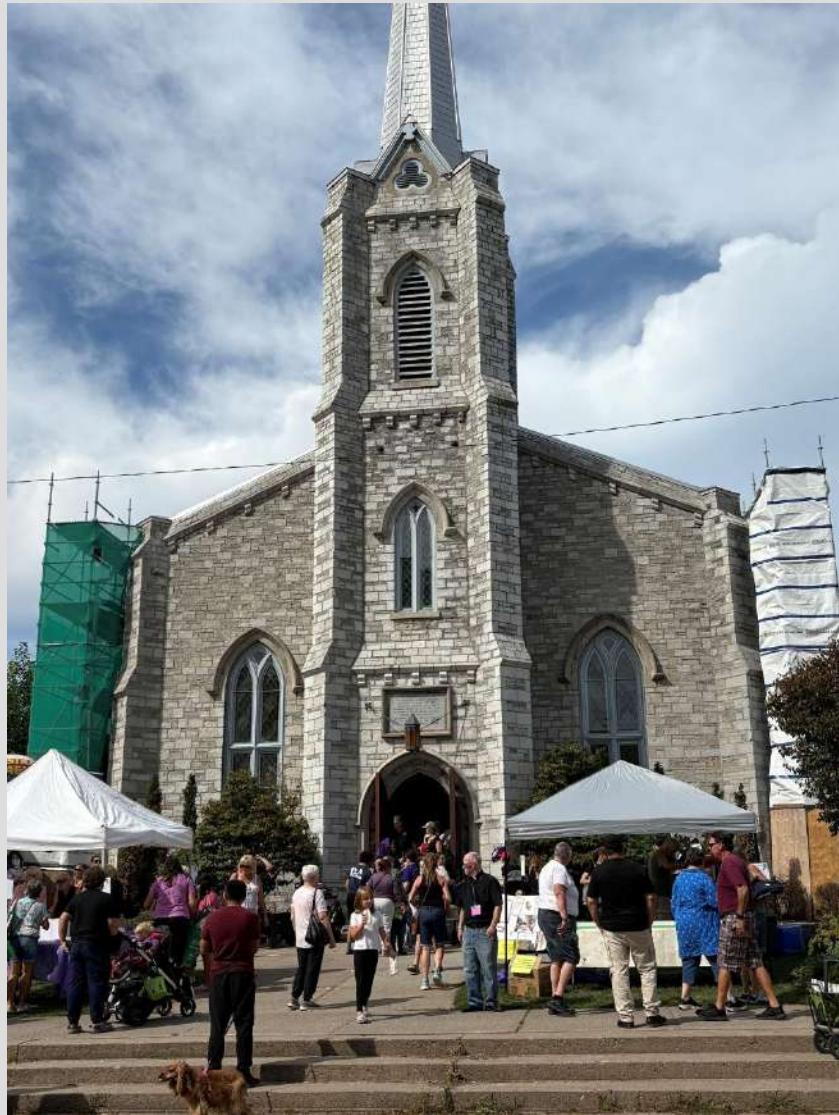




# VESTRY REPORT 2025

FEBRUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2026



## Death Bed Reel



There are three events from the past year that I have (somewhat) jokingly told my friends will be on my ‘death bed reel.’ By that, it means that they weren’t just exhilarating moments that will live in my memory forever, but they also speak to me about what I believe is most true and real and important. They all took place in our St. George’s community, and they all point to so much more than just the events themselves.

I’ll work backwards. Our Remembrance Sunday, with the choir’s masterful offering of Dan Forrest’s *Requiem for the Living* was a glorious pinnacle of musical excellence for our church. This extraordinary achievement was even more remarkable to consider given that five years prior, our music program had been all but levelled by COVID and recovery was not at all assured. It has been one of the great graces of my life to be able to support, even in a small way, the profound talent, vision and heart that Brad Barnham brings to our music ministry and to see what he has rebuilt these five years.

But of course, these comments only scratch the surface of what the Requiem was all about. It is the insistence that telling the story of loss, sacrifice, tragedy, courage, and costly peace that is represented in the two world wars still matters, and matters profoundly. This November’s Requiem felt particularly consequential, our prayers for peace especially fervent, the need for remembrance so very critical, as we have spent the last year watching peace in our world feel increasingly precarious and so deeply threatened. I have never felt more keenly how much it matters that we sing, pray, gather, remember and hope in defiance of the powers of darkness and despair.

The two other events on my death bed reel were intimately connected to this time of Remembrance. It was the “Not the 51<sup>st</sup> State” Advent Café we hosted in March and the “Great Canadian Singalong” that we held for our whole community in April. Both were a response to a political world that suddenly felt upsetting and confusing in ways that none of us was expecting, and both leaned into the power of music and the gift of gathering to create a space of celebration and hope in times that otherwise were feeling so dark and distressing. We sang some of our most iconic Canadian songs and reminded ourselves of the wells of resistance and strength we have on tap. It was fundamentally a reminder of God’s promise to be with us, to guide us through the darkness, and to give us help, companionship, beauty and 2 |

P a g e light no matter how fraught the circumstances. God's specialty is shining light in the darkness.

Of course, those were some of the bigger moments of the year, but for me, they act as a sort of 'lifting up' or gathering together of all of the many other kinds of moments that go into a year in the life of our church: the quiet prayers, the honest tears, the losses and griefs and goodbyes, the disagreements, the conversations that are anything but easy, the worship gatherings of all sizes reflecting many different kinds of moods, the solemnities and the laughter, the high spirits and the disappointments and difficulties too. I am convinced more than ever that God gives us the gift of community exactly so that we can stand in defiance of the darkness and division, and it is in these simple acts of showing up for one another that God most powerfully draws close.

Whether it was our biggest and brightest, or our quietest and most unassuming, moments of this past year, the other thing that underlies my reflections for 2025 is the remarkable way that our community has given to the Restoration Project and my inexpressible gratitude that this beautiful, historic building is such a vehicle for how we as a community serve and draw close to God. We have needed to come to our church family on more than one occasion to commit to raising more funds for work that has ended up being more complicated and critical than we had anticipated, and at every turn, the response has been generous and faithful. This past year has been a stirring witness to the legacy of faith that has been passed along to us in this church and this building and to the embracing of our role now in assuring that legacy going forward. That this restoration work has been accompanied by these most spirited and beautiful communal gatherings, by the reminder of just how much our church can strengthen and bless us, has been an outpouring of God's grace.

2025 has been a year for the books. Globally and politically, it will be remembered mostly for the distressing surprises, the uncovering of how deep human divisions can run, and so many questions and worries for what might lie ahead. I give thanks every day for this sanctuary of hope, loving service, and empowerment, for this place and people in which I so regularly experience the light and love of God, even when times are toughest.

Thank you, dear St. George's.

## The Mishamikoweesh & Arctic Water Partnership

*"We pray for that water because water is a living thing. It's not a commodity. We look at it as a spiritual element."*

— Shirley Williams, the late Anishinaabe elder from Wikwemikong Unceded Territory on Manitoulin Island (1938 – 2025)

### **Pimatiziwin Nipi (Living Waters Group)**

For fourteen years, a network of concerned Anglicans (and friends) have been partnering with First Nation Communities in securing clean, running water in Indigenous homes across Canada. Lack of clean, running water impacts physical and mental health, hygiene and access to education.

Alongside Hope (previously PWRDF) works in developing partnerships, receiving donations, and implementing these projects following the best partnership-led practices which allow these developing relationships and our donations to be as impactful as possible.

#### **Our partnership work has:**

- secured clean running water in approximately 60-75 homes in Pikangikum First Nation
- been part of developing a model between PWRDF and First Nations' communities across Canada that allows our fundraising to be directed to responsive Indigenous-led grants.
- raised \$150,000 toward a Water Truck in Kingfisher Lake, First Nation, a need identified by First Nations' leaders of Mishamikoweesh.

*This year, our partnership expanded to include the Diocese of the Arctic.*

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#### **Water Matters: Projects and Partnerships for 2025 and Beyond...**

#### **This year's fundraising, and our work for the foreseeable future, includes:**

**Mishamikoweesh:** providing running water for Big Beaver House Bible Camp, a multi-use facility playing a central role for the people of Kingfisher Lake and particularly a treasured place of formation and refreshment for the community's young people.

**Diocese of the Arctic:** providing washroom facilities in their churches, thereby amplifying the ability for these buildings to be places where community can safely

and comfortably gather, and where healthy and life-giving relationships are built and strengthened.

**Costs & Timeline:** costs for both projects are in the final stages of being calculated. Our hope is that work with the Bible Camp can begin as soon as March 2026, with running water available for most of the coming summer's camp season and beyond. The Arctic partnership will be a multi-year project of equipping the 58 disparate churches across the diocese with washroom facilities and the ability to be a community hub for their people.

### **The Ripple Effect**

These new projects are identified as priorities by Indigenous leadership in Mishamikoweesh and the Arctic and build on the recognition that access to clean, running water has a powerful ripple effect. It is not just a claiming of physical health and hygiene. Better physical health and hygiene also strengthens mental health, assists in access to education, and builds capacity, dignity, and hope across communities.

### **A Deeper Dive...**

Here are the five locations where Pimatisiwin Nipi will partner with Indigenous and Inuit churches to provide safer, cleaner, and more welcoming facilities to serve their communities.



