

ALL SAINTS ALIVE
THE NEWSLETTER OF ALL SAINTS ANGLICAN CHURCH
FEBRUARY 29, 2024

Happy Leap Year! Had I been born 4 days later than when I was born, I would be celebrating my 18th birthday today! Scary thought!!!

Do you know the history behind February 29th? The concept of the leap year evolved over a couple of thousand years. Julius Caesar introduced the "Julian" calendar in 46 B.C. so as to consolidate the many different calendars of the day and to keep the months in sync with equinoxes and solstices. It takes the earth about 365 days, plus 6 hours to orbit the sun, so it was decided to add an extra day to the calendar every four years. However, the solar year is not a perfect 365.25 days—there is still an extra 44 minutes that needed to be accounted for...this was worrisome as this could result in summer and winter weather being switched... (I think that is already happening!) and the church calendar was being compromised as well. So Pope Gregory XIII came to the rescue. He was noticing that Easter was coming later each year over time. He did not want events such as Pentecost being held when pagan festivals were held. The pope wanted Easter to be celebrated in the spring. He and his advisers tweaked the rules for leap years. They decreed that years divisible by 100 would not have a leap year. The years 1700, 1800 and 1900 did not have a leap year.



The year 2000 did have one...but if you want to plan your calendar in advance, take note that the years 2100, 2200, 2300 and 2500 will not have a leap year!!!

Warden Catherine Raaflaub and her team have been very busy overseeing the transformation in the church. This is such an exciting project and we are thankful for her guidance and the support of parishioners who have helped make this happen! Her report and photos follow...

The work on the new sound system has begun! On Sunday you will notice 14 new speakers in the ceiling and new larger TV screens, eventually 4 in total. The crew have installed the speakers by crawling up into the ceiling and I doubt anyone has been up there for decades. Our volunteer cleaners will have the church back in shape for Friday's World Day of Prayer and services this weekend and then the crew will be back for another week of wires and whatnot.

Thank you all for your patience and your financial support of this project.

The wardens



Mary Lou Dunn has joined our ASA team and will be providing us with “History Bites” in our newsletters. We are excited to have her share ‘Bites’ of the wonderful history of our Parish. Thanks Mary Lou.



History Bites:

The Bronze Bell on the front lawn of the church was cast in 1884 by Meneely & Co., Troy, New York. It’s estimated weight is about 2000 pounds.

The bell was purchased in 1887 by Rev. L.H. Kirkby for \$400. At today’s prices, that would be approximately \$12,500.

Father Michael has shared his update on Lenten Madness and the Book Study group on Narnia.....

Lent Madness Standings Update



Lent Madness 2024 is well underway, and ten contestants have won their first round battles and have made it into the Saintly Sixteen.

There have been some surprises so far. Neither of the Tudor Duo enjoyed any success: Anglican liturgist and martyr Thomas Cranmer and church musician William Byrd went down to defeat.

Biblical figures have show strength, with Andrew the Fisherman, and (Doubting) Thomas the Apostle easily winning their matches. Call them the Dangerous Disciples. Likewise Joseph of Arimathea, who provided a tomb for Jesus, easily beat Lazarus, who was called out of his tomb by Jesus. Go back to sleep, Lazarus.

Two Saintly Shamrockers represent the Emerald Isle: Canaire, who walked on water and talked down a misogynistic abbot, and Andoman of Iona, champion of the innocent in war-time. Both are strong contenders and we’ll see if the luck of the Irish lasts for them.

Who are your favourites? If you haven’t discovered Lent Madness yet, you can follow along on the leaderboards posted in the church, on our parish Facebook page, on Father Michael’s blog (www.madpadre.blogspot.com) or at the main website (www.lentmadness.org). It costs nothing to play and it’s a fun way to learn about some heroes of our faith.

Farewell to Narnia: The Last Battle

Our parish book club met this Wednesday to finish our Narnian adventures by discussing *The Last Battle* (TLB), the final book in the *Chronicles of Narnia* series by C.S. Lewis.

Published in 1956, TLB concludes a long series of adventures beginning with the creation of the world of Narnia by Aslan, a good and godlike figure that stands for Jesus in Lewis' fantastic retelling of the Christian story.



By the time of TLB, it is thousands of years since Narnia's creation, though little time has passed in the England where the children/heroes live until they are summoned. Aslan has not been seen for many years, but a malicious and cunning ape named Shift has found a lion skin and uses it to browbeat a hapless donkey named Puzzle into portraying Aslan so as to deceive and subdue the Talking Animals of Narnia. Shift gloats:

“There'll be oranges and bananas pouring in – and roads and big cities and schools and offices and whips and muzzles and saddles and cages and kennels and prisons – oh, everything”.

“But we don't want all those things”, said an old Bear. “We want to be free. And we want to hear Aslan speak himself”.

One of key themes of TLB is the distortion of religion by malicious actors. Indeed, as Rowan Williams notes in his perceptive book, *The Lion's World*, there is no organized religion in Narnia until Shift creates one for his own ends, misrepresenting Aslan as cruel and domineering. Shift in turn is manipulated by soldiers from Calormene, enemies of Narnia who worship a cruel and bloody god named Tash.

The guileless Talking Animals are confused by the new teaching that Aslan and Tash are equivalents. “Tash and Aslan are only two different names for you know Who. That's why there can never be any quarrel between them. Get that into your heads, you stupid brutes. Tash is Aslan: Aslan is Tash”.

This Orwellian distortion of the truth sounds uncomfortably familiar to us in our own day, where demagogues can carry the day if their lies are amplified and repeated, so that the truth sounds empty and we view all messages with suspicion. Indeed, a recurring theme of the Narnia books is that we need to hold on to the stories that tell us of truth and goodness, even when they begin to seem far-fetched.

