



The Mustard Seed

March 2021

The Monthly Newsletter
of
St. John's Evangelical
Lutheran Church

47 McLachlin St. S., Arnprior
Ontario K7S 2Z1

Pastor:

Norine Gullons 613-282-5032
Church Office: 613-623-4562

Church Council

Enid Blackwell	623-7017
Debbie Witt	623-1500
Dave Burkett	618-5729
Cory Weckwerth	793-3701
Andy Kalnins	863-0202

See us on facebook:

St. John's Lutheran Church Arnprior

On the web: stjohnsarnprior.com

Pastor's Message

If we are going to follow Jesus to the cross during Lent, then we have to start where he started - where John the Baptist started. We have to start out in the wilderness. Some days it feels like we, in the year 2021, are living in a wilderness.

If you are one who pursues the news, you will hear the many different views and information on Covid and it's variants and the vaccines and their role-out.

St. John's Church Council met last night Feb. 22 and have made the hard decision to remain closed for the Lenten season, and to offer scripts and continue with our YouTube services. They have made this decision as they are concerned and care for the wellbeing, protection and health of all of our people. I certainly support their decision, and hope you will too.

There is much to read in this newsletter and many ways one can be on a personal Lenten journey while at home. Along with worship, there is a **Lenten Series with ELCIC Pastor- Rev. David Maginley (Nova Scotia) on 5 Wednesday evenings at 7pm by ZOOM.** We have a new **CLWR – Lenten Project- Solar Lights** led by Andy Kalnins, and Jeff Kargus. (see further info) We are even going to **install our new Church Council by ZOOM on Monday March 8th.**

There is news from our sister congregation, **St. James in Renfrew.** There are ways to be together this Lenten season, through prayer, worship, participating in what is offered and connecting with each other. Please take advantage of all of these opportunities. Please do not hesitate to call Pastor or a council member if you need clarification about any of these events.

Lent begins in the wilderness. We are so tempted to stay put, to stay comfortable, and stay safe, and yet God's Spirit

continues to grab hold of us, and throw us out, into the wilderness parts of the world, not only to stand with, walk with, and lift up those who are hurting, but also to share the love and promise of God with them. Maybe that's why the Spirit keeps throwing us out there – into the wilderness – because when we walk with each other, and lift each other up in our pain and struggles – even in the simplest way, God is right there with us, giving us hope, providing us peace, and transforming our wilderness into sacred space!

May God protect and bless you and your families during this Lenten Season.

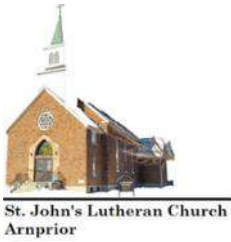
P+Norine

March and Holy Week Event Schedule

DATE	EVENT
Sunday March 7th	Third Sunday In Lent: Pre-recorded Service with Holy Communion available on YouTube
Thurs March 18th	UnPlug Team meets at 8:30 via Zoom.
Sunday March 14th	Fourth Sunday in Lent: Pre-recorded Service of Word and Prayer available on YouTube.
Monday March 15th	Church Council meet at 7pm via ZOOM call.
Sunday March 21st	Fifth Sunday in Lent: Pre-recorded Service of Word and Prayer available on YouTube.
Sunday March 28th	PALM SUNDAY Pre-recorded Service with Holy Communion available on YouTube.
Thursday April 1st	Maundy Thursday—No Service
Friday April 2nd	Good Friday: Pre-recorded Service of Word and Prayer available on YouTube.
Sunday April 4th	Easter Sunday: Pre-recorded Service with Holy Communion available on YouTube.

Please remember every Wed night Feb 24 – March 24 for the 7pm Maginley Lenten Series via ZOOM – see newsletter.

CLWR Lenten Project–Solar Lights Chat –via ZOOM on Thursdays March 4-18- 25 - see newsletter



Council Meeting Minutes

February 22nd 2021

Attendance (via ZOOM)

Enid Blackwell
Cory Weckwerth
Alison Burkett

David Burkett
Andy Kalnins

Pr. Norine
Debbie Witt
Jeff Kargus

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 and Pastor opened with a reading and a prayer.

