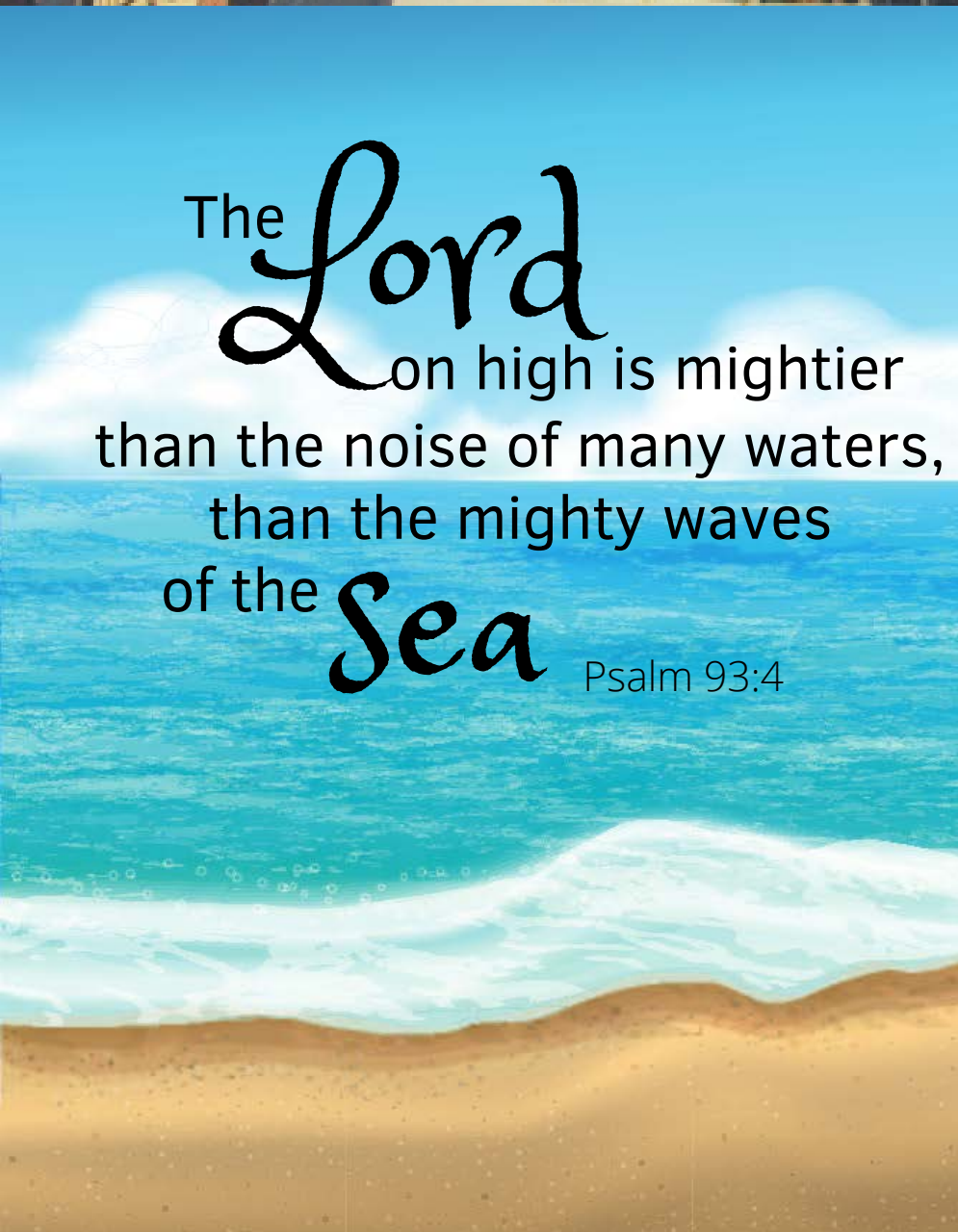




Summer 2022

THE VISITOR

Official Newsletter of St. James United Church



The *Lord*
on high is mightier
than the noise of many waters,
than the mighty waves
of the *Sea* Psalm 93:4

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Happy Summer to everyone.