*From west to east: All Saints, Aklavik; St. Aidan's, Baker Lake; Big Beaver House Bible Camp; St. Mark's, Coral Harbour; Pangnirtung*

***For more detailed information about each community, along with pictures, email Reverend Martha (mtatarnic@stgeorgesanglican.ca) who can email you the full report. Thank you to Joanne Millard, whose research into these five communities has been invaluable in being able to share a fuller picture of each of these water partnerships.***

## A Community with God-and One Another

The Reverend Canon Tom Vaughan



When I think back on 2025 at St George's, I think of all the ways we have been *with* one another. As I reflected more deeply on this theological theme, it struck me just how profoundly incarnational St. George's truly is. The gift of God coming to be *with us* means everything for the Church and for the world. While the Church celebrates this gift most clearly at Christmas, the season of Epiphany—where we find ourselves now—is when that gift is amplified with light. Our path through the darkness of winter is illuminated by the lamp of incarnational truth: that God is with us. This is a deep and vital truth.

First, it means that we are counted, and that all people matter. Genesis tells us that we are all made in God's image; therefore, we matter to God. And at St. George's, people matter. Visitors often pick up on this, frequently describing St. George's as a beautiful church filled with friendliness and genuine warmth. This begins with our relationship with God, who chose to be *with us*.

As I look back on the year that has passed, I see a common thread woven throughout our life together: we follow a God who is with us, and in following Jesus' footsteps, we choose—here, in this community—to be with one another. This is lived across every aspect of our shared life, sometimes visible, sometimes hidden like treasure in a field or a pearl in the sea. It is a sign of God's Kingdom among us; a glimpse of heaven's ways being lived on earth.

I notice this at St. George's both in the joyful activities we share and in the harder things we undertake together, where we intentionally choose to be with people.

Looking back on 2025, I have observed this dynamic again and again. We have chosen to be with one another in significant ways. This year, we took important steps together to raise funds for the Restoration Campaign—a journey that brought surprises in the size, scope, and expense of restoring our beautiful church building for its next chapter of life. Throughout this process, I have watched us choose to be with one another in sincere, thoughtful, and generous ways. I have been deeply moved by the generosity expressed through gifts of every size. The thermometer that is lovingly adjusted each week has become an outward sign of how we have journeyed together.

I noticed this spirit in a particularly joyful way at the spring recital for the Little Dragons Choir. The date was shared with the congregation, and we showed up. We gathered to support the children and witnessed how, through the gifts of Brad,

Tanya, and Melissa, the choir had come together in community and song. We celebrated them, we clapped, and we chose to be with them.

I also watched in 2025 as more volunteers joined the breakfast program. One of the ways we journey with one another is by showing up to the suffering in our world. Through 365 days a year—and years of faithful leadership from Janet, Duncan, and now Kelly, the most vulnerable members of our city, are offered breakfast. A whole community of people chooses to be with one another on these breakfast teams. At our newcomers' gatherings, this program consistently draws strong interest. People recognize this shared journey of being with one another as a contagious and compelling gift of faith.

Another expression of being with one another began to take shape in 2025 through our partnership with the region to host an emergency shelter during extreme winter nights. By the end of the year, this vision had become a reality. We witnessed people coming into our gymnasium—volunteers and guests alike—to be with those who are suffering in ways many of us can scarcely comprehend. On some mornings, breakfast serves forty additional people. The teams rise to the challenge, providing cereal and sandwiches, peanut butter and jelly, Cheese Whiz, and more. The breakfast leadership continues to find creative and generous ways to increase food supplies through community partnerships.

I believe that God being with us—and our choosing to be with others—is the pulse that propels everything we do.

At St George's, we are a community that lives our day-to-day lives, and our beautiful Sunday worship, under the shelter of God's wings—our refuge and our strength. We are a spiritually hungry people, fed and fueled each week for the real, flesh-and-blood work of mission: being with others in God's world.

Each week, as I look around and see visitors—many of whom become members of our church family—I am reminded of the gift that being with others truly is. In an increasingly secular world, people are finding a home here, a place to journey in faith. At St George's, there is a genuine invitation to be with others, to grow in faith and life, and to "come and see." The ways we reach out, accompany, and choose to be with others reflect who we truly are—and this authenticity is deeply attractive. Growing, nurturing, and integrating these relationships into the family tree of St George's will continue to carry us forward.

Having spent another year with you as Co-Rector of this beautiful and astonishing community—a community that chooses to be with God and with others—it is my honour and privilege to serve alongside you.

## Newcomers and Concierge



The people of St George's will often say to me, "Where are all these people coming from?" When we look around on Sundays, we see many new faces. People are arriving with a question they are quietly sifting: "What am I looking for?" Here, they find a warm and welcoming community.

One of the most tangible ways this welcome is experienced is through our Newcomers' Lunches. We hosted several of these gatherings over the past year, each marked by a genuine spirit of hospitality. The Reverend Alan, Sandra Legarde, and Valear Howsam all contributed to creating a space filled with warmth, good conversation, and good food—including pizza and homemade desserts.

Around the table, we introduced ourselves, shared the faith journeys of the Co-Rectors, and highlighted opportunities for involvement that many newcomers were actively seeking. A key purpose of these lunches is to help people understand what our community is truly about and to provide space for questions to be asked and answered. The Newcomers' program continues to be a vital way people connect meaningfully to St George's. As I write this report, I am anticipating a strong turnout for our next Newcomers' Lunch at the end of January.

Another essential part of our ministry of welcome is our Concierge Team. Each Sunday, a concierge offers a welcome—both in person and online—setting the tone for our worship. Practical guidance is shared to help people participate fully in the service, and visitors are warmly invited to coffee hour following worship.

Over the past year, Lindsey has faithfully organized and strengthened the concierge ministry, including hosting a team meeting focused on best practices. The team continues to grow, made up of people who have embraced this vision and who consistently show up for St George's and for one another. Each Sunday, we rely on them to engage visitors and ensure they experience the radical hospitality of Jesus.

If this is a ministry you feel called to explore, I would be glad to speak with you.

I am deeply grateful for all the leaders who help these ministries run so smoothly. Radical hospitality is not the work of a few—it is the work of the whole community, together.

Thank you, St George's.

The Reverend Canon Tom Vaughan Co-Rector

## Music Ministries



As I look back on the past year of church life at St. George's, I am struck by the many ways in which the music ministries have served as a vital, vibrant, and steadfast pillar of our community. They have offered meaningful weekly worship to a supportive congregation, thoughtful musical performances, and engaging community events—all grounded in a consistently high standard of excellence. There has been steady growth, and each year since the end of the pandemic has opened up greater space for musical excellence and meaningful fellowship within the music ministries. Exciting, enthralling, solemn, reflective, and deeply moving are just a few of the words that could describe the past year at St. George's. That momentum has carried us into 2026 with even more ambitious and inspiring opportunities to worship, perform, and collaborate—both for this congregation and for the wider Niagara community.

The Choir of St. George's continues to lead our worship with remarkable dedication and heart, committing to weekly rehearsals, Sunday services, and the many additional offerings throughout the year. Chorister numbers continue to rise, and we are delighted to welcome more “Friends of the Choir” as word spreads across the region about the work being done here. With this growth has come a deeper

sense of commitment and a higher expectation for the music we learn and perform. It is a positive and sustaining cycle that keeps the choir thriving.

The Little Dragons Children's Choir has also experienced exciting growth in its inaugural year and looks to the future with great enthusiasm. Weekly attendance has grown to approximately 12–15 choristers, and this past year focused on laying the foundations for a lasting program—one that provides a safe, welcoming, and encouraging space for children from our city and region to learn and to sing together. Only good things are on the horizon for this new initiative.

There were countless moments throughout the year when the music program truly shone. The music of Holy Week was profoundly moving on many levels, beginning with a collaborative Palm Sunday service featuring both the full choir and the Little Dragons. This was followed by a solemn and reflective Maundy Thursday, a striking Good Friday featuring a chamber choir drawn from the choir's leads, a stunning candlelit Easter Vigil, and, of course, a joyful Easter Morning with brass and timpani. Many remarked that this past Easter Sunday was among the finest in recent memory, musically speaking.

“Shine All Your Light” returned for its second iteration this past spring and proved to be a brilliant and vibrant evening of musical variety. It offered the many musicians within the choir an opportunity to share different styles of music in a different context. Funds raised supported the music program and helped make possible the Requiem performance on Remembrance Sunday—arguably the most significant undertaking of the year.





This year's Remembrance Sunday featured *Requiem for the Living* by Dan Forrest, an ambitious and deeply fulfilling work for both musicians and congregation alike. Reverend Martha described it as one of the very highest points in her life of ministry, and it stands as a highlight of my conducting career to date. The chamber orchestra was stunning, the soloists were outstanding,

and Adam MacNeil's organ playing was sensational. Most remarkable of all, however, was the choir's dedication, artistry, and interpretation of the work. There was scarcely a dry eye in the room—mine included. I am deeply grateful to everyone involved for creating a performance that will live on in my heart and mind forever, and I know I am not alone in that.