Roundtable check-in

1. Previous Minutes

Dave moved that the January 18th, 2021, minutes be approved as circulated, Andy seconded. **CARRIED**

2. **Council Members:** Debbie moved and Andy seconded that Enid be appointed Chair, and Enid moved that Andy be Vice Chair and Andy moved that Dave Burkett be secretary, Debbie seconded. Dave moved that Alison be appointed as Treasurer for a one-year term, seconded by Andy. **CARRIED**

3. **Finance:** Alison presented the P&L Comparison of January 2021 compared with 2020. Givings are up nearly \$2000 compared to same month last year. Alison noted that we have received the cheques (in Feb), for UnPlug and Technology. Debbie moved acceptance of the Finance report, Andy seconded, **CARRIED**.

Alison commented that if we purchase OneLicense (Reprint + Streaming) for \$377, the total technology budget should remain the same. To cover the increased cost of the license we would lower the AV director to 30 weeks.

Alison departed the meeting.

4. Pastor's report:

Pastor presented her report. She provided a status report on St. James building sale. Pastor talked about the evening Lenten services for 5 Wednesday nights at 7:00pm via Zoom – Dave to send out the link.

5. Communications:

Enid presented the facebook activity for February. More than 30 posts since last meeting. Enid presented the numbers of personal contacts and service audio with the congregation. Pastor noted she will contact the Grove and get contact details for Dorothy.

Dave: presented video viewership: the average number of people viewing the service videos completely remains at 43.

Jeff Kargus joined the meeting.

6. Outreach:

Jeff spoke about the CLWR initiative to raise money for solar Panels. Andy talked about the lack of light availability in the developing world. Suggested that we have an appeal for congregational support for Solar Panels (approx. \$100 each). Andy to contact Alison regarding how people should designate their givings. There will be regular communications to the congregation. Andy moved that council endorse this project (through CLWR), and that donations to LENT be directed to this project. Dave seconded, **CARRIED**.

Jeff departed the meeting.

7. Children Youth and family

Cory added to team of Ryan, P+Norine, Alison and Enid; the advisory team met twice. Finalized Outdoor Youth Program Coordinator job description, posting of ad etc. is ongoing, including our email lists. Anticipate mid March selection and next meeting. Planning for 7 activities of the 12 are fairly set, some are still brewing: e.g. community garden, sky, animals, tracks/nature hike/scavenger hunt, baby farm animals, riverbanks. Procedural, procurement, promotion work anticipated.

Continued over —>

Council Minutes, continued.

8. **Vacation Bible School/Vacation Camp:** It was agreed that we would not try to hold a VBS this year.
9. **Property Update:** Gerald monitoring the building every day. Tried to contact re getting the Lift inspected (Note: now scheduled for March 5th). There was some discussion around the town project for Alicia street. Randy has provided contacts at the town, Dave will follow up.
10. **Technology:** Dave moved and Debbie seconded that we purchase the reprint and podcast licenses from OneLicense for a cost of \$377. Carried.
11. **Re-opening:** St. James is already holding in-person worship. Pastor is not available for St. John's for March 14th due to St. James AGM. Dave suggested staying closed until at least the next council meeting. That will give more information regarding case numbers. Andy expressed concern regarding the risk, especially due to the variant, and suggested staying closed longer than that. Council decided to remain closed until at least April 4th. Enid and Andy will experiment with ways for people to call in and listen to the service.
12. **Synod Assembly delegate.** Looking for a delegate to the Synod Assembly June 25 – 26th. Need decision by March 15th.
13. **Council Installation:** Pastor to look at holding a zoom installation in March.

NEXT MEETINGS: Council March 15th.

Adjournment: 8:50

PRAYER LIST

We normally have this list on our Sunday bulletin. Please pray for these people in your daily prayer:

From both congregations: Chris & Kathy, Ed & Rosemary, Linda & family, Joe & Shelley, Vicki.

