



News Around the Flock

The Church of the Good Shepherd
Anglican Parish of Lancaster

Easter 2026 Newsletter

Holy Week

Maundy Thursday April 2, 7:00 pm

Holy Communion with Stripping of the Altar led by Fr Keith Joyce.
Prayer Watch - time to pray - to "keep watch with Jesus" - after the service to 9:30 pm (come & go as you'd like - whenever and for however long).

Good Friday, April 3, 12:00 pm

Celebration of our Lords Passion led by Fr Keith Joyce

Holy Saturday - the Eve of Easter Day, April 4, 8:00pm

Easter Vigil service led by Fr Chris Ketch

The Sunday of the Resurrection: Easter Day

Sunday April 5, 10:30am

Holy Communion led by Fr Chris Ketch

Regular Service Times

Holy Communion on
Sundays at 10:30 AM

Phone: (506)635-8145 (Office open Tue-Fri 9-Noon)

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facebook "Church of the Good Shepherd, Saint John, NB"

Website: www.goodshepherdsj.ca



We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional unceded territory of the Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) and Mi'kmaq Peoples.



Dear Church of the Good Shepherd,

As I sit down to write this, we are still in the midst of observing a holy Lent, but I feel the joy and light of Easter approaching. I am also mindful of the fact that we have now been journeying together for about six months. These months have been a season of getting to know one another— as I continue to learn names, and we all share stories, and begin to walk together in faith. Now, as the purple of Lent prepares to give way to the white of Easter, we stand on the threshold of the most sacred season of the Christian year.

It is a journey that takes us from the shouts of "Hosanna" on Palm Sunday to the heavy silence of the tomb, and finally to the explosive joy of the Resurrection. And we are not just retelling old stories but are being invited to renew our faith and walk alongside Jesus. In the coming days, our liturgy will lead us through the upper room and the garden, eventually bringing us to the foot of the Cross on Good Friday, and then to the empty tomb on Easter Sunday.

During Lent I have been reflecting on Jesus' words from the Cross - in particular I am captivated by words borrowed from an ancient song, Psalm 22: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

In his moment of greatest agony, Jesus chose these specific words intentionally. They were a signpost, pointing back to what God said would happen long ago. Psalm 22 describes the Messiah's suffering in haunting detail, from the piercing of hands and feet to the feeling of abandonment. When Jesus cried out, he was showing everyone—then and now—that his sacrifice was not an accident of history or a tragic mistake. It was the fulfillment of God's plan to rescue humanity. Even in agony Jesus, full of love and mercy, is trying to help us understand.



The Cross remains a profound enigma for us. To the world, the message of the cross is often "foolishness"—it is perplexing, even offensive. But to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. The Cross of Jesus Christ is where the brokenness and evil of the world collides with the love and grace of God. It is both grotesque and beautiful, a place of darkness and light. Jesus felt that deep, awful sense of being alone so that we would never have to be truly alone again. By his sacrifice, we find ourselves rescued, redeemed, and ultimately resurrected.

But, as we know, the story does not end with the darkness of the cross and tomb. We walk through the shadow of the cross to reach the light of Easter morning.

Easter is the announcement that the tomb is empty and the power of sin is broken! In the Gospel accounts of that first Easter, I am always moved by the message given to the women at the tomb: "He is going ahead of you... tell his disciples and Peter." Think of those disciples for a moment. They had scattered. Their faith was shattered. Peter had denied him. Yet the message of the resurrection is extended specifically to them. The underlying message is clear: Jesus is alive, and whatever you may be thinking or feeling, he wants you back.

There may be some today who feel shattered and scattered, or feel they are too far gone, or who feel overwhelmed by doubt and disappointment. Like the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, perhaps you feel like you are walking away. But Jesus is the one who walks alongside us, opening the scriptures to us and making himself known in the "breaking of the bread." He meets us in community, around our tables—both ordinary and sacred—and in our shared lives.

We see this "new life" taking root in our own parish through one of our newest ministries. I am so pleased to highlight "Youth Connection," a vibrant partnership between the Church of the Good Shepherd (West) and Stone Church (Uptown).



This is a shared Friday night youth ministry for students in grades 5-10. It is a place where young people can gather, share a meal, and connect with one another and with God. Our students in grade 11 or older are also welcome to join us, taking on leadership roles and enjoying their own separate devotional time. In a world that can feel isolating, this is a place for our youth to belong and to explore and embody the Gospel.