Just a few short weeks later, the choir came together once again to present a glorious program for one of our most beloved services of the year: Lessons and Carols. Filled with choral excellence, it ushered in the season of Christmas with beauty and intention. I have never seen the church so full, both literally and figuratively, and it brought me tremendous joy. Christmas Eve, coming closely on the heels of Lessons and Carols, was a success from beginning to end, with the Little Dragons shining as the musicians for the 4:00 p.m. family service and the full choir leading worship faithfully and beautifully at the 7:00 and 10:00 p.m. services.

It was, by every measure, a beautiful year—one marked by growth, commitment, and countless expressions of love. Music is meant to be shared, and it is alive and well at St. George's. The upcoming year promises to be even more ambitious, heartfelt, and thoughtful, and I speak on behalf of the choir when I say that we are excited for what lies ahead and are deeply grateful for all of it.

*Written by Brad Barnham, Director of Music*





## Advent Café

After a significant refresh to the Advent Café format for 2024, we continued to offer a similar experience during the 2025 calendar year.

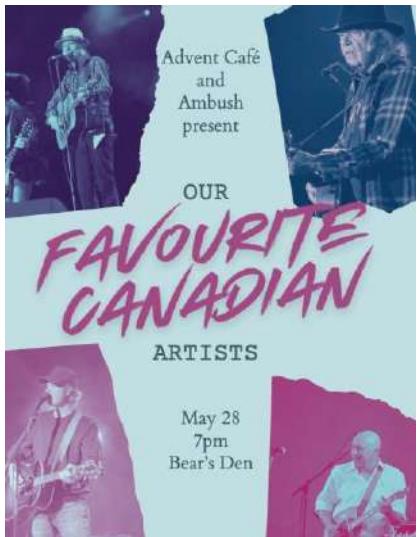
The reader will recall from my last annual report that we settled on a format of monthly Advent Cafes, rather than weekly, and made them theme based, with the emphasis on the musical offerings, 5 or 6 of them each time, with narratives woven in between to connect the songs and amplify the theme, all the while attempting to make Advent Café a topical, relevant and maybe even slightly edgy experience. We encourage our participants to sing along with the projected lyrics to our songs, and we always offer some prayer towards the end of the evening, usually just prior to introducing our last song. We continue to explore God's presence in our modern world and how to live out our Christian faith in today's political, social and economic climate.

Each Advent Café is livestreamed from the Bear's Den on YouTube, and for those actually in the room, coffee tea and finger foods are offered by our hospitality team.

Each group of performers (Infinitely More, Tracadie Cross, Ambush, Brad Barnham) has its own following, and there continues to be a loyal group of attendees that come each month no matter who is performing. The technical aspects of the evening (sound, livestream, PowerPoint) are ably handled by Greg Maddison, MJ Schmidt, Lindsey Wilton and myself, with the occasional expert assistance of Shawn Clement. Music selection is done by the performers, and narratives are written by the performers, by Martha or Tom, or by some collaboration. Usually, either Martha or Tom acts as host for the evening.

Our attendance through 2025 has been steadily growing. Mindful of comments from parishioners that they really didn't understand what Advent Café was all about and hence did not come out for it, we decided to up our game with respect to PR utilizing increased social media and direct-to-parishioner advertising in church on Sunday mornings. In the case of my band, Tracadie Cross, we held a Mini Advent Café to a captive audience at Coffee Hour after church on February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025 to show off what we do and try to attract interest. In keeping with the political realities of the day, Tracadie Cross held an Advent Café entitled "Not the 51<sup>st</sup> State" in March, a night entirely devoted to Canadian Singer-Songwriters,





and this spawned a follow-up city-wide event held in the main sanctuary a few weeks later where the entire city was invited out to show support for our country. Our October 29 Advent Café, with the theme Faith and Politics, was very well attended and generated a lot of interest also, with great attendance despite it being an important World Series ballgame night! My impression is that, based on attendance, online views, comments received, and from speaking to the other performers on the rota, our efforts to provide topical, relevant and interesting evenings of non-traditional worship have been successful.

I would like to thank the Advent Café planning team: Martha, Tom, Brad, Greg, MJ, Sue, Carolyn, Allison, Gerald and myself mainly, with occasional input from a few others, for carrying forward the vision of Advent Café on a monthly basis, and I would also like to thank the entertainers (Brad Barnham, Infinitely More, Ambush and Tracadie Cross) for their hard work, musicianship and leadership.

We are excited about potential offerings for 2026, including a celebration of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Advent Café on January 28, at which each of the current rota of performers will offer some words and music, and we have invited just about everyone who has been a part of Advent Café in any leadership role over the past 10 years to attend this evening. After that, we have every intention of keeping the momentum going, offering Advent Café a number of times throughout the year, exploring hot topics, and continuing to increase attendance as much as we can. We hope you will come out and join us.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

Brian Kerley

Bandleader, Tracadie Cross



## St. George's Church Marathon Bridge

This year we have eight teams playing bridge with much enthusiasm. We play seven times a year, September, October, November & December & again in March, April & May. We take turns hosting & playing in each other's homes. There is a fee of \$15.00 per person. This year we will be donating to the Restoration Project. If you are a bridge enthusiast and would like to join us please contact me. It is a fun afternoon of fellowship and bridge.

Respectfully submitted  
Gini Rigby



## Christmas Bazaar Vestry

Another successful year of our church bazaar is joyfully behind us, and it was truly a celebration filled with fun, faith, and festivity. Once again, the bazaar proved to be more than a fundraiser—it was a visible expression of community, generosity, and shared purpose within our parish.

The heart of the bazaar continues to be the many volunteers who generously donate their time, talents, and resources. From planning and set-up to baking, crafting, serving, selling, and cleaning up, etc. each contribution—large or small—played an essential role. This event simply would not be possible without the abundance of care, dedication, and goodwill shown year after year. We are deeply grateful to everyone who helped bring the bazaar to life.

This year marked the first bazaar without our beloved quilt raffle. We wish to take this opportunity to offer heartfelt thanks to **Sandra LeGarde** for her many years of extraordinary commitment and generosity. Sandra's beautiful quilts were not only treasured prizes but also tangible symbols of love, skill, and faithful service. Her long-standing contribution has left a

lasting legacy, and we are sincerely thankful for all she has given to this ministry.

The 2025 bazaar was a reminder of what can be accomplished when a parish comes together in service and joy. Thank you to Vestry and to the entire parish for your continued support, encouragement, and participation.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Bergie, Chair

Gina Schafrick, Co-Chair



## MEAL KITS 2025 - Supporting Community Care

In 2020, *Anglicans in Action*—six Anglican churches in St. Catharines—launched the **Meal in a Bag** program in response to food insecurity in Niagara. In 2025, five Anglican churches participated: Church of the Transfiguration, St. Barnabas, St. Columba, St. George’s, and St. Thomas. Volunteers pack meal bags either at home or in church groups and deliver them to **Community Care** in St. Catharines or Thorold for distribution to their clients.

Each meal bag includes food and an easy-to-prepare recipe that can be prepared in an oven or on a stovetop and is designed to feed **a family of four**. A printed recipe is included in every bag and closes with the message:

*“Packed with loving care especially for you by Anglicans in Action. Enjoy!”*

In addition to family meal bags, *Anglicans in Action* also prepares **Single Meal Bags** to meet the needs of individuals who have limited or no access to cooking facilities or utensils. These bags contain ready-to-eat food items that do not require heating, include easy-open packaging, and provide a spoon and napkin for immediate use.

## Program Impact – 2025

- In **2025**, a total of **21,990 meal bags** (family and single) were prepared, supporting **up to 93,056 individuals** across the Niagara region.
- Of these, **5,096 were Single Meal Bags**, providing direct food support to **5,096 individuals**.
- Since the program's launch in 2020 and through the end of 2025, **up to 199,494 individuals** have been supported.

*(Numbers may vary slightly due to short-term shortages experienced by some participating churches.)*

*Jan Kaye*

Please Note: Colette Gerryts will be taking over leadership of the Family and Single Meal Kit Program. She can be reached at cell phone number 289-929-0819 [colettegerryts@gmail.com](mailto:colettegerryts@gmail.com). Also at St. Barnabas Church Tuesdays through Fridays from 9:30am to 1:30pm. (905) 684-6421, [colette@stbarnabasanglican.ca](mailto:colette@stbarnabasanglican.ca).

## St. George's Meal Kit Team



In 2025, the **St. George's Meal Kit Team** packed meal bags at **St. Barnabas Church**, preparing **48 meal bags each week for 52 weekly deliveries to Community Care**. This work was carried out by a dedicated team of **three volunteers**, with two members responsible for purchasing and transporting the groceries while also participating fully in the packing process. Dianne Chisholm, Val Kuhns, Gail Robertson with Lori Martin helping. If anyone would like more information on the program, please call Dianne Chisholm 519-9301-8508 or email at [dcchisholm@gmail.com](mailto:dcchisholm@gmail.com). More helpers would be additional bags going to Community Care.

The St. George's team valued the opportunity to pack alongside the St. Barnabas team, sharing fellowship and collaboration. However, limited storage space and restricted building access (**9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**) created scheduling challenges.

Beginning in **2026**, the St. George's team will return to **St. George's Church** to store and pack meal bags on-site, providing greater flexibility for weekly shopping and packing while remaining grateful for the shared ministry experienced in 2025.