When Tirian, the Last King of Narnia, tries to intervene, he is repeatedly foiled when he discovers that the free creatures of Narnia are either cowed, confused, or in some cases, have given up on Aslan and now serve themselves. Indeed, the first half of the book is almost unbearably dark, until Aslan sends the children from the previous books – Jill and Eustace – to help him.

In the second half of TLB, Lewis follows a pattern that reminds one of the Book of Revelation. The forces of evil (Shift, the Calormenes, even Tash himself) confront Tirian, Jill and Pole and their Narnian allies, plus all the children from the previous novels as the previous kings and queens of Narnia.

I won't give away the ending in detail, but if the first half of TLB is dark, the conclusion is beautiful, joyous, and likely to make your eyes moisten. Aslan appears as friend, judge, and rescuer, evil is vanquished, and the old Narnia gives way to a new, perfected Narnia reminiscent of the New Jerusalem in Revelation chapter 22. Lewis offers a glorious and compassionate vision of the afterlife, for it turns out that the young heroes are no longer alive on earth, the "Shadowlands", but are now eternally young in Aslan's country. As Aslan tells them,

"The term is over. The holidays have begun. The dream is ended: this is the morning." And as He spoke, He no longer looked to them like a lion; but the things that began to happen after that were so great and so beautiful that I cannot write them."

We found our journey through the Chronicles of Narnia to be a wonderful reacquaintance for some and a new discovery for first time readers. In Narnia, Lewis created a charming vehicle to retell the Christian story in a fresh and enchanting way. Those of us who made this journey encourage you to give it a try and find the joy of our Christian faith in these simple yet profound stories.

As we approach a new month, All Saints continues to be an active centre of faith, fun and fellowship! And even if Mother Nature brings March in like a lamb, the church will be 'roaring like a lion over the next few weeks.

Tomorrow, a "World Day of Prayer" service will be held at All Saints at 2 pm. All are welcome. Please feel free to attend this service that invites us to enrich our faith experience with other Christians from other churches and countries. This year's service was written by the WDP Committee of Palestine.

Our Lenten Lunches continue each Tuesday at 12 Noon. All are welcome for a short service and light lunch.

The Food Ministry Programme will be active again on March 6 as Five Loaves prepares its dinners for various groups and individuals.

Our Après Ski Service continues on Saturday, March 2nd at 5:00 pm.

Colourful Meditation will resume on Saturday as well. Feel free to come out for a time of quiet reflection....

Don't forget about CO-3, a time for coffee and conversation....and maybe a game of scrabble or cards. This programme is held every Thursday at 10 am in the Parish Hall.

Once again, the AWARE retreat for women will be held at Elim Lodge near Peterborough. All church women are invited to take part in this 3 day spiritual retreat. Information can be found on the church bulletin board.

Our annual Vestry meeting was held on Sunday, February 25. Close to fifty parishioners attended in person or on-line. All Saints is a thriving church and spiritual community. Thank you to our clergy, wardens, staff, and all our parishioners who do so much to make this happen!

In your prayers this week, please remember those whose names are on our Parish Prayer List. We pray for their caregivers and all those who assist others in need

“Please pray for these people during the week” - Brenda Teeter, Bob Teeter, Sandra Girdle, Mary Ratensperger, Bev Baxter, Paul Reid, Eric Vignola, Wolf, SSN, Irene McVeigh, Brian, John, Gail, Penny, Barb, Loraine, Janice, Dimi Ntantoulis, Sean, Dorothy.

A bit of humour.....

BLESSED HORSES

A gambler was at the horse races playing the ponies and all but losing his shirt.

He noticed a Priest step out onto the track and blessed the forehead of one of the horses lining up for the 4th race.

Lo and behold, that horse - a very long shot - won the race.

Next race, as the horses lined up, the Priest stepped onto the track. Sure enough, he blessed one of the horses.

The gambler made a beeline for a betting window and placed a small bet on the horse.
Again, even though it was another long shot, the horse won the race.

He collected his winnings, and anxiously waited to see which horse the Priest would bless next.

He bet big on it, and it won.

As the races continued the Priest kept blessing long shots, and each one ended up winning.

The gambler was elated.

He made a quick dash to the ATM, withdrew all his savings,

And awaited for the Priest's blessing that would tell him which horse to bet on .

True to his pattern, the Priest stepped onto the track for the last race

And blessed the forehead of an old nag that was the longest shot of the day.

The gambler knew he had a winner and bet every cent he owned on the old nag.

He watched dumbfounded as the old nag came in last.

In a state of shock, he went to the track area where the Priest was.

Confronting Him, he demanded, 'Father! What happened?

All day long you blessed horses and they all won.

Then in the last race, the horse you blessed lost by a mile.

Now, thanks to you I've lost every cent of my savings!'

The Priest nodded wisely and with sympathy.

'My Son,' he said, 'that's the problem with you NONE BELIEVERS,

You can't tell the difference between a simple blessing and last rites.



WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE PARISH OF ALL SAINTS RESIDES ON THE TRADITIONAL TERRITORY OF THE ANISHNAABE AND WENDAT PEOPLES. THIS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT REMINDS US OF OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO OUR RELATIONSHIPS TO THE ANCESTRAL LANDS ON WHICH WE LIVE, SHARE, LEARN AND PRAY.

Sunday March 3 at 9:30 am: For one Sunday in Lent only, Prince of Peace Anglican Church, Wasaga Beach is having a Book of Common Prayer Eucharist as their main service. You are welcome to visit and worship with them. 565 Mosley St in Wasaga Beach.

Holy Week

Maundy Thursday March 28 - 6pm - Holy Eucharist

Good Friday March 29 - 12noon

Easter Sunday March 31 - 9:30am - Holy Communion