I want to encourage our teens—as well as their parents and grandparents—to get connected. Please take note of the upcoming dates. On Good Friday (April 3), the youth will be helping with a meal at Stone Church. Looking ahead to the spring, Good Shepherd will host on the following dates from 6:00-8:00 PM: April 17, May 1, May 15, and May 29.

As we finish our Lenten fasts and prepare to enter Holy Week, I invite you to join us for every step of the journey. Gather around the Lord's Table on Maundy Thursday, come to the foot of the Cross on Good Friday, wait together with patient hope at the Saturday Vigil, and come to the empty tomb on Easter Sunday. Let us receive the fullness of the Gospel: the forgiveness offered through his sacrifice, the new life made possible by his resurrection, and the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit.

I look forward to celebrating with you this year. May the Holy Spirit move us, provoke us, and captivate us with the love of Christ.

Yours in Christ,

Chris+

Our Dearly Departed

Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them. Amen

Elsie Rusling, February 23

Floyd Hoben, March 14



Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Church of the Good Shepherd, Parish of Lancaster was held on Sunday March 8, after a delicious, bagged lunch. With 36 parishioners in attendance the annual report was reviewed and discussed, vestry members were voted in and delegates to the Synod were selected. Special thanks to Terry Ricketts for taking minutes, all those who provided reports, the lunch and parishioners who attended.

Vestry Members 2026

Wardens

Paul Desjardins

Chris Titus

Vestry Members

Janet Brown

Shayne Galbraith

Susan Jack

Beverly Janes

Laura Janes

Janet Leitch

Jeff Maker

Heather Masson

Barry McQueen

Terry Ricketts

Patti Skidmore

Prabin Yesudhasan

Synod Delegates

Beverly Janes

Laura Janes

Patti Skidmore

Ann Stone

Myles Leitch

Synod Delegate

Synod Delegate

Synod Delegate

Synod Alternate

Synod Alternate

Please support these parishioners who have offered to serve our congregation and prayerfully consider if you are called to one of these roles in the future.



Vestry Portfolios

At the March Vestry meeting, Fr Chris, introduced a new vision of vestry portfolios in hopes to increase the growth of our church and our ministry beyond our walls. These portfolios and the teams assigned to them are as follows:

- ***Worship & Evangelism***

Team Leads: Heather Masson & Janet Leitch

Enhancing the worship experience as we strive to make our services to be welcoming and inspiring, actively thinking about how to bring the gospel and opportunities for worship to the wider community. This would include worship planning in partnership with clergy & music director, liturgical arts, greeting & integrating visitors, initial follow-up with newcomers, developing outreach events or initiatives to introduce people to the gospel and worship.

- ***Congregation Care & Communication***

Team Leads: Janet Brown & Patti Skidmore

Nurturing the spiritual well-being of the congregation through prayer, offering support during times of need, and celebrating during times of positive change, growth & accomplishment. Ensuring that there is regular communication that fosters a sense of community and facilitates connection. Organizing fellowship and hospitality for the congregation. The would include such things as Prayer tree ministry, visits to the sick/homebound, bereavement support, coordinating meals, coordinating rides for those in need, organizing special prayer services or contemplative practices. In charge of maintaining the websire, social media, publishing newsletters and maintaining the parish list. Organizing activities for congregation members to engage in together.



- ***Outreach & Family Ministry***

Team Leads: Terry Ricketts & Prabin Yesudhasan

Engaging with the wider community through service and partnerships, and specifically ministering to the unique needs of families, children and youth. This would include identifying community needs, planning service projects, organizing community-focused events, youth group activities and family ministry groups and events.

- ***Formation & Education Team***

Team Leads: Beverly and Laura Janes

Providing opportunities for spiritual growth, theological learning, and discipleship for all ages. This would include Adult & youth formation programs, confirmation classes, newcomer inquirers classes, developing curriculum for various age groups, exploring spiritual growth resources.

- ***Stewardship & Facilities***

Team Leads: Jeff Maker, Susan Jack, Shayne Galbraith & Barry McQueen

Overseeing the financial health and physical assets of the church and inspiring generosity of time, talent and treasure. This would include budgeting, financial reporting, annual financial campaigns, ^property maintenance, capital improvements, identifying and encouraging the use of congregational gifts and skills, long range planning for facilities us in ministry.

Each one of these portfolios will, at some point, be looking for volunteers. Subcommittees will be needed for short and longer commitments.