Jan Kaye

## **St. George's Dinner Club Vestry Report 2025**

Since its beginning in 1988, parishioners have enjoyed delicious dinners and new and deepening friendships as participants in the St. George's Dinner Club.

Each May, members and soon-to-be members meet for a potluck supper to draw the names of the next year's groupings. The Club's new year starts in September. Three or four couples meet in each other's homes three/four times over the coming nine months. The food preparations are shared by all so that the work does not fall to one couple. The end result is a series of opportunities to enjoy delicious meals while at the same time becoming better acquainted with one's fellow parishioners. A couple may be a couple or a pair of friends.

New members are always welcome. If you would like to join, please come to the reorganizational potluck in May.

You do not need to be a gourmet cook to enjoy this Club!

Respectfully submitted,

Grace-Ann Cambray  
Convenor



## Saints & Sinners Tour



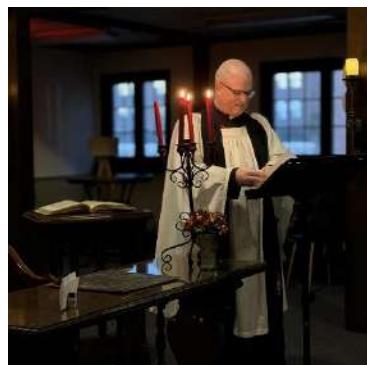
The Saints & Sinners Ghost Tour was designed as a low-cost, high-impact fundraising event in support of the St. George's Restoration Project, while also serving as a community engagement initiative rooted in the church's history.

Two ticketed guided tours, each capped at approximately 30 participants, allowed for an intimate and manageable format. The tours focused primarily on the personalities who have shaped St. George's over time — including both clergy and members of the congregation. Drawing on parish archives and historical research, the tours highlighted notable and influential individuals, using their stories to illuminate the church's long presence in the life of St. Catharines.

Ticket sales formed the core of the event's revenue, supplemented by voluntary donations from attendees who chose to further support the restoration campaign. The tours were led by Rev. Dan Tatarnic with support from Rev. Martha, Rev. Tom and volunteers. Promotion relied on existing parish, community and social media channels and therefore cost free allowing all of the funds raised to be directed to the restoration project rather than event overhead.

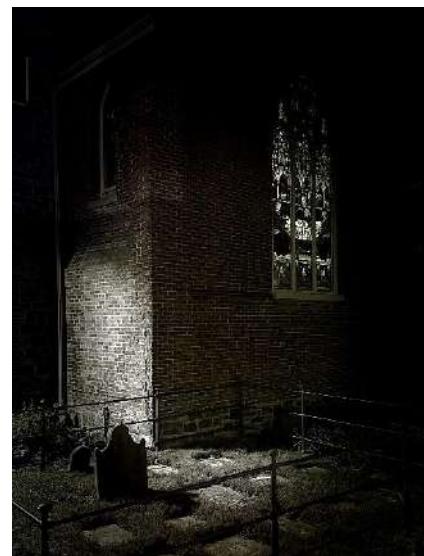
In addition to direct revenue, Saints & Sinners:

- Increased awareness of the restoration campaign and remaining financial need
- Engaged new and returning supporters through social media storytelling and by linking St. George's to the wider St. Catharines history
- Demonstrated a repeatable fundraising model with a favourable cost-to-return ratio



Overall, Saints & Sinners was a financially efficient and strategically effective initiative — no cost, modest in scale, and successful in generating both immediate funds and longer-term goodwill and interest in support of St. George's and its ongoing restoration work.

Saints & Sinners contributed to strengthening St. George's public identity as a place of traditional worship and more — positioning the church as a centre for history, storytelling, conversation, and creative engagement with the wider community. In this way, the event reinforced St. George's long-standing self-description as "the oldest church with the youngest ideas," demonstrating how heritage and innovation can work together in support of both mission and sustainability.



## **Bishop Beattie Fellowship**

The fellowship is a warm and welcoming group where the women of the parish can come together to deepen their friendships and share their talents with one another. We meet the first Monday of the month from March to June and September to December at 7 pm in the Asbil lounge. New members are always welcome. We began in March with a night of activity and laughter as Brier Coburn led us in some chair yoga. In April, we had a speaker from the Roots of Empathy program that works through the schools to help young children learn about understanding feelings and forming compassion for others. May's meeting was a mystery auction, an event filled with surprises and laughter. June's dinner was held at The Shore In Jordan where we had beautiful views of the lake and the sunset to accompany our lovely meals.

September's meeting began with corporate Communion presided over by Reverend Tom Vaughan. In October, Rev. Krista Hilton spoke about her chaplaincy at Brock and her work to help students with food and clothing issues. November's meeting is always a busy one, putting baskets together for the bazaar. We concluded the year in December with a lovely potluck dinner, with stories and carolling. Music was provided by John Butler and the singing led by Lois Duggan and Trudi Crowe.

Through the year, we have supported Community Care, Alongside Hope and the Water Project.

We look forward to a new year filled with fun times, learning opportunities and sharing our talents with the church and one another.

Respectfully submitted, Tina Valenteyn, president.

## Community Dinner



Throughout the past year, a dedicated group of highly committed church and community volunteers continued reaching out to those in the downtown core of St. Catherines, bringing delicious and nutritious meals to our local neighbours through the Community Dinner Outreach Program. This program provides a hot, evening meal once a month to those attending from April until October.

Due to some leadership restructuring, the program did not officially begin this year until late June. At that time, our skilled volunteers came together to prepare and serve a summer barbecue hot dog dinner on the evening of the third Wednesday in June, July and August. In September, a flavourful pasta casserole dish was served. In October, a hearty beef stew was the featured main course, closing out the program for the year. Dinners typically included side salads, rolls, and cookies with fresh seasonal fruit donated by parishioners for dessert. Crowds ranged in size from the mid-50s to well over 130 attendees at one of the three summer hot dog barbecue events.

The Community Dinner Program does far more than provide food for those who attend the events. Volunteers and neighborhood attendees have opportunities to meet and get to know one another in the parish hall. Relationships are formed in a loving, secure and trusting environment. The various team members working at each event enjoy fellowshiping with one another as they prepare, serve and clean up at the conclusion of each evening.

A sincere 'thank you' goes out to each volunteer for the contribution that she/he made to the success of each dinner every month. Your love and dedication are greatly appreciated and never go unnoticed.

The Community Outreach Program relies upon donations from parishioners like yourselves in order to continue. Donations of either cash or a cheque can be made by placing an envelope in the plate offering on Sunday morning and earmarking it accordingly. Fresh fruit can also be brought and dropped off at the church kitchen on the afternoon of the third Wednesday of the month, beginning in April of this year. If you wish to volunteer to serve on one of our teams, please contact Linda

through the church office and she will forward your message to Jack Pickett who will get in touch with you. As always, we deeply value your prayers as we seek to draw our brothers and sisters close by providing for their needs with a hot meal and a compassionate, caring heart.

Graciously submitted by Jack Pickett



## Daytime Bible Study Group

Our daytime Bible Study continued throughout 2024. We have a good group of around 12 – 14 people who together read various books of the Bible and discuss them. We do not presuppose any deep theological or Biblical knowledge, just a curiosity to read God's Word together and talk about what it might mean to us in our lives. During 2025 our longest read was "The Acts of the Apostles". This is a wonderful story about the earliest beginnings of the Church. It describes how the newly forming faith community spread and the events in lives of the leaders as they took the message of the faith to others.

It is a friendly and welcoming group, we often find ourselves talking about our faith without judgement in a spirit of support and friendship, often with much laughter. Everyone is welcome to attend. It is held at 10.30 AM on Wednesday morning. We would love to see you there. We also do not assume any particular level to Biblical or Theological knowledge to join our group. We are all learners together.

Alan McLean



## Rectors' Statistical 2025

### St. George's, St. Catharines

	2025	2024		
Households on Parish List	313	322		
Number of Identifiable Givers	251	257		
Baptisms	11	9		
Confirmations	1	3		
Marriages	2	3		
Funerals by St. George's Clergy	19	14		
	In Person + Live Online	Post Service Online	In Person + Live Online	Post Service Online
Average Sunday Attendance	165.3	154.13	180.18	182.58
Average Weekday Attendance (Weekly)	70.74	82.4	50.68	81
Average Total Attendance	236.04	236.53	231.42	256.54
<b>Christmas Attendance</b>				
Christmas Eve- December 24	505	222	444	217
Christmas Day- December 25	37	96	34	86
Total Christmas	542	318	478	303
<b>Triduum &amp; Easter Attendance</b>				
Maundy Thursday - March 28, 2024	114	127	118	103
Good Friday - March 29, 2024	136	120	116	124
Easter Vigil - March 30, 2024	70	114	86	140
Easter Day - March 31, 2024	287	435	279	475
Total Easter	607	796	599	842

## Super Tuesday

Tuesday Evening has long been a “study time” for the people of St. George’s. It was no different in 2025. The topics we choose vary from year to year, and in 2025 we studied two books together.

The first study was based on “The Essential 100” By Whitney T. Kuniholm. In it the author consulted many teachers and church leaders to choose 100 “Essential” Bible Passages throughout the Bible which would help readers to get a broad, sweeping sense of the stories and teachings of Scripture from the beginning to the end. Then these 100 passages were grouped in groups of 5 which had similar themes. So that made 20 evenings of teaching and discussion sessions. Twenty weeks is longer than most of our studies have been on Super Tuesdays, but we organized it in such a way that each evening was both interesting and varied.

