

# St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

# SPRING Newsletter

April 2020 | 484 Water Street, Newmarket

[www.standrewsnewmarket.org](http://www.standrewsnewmarket.org) | (905) 895-5512

*"We are a caring congregation seeking to share, show and speak the love and joy of God."*

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## Easter Greetings From Rev. Laura

As I write, I am thinking about the disciples. Our lectionary passage for the Sunday after Easter tells us that the disciples were behind locked doors. They were afraid of what would happen if they went outside. The Roman soldiers might still be looking for the Galilean followers of Jesus. The disciples might also have been afraid of facing people. This fear might have been more like shame. What if they had got it wrong? What if Mary was wrong and Jesus had not risen from the dead?

They may have also been spending time wondering and trying to figure out what had taken place. If Jesus had truly risen from the dead, what did that mean? What happened next? What were they supposed to do next?

Afraid, ashamed, wondering, trying their best to make sense and understand what had taken place and what it meant, the disciples were behind locked doors. Into all of this, Jesus comes to them, giving them the gift of the Holy Spirit and the gift of peace.

This is one of my favorite stories. I love to read it each year and be reminded of the peace that Jesus offers us. It is not just a pleasant greeting. It is a reassurance of Jesus' love, God's love, that is with us through the good times of life and with us still in the times find ourselves afraid, even hopeless. In her blog "Worshiping with Children", Carolyn Brown describes passing the peace as a wish, or a prayer, for the other person. We pray that they will have the peace of Christ.

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She says, too, that we are able to offer that prayer because we know that God loves us and forgives us both.

The other part of the story that I love so much, is that Thomas asks questions of Jesus. He needs to ask questions before he can believe. He asks and is not dismissed by Jesus. His questions are welcomed.

The interesting thing about stories, good stories, is that you can read them and think that you know them yet still hear something more when you read them again. I wonder if you hear something new in the story of Thomas and the other disciples in the days after the first Easter. I wonder if our being behind closed doors this year adds a different dimension to our hearing. I wonder if we feel the presence of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in our midst – in perhaps our moments of wondering what the future holds, in moments of fear. I wonder about the many questions, maybe even doubts, that we have for God in this time and I am grateful that God listens to each of them. I wonder how we hear Jesus' gift of peace, in this time.

My prayer, as I reflect on this story this year especially, is that the peace of Christ may be with each of you – each of us. My prayer is that you may know the peace of Christ until we can offer that prayer to each other again in person.

BLESSINGS, LAURA

THANK YOU

to our essential and frontline workers! You are in our thoughts and prayers.

## Easter Greetings From Rev. Robert

Beloved in Christ;

Easter is always a very special time for me, as the resurrection of Jesus fulfills God's promise to us that we will indeed live forever in glory with God. That has an interesting ring to it, doesn't it? "I am going to live forever!" John 3:16 succinctly summarizes this; "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life". I want to bring to our attention the phrase "whosoever believes in Him".

As you and I journey together in faith, it is always good to remember that God doesn't call the qualified, but instead qualifies the called. In a word, we are remolded when we follow Jesus. Remember the call of Abraham in the Book of Genesis? Abraham did not confuse the voice of God with idols and false Gods, and what qualified Abraham to be called was his belief in God. *Abraham recognized God's voice* just as we recognize the Shepherd's voice. Later, in the Book of Exodus, Moses is quite another story altogether. God called Moses by way of a burning bush, and Moses said, "Who me? You've got it all wrong, God. Who am I?" What God saw in Moses was that he would become one who would defend the oppressed, live justly, and remain faithful whatever the circumstance. And God said to Moses, "*I will be with you*". These are comforting words for us in these uncertain times; words which we heard repeated at the first coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; Emmanuel; *God with us*.

During this time of self-isolation, I hope we can hold fast to the promise that when we open our eyes and hearts to Jesus, we are never alone. He enters our life, becoming our Guide, our Counselor, our Comforter, and our best Friend. Jesus strengthens us to overcome all our trials and temptations; freeing us to experience a new life full of meaning, purpose, and power.