Volunteer

According to Merriam-Webster.com the meaning of VOLUNTEER is a person who voluntarily undertakes or expresses a willingness to undertake a service.

To some volunteering is daunting - will I be good enough, what are they asking me to do, how can I fit it into my already busy day, what can I possibly offer, I physically can't help, I don't think I can commit. The key is to find your fit.

No doubt that sometime in your life you would have heard or read a version of the poem Somebody, Nobody, Anybody and Everybody. The gist of the poem is there is a task that anybody could do, everybody should do, somebody would do it, but nobody ended up doing it. It is easy to see how this can happen. When you say "Somebody should've"....ask yourself: Aren't you a somebody, isn't that we all strive to be?

It takes a village to encourage the right growth, and the path for growth requires everyone to be involved at some level. From the smallest task - writing a card, making a phone call, checking expiry dates in the Shepherds cupboard, to larger tasks - helping with youth, lending a hand on facility work projects or special events and everything in between, all these combined make the load lighter for everyone.

So please pray, look inward, assess your abilities, ask yourself what gives you joy, and there, in that space, you will find where you fit.

Over the next few months information will be forth coming from each of the Team Leaders as they asses their portfolios, prioritize tasks and make plans for moving forward. We will be looking for and needing help.

Everybody and anybody can help but will you be that Somebody?



WORSHIP

On January 25th a **Celebration of New Ministry** was held to induct Fr Chris as our priest. The celebration was led by Bishop Edwards and several of Fr Chris's colleagues and family were in attendance. After the service we came together to break bread with a delicious lasagna, garlic bread and homemade sweets.



A **thousand thanks to our Lay readers** who have stepped up to provide Morning services on the Sundays that Fr Chris is not with us. Their dedication and guidance with their sermons are greatly appreciated.

Bishop Edwards once again visited us on February 15th. It is always a pleasure to have Bishop David and his wife Debbie with us.



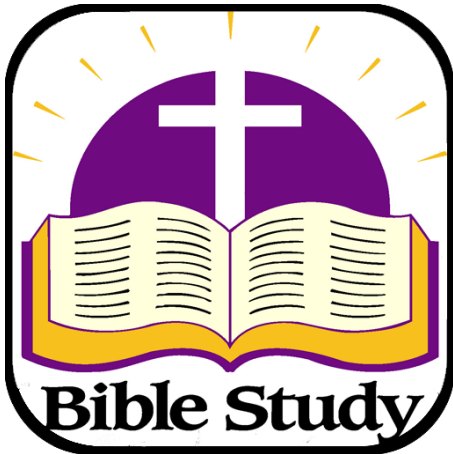
HOLY WEEK

Holy week will soon be upon us and several services marking the journey to Easter morning are planned.

Upcoming services on Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, the Prayer watch, Good Friday, and Easter Vigil will prepare us for the celebrations for Easter Day.



BIBLE STUDY



Fr Chris led a 5-part bible study from January to the end of March studying the Book of Jonah. Two group sessions were held on the Saturdays that Chris was in residence, one in the morning and one in the evening.

LENT OFFERINGS

With the great success of the 2025 lent challenge of raising money to provide goats to a community in Kenya (approximately 44 goats!), vestry considered this again for the Lent giving's. It took a bit of investigating as it was discovered that there were changes in the program (name change from PWRDF to Alongside hope, and to the catalogue) and although goats were still available for purchase chickens were highly recommended. Therefore, the 2026 Lent giving's will be directed to the purchase of chickens. The cost of a chicken is \$25, which the Government of Canada will match by 3:1.





VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

We are delighted to announce our upcoming Vacation Bible School (VBS)—a joyful and faith-filled program for children in our community.

Last year's VBS was a wonderful success, filled with laughter, learning, and meaningful connections. Children enjoyed engaging Bible stories, lively music, creative crafts, and exciting games. Many parents shared how their children came home each day excited, singing songs, and talking about what they learned about God's love and kindness. It was truly a memorable and enriching experience for everyone involved.

Building on that success, this year's VBS promises to be even more exciting! Children will once again take part in inspiring lessons, fun activities, and opportunities to grow in faith while making new friends in a safe and welcoming environment.

📅 Dates: 22 June to 27 June 2026

🕒 Time: 9 am to 1 pm

📍 Venue: Church of Good Shepherd

👥 Age Group: K-8 grade

We warmly invite all children to join us for this special week where faith and fun come together.





HOSPITALITY

Monthly Luncheons Continue.....