Participants were asked to read the 5 passages in the week before each session. Then we had the wonderful idea of asking guests, or members of the group, or friends of St. Georges to briefly speak on some main theme or idea in that bundle of 5 passages.

The brilliance of this way of organizing was that it allowed each speaker to introduce the evening with their thoughts, their “take” on the passages for the evening. Since we had, therefore 20 different “leaders” we were given the gift of rich and varied ways to look at scripture and its meaning for individuals and the faith community.

I want to thank each speaker/leader for their contributions. It was immensely interesting to see the amazing and wonderful way in which each “leader” brought their perspective as our starting point and generously shared it with the group. I think that those who participated in this study began, maybe for the first time, to develop a sense of the overall narrative of the Bible.

Our second study group was another book. “The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism” by Timothy Keller. This book, although provocative for many of us, took some difficult time to “warm up” towards. We had a few of our original group decide it was not a book that interested them and so our group shrank somewhat over time. However, for those who stuck it out we found the second part of the book more engaging and conducive to discussion. And discuss what we did. The book falls into that broad category of theology call “apologetic”. That is an attempt to defend the truth of Christianity from a believer’s perspective. As such it did allow some of us to think hard about what we do believe. In a good Anglican way, we found that we all had different perspectives on faith and what it is. At the same time,

we discovered the richness and value of our theological differences and that truly all are welcome here as we wrestle with our faith.

You can see that it was a busy and varied year in our learning together. We are fortunate to have such rich and inclusive learning opportunities at St. George's, and I look forward to all we have to offer in 2026.

Respectfully Submitted, Alan McLean

## **Extramural Worship**

Those of us who can attend regular worship at St. George's really appreciate the communal life that we experience there. Our Sunday Morning liturgies with the Eucharist, our Wednesday Noon Eucharist, our occasional Evensong or other special liturgies are important to all of us in our faith journeys.

I am grateful that we also remember those people in senior residences of various types who are unable to get out to worship with others. They are often people who have had a rich and meaningful church life in their past, but it is no longer an option for them. A group of people at St. George's are trying to ameliorate that situation with regular extramural worship services at some of the local residences in the church's surrounding area.

Monthly worship services are held at Tufford Manor, Henley House, Ina Grafton Gage, and Loyalist Residence. This includes both Eucharist and Prayer Services. They are very much appreciated by the residents who want to continue to have an active and supportive communal spiritual life.

Involved in leading in those services are Rev. Martha, Rev. Tom, M.J. Schmidt, Valear Howsam and Alan McLean.

I would also be remiss if I did not mention the videos of the 10 AM service which Janet Veale shows on Tuesdays to her neighbours in Heatherwood. There is also an "in person" communion service at Heatherwood twice a year.

I am grateful to be part of a parish that tries to respond to the faith needs of those who are unable to attend the church building in person. It is important for us to remember our worshippers "outside the walls".

Respectfully submitted, Alan McLean

## **Stewardship Committee Vestry**

The Stewardship Committee decided to try a different tactic for this year's Joyful Giving Campaign. The task was focused on the idea of stepping up. The materials provided an overview of the giving levels within the congregation. Parishioners were asked to consider whether they could take a step up the ladder with a goal of raising an additional \$60,000 to support our outstanding music program, our amazing spiritual support through the various worship services, and our important community outreach.

The Stewardship Committee helped to arrange and host a meeting to explain this new concept. Our dedicated route managers called each household to invite them to attend and delivered the Joyful Giving packages to those who could not attend. My sincere thanks to the members of the Stewardship Committee and all our route managers for their work on this campaign.

The St. George's congregation responded generously as they always do. We received over 105 forms with pledges of \$263,010. This represents an increase of \$23,789 from last year. While this did not reach the goal, this increase was double that of the prior year.

St. George's is blessed with an ongoing influx of new people to our parish. In this secular world, we thank God that St. George's continues to grow and flourish through the generosity of our committed church family.

Submitted by Nora Jenter

Committee Chair

## **Community Breakfast Program (CBP)**

Breakfast was served with kindness to the vulnerable population of our community for 365 days of the year in 2025. We didn't miss a service, serving an average of 89 guests per day for a total of 32,600 guests. CBP is a "community" of over 180 dedicated hard-working volunteers who continually give themselves in the kitchen, on the floor and at the doors each and every morning. We are extremely grateful to our volunteers for their time donated so graciously.

CBP relies on generous financial and food donations from the congregation of St. George's and the wider community in St. Catharines. In 2025, \$106,151 was received from donations and grants.

Costs incurred by CBP include food, supplies, a monthly donation provided to St. George's as our contribution towards the support we receive from the church, particularly janitorial services. For 2026, CBP will cover 50% of security costs during breakfast service.

The Niagara region is rich in food sources. We have partnered with many individuals, companies, organizations such as The Bridge (food rescuers), an Anonymous Donor who supplies our fruit and more. Since July 2025, a value of over \$10,000 in food donations has been received through these community relationships. We recently partnered with Community Care and are receiving food and non-food donations such as hats, mitts, gloves, scarves, toiletries. Food donations and operational changes have enabled CBP to end 2025 with a slight surplus. We are looking at ways to support the program and St. George's better through these savings. CBP is developing a presence in Niagara where everyone is learning who we are, what we do, and what we need. We are thankful for the support of the congregation at St. George's and the broader community through donations of food, money and time.

Changes to the Operations Team continued in 2025. Kelly Bailey has been at the helm of the CBP for one year and has worked tirelessly supporting the program and volunteers. CBP lost a valued supporter in May with the death of Ann Koppel. Her support and dedication while serving as co-chair has been truly missed. The Operations Team said goodbye with thanks to Faye Perkins, Nancy and Duncan Moffett and Lori Martin as treasurer, shoppers, volunteer coordinator and newsletter editor. We are happy to welcome Daryl Crosby as co-treasurer, Larry Frizelle on the bread purchasing team and Lori Martin as co-chair.

In 2026, CBP will look to add a Donations Coordinator to the Operations Team. This position will be responsible for maintaining the partnerships that have been formed over the past year as well as seeking new relationships that will allow the CBP to continue serving those in need in our community. CBP has been in operation for 30 years and thanks to our supporters and volunteers has served breakfast every morning; "Breakfast served, no questions asked". The past year has been one of observation and change. Operationally we ask questions, allowing us to adjust to the needs of our community.

CBP can now be found on Facebook. We are connecting "digitally" with other service groups in Niagara opening the door to better serve vulnerable individuals. Awareness is key and we look forward to working in partnership to continue this service. In 2026, we will be looking for someone to look after our social media presence and potentially a website, as well as create a newsletter

We will celebrate 30 years on March 7 with a Celebration for all. Details will follow. 2025 has been a great year, small adjustments were made laying the foundation for the future of CBP. Community awareness and community involvement will be one of the many important focuses for the year ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Bailey, Chair

Lori Martin, Co-chair

### **Ad Hoc Finance Committee**

The Ad Hoc Finance Committee 's mandate is to advise Corporation and Parish Council when requested and to monitor the financial status of St. George's investments. We meet five or six times a year as required.

Our year has faced challenges due to the restoration project and the financing of this project. The challenge was met with optimism and creative suggestions as to how this project would be completed. The markets were favorable this year allowing us to draw on the interest of our investments, generous donations from the congregation and creative ideas for outreach into the community and the possibility of Grants have made this project possible.

Our group was saddened by the prospect of the retirement of our hard-working and faithful treasurer, Jim Jenter. He will be missed. His retirement will become official after Vestry in February 2026. We are pleased to welcome our new Treasurer and Bookkeeper Carol Wang.

Our previous accounting firm was unable to do a full Financial Audit for us. A full Audit is necessary for some of the Grant Committee is working on. We researched different accounting firms and found that KPMG in Toronto would be able to provide us with the Audit we require.

I would like to thank our committee members, Charles Burke, Corwin Cambray, Bruce Whitehouse, Jim Jenter, Sandra Legarde, Rev. Canon Tom Vaughan, and Rev. Canon Martha Tatarnic for their support, time and valuable contribution. Our committee is always looking for volunteers, if you are interested or would like more information, please contact Rev. Martha or Marilyn Pettit.

Respectfully submitted by Marilyn Pettit

## **Sidesperson's Vestry**

In 2025, we had eleven dedicated teams that fulfilled the role as sides people. During the year, we have added to our list, Sue Bartlett who is now Marilyn Pettit's partner and Marion Vincett who is partnered with Janice MacKenzie.

We were saddened by the passing of one of our sides people, Sheldon Pettit. He was a long-time faithful member of our group. We have had to say good-bye to Rosalyn Ryman, as she has returned to her family home.

Members arrive at Church half an hour before the service, on their designated Sunday. One would welcome congregants at the west transept and one at the Chapel entrance and hand out the order of service and any other material that is needed for that service. They were also available to help with the opening of doors, giving directions or answering questions that people may have. During the offertory hymn, the two sides people take the collection on each of the side isles.

