



INCUMBENTS REPORTS TO VESTRY 2021

The Area Parish of Mississippi Lake meeting in the Chapters of St James' Franktown (January 31, 2021), St John's Innisville (February 2, 2021), St James' Carleton Place (February 21, 2021) and Christ Church Ashton (February 28, 2021)



FEBRUARY 28, 2021

AREA PARISH OF MISSISSIPPI LAKE

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(5) St James Franktown Chapter Meeting 2021 - Clergy Report: Rev. Rosemary Parker

Soon after St James had its 2020 Chapter Meeting in February--and the weekend of our Episcopal Election in March--our country and Diocese entered into our first lockdown to limit the spread of COVID-19. We quickly transitioned to worshipping together on Zoom, along with our sister churches in the Parish of Mississippi Lake. Although our church community was greatly missed during that difficult time, parishioners and clergy stayed in touch by phone calls, emails, and newsletters. At first, there was some hope that we would be able to gather once more for the Lilac Festival, but gradually, it became clear that this was our 'new normal.'

Despite the significant disruption and change, St James Franktown continued to respond with its spirit of creativity. Gary rang the bell every day for months, as a reminder of God's presence in our struggling world. Our warden Cora did a short survey of residents in Franktown, to see how we might better connect with and support them. Whenever possible, St James participated in local events, too--with a safe candy table at Halloween, and Christmas decorations for "Light Up Franktown. The St James' Bake Sale in the fall was a great success, both raising funds and lifting spirits. We also revived the beloved Franktown Craft Nights, with Jen offering an Ornament Workshop over Zoom. Meanwhile, behind the scenes, our lovely Treasurer Jan has kept our books in order, and our congregation on track!

Thanks to the leadership of our Pandemic Team (Cora, Jan, Gary, and Ven. Brian), St James was able to safely resume In-Person services in September 2020. Even with the masks, distancing, and screening, it was a joy to worship together again. We missed being able to sing, but the talented Michael Costello helped fill the space with his musical gifts. Christmas Eve in 2020 was bittersweet, as we knew a second full lockdown would begin on Boxing Day; however, St James has adjusted yet again to online worship on Facebook--now livestreamed from our sister church in Carleton Place.

As I prepare to leave my role as Associate Incumbent in February 2021, I am grateful for the faithfulness and generosity of St James Franktown; in many ways, this is a dream parish, and I pray that you are able to continue your wonderful ministry throughout this pandemic--and beyond. Blessings as you begin to prepare for your 200th Anniversary, too!

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Rosemary Parker

5) Clergy Report - Rev. Rosemary Parker

St John's greatest gift has always been the fellowship--the conversation and laughter before, during, and after worship. We are a close-knit community, and everyone is happy to see one another on Sundays and share stories over coffee. Because of this, the lockdown in Spring 2020 in response to the pandemic was a challenge at first; however, St John's quickly shifted to online services offered by our Parish of Mississippi Lake, and rediscovered one another on Facebook and Zoom--at least when our internet cooperated!

Thanks to the hard work and preparation by St John's Pandemic Team (Tom, Myrna, and Ven. Brian), we were able to gather again for In-Person worship in September 2020. Although we missed singing hymns together, our gifted Michael Costello nevertheless filled the space with his musical talents. Of course, the pandemic restrictions prevented us from having our customary St John's concerts and fundraisers; however, the community stepped up to generously support our new roof, which was completed while the interior space was painted and refreshed. Thank you to warden Tom for wisely thinking to arrange these projects while the building was not in use.

Our Diocese of Ottawa also offered us some financial relief in an otherwise uncertain year: two months of Jubilee, where our monthly contributions to the Diocese were paused--and debt forgiveness for the remaining \$4000 that we owed to our Diocese. The patterns of giving in St John's also shifted somewhat from monthly donations to one-time annual donations, and at the end of the year, we did well--especially given the pandemic. We are grateful to treasurer Alana for keeping our books, and working with Jan Campbell to produce our financials throughout the year.