Friends of the Parish: Joan, Leslie, Tere B., Lorraine, Barb L., Mary, Lucille, and Brenda.

We pray for all those administering the new covid vaccines, that they may be diligent in their task.

Bless you for believing in the power of prayers. If you wish to add a name to this list, please contact Pastor Norine.

LENTEN SERIES via ZOOM

Rev. Maginley is an ELCIC Pastor in Nova Scotia. I commend this Lenten series to you which starts **Wed night Feb 24 at 7pm by ZOOM & I have been told it is an hour long.**

Please retain the email with the zoom link listed, to be used for each Wed night session, blessings, P+Norine



Greetings,

I'm very pleased to announce that we are hosting Rev. David Maginley for a 5 week Lenten wilderness journey. The sessions will take place Wednesday nights at 7pm and will run from **February 24th to Wednesday, March 24th.**

Everyone is invited and there is no cost to this event. Funding for this event has been generously provided by the Eastern Synod Mission Grant program. A special thank you to Mission Committee for supporting this important initiative!

Below you will find an outline of what to expect, as well as the zoom credentials. David will be available for questions and conversation after each presentation. I strongly encourage your participation in this event as I know it will be very transformative for all of us. David has a unique gift of explaining the science of spirituality in relatable terms.

I sincerely hope you can make it. Peace be with you, *Pastor Ronnie Smith, Peace Lutheran Church, Pickering*

Lenten Series Outline

You're not who you think you are: Lent and the New You

The astonishing surprise, often not realized until the end of life, is that you are more than you could imagine, for you emanate from and are sustained by God. Even more, that you, and reality, are so much more than you could comprehend. Join us as we explore with Rev. David Maginley this great surprise and ways in which it is accessed, through a model of redemption that is rooted in contemplation, cosmology and even crisis. These pandemic days provide us with an opportunity to discover who we truly are, and Lent is our path.

Week 1. A bad day for your ego is a good day for your spirit

Explore the contrast of ego and spirit, and how crisis accelerates our awakening.

Week 2: Baptism and awakening.

Explore rituals as ways to tune yourself to God, to love, to your true self, especially during the pandemic.

Week 3 The Body as Temple

Who, or better still, what are you? You'll be surprised and intrigued to discover a scientifically spiritual model of yourself, and reality. An astonishing surprise awaits!

Week 4 Redemption Redeemed.

What is it to not only believe in Christ, but believe into Christ? Explore what it is to be a warrior of compassion, as a partner with Christ in restoring the world.

Week 5: Crisis and Resurrection

Imagine using suffering as fuel for transformation. Explore how the quality of your presence empowers you to do what you could never imagine, and awaken to what God has created you to be.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86039397546?pwd=SkJiV1J2azNoVjZKZDRXZjJrWHg3QT09>

Meeting ID: 860 3939 7546 Passcode: 318076

Dial by your location: +1 438 809 7799 Montreal ● +1 647 374 4685 Toronto

ASTRONOMY CORNER with Andy Kalnins

Genesis 2: 6-8

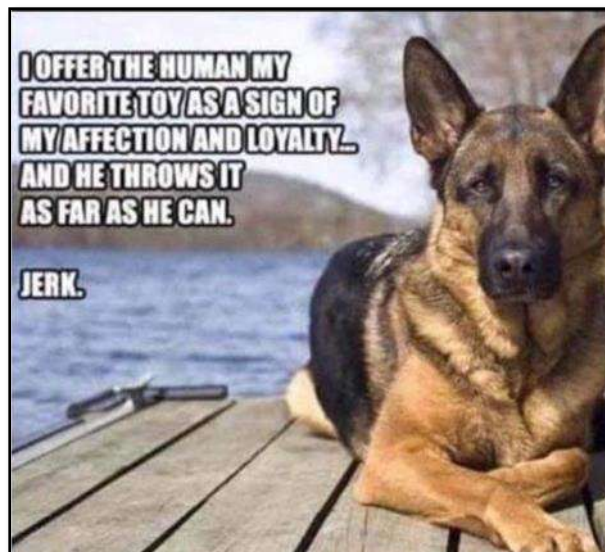
*Then the Lord God formed man from the **dust** of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being.*

The Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground I would suspect because it was pretty darn handy. Dust is ubiquitous, it gets in our hair, it gets in our homes, it seems to want to adhere to every surface. Dust and sand clouds can turn noon into midnight in cities, and can literally shut down the engines of high-altitude aircraft.