As you may have noticed, this is a new time for the newsletter to come out. There seemed to be a large break between an Easter newsletter and a Thanksgiving newsletter. The church has so much more to share with everyone, so a summer edition was created.

Lets hope everyone has a chance to take a break this season and enjoy our amazing province. Have a picnic along the beach, hike the numerous trails, or even spend a little time in your garden. This is a time to recharge and renew.

While creating memories, remember to take care of our sacred spaces. Take nothing but pictures and leave nothing but footprints. Share your photos of your gatherings this year and tag St. James to show your pride! We'd love to see them.

Sincerely,
Glen Warren, Editor

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**REV. JAMES RAVENSCROFT
SUSAN SHEPPARD, DLM**



@STJAMESUNITED



ST.JAMESUC



STJAMESUCNL

**Worship with us!
Saturdays, 4:30 pm
Sundays, 11:00 am**



Ministry Message

SARAH NORMAN

Surprise! A new edition of the Visitor!
A “Little Visit” as I keep calling it.

As the temperature here in St. John’s starts to find its way to those beloved double digits and school lets out, more and more we see ourselves taking off for weekends at the cabin, trailer, or around the bay. And after two years of COVID-19 and 2022 being dubbed the “Come Home Year,” we find ourselves busy with family, friends, and summer fun.

We know that time is at a premium, and making it to church is not always possible. That’s why we decided to put out an extra edition of the Visitor. A little something for you to enjoy and ponder those starry nights by backyard fires, or the rainy mornings at the cabin. We also want to let you know that we’re still here. Be sure to keep an eye on our website and socials (Facebook and Instagram) for any fun events popping up throughout the summer!

With all that said, enjoy your summer and remember that every day is a gift from God. The future is as unknowable as the weather, so enjoy every day to the fullest...because snow in July is not outside the realm of possibility!

Happiness and Joy,
Sarah Norman, Chair of Communication and Administration

**"Let your light
so shine
before men,
that they may
see your good
works"**

MATTHEW 5:16





Do you know why June is Pride Month? Pride is celebrated in June because on June 28, 1969, the patrons of New York's Stonewall Inn had finally had enough, and stood up to the police who regularly harassed them because of their sexual orientation and gender identity. Up until then, the police would frequently raid gay bars, carting patrons off to the local police station. But on June 28, they refused to go, and led by mainly racialized and transgender patrons, a riot broke out that night and several nights after. Within weeks, local gay, lesbian and trans residents of Greenwich Village organized into activist groups demanding the right to live openly and without fear of being arrested. A year after the uprising, the first gay Pride marches were held in major US cities to mark the anniversary, and within a few years gay rights organizations were founded, especially in major urban areas like New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco, as well as other diverse cities in the world.

A significant symbol that you will see at Pride celebrations is the rainbow flag. Now comprising 6 stripes (red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet), did you know that the original flag created by Gilbert Baker in 1977 had 8 stripes? The first was hot pink, followed by red through green, then turquoise, indigo and violet. With the encouragement of Harvey Milk, the soon to be first openly gay man elected to public office in California, Baker created a new symbol for the growing gay rights movement. He was likely inspired by the "flag of the races" (with 5 horizontal stripes in red, white, brown, yellow and black), a popular symbol of racial inclusion in the 1960s rather than any association with Judy Garland's "Over the Rainbow" as some speculate.

The original 8-stripe flag was made of hand-dyed fabric by a group of thirty volunteers and flown as part of the "Gay Freedom Day Parade" in 1975. The eight colours had meanings attached to them: hot pink for sexuality, red symbolizing life, orange signifying healing, yellow for sunlight, green for nature, turquoise for magic, indigo for serenity and finally violet as a symbol of spirit. Following the assassination of Harvey Milk in 1978, the flag became an important symbol of pride and visibility, but as you can imagine, it was difficult to produce the flag commercially because of the scarcity of hot pink fabric. That stripe was dropped and then in 1979, Baker dropped the turquoise stripe in order to split the motif in two for street lamp decorations along the parade route. The standard Pride flag was born.