As I prepare to leave my role as Associate Incumbent and transition to another parish in February 2021, I am grateful for the joy and warmth that defines St John's Innisville. If only we could have one more cup of coffee together, and share a treat with Mr Wiggles! Know that you will always have a place in my heart, and that I wish you well in your ministry at St John's for the years to come.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Rosemary Parker

Incumbents' Report to Vestry

The Area Parish of Mississippi Lake

As a Parish, we welcomed Christ Church Ashton to Mississippi Lake in March after a process of discernment and vestry decisions. The process of parish-building was then to begin again. It was almost immediately interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and suspension of in-person activities. One of the strengths of how Anglicans do church lies in how we are structured. We already shared a strong relationship and bond by being members of the Diocese of Ottawa. The basic unit of church for us is a Diocese, served by a Bishop who sends clergy to local parishes and congregations. Missional responsibility lies in the hands of the local church, but our 'body' is wider and more broadly based, and collectively we are stronger. On the strength of that relationship, as a Diocese we are able to provide for the needs of the local churches and resource that mission. Two full time clergy with one part time associate, a parish administrator, two musicians and proper supports provide for the needs of all in Mississippi Lake. This is so much more than one part-time clergy covering multiple congregations, or one church with not quite enough to do the work it is called to do.

What we really look forward to, when vaccines have had their effect and pandemic restrictions are behind us, is the opportunity to take full advantage of collaboration. The whole of the Parish of Mississippi Lake can be far greater than the sum of the parts. That will happen, but now is the time to patiently stay the course.

As we turn towards a new year, we say goodbye to the Reverend Rosemary Parker, Associate Incumbent of the Parish of Mississippi Lake. It will feel like there's a piece missing for a while, and we will be missing the essential ministry Reverend Rosemary provided. In due course, a new ministry will come to us. It will not take her place. And while her place will now be somewhere else, her impact on this Area Parish as the first holder of her office will be felt for years to come. We wish her well as we release her to her next assigned position in the church we all serve.

The work of ongoing discernment continues. It's worth taking some time here so that everyone understands how we proceed from this point forward.

Canonical Authority

C4.06.1 The appointment of all Clergy to all offices within the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Ottawa shall be vested in the Bishop, but before the appointment of an Incumbent is made to a Parish, the Bishop shall consult with the Churchwardens and the Lay Members of Synod of that Parish, as a Committee.

Over the next few months, we will engage in a process of determining what particular ministry our parish needs to do the work we are called to do. When the time is right, I will ask the Bishop to send us someone to fill that ministry position. One option is the appointment of another Associate Incumbent. If that's what we need, the appointment will unfold as described above. If another path presents itself and seems right to us, and the Bishop concurs, we could

find a part-time priest, deacon or specialized lay ministry is a better way for us to respond to emerging ministry opportunities. The Incumbent and Clergy will not be making decisions alone. This discernment will include leaders from across the parish, listening carefully to the needs of our people and the places in which we are called to serve.

Given the current restrictions on in-person activity, there is no advantage to rushing to discernment. In the meantime, an interim priest will be assigned to us to make sure we don't overwhelm the clergy and lay leaders here.

Submitted by

The Venerable Brian Kauk, Incumbent

The Reverend Rosemary Parker, Associate Incumbent

The Reverend Canon Mary Ellen Berry, Pastoral Associate

St James' Carleton Place

The condition of ministry at St James Carleton Place at the end of 2020 is relatively strong. The 2020 budget forecasted a deficit of X. Given consistent contributions from envelope holders and the 'jubilee' (two months of not having to pay for salaries of clergy, lay staff, insurance and our share of Diocesan costs), St James financial position at year-end is better than expected. The real story is that this happened despite not actually being together for 6 months, and then operating for another 3 months under severe restrictions! That we continued to worship without skipping a beat, engaged in community building and sustained the church is in some ways a miracle. That we will continue to do so as we work through the challenges of 2021 is a testament to the faithfulness of St James parishioners and the grace of God.

In 2019 the congregation charted a way forward focusing efforts on (a) impacting people's lives through community engagement, (b) serving the most vulnerable in our community by addressing homelessness and housing, and (c) financial sustainability that will support our work for years to come. 2020 was a challenging year for all three priorities. But we held to the progress achieved before, and made some headway as well.

St James was visible and present in Carleton Place in many ways, thanks to the work of the 'A team'. We were visible in the community at key events like Pride. The Tower Garden is quietly growing, sending packages of nutritious food out into the world like doves from Noah's Ark, preparing us in hope for a day when we will be able to come together again.

While the breakfast program on Wednesday mornings had to go on hiatus, a group from St James kept us in the game by volunteering at Mitchell's Your Independent Grocer, picking and delivering groceries for those unable to leave their homes. The program is run by Carebridge Community Support. Through this participation, we keep the partnerships going that will see us eventually break ground on new ministry opportunities. I continue to build on those partnership opportunities, hopefully heading towards the formation an ecumenical inter-faith coalition in Carleton Place.

