

St. John's Journal

**St. John's Anglican Church,  
West Toronto**

288 Humberside Ave. (at  
High Park Ave.)

(416) 763-2393 [www.sjwt.ca](http://www.sjwt.ca)



**September  
2002**

*Another Autumn at St. John's, another time of New Beginnings - welcoming back old friends and greeting new ones. What began as a short newsletter to introduce some of the activities planned for St. John's has grown into the Journal that you see now. And more opportunities for exploring faith and community continue to be planned.*

*As usual for St. John's, we start the season off with an event involving food and merriment - our BBQ & Dance Pub Night. What a wonderful way to welcome everyone to St. John's. May God Bless Each of You!*

**Incumbent's Greeting**

Welcome back! We hope this Homecoming Weekend lives up to our motto: "St.

John's? Oh, What Fun!"

It's always great to see people again, after a summer of vacations and adventures. In fact, I find it is always great to get back into my regular routine. It fits like an old shoe. Or it fits like a new shoe, because coming back to my routine after a break, means it is easier to adapt into a new routine. And it is always great to reconnect with friends. I hope the summer has been refreshing for you. I've enjoyed a great adventure, away in South Africa, with some spillover for all of us (more in this issue).

We start a new season of CHURCH with our Homecoming. We've come through a year of experimentation to end up with St. John's so beautifully painted. And we are entering a year with some more experimentation. We will be exploring music and its place in our life as a worshipping community (more in this issue). The painting was an interesting process and we didn't know where it would end up. We hope for the same and trust that as you consider the details, you will find our musical discernment to be a helpful process also.

As you look around, you will see familiar faces and some new ones. And a

big plus: Great caring. Opportunities to deepen your faith. And, we pray, room for God to do some interesting things.

Welcome back sincerely,

The Rev. Gary van der Meer

## PRAYER AND BREAKING BREAD

Ever since I first received the Communion with real bread, it has made sense to me. I heard all the jokes: "It looks more like fish food than bread," and agreed. When I discovered baking the bread for the Eucharist, I came to a whole new appreciation. "Guys don't bake," never stopped me before, and the recipe was easy. Natural ingredients, like red river cereal and honey, and getting my hands sticky. Deciding not to wait until the next morning, and sharing a loaf because it is hot and smells wonderful. And then there's the sentence in the service, when the bread is broken: "Creator of all, you gave us golden fields of wheat, whose many grains we have gathered and made into this one bread." (Book of Alternative Services, page 212).

Without getting sentimental, I saw the bread I had made with my own hands, shared by my community, and it felt so right. Now, as I discover again, how many things done prayerfully are really prayer, baking bread becomes a prayer. Under Elizabeth Fairley's leadership, simple yoga movements become prayer. David Fisher gets us drumming, all our rhythms going at the same time, and we are connected. Even doing the dishes, or using your spade in the garden can be done as a prayer. These

turn out, or you didn't find the time, bring some from a bakery. But to bake yourself, as a prayer, could be a moment in communion with the holy, as you've never previously experienced it.

Father Gary



## EUCCHARISTIC BREAD RECIPE

1 1/2 cups whole wheat flour

3/4 cup white flour

a pinch of salt

3/4 teaspoon baking soda

2 tbsp shortening (or margarine)

a generous sprinkle of 12 grain or red river cereal

3/4 cup cold water

3 generous tablespoons honey

Form into 3 equal sized loaves. Cut crosses in the tops. Bake for 20-25 minutes on a floured cookie sheet at 400°F

simple acts, done in the right spirit, bring into consciousness how we really are in the presence of God.

Maybe you would like to try baking bread too. Whether for your own enjoyment or for the profound moment when you receive the bread you made, "The Body of Christ, given for you." There are a lot of Eucharistic Bread recipes, some with yeast, some like a huge host scored into a hundred chunks. This is the easy one I tried first. Try it as a prayer. If you would like your bread to be used at the Eucharist, ask to be added to the roster. If, at the last minute, your bread doesn't

Bread baking will be part of the **Thanksgiving Prayer Mini-Retreat on Saturday morning, October 5**. Yoga and drumming are also on the menu. All are welcome.