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Since then, the flag has been modified a few times, all with the aim to ensure that the flag continues to be a symbol of inclusion for all. The first iteration was an update in 2017 by Gilbert Baker himself, adding a lavender stripe for diversity to the top of his original 8-stripe flag . Also that year, in preparation for Pride celebrations in Philadelphia, a black stripe and a brown stripe were added to the top of the flag to acknowledge the issues that racialized people face in the LGBTQ+ community. In 2018, Daniel Quasar designed what is known as the Progress Pride Flag which added to the 6 stripes a chevron of white, baby blue, pink, brown and black of the Trans Pride Flag and Philadelphia Pride Flag respectively. In the same year, Julia Feliz used a similar colour combination on a diagonal to represent the ongoing struggle within the LGBTQ+ community around intersectionality. Finally in 2021, Valentino Vecchietti added the purple circle on a yellow chevron in honour of the intersex community (the intersex flag is a purple circle on a yellow field).

Each flag expresses in its own right the desire for visibility and inclusion at the heart of the riot outside the Stonewall Inn in June, 1969. Whatever version of the Pride flag someone displays, it communicates that the business, or home, or church is a safe space, a place that honours diversity and will advocate for the inclusion of everyone, especially those of us who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community.





Start a **GIVING** Garden

Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are good at many things, especially helping our neighbours. And some of our neighbours need help. According to research in 2017, our province has the highest food insecurity in the country: over 15 per cent. Imagine sending your child to school, knowing that in the class of thirty students, five of them didn't have enough to eat yesterday, or didn't eat at all. You can help by starting a giving garden. A giving garden can be a whole garden, a raised bed or a row or two dedicated to growing healthy, organic food for those in need.

Beyond its physical definition, a giving garden is a way to get your hands dirty with your little ones, while volunteering your time close to home. If you're already a gardener, this volunteer opportunity is ideal. Before building my own food bank garden, I could not find hours in the day for volunteering, even though I wanted to give back. With the giving garden I found I could contribute without necessarily impacting my schedule. Instead of donating hours at a time, donate hand-cultivated food.

Starting a food-bank donation garden is easier than you think. First, you need a little space. If you have multiple raised beds in an existing garden, you could dedicate an entire bed or part of a raised bed for your food bank contributions. Alternatively, you could choose to dedicate a single row or one container on your balcony to be your giving garden.

Next, find out where you can donate and what foods the food bank will accept. Before you start growing a ton of unique heirloom vegetables for your donations, do a little research first to find out what the food banks really need.

Mother Teresa said it best, "If you can't feed a hundred people, then just feed one." With your family's giving garden, you can do just that.

Bridges to Hope is St. John's community food bank. Reach out to them this summer to see if you can help at bridgestohope.ca