Our triune God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; speaks Truth to us every day, and *whosoever believes in Jesus* will also believe the Truth when he says "I am with you always, even to the end of the world." Please pray this prayer with me: "Dear God, I want to know You personally and live eternally with You. Thank You, Lord Jesus, for dying on the cross; paying the ransom for my sins. I open the door of my life and receive You as my Saviour and Lord. Take control of my life and change me, molding me into the person You created me to be. I pray this in the name of the risen Jesus, and for His sake. Amen.

Please stay safe friends, and may God bless you and keep you.

YOURS IN CHRIST, ROBERT



# FINANCIAL STATUS OF ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

## Financial Update to March 2020:

Current Operating Account, as of March 31, 2020:

Revenues:	\$53,391
Expenses:	\$81,711
Deficit:	-\$28,320
2018/19 Surpluses:	\$15,219
Net Balance:	-\$13,101

Revenue to other Accounts: Presbyterian Sharing: \$5,676    Property Fund: \$1,831

## **St. Andrew's Financial Emergency Action Plan:**

### **Preamble:**

During the first 3 months of 2020, our church operating budget acquired an average monthly deficit of over \$9000 a month totaling a deficit of -\$28,000 by March 31<sup>st</sup>. Since the church services were postponed on March 15<sup>th</sup>, we are acquiring even more deficit in our operating budget.

### **Our strategy is to move forward, reducing our operating costs and increasing our monthly givings.**

Over the last 2 weeks, the Finance and Stewardship Committee, Maintenance Committee and Session have collaborated to develop a financial emergency action plan to manage the finances of St. Andrew's while the church buildings are closed and no live services can take place. The following actions have been taken and confirmed by Session:

1. A revised 3-month operating budget has been developed to guide us through the next few months. Some operating costs are reduced and support can be acquired through government support.
2. George Smith (F & S member) and Anthony Samuel (Treasurer) will apply for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) on May 10<sup>th</sup> (for period April 12 to May 9 payroll) for our ministers and administrative assistant. We hope this government subsidy will cover up to 75% of their stipends/wages. From May 1<sup>st</sup> until we achieve a subsidy, our church administrator has agreed to work at 60% of her role, working 4 hours each on Mondays/Wednesdays/Fridays.
3. Since our organist is not able to function in most of his church role, he has applied for and is receiving the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). The Session supports this action.
4. Our caretakers have adjusted their weekly hours of work in the church to a combined total of 6 hours per week (about 25% of regular hours), primarily focusing on sanitation of critical work areas and the oversight/maintenance of all church mechanical systems (heat, hydro, light, etc.). The documenting of the oversight of our church mechanicals is an insurance requirement.
5. In order to temporarily carry the deficit in our church operating account, Session has authorized that we will borrow up to \$60,000 of our designated funds (now about \$88,000) to 'float a temporary loan' to the operating account during the pandemic. The funds used will be re-cooperated by fundraising/donations after the emergency is over.

We hope all of these actions will help reduce our expenses by \$2,000 - \$3,000 per month and hopefully increase our monthly givings by \$2,000 - \$3,000 per month allowing us to better handle any further deficit we acquire.

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## CONTINUED..... FINANCIAL STATUS OF ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

### What can our Congregation do to help?

To better carry our operating budget and to limit our deficit, we would like our congregants to continue giving your monthly offering to support the church budget. This will align with most of our monthly bills. We recognize that some families may have difficulty with their offering as a result of possible lay-offs or reduced hours. Please give what you can. The more monthly offerings we receive, the less likely our deficit will increase. Thank you for your stewardship.