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## A RATIONALE FOR CONFESSION

You may have noticed that on the second Sunday of the month, when we have the anointing, it always includes a Confession of Sin. Actually, on that Sunday, we make some hard choices. For many, the reading of all four scriptures is a sign of our connection to the universal church. Anointing which is new to Sunday morning, but also ancient, takes some time, in fact it can't be rushed. For the time being, we skip a reading and the psalm on mornings when we have anointing. Clergy may anoint as part of the vows of ordination, but lay persons receive a special licence. Currently Elizabeth Fairley is our lay anointer. In November, Evelyn Butler will join her in this role, and we will mark this new ministry with the presentation of her licence from the

may be exactly what someone else is needing. Or what you need. The release from our regrets is in fact a healing. May God's forgiveness give us the energy to be forgiving people and healed people

Father Gary



## ST. JOHN'S PRAYER CHAINS

St. John's has two prayer chains that I know of. One is very long-standing. The other has been operating for at least five years and was created about a year before we began having healing services with laying on of hands and anointing on a regular basis. Prayer requests that

Archbishop. With the logistics of two lay anointers, we hope to restore our connection to the wider church, and again present all four scriptures.

On other Sundays, we have made an additional choice. Confession has been connected to Lent and Advent, but omitted during the rest of the year. But, let's consider this again. When we ask for God's healing, we confess because we want to make sure that nothing that we have done is blocking us from receiving the healing we seek. Just consider how much energy goes into unforgiveness. When we hand our brokenness over to God, even the part we caused, there is a release. We let go of shame. We let go of grudges. We let go of the poison of revenge. These blockages can no longer stand in the way of God's healing desires for us. "Confessing my sins," may sound hoity-toity and old-fashioned, and after all, we are all trying to do our best. It isn't like every week we have multiple incidents of meanness. But each week, there is sure to be someone who needs the freedom to be gained by letting go of blockages. Giving them, our part in causing them and carrying them, to God. As you begin to see the Confession with a bit more frequency, it

are made to the chains are kept completely confidential.

These prayer chains are about to be linked together. An appeal is going out to all members of St. John's who might want to join the prayer chain. You may have no time or energy to attend meetings or prayer groups, yet still be interested in praying for others. We need a broad base of prayer for healing of all kinds at St. John's. If this interests you, please tell Gary or me.

Once we have a list of everyone who is interested, we'll print up a description of how the chain works, along with names and numbers. There will be a few simple rules mainly about confidentiality and keeping the chain operating. Basically, however, the only skills you need are the ability to use a phone and the ability to take a few minutes to pray.

Elizabeth Fairley

(416-481-0583)

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## ABOUT SOUTH AFRICA

This summer I had a great adventure traveling further afield. I went to South Africa because it turned out that way. I was hoping to see something of the world, and to do it through the relationships and community provided by our Church. It turned out that I visited the

Diocese of Grahamstown, South Africa on behalf of the Diocese of Toronto. I had no idea that there was an initiative underway to "twin" our dioceses, and I became the "Scout."

I sought out every opportunity to discover what life is really like, and what the Church is like. I reported back, and the Diocese is proceeding with the "twinning." And I am not off the hook. I will be the Toronto Link representative and will put together a committee that will design our relationship. I can already tell you, based on what I have seen, that this should not feel like an institutional connection. We have a lot to learn from each other, and the potential for a lot of fun doing it, if many people get involved in the mode of friendship between equals.

One way to involve a lot of people is to develop parish-based companion relationships. Surprise, surprise! I found the ideal parish that would like to twin with us. St. Saviour's Church in East London has just finished a paint job. Their church interior is Orange, Yellow, Green and Black. Imagine a postcard of the Serengeti at sunset with the silhouettes of trees. It is actually much more dignified than listing the colours suggests. As is the case with St. John's. Furthermore, their Rector, Reg Morgan, keeps bees, and with greater expertise than I have. We have already had a few conversations. If you look on our website, you will see that we have designed a website for them at [www.sjwt.ca/ssel](http://www.sjwt.ca/ssel).

Reg and his wife Helen hope to visit Canada next summer, and it may even work out that I would briefly trade places with them. There are a lot of ways we might share our life with each other. We'd like to



St. Saviour's Church,  
East London, South Africa

try youth group penpals. We'd like to put on a church service the way they would do it. We are holding an adult education study on the faith implications of our friendship. And there will be other visitors. Jesse Sage, the Grahamstown link representative, will be with us this month. Bishop David Russell will visit us in October, and preach at St. John's on **October 20**. Cynthia Webbstock of the International Library of African Music may visit later in the year as an extension of her trip to the Diocese of Kentucky. You may also wish to travel to South Africa!

