



News from the Pews for Palm Sunday, April 2nd, 2023

“News from the Pews”, contains stories, pictures and happenings from, by and for the members of the congregation. It also contains the “Minister’s Message”, Birthdays and Anniversaries, a Treasurer’s Update, special requests from Bridges to Hope, and of course Special Events happening at St. David’s. Also, from time to time, there will be archival pictures, trivia and stories. We hope you enjoy...

Holy Week Schedule:

- **Maundy Thursday Communion Service, April 6th at 7:00pm**
- **Good Friday Service, April 7th at 11:00am**
- **Easter Sunday Service, April 9th at 11:00am**
(Holy Communion will be celebrated on Easter Sunday)

Minister's Message



Over the past month or so, I have found myself reading one of my favorite book series again: The Lord of the Rings, by J. R. R. Tolkien. This morning, I just

finished the first book of the trilogy. This evening, I'll start reading the second.

The books are long and full of description, and they are definitely not everyone's cup of tea, but it can't be denied that Tolkien was a magnificent writer, a man of great Christian faith, and the creator of some fabulous bits of poetry. Many of these poems are written into the Lord of the Rings books, supposedly written by characters in the story.

One poem in particular stuck with me this time: a poem written by the hobbit Bilbo Baggins as he lives out his final days in the Elven refuge of Rivendell. The poem is titled "I sit beside the fire and think":

I sit beside the fire and think
of all that I have seen
of meadow-flowers and butterflies
in summers that have been;

Of yellow leaves and gossamer

in autumns that there were,
with morning mist and silver sun
and wind upon my hair.

I sit beside the fire and think
of how the world will be
when winter comes without a spring
that I shall ever see.

For still there are so many things
that I have never seen:
in every wood in every spring
there is a different green.

I sit beside the fire and think
of people long ago
and people who will see a world
that I shall never know.

But all the while I sit and think
of times there were before,
I listen for returning feet
and voices at the door.

I was struck by the combination of nostalgia and a sense of leaving things unfinished that this poem evokes, a combination that I have come to know more fully as I have had opportunities to sit and speak with those who are coming to the end of their lives. There is so much beauty to see in this world that none of us will see it all, and the beauty we have seen we remember imperfectly.

But the poem ends with a word of imminent hope, and I find it perhaps to be an encouragement from one man of faith to me. The voices of those who have left us are heard just beyond the door. The story goes on, and there are surprises and joy still to be found and hoped for.

Believe in the promise of our faith: the darkness will never triumph over the light. God's plan for us is an abundant and eternal life which will surprise us with new joys day by day. We do not need to be lost in nostalgia or sorrow for all that we have missed out on, because new joys lie ahead. We can't help but be hopeful, because we know that in the end, every evil will be utterly undone.

So may you rise from your chair by the fire and open the door to seek out the new joys of today, after reflecting on what has been lost or left undone. For the loss is only temporary, but each new joy remains. That is the Good News of what the Gospel means. Hallelujah!

Treasurer's Update for this Week

I've been reminding everyone about the Annual reports being due. I have the budget done and am busily making pie charts to show what are income and expenses look like. In checking out the PCC statistics, several things were startling, including that our last communicant's class was in 2014:

Households: 2020 – 179, 2021 – 127

Communicants: 2020-178, 2021 – 176

Adherents: 2020 – 167, 2021 – 120

That really got me thinking: how many people are supporting the church? I went digging and found that we had 80 households supporting St. David's last year. We had another thirty people make anywhere from one to five donations to us.

While the budget is what it is, we have several groups engaged in doing their best for St. David's: the fantastic ladies of the WA are working hard and smart to fundraise almost \$1,000 every month, the Session, the new Board of Managers (more are welcome!) and the St. David's Future Committee are working diligently on our behalf.

Our Line of Credit (LOC) will increase to \$6,000 after our end and start-month cheques are all cashed. I am continuing to pay every invoice that I can, some invoices and commitments will not be paid when due. Salaries, contracts, and most local invoices will continue to be paid when possible.

While our finances are still not good, we do get regular monthly donations (PAD, on Sundays, E-transfers) and from increasing rentals. Please consider this as you make choices about your donations to the church. Thank you to all those who have made donations and continue to do so.

What would you do for your Church? What could you do?

In less than a month's time, **on April 30th, we will have the Annual Congregational Meeting (ACM).** On Sunday afternoon after church and a lunch, we will meet to review the church's audited Financial Statements for 2022. We will also review the 2022 Annual Report and the 2023 Budget. We have decisions to make about this church and its future. We are not alone in this. By the time you read this the Kirk's (St. Andrew's) ACM will have taken place, it is scheduled for March 30th.

Back to the question posed above: What would or could you do for your church? That's a question I hope many of you are asking yourselves. Some people are actively thinking about it, while others are actively doing things.