### How can our Congregation give during the pandemic?

1. You can mail or drop-off your monthly envelope givings to the church. Please ensure to send a **cheque not cash**. The church mail box by the front door is secure and checked regularly. It would be good to receive these givings by mid-month.
2. **(Preferred)** You can contact the church office on Monday, Wednesday or Friday and arrange to give through Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR). This will arrange for your givings to be transferred to the church account directly on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of each month. You may print the enrollment form from our website and deliver it with a cheque marked 'VOID' to the church or church mail box. (PAR charges the church \$.50 cents per transaction.)
3. You can contact your elder to pick up your envelope and courier it to the church.
4. **(New)** You can give your monthly donation through Pay Pal (Just hit the **donate** button on the church website). (Pay Pal does charge a small fee to the church for using their system.)

### Contacts for more information or questions:

For more information and any questions about our church finances, please contact **John Hopkins**, Convener of the Finance and Stewardship Committee at [john\\_hopkins@sympatico.ca](mailto:john_hopkins@sympatico.ca) or (905) 853-7131. Our church website provides up-to-date information at [www.standrewsnewmarket.org](http://www.standrewsnewmarket.org)

We hope, through everyone's help, we can regularly support the church operating budget during this pandemic. Our church continues to provide a range of worship activities through its virtual programs, and provides ministerial support through contact with our ministers and elders.

*We pray for God's help to overcome this emergency and return to a more normal church life.*

## SESSION REPORT

Session met on Tuesday April 28 "virtually"! We discussed our pastoral outreach and St. Andrew's financial position, as we as a congregation have not physically met for the past month. Session approved the Emergency Action Plan to deal with the lack of revenue caused by the church building closure. We are relying on the wisdom of our Finance and Stewardship Committee

and the continued generosity of our members & adherents to get us through!

Please consider how you can continue to give financially to St. Andrew's and how you can help others during this pandemic. If you want to talk, call your elder, Laura or Robert. Be sure to join us for a virtual coffee after our Sunday services at 11!

*Blessings to you all. Diane H., Clerk*

## WHILE WE ARE NOT ABLE TO BE TOGETHER, THE WORK OF THE CHURCH CONTINUES IN NEW AND CREATIVE WAYS!

- ✚ We are recording the Service each week. They are posted on the Church website and you can “attend” the Service by following the links. Past Services are also archived on our website.
- ✚ Phone calls are being made, e-mails are being sent and cards and letters written to help us stay connected while we cannot gather together. Please don't hesitate to contact Laura, Robert, or Robynne – to share news, to ask a question, or to have a conversation.
- ✚ The Prayer Shawl group has been meeting Tuesday afternoons at 2:00pm, virtually, using Zoom. If you would like to attend, let Laura know and you will be sent a link to the “gathering”.
- ✚ Stirred up Youth, Be the Change and Men's Fellowship Breakfast have also met by Zoom.
- ✚ A virtual “family games night” is being planned for Fearless Friends.
- ✚ The Finance & Stewardship Committee and Session have met virtually.
- ✚ Coffee Hour is now also taking place virtually. Look for an e-mail invitation each week. (If you don't have e-mail contact Laura or Robert to be included.)
- ✚ You can join a Zoom group session by phone! Call (647)-558-0588 and when you are prompted dial in the meeting number and password.
- ✚ New ‘face-to-face’ phone visitation known as the *Lawn Chair Ministry!* Rev. Robert comes to your home, sits outside on his lawn chair sipping water, and talks with you on the phone while you sit in the comfort of your home looking out the door or window sipping your beverage. It doesn't matter if you live in an apartment or condo; as long as you have a window. If you would like a *Lawn Chair* phone visit, contact Robert at (416) 578-4854, or robertroyal@standrewsnewmarket.org

## WE MISS YOU!

Our Sunday Worship and social time at Coffee Hour have certainly changed this Spring!

We miss you a lot and are looking forward to the day when we will all celebrate together! Please know that you all are in our thoughts and daily prayers.

If you are able to watch, we have been recording our “Sunday Services” and posting them to our [website](#) as a way to feel God's love and worship “together.”

We'd like to share in the worship service videos, the variety of ways in which people in the congregation are serving God and offering what they can, in any way, during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you have pictures of something you have done, made, shared, please send them to Ruth Bennett at [rgbennett@rogers.com](mailto:rgbennett@rogers.com) or the ministers. Be sure to include a brief description. Or if you'd like to record a short video, please do that and send it to Ruth. We can discuss the best way to do this - feel free to contact Ruth. Perhaps you'd like to share an audio recording rather than video?