The willingness and cooperation that I have seen in all these teams leaves me with the reassurance that we are a congregation of friendly and caring people. It is an honour to be able to schedule this enthusiastic and eager group. I want to thank all the teams for your help, understanding, and dedication throughout 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Pettit

## **Visitors Group**

The St. George's visitor group works together with the clergy to ensure that all members of our parish who are unable to attend regularly scheduled worship services or that have requested a visit, receive at their discretion, a personal visit at their residence or in hospital. Our goal is to share the spirit and fellowship that we all enjoy as members of our church family.

The clergy, as well as two team members are designated hospital visitors. They minister to those in the Hotel Dieu Shaver Health and Rehabilitation Centre. Due to changes in the Hospital privacy policies at the St. Catharines General Hospital, visitors can not visit representing St. George's. The clergy have been covering hospital visits at all the Niagara Hospitals when they have been notified by a parishioner or by their family that they are at the Hospital. Visits usually last from a few minutes to an hour, depending upon the patient's wishes.

Members of our group also visit the parishioner's homes or in the senior and long-term care facilities where they live. The time and duration of these visits are at the convenience of the parishioner and visitor.

The sacrament of Holy Communion is offered by the clergy or a member of the visitor team. Eucharist services are conducted at Linhaven, Ina Grafton and other facilities (upon request) during the year by clergy. Visitors must undergo a screening process and agree to abide by a rule of strict confidence regarding visits. Team meetings are held about five times per year or as circumstances dictate.

A visitor experiences the joy and fulfillment that comes from the expression of appreciation by the clergy and those we visit. Thank you, visitors, for sharing your talent and your unfailing dedication to the important ministry.

Submitted by Marilyn Pettit

### **Dialing Disciples**

Dialing Disciples was formed 30 years ago as a way of sharing information and to keep in contact with all parishioners in a personal way. Currently, we have twenty-five members of our congregation who have volunteered to faithfully call the people on their list. Each list has eight to ten names of people from our congregation. Parishioners are called about three times a year, with updates about the life and events happening within our church.

If you are interested in becoming a Dialing Disciple, please contact Marilyn Pettit. This is a rewarding and fun way to meet and chat with other parishioners you may not have had a chance to meet or talk with.

I want to thank all the faithful callers who have reached out to parishioners this year, your calling has been greatly appreciated.

Submitted by Marilyn Pettit



## Property Management



- Thank you, Gina, Gina is stepping away from committee after several years of service
- Thank you, Neil Allyn, for his work on the committee and wish him and his family all the best in BC
- Thanks to all committee members for their help in 2025
- Dave Bell oversees all heating and air conditioning concerns. Thank you, David
- Peter Schafrick oversees Fire Safety. Thank you, Peter
- In the past year, thank you Bill English for the sink/plumbing repairs
- Thanks to Davids help, dealing with the city with the new fence on the Robertson Hall side
- New wheelchair access door is complete, but we continue to have issues with closing, work in progress
- New humidifier installed in the organ area
- New fire safety plan has been implemented, and some training has taken place
- Restoration project is almost complete. Waiting for good weather to complete. Painting will take place in the spring

## Social Justice and Community

In 2025, we gathered. Through our gatherings, we created, restored and renewed connections within our community of St George's, and the broader community of St. Catharine's, testifying by our presence of the love of God for all people.

We gathered in the Asbil Lounge to meet our neighbours, Community Care & Start Me Up Niagara, welcoming Betty Lou Souter, Susan Venditti and Emily Fieguth. We hope to resume this program in 2026, at a time when more may attend.

We gathered with our community to walk on the Coldest Night of the Year for those most vulnerable who rely on the resources supplied by the YWCA & Start Me Up Niagara. With your support, both walks made their fundraising goals.

We gathered for Soup Sundays, for warmth of body and soul.

We gathered for the Baby Shower, a tradition Grace shared with St George's that is a now hallmark of our springs. Ms. Souter was again on hand as we presented her with a donation and with all the clothing and necessities for the littlest in our community to be welcomed home, with the help of Community Care.

We gathered for "Fruit of the Month" socials, enjoying the fresh harvest fruits of Niagara.

We gathered for Community Dinners, a summer and fall monthly meal for all.

Come fall, we gathered and gathered the community to the lawn and through the doors with our Neighbourhood Picnic - something that has become part of the Wine & Grape festival tradition now for families young and old.

In winter, we gathered gently used coats, scarves, mittens and blankets and gave them to the Chaplain at Brock University for international students. We look to also establish a way to give in an ongoing way to their food security program.

Throughout the year, we also offered a Sunrise service in the Swan, before the breakfast program. We are building a small community of faithful people, as we learn and sing and pray, we make it clear all are beloved and welcome in this place.

Finally, we gathered to bid adieu to two members of our team, Reverend Mike Degan, as he ventured forward in his ministry; and to mourn the loss of Ann Koppel, may light perpetual shine upon her.

None of these gatherings would have been possible without the many hands, prayers and support of the parish, in particular MJ Schmidt and her mother, Linda Potter.

Submitted by Valear Howsam and MJ Schmidt



## Children and Youth – Sunday School and Youth Group Programming



It has been a great year for growth and excitement. Our Sunday school is regularly increasing in numbers again. We have new friends who have joined our Sunday school family. We regularly have 10-14 on a Sunday. We are using the Sparkhouse curriculum that is provided by the children/youth and family support from the Diocese. We have our weekly Bible story along with the provided video to help understanding and relating the story to our daily lives. Our classroom is very comfortable and fun for everyone. We have children and youth all together so that the older children/youth can assist and help with our younger group. We provide nursery for children aged 0-4 with our provider Cecilia Tatarnic.

In addition to our regular Sunday morning classes, we provide a monthly group “Pizza and Play” where we gather, eat pizza and then the children have time together to play while the adults have time for a book study and conversation. We have 15-24 people attending. This group has been growing and the enthusiasm around it is wonderful to see.

We also provide a music program “Little Dragons” for children who attend St. George’s as well as children in the community. There is no fee for this wonderful offering. This program is led by Brad and Tanya. As a team we offer music lessons, games and fun as well as performances throughout the year. We have a wonderful volunteer assistant, Melissa, who is a member of our choir and we are so blessed and thankful to have her weekly assistance. On average we have 13 children attending weekly for practice. This program is exciting and we are building strong relationships. We are very thankful for the support we receive for this great work. Music is essential and it is a blessing to be able to share that joy and learning with our community.

Our youth group are active in the church in many ways, serving, assisting in Sunday school programming, helping with our community events such as our annual Community BBQ, Bazaar, Vacation Bible School and so much more. We have some dedicated youth that regularly attend and take pride in their roles. Our youth group has been actively involved in with our basketball “youth vs, adults” games. These games have become so exciting and so many upgrades have occurred overtime. New digital scoreboard, exceptional and funny commentator, amazing food and

popcorn, professional refs, and an intense and exciting game. We are so thankful to all our players, volunteers, and supporters.

We are offering Communion and Confirmation classes again this year. We have children's liturgy scheduled throughout the year where the Sunday school is involved in the 10am service as well as our Little Dragons performing. We will also be providing Vacation Bible School in August 2026. We are very excited about the year ahead. Thank you.

-Tanya Schleich



## **French Elite Montessori (FEM)**

French Elite Montessori (FEM) grew out of the vision and dedication of its headteacher, Madam Annick, whose commitment to Montessori education and early childhood development lies at the heart of the school. FEM offers a caring and inclusive environment where each child's individuality, learning pace, and developmental journey are respected, within a fully bilingual English French setting. FEM opened its doors in September 2024, welcoming a small group of children in its inaugural year. Now, with an additional year of experience and increased enrollment, we are pleased to see our school community continue to flourish, bringing together more young learners and families who share and believe in our educational approach.

Anchored in diversity and inspired by Montessori values, Madam Annick views every child as a bright light—unique, capable, and full of potential. Working closely with



parents and educators, we share the responsibility of guiding these children as they grow, learn, and build confidence in their own abilities.

We remain available to answer any questions you may have, and we sincerely value and appreciate the support of the St. George's faith community. [www.FrenchEliteMontessori.ca](http://www.FrenchEliteMontessori.ca)

## **Brotherhood of Anglican Churchmen (BAC)**

BAC has an average of approximately 20 members who come out to each of our meetings in 2025. Each year on the second Tuesday of each of the following months we have dinner: January, February, April, October and November. These meetings are held in Swan from 6PM (socialize), 6:30 PM (dinner), 7:30 PM (guest speaker from members and across the community).

We continue to have an excellent caterer, Lidia. She provides excellent meals. An example is a full roast beef and ham dinner with salads, potatoes, carrots, mixed vegetables, buns and dessert for just \$32 dollars. We charge our members \$35 to cover all costs. We have also started a volunteer system where 4 or so members volunteer to help set up and clean up. It is working very well. Many hands make light the work.

Our membership is around 35. We are eager to welcome any men of the Parish or their friends, who would like to join us. Some of our speakers from 2025 included: Lois Marsh Duggan and Paul Welford who founded an organization to protect members of Life Lease Agreements; Andy Holman who is a professor of Canadian History in Boston, on the Life of an Ex-pat in Trump's America.

The BAC welcomes new members. Please contact the BAC through St. Georges office for contact information (905-682-9232).