Chili was on the menu for our **February** luncheon, thank you to Susan Jack for being the head chef.

Mother and daughter duo, Beverly and Laura Janes taking a break after serving up the chili.

In **March** our annual bag lunch was served prior to the Annual General meeting. Special thanks to Beverly Janes, Laura Janes Ann Stone, Terry Ricketts and Janet Brown for preparing these lunches which included a tasty deli sandwich, grapes, and brownies. As always, there was lots of coffee and tea available to fortify everyone throughout the meeting.



Upcoming Lunches:

April 19

May 31

Jun 14



LIFT

In January, LIFT created a Valentine treat for the congregation and Youth Connection.



Thank you to all those who participated in our annual February fundraiser, the Bakeless Bakesale. It was a wonderful success once again. Money raised from this year's fundraiser will be used to support the Harbourview Lunch Program.



The ladies working on an Easter surprise for the congregation. 😊





MISSION PROJECTS UPDATE

Our **Shepherd's Cupboard** mission continues helping families during these winter months. We are in need of nonperishables and financial contributions as we typically buy bread, milk and eggs (fruit if there are children) upon delivery. Thank you for your continued support of this mission.



As we approach the warmer weather, please keep the **Hillcrest Caring Closet** in mind as you sort through your spring/summer clothing. Their donation drop off times are 9am to 12 pm Tuesdays and Fridays or you can drop in the designated area in the Narthex, and a volunteer will deliver them to Hillcrest. The Caring Closet will focus on the following items:

- Clothing & accessories
- Footwear
- Bedding, linens, blankets, pillows
- Bathroom items especially towels
- Kitchen items - nothing bigger than a small microwave
- Children's Toys
- Christmas items

Harbour View High Lunch Program continues to provide 45 lunches per week. All organizations involved recently received this message from HVHS lunch program coordinator Connie O'Hearon - Thank you very much for your continual support!!! Some hiccups every now and again however overall, it's going well and most importantly the students LOVE and Need this program!



Thank you to all of those who support The **West Side Food Bank**. The food bank is very grateful for all our contributions. You can donate by marking an offering envelope with your donation or by placing a donation in the can on the Narthex.



The Mission to Seafarers in Saint John

Saint John Seafarers Mission

The **Seafarers Mission** outreach project happened in January/February. The boat was delayed making an appearance in early January, so it was decided to keep it up until the end of February. We were happy to see that this did not deter the donation of items. Thank you for supporting this mission.



FINANCE UPDATE

While it's still early in the year, and there's plenty of time to recover, financial results for the end of February show a loss of (\$8,693), which is \$742 unfavourable to our budgeted year-to-date loss of (\$7,951).

Revenues are approximately \$3,000 below both our 2026 budget and our 2025 actuals.

On the expenses side, we are below budget for almost all line items. Natural gas and power for the church are both slightly over budget and over 2025 actuals, but are being offset by the fact that we have not paid a water bill yet this year, and we have incurred no furnace repair costs.

Hopefully we'll see our offerings rebound some as we enter this Easter Season.

	<i>Jan - Feb Actuals</i>		<i>Jan - Feb Budget</i>	
	2026	2025	2026	2025
Offerings	20,331	22,907	23,322	23,533
Rents	3,000	3,200	3,240	4,333
Interest	-	-	-	-
Misc Income	-	-	-	-
Total Income	23,331	26,107	26,562	27,866
Salaries	15,134	13,814	15,282	13,814
Church Bldg & Office	12,560	10,496	13,435	9,104
Rectory	275	(606)	658	-
Worship & Programs	134	858	1,217	1,108
Shared Ministry	3,922	4,011	3,922	4,011
Total Expenses	32,024	28,572	34,513	28,037
YTD Surplus/(Loss)	(8,693)	(2,465)	(7,951)	(171)



COMMUNICATION

If you are interested in contributing to the newsletter please speak with Janet Brown or Patti Skidmore.

Want a subscription to the award-winning NB Anglican newspaper? Here's how!

**Send your name, mailing address and telephone number
(and email address if you have one) to the following,
stating you would like to become a subscriber to
the NB Anglican:**

**circulation@national.anglican.ca
OR CALL 1-866-924-9192, ext. 245**





The midday sun shines on the cross reminding us of Jesus's sacrifice and that Gods light continues to shine upon us.

**May the grace our of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore.**

Amen

We hope to see you at our Worship Services.

Wishing you a Blessed Easter!

~The Good Shepherd Vestry