Just as we turned the corner into 2021, a neighbour reached out with concerns about St James' Woods. A deeper awareness emerged of the value inherent in this property. Many of us walk the trails there (with and without canine companions) and realize how precious this resource is. Property development that does not also serve community and God's creation misses the mark of our shared vocation in Christ. I am confident there is a way forward that honours the gift of Creation, the gift from our forebears and the needs of the church today. Rob Pretty, who winds up his service as a Churchwarden on the Corporation, is taking the lead on forming and chairing a Property and Finance Committee that will organize our efforts.

Despite serious challenges, St James has made progress towards our objectives. We need to stay the course. But St James also needs to pay off the mortgage and balance the budget. Right now, we spend more than we bring in. Despite the regular, faithful offering of the people, we fall behind every year. We need a major investment of capital to pay off outstanding debts,

and a good hard look at what we can reasonably achieve with the financial resources we have available to us. That is the work that lies before us in 2021, along with continued worship, service and sharing our Christian fellowship.

Those we lost this year will not be forgotten. Most of us could not attend the funerals of those we love but see no longer. The Christian tradition of burying our dead in the context of our shared hope in the resurrection Jesus Christ has not been set aside. It has been delayed in some cases, but we will gather again. When we do, we will celebrate the fullness of life and the witness of the saints who were among us and now live in God's nearer presence.

I want to thank the leaders, volunteers and staff who kept things going. In the midst of a global pandemic the altar was set, the phones were answered, the books were kept, the church was cleaned. Everything we did for 9m months required a second and then a third look, from the point of view of safety planning and responsibility for public health. Such planning is exhausting, and sometimes thankless. So thank you, on behalf of a grateful congregation. In the reports that follow, you will find out who those people are.

Submitted by the Venerable Brian Kauk,
Pastoral lead, St James Carleton Place

Christ Church Ashton

The Incumbent's report to Vestry is intended in the Canons, Bylaws and Regulations of our Diocese to be a "report upon [the] condition, progress and needs of the Parish" (R.5.05). I have always found this to be a valuable guide.

The condition of Christ Church Ashton's structures, finances and ministry are good. I think 'good' conditions in the midst of transitioning from one parish model to another, interrupted by a global pandemic, in a day and age when everything around us is changing faster than we can keep up with – well, that's pretty darned good! I can't wait to see the finished product of the renovations. I can't wait to get going on some good stewardship programming. I really can't wait until the vaccines have done their job, and our common life returns to normal. Until then, our Diocesan church will be with us every step of the way. As a part of the Area Parish, Christ Church Ashton has options about how we move forward, options that didn't exist before. We've barely talked about those options, due to the interruption and disruption of COVID-19. Like Noah, the ark of our church waits for the day when the flood waters recede and we make landfall. We carry two of every kind of our traditions of word and sacrament, fundraising activities and outreach ministries, music and proclamation with us, ready to repopulate our community with faith, hope and love.

Progress has necessarily been slow in building a working relationship with the other churches in Mississippi Lake. We have not built the shared statement of vision we intended at the last Vestry meeting in 2020. This has been very frustrating for me, and I suspect for many of you as well. But the energy of our leaders was not wasted! We opened our doors for four months in 2020, which required a major heavy lift on the part of the team tasked with keeping us safe. I don't think anyone could ask for anything more.

I believe the need right now, other than making sure everyone is aware of the financial needs in the 2021 budget, is to stay the course. We need to rely on those called to serve (clergy, lay leaders and volunteers), and on what we are called to be (a constituent part of an Area Parish, not a standalone congregation). As we said during the discernment that led to last year's Vestry decision, if that doesn't work, we reconsider. There is currently no way of knowing until we get back to normal. We do need to engage in a formal financial stewardship program. This affects all aspects of our common life, not just the amount of money that shows up on the collection plate. The Anglican Church of Canada sponsors a program called Giving our Thanks and Praise. It is built in a very simple outline of Inspiring, Inviting, and Thanking people for their offering. We've seen good results elsewhere in the parish, and I believe it's the right tool for Christ Church Ashton. As you'll read in the next section, the search for new ministry to take up where the Reverend Rosemary Parker leaves off is going to occupy some time and energy at the beginning of the year. Perhaps by the second half of 2021, we'll launch some new initiatives. But I won't make predictions – not this year, that's for sure.

Submitted by the Venerable Brian Kauk,
Interim Pastoral Lead, Christ Church Ashton