take a walk in your neighbourhood or gather together in small groups and enjoy the beauty that surrounds you (depending on restrictions).

Saturday afternoon starting at 12:45 pm,

we will have fellowship, a Celebration of Hope, and Zumba by Deb Noble van Hees. Cathy Reid will present her trip to India, with discussion to follow and we will have a craft which will be so much fun and easy to do! I can already hear the excitement or was that exasperation? We will also have a scavenger hunt looking for household and garage items. Who will be the winner?

Saturday evening starting at 6:45pm we will have a skit entitled 'U Turn Allowed' performed by our own 'NSJ Skit Gals' and we will learn who has the weirdest junk in their house when we announce the winner of the scavenger hunt.

If any ladies are interested to join us, please email Karen Buchwald karenbuchwald@hotmail.com so we can put your email address on the Zoom platform hosted by Cathy Reid.

Northern Hospitality

Shepherds' pies were back on the menu on March 15. Thank you to Heather McDonald for joining me today at the church to prepare a very tasty dinner for our attendees.

Of course our take-out meal wouldn't be complete without home made cookies baked by Heather, Deb Noble van Hees and Andrea Dekay.

Dee Ann and Sydney Vickers were my right-hand helpers serving up this hot meal as our guests arrived. They work like a well-oiled machine and always say

yes when I ask for their help. We served 55 attendees and as always they were very appreciative. Our next take-out dinner to host is April 19.

Cathy Taylor, Convenor

Women's Missionary Society

We are joining the National WMS "Come Together" series for an Easter Worship Service on April 7 at 1 pm. This will be a very meaningful celebration as we are having Rev Bridget Ben-Naimah, President of Tumekutana (African Conference for Women), preach. She is a very dynamic speaker and will inspire us with her message. Bridget lives and works in Ghana. Isn't technology wonderful!

The secretary of Tumekutana from Nigeria, Jessie Benebo, will also take part. I am really looking forward to seeing them again on Zoom. Karen Baron and I were part of the last Tumekutana conference in Johannesburg, South Africa.

If you would like to be part of this service please email me reidc@rogers.com

Cathy Reid

Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition

I have served as a volunteer judge for the Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition for several years. Every year hundreds of Canadian students enter this important competition along with thousands from other Commonwealth nations. In the last several years, a number of Canadian students have taken top prizes. The Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition is the world's oldest writing contest for young people. There are two age categories. The junior division is open to those who are born on or after July 1, 2007. The senior category belongs to those who have been born between July 1, 2002 and June 30, 2007 (14-18 years of age).

The realities of COVID 19 have been felt around the world and throughout the Commonwealth. We have felt them in our congregations. The theme for this year's

essay competition is "Community in the Commonwealth." Young people are being urged to reflect upon the ways that local and global communities have come together during the pandemic to offer hope and security. Participants in each category are given four topics from which to choose. This is not a research essay. Poetry, fiction, and creative reflection are welcome.

Please encourage any young people you know to participate. Awards will be presented in the autumn by the Patron of the competition, HRH the Duchess of Cornwall. In the past winners have been flown to London, England for a week of events including the awards ceremony at Buckingham Palace. All students will receive a participation certificate. Some entrants will be awarded a bronze, silver, gold, or top gold certificate.

Submissions to the competition may be made between May 1, 2021 and June 30, 2021. Please visit the Royal

Commonwealth Society's website for more information and a downloadable flyer that you may share.

<https://www.royalcwsociety.org/enterthecompetition>





Rev. Keith McKee

House search

Wanted to rent in spring 2021: an unfurnished granny flat or apartment in south west London, from Wharncliffe Road to Wonderland Road via Southdale Road, Commissioners Road or Baseline Road. One level main floor (no stairs please), two bedrooms, two parking spaces, washer and dryer, front porch or small backyard.

Please email susan.vallas@yahoo.ca

For children of all ages - 1

Interactive  **Holy**  **Week** 
Activity 

Bored and looking for something different to do over Holy Week? Click and discover! That's it.

From the Synod of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda, and Foothills Presbytery Church (PCUSA) our church family can click and discover Holy Week by interacting on a Google Classroom platform.

Holy Week can be viewed by clicking on different slides and images starting on Palm Sunday and continuing each day of the week. You can hear the cries of

Hosanna! Or find yourselves seated at the table of the Last Supper. Or journey with Jesus from the garden to his trial and crucifixion. Finally, you will reach the wonderful day of Alleluias!

And that is not all! There are activities to explore each day--- crafts, recipes (do you know how to make hummus?) guided meditations and music.

And kids, don't forget to invite your siblings, parents and grandparents along. It's for the whole family.

So, on Palm Sunday go to the New St. James website and click on HOLY WEEK. That's it....click and discover!

Christian Education Committee

From the Board of Managers

The Board continues to oversee improvements around the church.

On March 10, social distancing in the sanctuary was taken to extreme levels.

Electricians raised scaffolding in order to install more efficient lighting over the choir and pulpit. The job was completed that day.

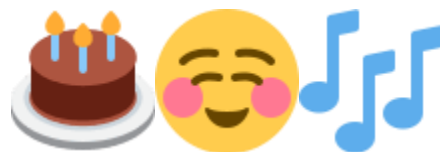


It is not an annual occurrence, but ice build up was certainly in evidence around the exterior of the sanctuary this February.

Better trough systems will be installed this spring and insulation improvements will be made above the sanctuary in ongoing remediation efforts.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Sunday School and Teen Group members



MARCH 2021: Timothy and Katia
APRIL 2021: Jack, Jaydon, Joy and Caden
MAY 2021: James, Cole and Liam N.

Condolences

To the family and friends of John VandenBrink, who died on February 13.

To the family and friends of Don Bolter, who died on March 15.

For children of all ages - 2

The gold medal in the race to name New St. James' first Olympian goes to Tim van Hees, who was actually a former student of the Olympian. Silver is shared by Bob and Carol Fisher, and bronze goes to Keith McCreary, with participation certificates to everyone else. The answer is of course George Wearing, who represented Canada on the basketball team at the Helsinki Olympics in 1952, before going on to teach at the University of Western Ontario.

Contact List

Minister	Rev. Dr. David Clark dclark@newstjames.ca
Clerk of Session	Bruce Curtis bcurtis@newstjames.ca
Music Director	Torin W. Chiles tchiles@newstjames.ca
Office Administrator	Judi LeBlanc admin@newstjames.ca
Custodian	Mark McDonald admin@newstjames.ca

New St James Presbyterian Church
280 Oxford Street East, London, Ontario N6A 1V4
519.434.1127 www.newstjames.ca

And finally, for anyone who has a dog (and especially those who have a new puppy) . . .