Glen Warren



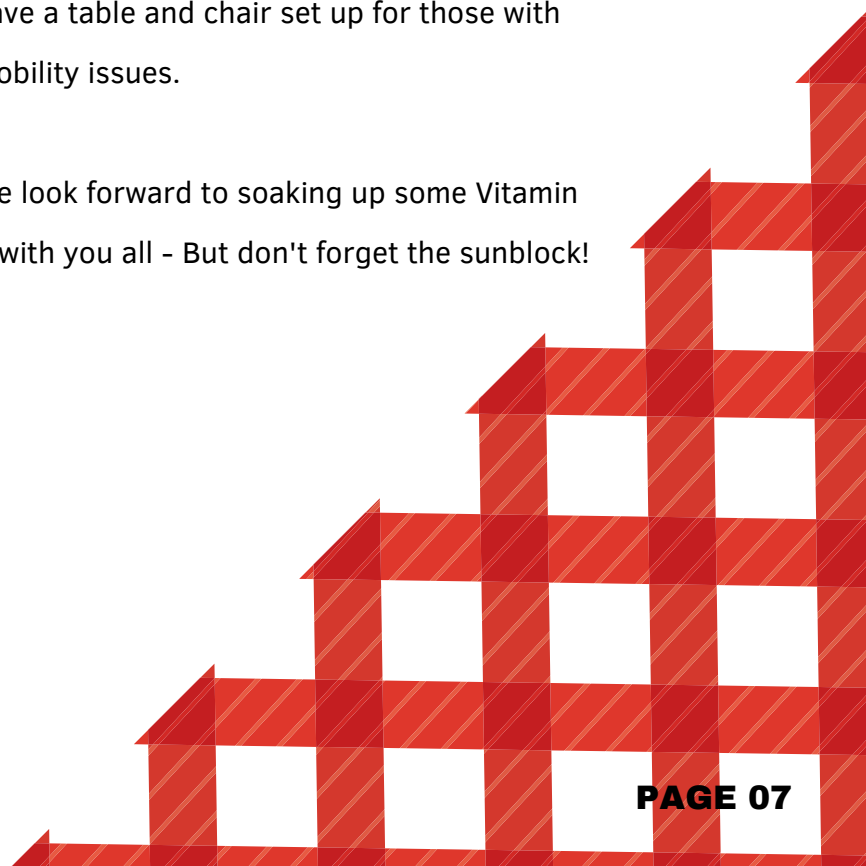
Sunny Sunday Summer Picnics

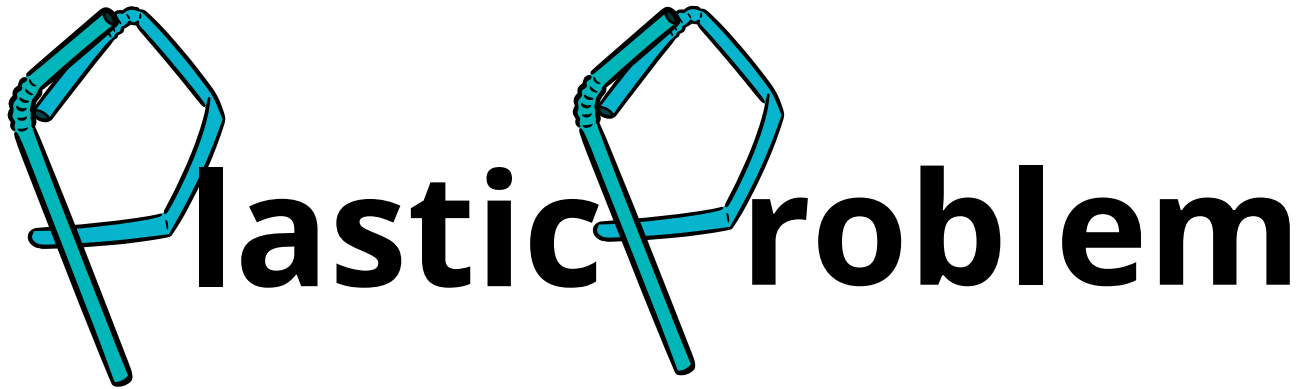
While sunny days in Newfoundland and Labrador are rare, we like to make the best of them! This summer, we'd like to enjoy our sunny summer Sundays together. Starting Sunday, June 12, and every warm Sunday we have, St. James will be hosting a brown bag picnic on the grounds after our morning worship. This will be a bring your own lunch and picnic blanket event; however, we will have a table and chair set up for those with mobility issues.

We look forward to soaking up some Vitamin D with you all - But don't forget the sunblock!



**STAY TUNED FOR ST. JAMES
END OF SUMMER
OUTDOOR CRAFT SALE**





Plastic Problem

Have you thought about how much garbage in our oceans? Despite our love of the ocean and images of windswept, rugged coastlines, in our province, we and our ancestors have treated our forests and our ocean as a dump. Our province has the greatest number of harbours in our entire country, and many people in these communities rely on the ocean for their livelihoods, and yet, we've been dumping a phenomenal amount of all sorts of garbage into our bays and oceans for more than 500 years, including sewage waste, chemicals, fishing gear, mechanical equipment and parts, rubber tires, and -- one of the worst -- plastics. Most of us are guilty of being uninformed and dismissive -- of having an "out of sight, out of mind" attitude -- with tragic consequences to our environment, its various ecosystems and the preservation of thousands of species.