One of the best things about these kinds of friendships, beyond the fun of discovering how they are different, is how knowing them gets us to know ourselves and ask ourselves questions from a fresh perspective. In any case we are a test case for whether parish-based twinning is workable. The reality is that we are about to make some new friends, and we hope to have a lot of fun doing so.

Father Gary

### **WANT TO KNOW MORE?**

Come drop in to our Adult Education series - Mondays from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. Call Father Gary at 416-763-2393 for more info.



## MAKING A JOYFUL NOISE UNTO THE LORD

### RECTOR'S RAMBLINGS ON MUSIC AT ST. JOHN'S

Dear St. John's Friends,

As we enter September, many of us are thankful for the wonderful and less structured experiences of summer. We also long for a return to the community and activities that give our life stability and joy, including our parish church. My life this summer was no exception, as I celebrated life and the church in South Africa and looked forward to returning to life at St. John's.

I returned with many thoughts about our life at St. John's. First, after seeing churches further afield, I noticed that St. John's is looking good. The colours are wearing well they are both dignified (more dignified than people imagine when you tell them "Purple, Yellow and Green") and at the same time adventurous, even playful in their interaction with the windows. Second, some people from our church family have been going through rough times, and you have been wonderfully loving and supportive with each other. Third, as most of you know, there has been a change in our music program.

Since the departure of James Bailey as our organist, some of you have expressed your concerns, and I realize that the musical direction of a parish has the potential to be a divisive issue. As I become aware of your musical preferences as a worshipping community, I wonder, can we find the "right" mix of music to satisfy the diverse tastes of our worshipping community at St. John's? Is there any one person who would be competent with several instruments and different musical styles, as well as to lead choirs, junior and senior, and support volunteer musicians from the congregation? Does it have to be one person? What can we afford financially for St. John's? I don't think we are yet able to answer these questions. I would like to suggest a route that would bring us some of the answers we seek.

First, I want to suggest that rather than rush to put together a search committee, we take time to figure out what as a community we are seeking. I suggest a time of intentional discovery, as follows:

1. Invite a wide range of musicians to play for us on Sunday mornings. I have found a few to start us off: a harpist, a jazz pianist, a youth band, and a couple organists. If you know some artists that would be interested in broadening their repertoire to include sacred music in worship, I hope you will suggest their names. This would be akin to putting our own paint colours on the walls, an important step to arriving at the colours we ended

up choosing. To encourage us to reflect on our music in worship experiences, every Sunday there will be a "Worship Response Form" in the bulletin. It has three parts: "What I found most satisfying about our worship this morning," "What we could have improved in our worship this morning," and "Ideas and suggestions for future Sundays." I am hoping for a couple volunteers to tabulate our responses and present them at the Advisory Board Meetings.

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### **RECTOR'S RAMBLINGS (Continued)**

2. Send scouts to parishes (especially, but not only to Anglican churches) where we know that interesting things are happening with music in worship. I suggest that people travel in groups of threes, representing the diversity of our music preferences at St. John's. Our scouts would then report back at the Advisory Board Meetings.

3. We would then ask a consultant to spend a half day with us, helping us figure out what we have learned about what is important to us at St. John's. At that point we would put together a search committee and define the job we would ask them to do on our behalf.

4. In the meantime, as we begin the fall season, I would ask you to do the following:

Make an effort to participate in our worship and provide constructive feedback. None of the visiting musicians is seeking a permanent role their presence is for our exposure, learning and discerning.

Suggest musicians to play for us. St. John's will pay artists fairly, though we may need to have a few "a capella" Sundays to be able to afford *expensive visitors*.

**Volunteer as part of a scouting group, and report back to the congregation at the Advisory Board.**

**Come to the Advisory Board Meetings, on Sunday after the 10:30 service, September 29, October 27, and November 24.**

**I would like to invite you to suggest other ways that would make this time of discovery a helpful exercise. I am not sure how long this process will take, but we will book capable musicians to offer the traditional music of the Advent and Christmas season. Thank you for taking time to consider these suggestions. Please remember to pray that God's Spirit will be in both the process and the destination.**

**Yours in faith,**

**The Rev. Gary van der Meer**



We hope you will welcome our guest musicians over the next few months. They include the youth band "A Cast of Thousands," harpist and pianist Joan Wright, and jazz pianist David Jones. Please continue to welcome Kevin Docherty and David Meanwell on the organ. We also look forward to a visit from the steel drum band from the Church of the Nativity in Scarborough, and perhaps a brass group from Humberside. Maybe you have some other ideas. This will be a very stimulating time, and we will be very blessed as these fine musicians come to us with all their gifts.