### **The Executive is:**

Tom Owens (905) -934-4239      e-mail [towens@sympatico.ca](mailto:towens@sympatico.ca)

Dave Smith (905) 641-3454      e-mail [dgsmith1917@hotmail.com](mailto:dgsmith1917@hotmail.com)

Ron Duggan 905-328-4808      e-mail [marsh-duggan@sympatico.ca](mailto:marsh-duggan@sympatico.ca)

Respectfully submitted Tom Owens

## Prayer Chain

This report will be very similar to last year's report as not much has changed. We wish to let anyone who is not familiar with Prayer Chain, how we might be of service to you, your family and our friends.

Prayer Chain currently consists of about four members who firmly believe in the power of prayer. Studies have shown that people who know that they are being prayed for often have remarkable outcomes. We are inspired in our prayer life by missives like an Evening Prayer composed by St. Augustine: "Watch, oh Lord with those who wake, or watch or weep tonight and give your angels and saints charge over those who sleep".

Our group keeps all prayer requests confidential. Information is only disseminated among the group. We try to individually pray daily and include the names of our petitioners in our prayers.

Those who would like our prayers may request help from us directly or through a person they have designated, such as a member of the clergy. They may give us as much or as little information about the person we are praying for. We do ask that petitioners keep in touch with us and let us know of any changes or when the situation has been resolved. If you wish to contact the Prayer Chain; please speak to Martha or Tom or other clergy or call any of the following members of the Prayer **Chain**: Tom Owens 905-934-4239; Rev. Alan Mclean 905-562-6713; or Rev. Marion Vincent 905-308-6360.

We normally meet in person every few months and keep in contact by phone and e-mail in between. We welcome any new members.

Call the people above, if you are interested or have questions.

Be At Peace –Carol's Prayer:" Do not look forward in fear to the changes in life. Rather look to them with full hope as they arise. God, whose very own you are, will deliver you from them "

Respectfully Submitted by Tom Owens January 2026

## Coffee Hour



Coffee Hour continued in the Asbil Lounge on regular Sundays throughout 2025. Each week, teams of three to four volunteers prepared and hosted Coffee Hour following the 10:00 a.m. service, offering coffee, tea, juice, and light refreshments. Special occasions were marked with celebration cakes, helping to create a welcoming and relaxed time of fellowship after worship.

On the fourth Sunday of each month, the assigned team provided Coffee Hour service downstairs in the Luxton Hall in support of Soup Sundays and the Summer BBQs.

Coffee Hour remains a well-attended and valued part of our Sunday morning life, with approximately 50 people gathering each week. As participation has grown, so has the need for additional volunteer teams, so that the work can be shared more evenly and sustainably.

Coffee Hour supplies are funded through the donation box. As everyone is aware, the cost of basic supplies such as coffee and tea has increased, and donation levels do not always reflect current attendance.

In 2026, we will take time to review how best to move forward in a way that continues to support this ministry and the volunteers who make it possible.

A sincere thank you to Dianne Chisholm and Linda Telega for their support with the administrative and paperwork aspects of this ministry.

Sincerely,  
Effie Ditiello, Coffee Hour Coordinator – 2025

## Prayer Shawl Ministry

Our prayer shawl ministry has helped many people, including from our own parish as well as friends and family. It's heartwarming to hear so many wonderful stories. We meet on the second Thursday of each month, January to June and September to December. We are looking for knitters interested in helping us knit prayer shawls. Call Evangeline at 905-682-1546. Thank you to all the people who have encouraged us in this great ministry.

Sincerely Evangeline Horton

## **St George's Altar Guild**

The Altar Guild is a lay ministry that prepares the Sanctuary for worship, maintains and cares for the sacred vessels, altar linens, dusts and cleans the Sanctuary, and serves the clergy and the parish.

The current membership is 19 and 3 associate members. There are 4 teams, and each team is responsible for one week of service a month. With the guidance of Mary Crawford, the memorial and festival flowers are ordered and arranged.

In June, the Altar Guild members meet for a luncheon. I congratulate the members on their continued dedication to the ministry. Our sincere appreciation to the clergy for their understanding and guidance.

Thanks to Linda Telega, our caretakers, for always being available to help us. I wish to thank the membership for their support over the past years as your President. I feel very honoured and humbled to have served as President. I thank Faith Bell for accepting the position as President and wish her well. Lastly, I extend a warm welcome and invite others in the parish to join the Altar Guild.

Respectfully submitted  
Sharon Crane, President

## **St. George's Annual Golf Day**

St. George's Annual Golf Day June 9, 2025

Once again, this year the weather prevented our best golfers from displaying their talent. However, all who attended enjoyed an evening of fellowship and a delicious prime rib dinner. I wish to thank all who came our and the many who donated over 25 prizes. Special thanks to Paul Chapman, Lydia and Doug Gallaway, Jim Jenter and Linda Telega for their help. Beechwood Golf Club is a great venue for our event. In all, \$2000.00 was raised for St. George's. Circle June 8, 2026, on your calendars for our next annual golf day (and hope for better weather).

Respectfully submitted, Vic Cicci.

## Labyrinth – New Home for 2026

Micah 6:8 “He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does God require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

Walking the labyrinth is the spiritual discipline of setting aside a time and a space to pray and walk meditatively with God. The labyrinth at St. George’s is a large, 40’ diameter canvas pathway modelled after the labyrinth in Chartres, France. It is not a puzzle; it is a single path to be followed to the centre and then out. Many people can journey at the same time but often each is on their own personal journey. It can be a time of prayer, meditation, relaxation and spiritual refreshment.

The themes of spiritual journey and following God’s way are common in the scriptures. Our faith journey is seldom a linear process. The twists and turns of the labyrinth can represent our faith journey and facilitate our prayer and reflection.

While each person’s journey is an individual one, we begin and close the time with prayer and a scripture reading. This fall we began a more structured format inspired by the book “The Cup of Our Life – A Guide for Spiritual Growth” by Joyce Rupp. This series has walkers focus on a cup as a metaphor for their lives and includes prompts to use while praying. In October we considered that we are vessels to be filled with God’s love. We need to nurture and protect this relationship as we pour out our love to others. In November we reflected on the open cup. We can become cluttered when we let the feelings and messages of the world take up our inner space. Emptying the cup and listening attentively are essential.

The labyrinth group meets monthly from September through May on the fourth Saturday of each month excluding December. The labyrinth group met twice at St. George’s in the winter of 2025. Due to scheduling conflicts, the group also met twice at St. John the Evangelist Church in Niagara Falls. In the fall of 2025, the location for walks was changed to St. John’s, this permitted a morning walk (10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.).

In September and May, the group uses an outdoor labyrinth in the community to provide a different experience. This has included labyrinths at Fairview Park, Niagara Health St. Catharines Site and Niagara-on-the-Lake Library.

Labyrinth walks are facilitated by Stephanie Wilton-Duncan or Deb Kostialik. We are extremely grateful to Jim Jenter for liaising with St. George’s and for his guidance in setup and clean up. New walkers are always welcome, and brief instruction is provided as needed.

Submitted by Stephanie Wilton-Duncan

## Tech Team

Hello, my name is Greg Maddison as of January 1st, 2026, I have become the head of the tech team. I thought I would share with you what the tech team does and why it is such an important ministry.

Most commonly you will see us sitting at the desk at the back of the church on a Sunday 10 am service or Wednesday at noon. However, we also assist with special services (Lessons and Carols, Christmas eve, the many services during holy week and more), as well as weddings and funerals. As well as things like Advent Café and other musical events.

Now for those who are sitting in the pews you likely appreciate someone sitting at the back making sure you can hear everything during the service. But we have a very growing online community. This is a treasured resource by people who are not sitting in the pews (or those who enjoyed it so much that they want to see it again). These range from people who may have mobility difficulties, don't want to come out in the bad weather, people who are away on vacation, people who are looking for a church before they walk thru our doors and some who have come to find us from wherever in the world they might be.

The average online attendance on a Sunday in December was 23 live viewers with 146 total views. Our Wednesday noon service had an average of 5 live viewers with 36 total views. For as full as the pews were at Lessons and Carols service, we have had 566 views. What this shows is our efforts are allowing people to bring worship into their lives at a time that works for them.

We are always looking to expand our team. We have had an age range from high school students to people who are retired. It is not nearly as intimidating as it might seem when you look at the desk. We provide training and have a helpful binder of guidelines to assist with any service or event.

If you are interested, please feel free to come and talk to any of us at the tech desk or send me an email at **stgeorgestechteam@proton.me**. We look forward to growing our team in the year to come. Submitted by: Greg Maddison

## Fundraising Committee

This year, the Fundraising Committee focused on both community-building events and longer-term revenue generation to support the church's financial sustainability.

In the past year, we successfully hosted a Trivia Night, which was well attended and warmly received. Beyond the funds raised, the event strengthened fellowship within the parish and demonstrated that fun, accessible events continue to be an effective way to engage both parishioners and the wider community.

In addition to smaller-scale events, the committee has been working behind the scenes on planning a large-scale Catch the Ace / 50-50 style fundraiser. This initiative has involved extensive research, compliance review, and logistical planning to ensure it meets all licensing, governance, and operational requirements.

As a smaller charity, running a Catch the Ace fundraiser requires a significant investment of volunteer time and coordination, including ticket sales, financial tracking, communications, and weekly execution. However, the benefit of this approach is that hard costs are substantially reduced, allowing a greater percentage of funds raised to remain with the church. In short, the trade-off is people power and a reduced financial outlay.