And our solar system, from the sun to almost the orbit of Mars, is laden with dust. For those of us that take the strategy that dust is eventually going to go away (and therefore not worth worrying about) we might be comforted by the fact that each particle of this solar system dust has a finite life. There are two problems: 1) The life of each particle is about 10000 years which is a long time not to use the Swiffer Duster, and 2) The dust that is vaporized by the sun, or hits the earth, or is blown away by the solar wind is replaced by the exhaust of visiting comets.

Most of the time this dust cannot ordinarily be seen but the first two weeks of March and the first two weeks of April will be good times to see what is called Zodiacal Light. The ecliptic is the path that the sun appears to follow in the sky as it travels through the year. Technically it is of course the path of the earth, but it looks to us like the path of the sun. At this time of year that line is at a steep angle. If you go outside about half an hour after the end of twilight and look to the west you may see what looks like a massive cone of light. It will be widest at the horizon and the center will straddle the line of the elliptic. It is the reflection of that inter-planetary dust, the stuff that we are made from!

Don't forget: Saturday March 20th is the arrival of spring !!! We get 12 hours and 8 minutes of daylight !!! Can an egg stand up on end that day? No, it cannot. But no matter, summer is on its way.



Jan Richardson

Beloved is where we begin.



Beloved Is Where We Begin

If you would enter
into the wilderness,
do not begin
without a blessing.
Do not leave
without hearing
who you are:
Beloved,
named by the One
who has traveled this path
before you.

Do not go
without letting it echo
in your ears,
and if you find
it is hard
to let it into your heart,
do not despair.
That is what
this journey is for.

I cannot promise
this blessing will free you
from danger,
from fear,
from hunger
or thirst,
from the scorching
of sun
or the fall
of the night.

But I can tell you
that on this path
there will be help.

I can tell you
that on this way
there will be rest.

I can tell you
that you will know
the strange graces
that come to our aid
only on a road
such as this,
that fly to meet us
bearing comfort
and strength,
that come alongside us
for no other cause
than to lean themselves
toward our ear
and with their
curious insistence
whisper our name:

Beloved.
Beloved.
Beloved.

—Jan Richardson
from *[Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings for the Seasons](#)*



A Special Milestone for a Special Couple

A congratulations to Bill and Marion Koops upon their 75th Wedding Anniversary, which was celebrated on February 26. They have been blessed with 3 children, 9 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren. They attribute a long marriage with love, patience, communication and family as a factor in keeping together over these many years.

We give thanks to Marion and Bill for their faithful participation in and support of St. John's community and work over many years!