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## ST. JOHN'S CHOIR GEARS UP

### FOR 2002/2003!

Over the past year, there have been many exciting ways to explore music and faith at St. John's jamming nights, concerts, drumming sessions,

etc. One of St. John's musical traditions continues, the St. John's Choir. All ages, including children and youth, are welcome and no experience is necessary. Currently we meet at the church on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. (Enter at the side door at the end of the driveway.) You can drop in whenever you like and no long term commitment is required.

If you have a piece of music you would like to share, we would love to hear it. And, if you play a musical instrument, we love having new musical accompaniment.

In the discussion groups there are no teachers, just facilitators. Alpha is a safe, confidential, and non-judgemental place to voice doubts and explore faith issues.

Alpha courses sponsored by four local churches are starting at Runnymede United Church, 432 Runnymede Rd:

**Tuesday Mornings** (Childcare available):

Starts September 17 at 9:15 AM with light breakfast.

OR

**Wednesday Evenings:**

Starts September 18 at 7:15 PM with dessert and coffee.

Both courses are free. Donations toward food costs are welcome. Childcare is available on Tuesday mornings for a small pro-family fee. For more information or to register call 416-767-6729.



For anyone who is interested in singing or playing with an eclectic group of faithful music-lovers, please contact May Webster (416-763-7556).

Andrea Rutty



### AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE THE MEANING OF LIFE THIS FALL!

Alpha is a contemporary and practical introduction to the Christian Faith for adults ([www.alphacanada.org](http://www.alphacanada.org)). In twelve weekly sessions, beginners, sceptics, lapsed and long-time churchgoers gather to watch a video presentation such as "Christianity: Boring, Untrue and Irrelevant?" and then discuss meaning-of-life type questions like "What is the purpose of my life?", "What happens when I die?", and "What relevance does Jesus Christ have today?"

### ST. JOHN'S TO HOST MONTHLY COMMUNITY PRAYER WALK

On **Tuesday, October 1**, people from many neighbourhood churches will gather at St. John's to participate in the monthly community prayer walk for October. Please consider joining us at **7:30 p.m.** for a time of worship singing, followed by prayer for the host church (St. John's), followed by a walk in the neighbourhood. Prayer walking is not a parade; pairs of people go out for a walk and discretely pray as they go for the people who live, work, go to school, shop and conduct business in our neighbourhood. To wrap up the event everyone will gather back at St. John's to share their experiences and enjoy some refreshments. All are welcome!

*As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love. (2 John 1:6)*

Marion Karasiuk

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### BRINGING FATIH ALIVE THROUGH STORYTELLING:

#### CHILDREN AT ST. JOHN'S

Ah campfire stories do you remember those? What about other kinds of stories like the ones you tell around the dinner table. I remember well Sunday night dinner stories. These stories, told by my mother, father, other relatives or family friends helped me to understand my family and their peculiar quirks - and at the same



Finally, since all of us are unique and learn in different ways, the children are provided with a variety of learning materials which include age-appropriate crafts, games, puzzles and stories. All of these aspects are considered when preparing for the children's lesson

time helped me to understand who I was becoming. Perhaps many of you had similar experiences. I hope that you have found them valuable as well as entertaining.

This sense of story is an important and wonderful element not only to our lives but to our faith as well. This is what I hope to allow the children in the church school to experience this year the wonder of their story within the context of the "bigger" story. For example, this Sunday, September 15, one of the stories we will be looking at is the story of Joseph and his brothers talk about blatant favoritism and bragging about it no less well there'll be a lesson in here about what happens to braggarts!