We are now approaching the stage where the Catch the Ace initiative can move forward. At Vestry, we will be presenting an overview of the program so that all members have a clear understanding of:

- the complexity and responsibilities involved,
- the volunteer commitment required,
- and the potential financial benefits for the parish.

This presentation is intended to ensure transparency, invite discussion, and give parishioners the opportunity to offer feedback before the initiative is formally launched.

The Fundraising Committee remains committed to pursuing creative, responsible, and sustainable fundraising efforts that align with the values and capacity of our parish.

## Departed Members and Friends 2025

*We remember, by name, those in our church who died this past year. We remember those in our community, particularly guests of our Breakfast Program, who have died this past year.*

*Rob Dundas*

*Ann Koppel*

*Tom Lewis*

*Sheldon Pettit*

*Peggy Pickett*

*Mary-Jayne Mete*

*Fred Hanam*

*Paul Vincett*

*William Wakely*

*Barbara Harrison*

*June Livingstone*

*Grace Dakin*

*Mary Ann Krajewski*

*Missy Collier*

*Jacob Hildebrandt*

*Derrick Albertyn*

*Muriel Herne*

*Tom Broughton*

*Russell Baird*

*Joan Richard*

*Art Rankie*

*Pat Matheson*

*Helen Fisher*

*Sue Chapman*

*David Shaw*

*June Court*



## **Warden's Corporation's Report to Vestry**

### **Year in Review**

This past year has been one of careful discernment, responsible stewardship, and faithful commitment to the life and future of our parish. Throughout the year, the Corporation has worked diligently to support the mission and ministry of the church while attending to its legal, financial, and property responsibilities.

### **Stewardship of Our Treasured Building**

A major priority for the Corporation this year was the completion of the restoration project required to preserve the structural integrity of our cherished church. This essential work was undertaken to ensure that our building remains safe, sound, and able to serve as a place of worship and community for generations to come. Along the way, it was brought to our attention that it was necessary to do further repair than anticipated. In response, some adjustments were made of things that could be delayed focusing on the necessary work. This still left the budget short and required a Special Vestry, where an appeal was made for approval to increase the budget. We sincerely thank the congregation for the generosity, trust, and encouragement shown in supporting the restoration project, both financially and with prayerful and steadfast support as it evolved. We are grateful to report that the majority of the project has now been wrapped up, marking an important milestone in the long-term care of our parish home.

### **Accessibility and Inclusion**

The Corporation also focused on improving accessibility within the church. A new strategy was introduced to manage the elevator "controller" more effectively through the creation of a dedicated team to manage the elevator in a timelier manner. This approach has improved reliability and oversight, making access to both levels of the building easier and more consistent for parishioners and visitors. This work reflects our commitment to being a welcoming and inclusive community.

### **Financial Stewardship and Giving**

In response to changing patterns of giving, the Corporation expanded the use of Square technology, offering parishioners additional options for financial contributions. This has increased convenience, encouraged participation, and strengthened our financial administration.

The Corporation worked diligently throughout the year toward financial solvency. Through prudent budgeting, careful monitoring of expenses, and the generosity of the parish, meaningful progress was made. While ongoing vigilance remains necessary to continue the level of outreach and ministry at St. George's, these efforts have helped stabilize the parish's financial position.

### **Outreach and Community Responsibility**

In response to emerging community needs, Corporation in partnership with the Region have introduced an emergency shelter initiative. The Corporation supported this effort by ensuring appropriate oversight and coordination, recognizing the importance of balancing outreach with responsibility of our parish. This ministry reflects the parish's call to serve those in need with compassion and dignity on night's that have extreme weather.

### **Safety and Security**

The Corporation also addressed the increasing importance of safety within our church facilities. Efforts were made to enhance security measures in order to protect parishioners, staff, and visitors, while maintaining the open and welcoming nature of the church. This work remains an ongoing priority.

### **Staff engagement**

While matters related to human resources remain confidential, the Corporation continues to fulfill its responsibility for staff oversight, including conducting regular staff reviews, supporting a healthy and effective working environment, and participating in the recruitment process for new staff.

### **Closing Reflection**

This year has highlighted the importance of collaboration between the Corporation, parishioners, clergy, staff, and volunteers. The Corporation is deeply grateful for the trust placed in it by the parish and for the continued support of the congregation as we work together to ensure a strong, faithful, and sustainable future for our church.

Respectfully submitted,  
On behalf of the Wardens of St. George's Anglican Church

## **Agenda for the 234th Session of St. George's Vestry**

### **Sunday February 15th, 2026**

1. Call to Order and Opening Prayer
2. Appointment of Vestry Clerk: Resolution #1
3. Establishment of Eligible Voting Members as per Canon 4.1
4. Remembering the Departed of St. George's (2025 - 2026)
5. Financial Statements for the year 2025
6. Parish Budget for the year 2026
  - A) Presentation
  - B) Discussion and adoption: Resolution #2
  - C) Auditor for 2026 – Resolution #3
7. Thank you Jim Jenter – Treasurer of St. George's for 26 years  
Retirement Celebration March 22nd following the 10am service
8. "Catch the Ace" – Fundraising Report
9. Election of Peoples' Warden and Deputy Peoples' Warden: Resolution #4
10. Announcement of Appointments for 2026, Rector's Warden, Deputy Rector's Warden and New Parish Council Members
11. Organizations and Committee Reports
12. Adoption of all Reports: Resolution #5
11. Gratitude: Resolution #6
12. Appointment of Signing Officers for 2026: Resolution #7
13. Resolution #8
14. Resolution #9
15. Adjournment

## Resolutions

### **234th Session of St. George's Vestry Sunday February 15th, 2026**

1. Be it resolved that Linda Telega be appointed Vestry Clerk for this meeting.
2. Be it resolved that the Vestry of St George's approves the proposed Budget for 2026.
3. Be it resolved that the Vestry appoint KPMG as auditors for 2026.
4. That Neil Culp be elected Peoples' Warden and Marilyn Pettit be elected Deputy Peoples' Warden for a one-year term.
5. Be it resolved that the Reports presented to this Vestry be adopted as written or amended.
6. Be it resolved that this Vestry record with gratitude the efforts of the many members of this congregation who work diligently in providing leadership and service in the many areas of parish life and worship.
7. Be it resolved that the Co- Rectors, Rector's Warden, Peoples' Warden and Treasurer be empowered to transact business in the name of "The Corporation of St. George's Anglican Church, St Catharines" for the year 2026;

And be it further resolved that two members of the Corporation—but only a maximum of one Co-Rector signature per cheque—sign all cheques on the parish bank accounts, with the exception of the Rector's Discretionary Funds.

8. Be it resolved that this Vestry authorizes the Co-Rectors and Church Wardens to consider and, if they deem it advisable, to approve leases, licenses, or space agreements of less than three years in length, inclusive of all renewals. And that this authorization shall extend only to agreements that include the following provisions:

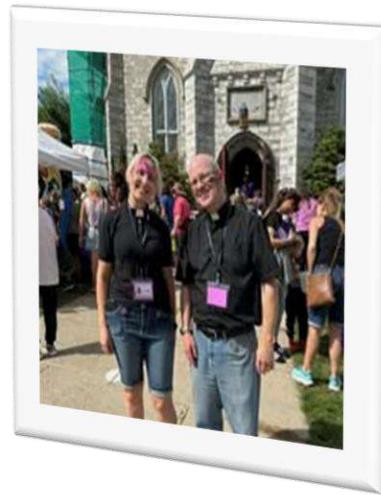
· That the agreement may be terminated by St George's upon 60 (sixty) days notice;  
That the lease or licensee shall provide proof of liability insurance;

The leasee or licensee agrees to hold harmless St George's Church, the Synod of the Diocese of Niagara and the Anglican Church of Canada;

The leasee or licensee agrees to abide by the Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment Policy of the Synod of Niagara; and that if there is any conflict between this

resolution and any authorization of approval resulting from it, it is understood that the current Canons of the Diocese will prevail.

9. Be it resolved that all acts, contracts, proceedings, appointments and payments enacted, made, done and taken by the Corporation of St George's since the date of the Vestry Meeting of February 23rd, 2025, be hereby approved, sanctioned and confirmed.



**Co-Rector:** The Reverend Canon Martha Tatarnic

**Co-Rector:** The Reverend Canon Tom Vaughan

**Bishop in Residence:** Bishop George Elliott

**Honorary Assistant:** The Venerable Marion Vincett

**Ecumenical Honorary Assistant:** The Reverend Dr. Doreen McFarlane

**Pastoral Associate:** The Reverend Alan McLean

**Pastoral Associate:** The Reverend Heather Whitehouse

**Sub-Deacon:** Mary Jo Schmidt

**Verger:** Sharon Vermolen

**Office Manager:** Linda Telega

**Treasurer:** Jim Jenter / Carol Wang

**Director of Music:** Brad Barnham

**Associate Organist:** Adam MacNeil

**Children's Ministry:** Tanya Schleich

**Youth Ministry:** Tanya Schleich

**Nursery Care Provider:** Cecilia Tatarnic

**Interim Caretaker:** Greg Maddison

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