BIRTHDAYS

March 1—Chris Tonkin

March 8—Melissa Watt

March 11—Randy Zimmerling

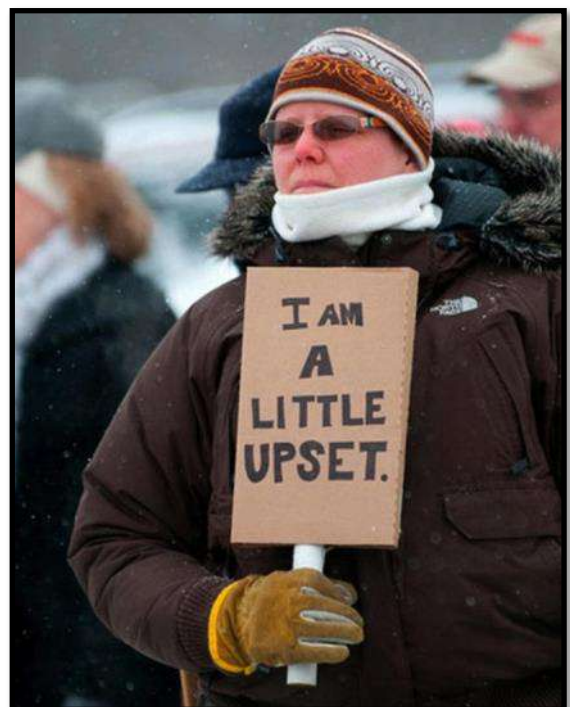
March 20—Elmer Leek

March 25—Pastor Stan

March 29—Lorne Bretzlaff

March 30—Blake Zimmerling

A Canadian Protester



I told my wife
she should
embrace her
mistakes...
She hugged me.



ONLINE AND SCRIPT WORSHIP

We Continue to Worship, Share and Care Safely

St. John's council decision is to continue with online and script worship services presently, and not resume in person worship until it is considered safe for the faith community to do so, and provincial and public health guidance allows.

Rationale:

- even given our current county 'green zone' category, our local chief Public Health official continues to encourage 'stay at home' as much as possible,
- congregant age and/or vulnerabilities
- vaccination roll out takes time
- COVID variant and 3rd wave concerns,
- recent cases in our area of Renfrew County,
- reluctance to reopen and possibly close again, and
- perspective and plans of national and synodical church leaders on continuance of caution and care.

However, **please keep the phone calls and contact going around St. John's community and beyond**. Who have you not seen for months? A year? How about a chat? A regular phone date? A card? A special treat or needed supply dropped off?

And, remember, **we have Lenten zooms** locally on 'light' and CLWR solar lights and nationally on Wednesday evenings (details elsewhere in newsletter). **Phone in connections can be arranged**, too.

Thank you for faithful ongoing connections, care, support and hope.

Enid

On behalf of congregational council



UNPLUG Project

Planning for the UNPLUG project continues with full awareness of COVID safety for scheduling of activities. We've posted the two Youth Program Coordinators positions in several places locally; applications close March 16th. If you know someone who might be interested, here's a short description of the position. A full position description is posted on our website <http://stjohnsarnprior.com/>.

Part-Time Outdoor Youth Program Coordinator

Seeking two (2) energetic and accountable program coordinators to provide leadership in a safe and memorable outdoor experience for children and youth. Proven capabilities in volunteer coordination, participant registration, logistics and communication in child/youth centred programming. Experience in a faith-based setting an asset. Part-time, several days per month over 6 months.

Please send your application, including a detailed resumé and cover letter (MS Word or pdf format) stating: Youth Program Coordinator by March 16, 2021 to:

Advisory Team Chair - UNPLUG

Email: stjohnscommunications@gmail.com

**Ill never forget the
look on the cashiers
face, when she
scanned the packet of
bird seed,
And I asked her how
long does it take for
the birds to grow once
I plant them.**

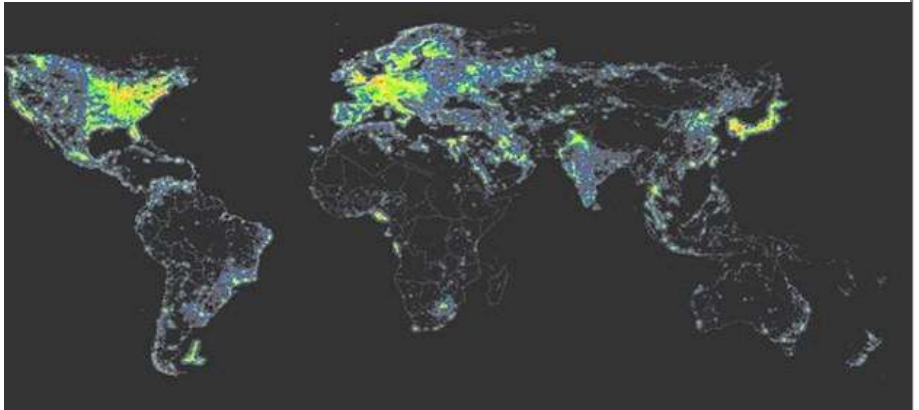
2021 Lenten Offering Focus

On Ash Wednesday there were about ten a half hours of daylight, but by Easter Sunday there will be almost 13 hours. This happens no matter what we do, or do not do, We are careening towards the Summer Equinox when Arnprior and area will have 15 hours and 40 minutes of daylight. The light and the returning sun are welcome and essential to our food supply, our warmth and our very survival.