We have a large number of people who profess themselves to be a member of this church and think of St. David's as their church. We have a much smaller group who are active in one or many church groups. We do know that when asked, people will step up to make a difference, to help out on an outreach project or a WA

function. Everyone is busy with both a growing family and with work which seems to have crept into their lives more than ever before. You may think “When I retire, I can take it easy.” Not so! In many cases these days, your retirement is busier than your work life ever was.

Now, I’m going to turn it around. We’ve had some responses to the appeal and the questions posed, but a silence from the vast majority. We’d really like to hear from you.

What can your church do for you? What interests you that St. David’s could be a part of, could help you with, or could make happen for you? Please give that some thought over the next while and get back to us with your thoughts. We do welcome all types of participation, big and small, from everyone. I’m renewing my call: if there are any things that you’d like, or hope, to see happen, if you see a need we can undertake, or if you would just like to talk about our finances or the church and its outreach programs, please contact the church at 722-2382 or email us at stdavids@nfld.com.

Condolences – Gerhard Paul Bassler

We are saddened to announce the passing of Gerhard Bassler on March 26th, 2023. Gerhard was an important part of our St. David's family for many years. Gerhard's love for his family and his enthusiasm for life and all it had to offer were a great inspiration for all of us who had the honour of being his friend. We are blessed that he was a part of our lives.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his children – Elisabeth, Heidi, Christine, and Paul and their families – and with his brother, Jürgen. Know that everyone from St. David's is thinking about you at this time.

(Funeral arrangements will be handled by Carnell's. See details below.)



Obituary

Born in Stuttgart, Germany, Gerhard was an impressive man with numerous skills, interests, and academic contributions. In 1961, he transferred his studies from Germany to University of Kansas, where he met the love of his life, Tonya Kurt. Shortly thereafter, Gerhard completed his Ph.D. in history, married Tonya, and accepted a faculty position at Memorial University of Newfoundland. An accomplished scholar respected nationally in his field, Gerhard rose to full professor at MUN and retired in 2003, at which time he was appointed Professor Emeritus. He learned seven languages and published in two. He thoroughly enjoyed his chosen field, devoting endless hours to original research because he believed it was important that the truth be told for future generations.

Gerhard published nine scholarly books, numerous book chapters and academic articles, and an extensive three-volume family history during his lifetime. *Vikings to U-Boats* won the Rogers Cable Nonfiction Award, which is a part of the Newfoundland and Labrador Book Awards, and *Escape Hatch* was shortlisted for the Heritage Book Award.

Gerhard loved his life in Newfoundland. In 1975, he moved his family to St. Mary's Bay, where he and Tonya became self-taught organic farmers with the first registered farm for Jersey cattle in Newfoundland. In addition to dairy cattle, their

livestock included ducks, geese, chickens, and turkeys. Gardening was more than just a hobby; it was a lifelong labor of love. Despite Newfoundland's short growing season and harsh climate, he could make anything flourish. From edible crops to incredible landscaping and indoor blooms, Gerhard's green thumb was impressive, although he would modestly say that anyone could do it.

Gerhard was intelligent, hardworking, thoughtful, and honest. "A man among men," as a friend recently described him. He enjoyed challenges and learned how to fix almost anything, from children's toys to home repairs. His eye would twinkle when he found the solution. To assist his research, Gerhard welcomed technology and became skilled with computers.

His greatest passion, though, was for his large family with whom he loved spending time. Gerhard adored his wife Tonya, who predeceased him in 2017, and embraced his growing family, cherishing every new member. Gerhard's homemade Spätzle dinners were legendary, as were the bountiful organic salads that went directly from his prolific garden to the table. He generously shared whatever he had, including delighting the young children with delicious dark chocolate. In lively discussions, Gerhard connected current events to historical preludes and precedents, providing a greater understanding of the world we share.

Gerhard passed away peacefully surrounded by his four loving children in St. John's, Newfoundland. Leaving to mourn are his children Elisabeth (Karl Hammond), Heidi (Todd Newman), Christine (Kris Aubrey-Bassler), and Paul (Sarah Bassler), his brother Jürgen, and his eleven grandchildren: William, James, Emma, Adam, Anna, Maggie, Charlotte, Kurt, Julia, Timothy, and Alex.

The family will receive visitors at Carnell's Funeral Home, 329 Freshwater Road, on Thursday, March 30 from 7-9pm and Friday, March 31 from 2-4 pm. Funeral service will be held from the St. David's Presbyterian Church on Saturday, April 1st at 2 pm. Interment to follow in the Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

Donations in Gerhard's memory may be made to St. David's Presbyterian Church or the Canadian Cancer Society

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Belated Happy Birthday greetings to Kathy McKay who celebrated her birthday on March 10th with family and friends – near and far – including her husband, Don, and children, Cameron, Neil and Kirsten and their families! Kathy is a longtime member of St. David's and is very active in many groups and organizations, including Session, the WA, the AMS, the Prayer Shawl (Knitter's) Group and our newest initiative – pickle-ball! Kathy is a worker-bee and an inspiration for many. We hope you had a wonderful birthday, Kathy. Best wishes from your St. David's family!