As you know, there are many ways to learn about our faith and stories is one of them. Listening is a good way to hear a story which means simply having someone read the story like we do every Sunday. Sometimes we need to act out the story and in today's language so that it becomes more authentic for us and sometimes we need to see someone else's interpretation such as in a movie or a video. A popular summer treat this year was to show the children two "VeggiesTales" videos which were greatly enjoyed by all (adults included) and Kristen Allison brought popcorn to share. Perhaps you might consider joining us one Sunday. The story of Jonah is coming to movie screens across North America as the first full length VeggieTales feature film on October 4<sup>th</sup>. Part of that bible story will be part of our Sunday lectionary readings real soon.

each Sunday and the Mustard Seed program that we bought last year has been a big help. Perhaps you'd like to offer your perspective to the children one Sunday. Think about it and think about all the fun stories you can share with each other and with our children.

Lynda Ward

(416-763-2393)

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## **YOUTH ACTIVITIES AT ST. JOHN'S**

Activities for teens and pre-teens at St. John's continue to be planned. During the past two years, we have hosted Christian rock concerts and fasting events. We also have a youth Sunday School discussion group. Happily for St. John's, one of our parishioners, Marion Karasiuk is Youth Event Coordinator for the York Area of the Toronto Diocese. We are confident that this relationship will lead to some exciting opportunities for all area youth.

We welcome both volunteers to assist with youth activities and new ideas for fellowship, worship and discussion. For more information, please call Lynda Ward (416-763-2393).

## WHAT'S COMING UP AT ST. JOHN'S

Sunday, September 29 Guest Sermon: William Sibley

Advisory Board Meeting (after the 10:30 a.m. service)

Tuesday, October 1 Prayer Walk - 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 3 St. Francis of Assisi Day -Blessing of the Animals

- 5:00 p.m. Snacks, 6:00 p.m. Blessing of the Pets

Saturday, October 5 Thank God It's Saturday (Prayer Day)

Sunday, October 6 Harvest Thanksgiving Service

Sunday, October 13 Thanksgiving Holiday Service

Sunday, October 20 Guests: Bishop Taylor-Price; Bishop Taylor-Russell of

Grahamstown, South Africa

Monday, October 21 Potluck Dinner at the Parish

Sunday, November 10 Remembrance Day Service

Friday, November 15 Parish Dinner Event (t.b.a.)

Sunday, November 17 St. John's Anniversary

Saturday, November 23 Pre-Advent Fasting Day

Sunday, November 24 Advisory Board Meeting

Friday, December 6 Parish Dinner Event (t.b.a.)

Sunday, December 15 White Gift Sunday

Sunday, December 22 Christmas Pageant

### **Christmas Services**

December 24 - Christmas Eve - 5:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. with Carol Sing  
at 10 p.m.

December 25 - Christmas Day - 9:30 a.m.

### **MUSICAL HIGHLIGHTS AT THE 10:30 A.M. SUNDAY SERVICE**

September 15 - band "Cast of Thousands"

September 22 - harpist Joan Wright

September 29 - jazz pianist David Jones

## October 20 - band "Cast of Thousands"

**ONGOING**

Mondays at 7:30 p.m. Adult Education Series

Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. All Ages Choir Drop-In

Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. Weekday Morning  
Eucharist

This list continues to be updated.

Please forward updates to Andrea Rutty (416-769-7948,  
cmrd@sympatico.ca)

**We are not a Building!**

We're an accessible, accepting, diverse community. We are young and old, able-bodied and disabled, employed and unemployed. We are married, single, divorced, widowed, straight and gay. We are from all over the world, yet we could live next door. You will find open minds and open hearts at St. John's.

The mission of St. John's Church is to build a community of caring believers committed to Christ to work for justice and service to all in need. We gather to praise God and to give and receive support to meet the challenge of our daily ministries. We call on all who will to come and join us

We have a proud (120 year) history, an exciting and challenging present, and a dream of the future that we'd like to share with you.

**A Few Words from the Editor:**

*Thank you to all those who helped with this quickly done Journal:  
Father Gary, Elizabeth Fairley, Lynda Ward, Marion Karasiuk, May  
Webster, Bruce Alton.*

*The next issue will be coming shortly and will include articles on some  
of the activities that have occurred over the summer. We are always  
looking for new contributors and especially graphics (sketches, doodles,  
clipart, photographs). Please send them in as soon as possible. If you  
have any questions, please contact me at 416-769-7948 or  
cmrd@sympatico.ca. Best Wishes and Welcome Back! **Andrea Ruttly***



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[www.sjwt.ca](http://www.sjwt.ca)

Yahoo group:  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/stjohnstoronto>