**Some of the things that people are doing:** praying, sharing music, donating financially, making prayer shawls, card making, telephone calls, food preparation/delivery, working on the front lines, providing essential services, helping children and young people with learning at home, lawn chair window visits, participating in virtual worship (in comfy chairs!), video chats.....and many more!

THANK YOU to Ruth and “helpers” for their technical abilities and generous hearts.

### THE TOWN OF NEWMARKET OFFERS A WEEKLY LUNCH

Take away meals for community members in current need are available Monday to Friday from 11:30am outside the Town Offices at 395 Mulock Drive.

## WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!

Session, Finance & Stewardship, Maintenance and Personnel are continuing to work as the pandemic situation evolves. We are doing our best to keep everyone up to date with what is happening in and through St. Andrew's Church.

If you have any questions, concerns or just need to talk to someone, please know that you are welcome to call Laura, Robert, the Church Office or any of the elders.



*Please keep people living in Nursing Homes, Retirement Residences and Group homes, the Staff who care for them, and their families in your prayers.*

### Rev. Robert's Puppies!

Dash (Left) | Dixie (Right)



Following worship on Easter Sunday, Rev. Robert picked-up two 4 month old mini-schnauzers from Hamilton. The puppies are male and female, and come from different litters. The family, originally from the Czech Republic, had given them unfamiliar names, so the names Dash and Dixie came as a result of Robert's penchant for classic 1940's and 50's private detective movies.

*"Dixie and Dash are both a blessing and a handful."*

## SPEND SOME TIME AT CAMP!

On Sunday April 19<sup>th</sup>, Robynne Howard (Mapes) from the Cairn Family of Camps led our Worship Service. She shared some Camp songs and a message about community, connections and love. If you missed the Service, it can be found on the St. Andrew's, Newmarket website. If you would like to "spend" more time at Camp, check out the Camp Cairn website and go to the "Facebook" section. Robynne, other Camp Staff & Alumni have been leading "Camp" programmes each day. There are morning devotions with Mapes at 7:45 and a sing-a-long in the afternoon. There are also ASL classes, crafts, restorative stretching and cooking. You can watch live, or you can watch the archived sessions. You can find the schedule at <http://ilovecamp.org/cairn-connects.cfm>

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

### Q. Is the church open during the COVID-19 pandemic?

A. No, however you can call. If no one answers, please leave a message for a call back.

Church Office (Robynne): (905) 895-5512

Laura's phone: (905) 953-7811

Robert's cellphone: (416) 578-4854

### Q. When will we be gathering together again?

A. Unfortunately, not yet.

It is best to stay updated on the church website:  
[www.standrewsnewmarket.org](http://www.standrewsnewmarket.org)

### Q. How do I find St. Andrew's weekly worship service?

A. The weekly worship service is available on the church website: [www.standrewsnewmarket.org](http://www.standrewsnewmarket.org)

### Q. Can I participate in the "virtual" worship service?

A. Yes. We would love to have you all participate.

Please contact

Laura: [lauraduggan@standrewsnewmarket.org](mailto:lauraduggan@standrewsnewmarket.org)

Robert: [robertroyal@standrewsnewmarket.org](mailto:robertroyal@standrewsnewmarket.org)

### Q. How might I continue with fellowship and the work of the congregation with others?

A. The telephone is a great way to connect with the congregation. Zoom is a wonderful online tool as well. For details check out <https://zoom.us/>

### Q. How can I give my offering to the Church?

A. On our website through PAR or PayPal, Mail or Drop off to the Church Mailbox (front doors), Call the church office or an elder.

## Our Electronic Communication List

If you would like to receive updates from St. Andrew's by email, please send us your email address. You can call the office or email us at [info@standrewsnewmarket.org](mailto:info@standrewsnewmarket.org)