But in the Western World we are not totally dependent on the sun for light. The modern world is ridiculously awash in artificial light, as any nighttime map of the world will show. We can read, we safely walk about, prepare meals, carry out commerce, and take care of all our needs on the darkest of nights

But much of the world becomes dark as soon as the sun sets. Reading, meal preparation, and just walking become difficult if not impossible. Just think of how highly inconvenient it is when we have a power failure. Just think of how dreadful it would be if this power never returned.

The Church often talks of darkness of the spirit. But we don't often talk of literal light, the light that guides our eye. This Church Council is putting forward that we brighten and enhance the lives of others by providing them with Solar Lights.



CLWR has priced out installed Solar Lights at about \$100 a unit. They would be directed at primarily for use at refugee camps where the night's darkness brings particular dangers to women and children.

So this would be the Lenten Offering Project of our church: Providing Light. We do not have a target of how many units we could provide but one unit would be nice, two would be better, three would be fantastic, and more would be absolutely illuminating. How many lumens can we provide?

For Supporting the Solar Lights Project please note the following:

- **Envelope**, write: LENT Project
- **e-transfer**, on the message write: LENT Project, and your envelope or PAR # or your address.
- **Canada Helps**: select LENTEN Fund

Pre-authorized contributions: those are set up for regular monthly donations, not for a special contribution. Please use one of the above methods for special contributions.

There will be three special (and short) Zoom Meetings to talk more about this project: March 4th, 18th, March 25th at 7:00 pm (all Thursdays), led by Jeff, Andy and Pastor. More details will follow later.

SOLAR LIGHT



Thank you, St. John's Members!

Thank you to the many members who came together over Zoom, through internet and by phone, to attend St. John's 'remote' annual general meeting on Sunday, February 14. It sure was different! We missed closeness, sharing worship and a meal, as well as in person discussions.

But, together, we reviewed, appreciated and approved: last year's meeting minutes, 2020 financial statements and a budget for 2021. We also briefly thanked retiring (long-time!) council members, Jeff Kargus and Randy Zimmerling, and welcomed Andy Kalnins and Debbie Witt as new council members, to join Cory Weckwerth, Dave Burkett and myself. To those unable to join in the meeting, we thank you for reviewing the annual report and your supportive comments. Know that some printed copies of this report are yet available if anyone wishes one.

We look forward to the time when we can more fully gather and recognize all the many efforts, pastoral and communal care and varied worship we shared last year and which yet continue, and thank key leaders and workers more fully for past and ongoing support. That will be a fine gathering! In the meantime, feel free to contact any council member with your encouragement, questions and suggestions.

Please keep Pastor Norine, council members and one another in your prayers - and remember, there is room round the council table for some more caring folks. Maybe one of those is you?

Enid 613 623-7017

On behalf of St. John's congregational council

Finally found out why the
fish weren't biting.



News from St. James



It is with mixed emotion that we inform you that our building & property have been sold, with a closing date of May 14, 2021. We will have a busy few months ahead of us. Our building deconsecration is scheduled for May 2nd.

We will then start our worship services in the chapel at Trinity St. Andrews United Church. The Shared Ministry Agreement with St John's will remain unchanged.