Belated Happy Birthday wishes to Olive Goobie who celebrated her birthday on March 30th with family and friends, near and far, including her husband, Charlie, and daughters, Megan and Claire and their families. No doubt, it was a special day for Olive! Olive and Charlie are long-standing members of St. David's and are very supportive of all the events and activities here at our Church. We hope you had a great birthday Olive, and best wishes for the coming year!

Happy Birthday greetings to Andrea Greeley who has a birthday coming up on April 6th. Andrea will be celebrating her big day with family and friends including her mom and dad, Mildred and Darrin Greeley, and her aunt, Marilyn Reardon. We hope you have a wonderful birthday, Andrea. Best wishes from your St. David's family!

El Patey will be celebrating her birthday on April 5th. Eleanor will be marking her big day with family and friends, including her mom and dad, Heather and Bob Patey, sister, Jean and of course proud grand-parents, Sylvia and Bob Taylor. Happy Birthday El from all your friends here at St. David's and best wishes for a wonderful day!

Happy Birthday to Ciaran Putt who will be celebrating his 11th birthday with his family and friends on April 5th. Ciaran is the son of Kim Andrews and Craig Putt. They, along with Ciaran's younger sister, Kaylee and proud grand-father, Steve Andrews, will all be sharing the happy day with him. Your friends here at St. David's wish you a very Happy Birthday Ciaran! Enjoy!

If you know of someone who is going to have a birthday or an anniversary in the coming days or weeks, please call or email the church.

Upcoming Events and Activities

Sunday School: Palm Sunday

The children are invited to attend class today as we begin this Holy Week, to learn about how Jesus was welcomed to Jerusalem! "Hosanna to the King!" They will also complete a special Easter craft prepared for them by Yasmin. Thanks once again to the children and their families who have brought items for Bridges to Hope throughout the Lenten season.

Prayer Shawl Ministry/ Knitting Group

The Prayer Shawl Knitters will be holding their monthly meeting this **Tuesday, April 4th at 10:00am**. No experience of knitting is required ~ please join this friendly and fun group for a morning of knitting and fellowship.

Bible Study

Our long standing Bible Study, under the guidance of Sheena Findlay, has resumed for 2023 and we are trying something new, "Sandwich and Scriptures"! Bible Study meets in the Armour Room on **Wednesdays at 12:30 pm** ~ so bring your lunch and we will make the tea (or coffee!).

Food For Thought

The Food for Thought fellowship, prayer, and discussion group for young adults holds weekly meetings by Zoom. For information contact Ernst Rollmann at ernstrollmann12@gmail.com.

Good Companions

If you would like to try your hand at carpet bowling, join a game of Bridge or 120's, maybe a friendly game of scrabble ... please join us on Thursday afternoons **from 2:00 to 4:00pm** in the Church Hall and Armour Room. The next date for Good Companions is: **Thursday, April 6th.**

Notice: Sarah King is hoping to help a friend looking for a cat friendly apartment. If you know of anyone with an apartment for rent please email Sarah at: sarah_mcmeekin@hotmail.com

Bridges to Hope:



Weekly “Flyer” Specials – Useful items for Bridges To Hope:

Sobeys: Compliments Canned Vegetables - \$0.99

Dominion: Graves Apple Juice - \$0.99

No Frills: Lantic Sugar - \$1.77

Pipers: Tropic Isle Mandarin Orange Segments - \$0.99

Colemans: Jello Jelly Powders - \$0.88

* Bridges To Hope are asking their partner churches to contribute a specific item each month and the item for **APRIL** is **Canned Pasta – Ravioli, SpaghettiOs, etc.** Other non-perishable food items are always welcome and appreciated!

* Bridges to Hope are looking for a volunteer (s) to bake bread on Wednesday mornings from 10:00am – 1:00pm. If you can help, or know someone who would be willing to volunteer, please call Bridges to Hope at 709 722 9225 to speak with Lesley Burgess. You can also email Lesley at info@bridgestohope.ca

Bouwina's Birthday Celebration

Last week, Bouwina Fogwill celebrated her 93rd birthday – and she did it in fine style! Bouwina's family – daughter, Margaret, and sons, Bill and Frank, along with their families and friends – arranged a gala birthday celebration in the Church Hall after our service last Sunday. It was a great success if smiles, laughter and happy chatter were any indication. The family did all the decorating and supplied all the yummy treats, including two birthday cakes! It was a very special day for a very special lady!

Thank-you to the Fogwill family for including us in the celebration and we pass along all our love to Bouwina! Here are a few pictures from last Sunday and we hope you enjoy them.....