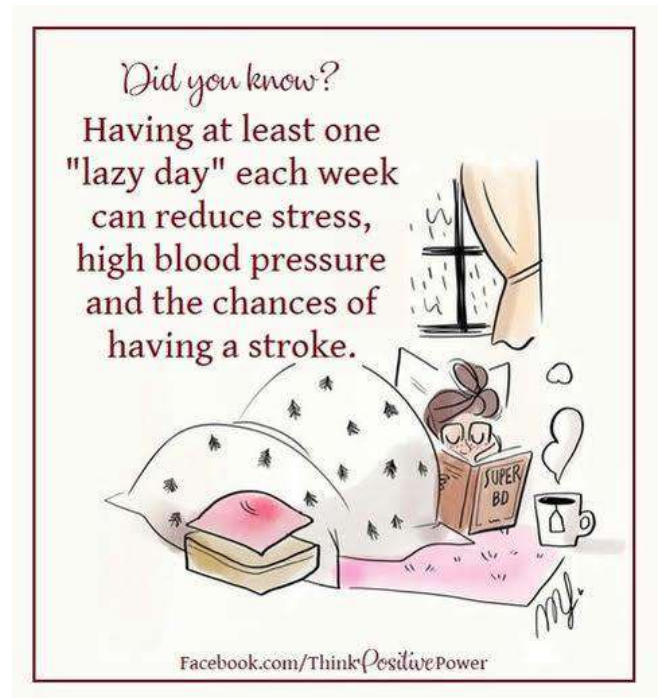
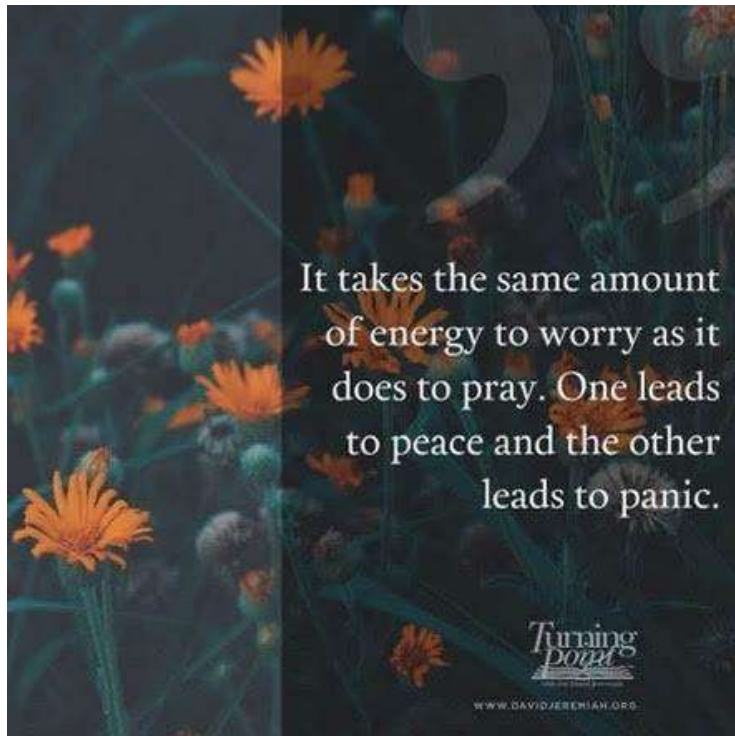
Thank you for your continued support.

Shared Ministry Team
St. James Lutheran Church
Renfrew

Response from St. John's

We thank you, our sister parish, St. James for providing us with this important news. This is a significant transition and we will support you as possible through this time. We continue with appreciation for our shared ministry with Pastor Norine and commit to working together faithfully with you in all ways that we can as we move forward.

Enid Blackwell
On behalf of Congregational Council
St. John's Lutheran Church
Arnprior



VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE FOR MARCH 2021

DATE	READING	ALTAR	COUNTERS
March 7 th	Debbie/Jeff Kargus	Barb & Gerald	Mel and Marion
March 14 th	Maureen Rueckwald	Barb & Gerald	
March 21 th	Cathy/Randy Zimmerling	Barb & Gerald	
March 28 st	Andy Kalnins	Barb & Gerald	
April 2 nd Good Friday	Mark Boese	Beryl & Keith	
April 4 th Easter	Joy Statham	Beryl & Keith	