There are many people in our province here (including St. James' Social and Environmental Action Committee) who are seeing, collecting, studying and recording some of our plastic pollution. They are working to increase public awareness and education of this huge problem and to encourage others to reduce the amount of plastics in our environment through clean-ups and by changing our behaviour.

Shawn Bath has personally seen up-close the ugliness and horror of the ocean floor used as a dumping ground. He is working hard with his team to clean up our 343 harbours one harbour at a time. He is a scuba diver who dove commercially for sea urchins for 21 years and was troubled by the amount of trash he saw littering the bottoms of Newfoundland harbours. In July '18, Bath decided to do something about it and started Clean Harbours Initiative. He has devoted his passion and energy to cleaning the harbours around Newfoundland, with a goal of removing 100,000 tires and 10,000 ghost nets, and 1,000,000 lbs of ocean trash.



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To date, Bath, with the help of others, has conducted over 50 harbour clean-ups, removing the equivalent of 1750 car tires, dozens of ghost nets, and an estimated 50,000 lbs of ocean trash. He also works to educate the public about threats to our ocean environment posed by marine plastics and abandoned and lost and discarded fishing gear – also known as “ghost gear”.

While helping care for the planet on Earth Day and Ocean Day are necessary, we should be making an effort every day. There are several ways you can help clean up our bays and to reduce your use plastics in our oceans to save fish, whales, birds and other marine life from death by ingestion of plastic. Below are some suggestions.

- Reduce your purchasing and use of plastic. Don't buy plastic items you don't need.
- Be creative. Find innovative ways to use household plastic objects and bits of wrappings for another purpose or tool.
- Keep recyclable shopping bags in your car or one in your bag, briefcase or pocket wherever you go.
- Buy or sew small and large bags from natural fibres such as cotton or hemp and take these with you when you go to the grocery stores to hold your fruits and vegetables.
- Shop wisely and conscientiously. Try to be select more products which do not use plastic bottles, containers or wrappings or less of them. (It can be very difficult for us to do that but try.)
- Don't buy bottled water if your tap water is fine. Fill up re-usable drink bottles and cups instead.
- Organize or attend a beach, harbour, river or pond clean-up.
- Educate others about how plastics damage our world and encourage them to act.

Robin Bartlett



**CLEAN
HARBOURS
INITIATIVE**





Affirming Celebration

This past March 13, 2022, the day finally came. After a two-year delay because of the global pandemic, members of St. James United Church were joined by guests from local United Church congregations and the wider community for a public celebration of our new status as an Affirming Ministry. There was excitement in the air as people gathered at 3:00 pm in the sanctuary. We were also joined online via Zoom by invited guests from Affirming Ministries in Atlantic Canada. Everywhere you looked were rainbows, including a large art piece on the back wall comprised of old bulletin covers. A big thank you to Hannah Sheppard and Kennedy Collins for such festive decorations. Thanks as well to Hannah, Katie Vardy and Chelsea Skanes for their leadership in bringing us to this day.

The service, co-led by (Rev.) James and Susan, began with a Call to Worship based on the six colours of the Pride flag. After each part of the litany, another candle was lit until the full spectrum of the rainbow was glowing on the communion table. That was a special moment for many, as was the song leadership of a choir made up of Amy Dalziel, Hannah Sheppard, Susan Sheppard, Glen Warren and Glenda Winsor. Another highlight was a video performance by the St. John's Gay Men's Chorus. After a technical hiccup, we were treated to their rendition of "Born This Way". They summed up so well why being an Affirming Ministry is important. We are welcoming everyone, unique and special just as they are.

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This was the main message of our guest preacher, the Rev. Bob Fillier who joined in the service by video from Prince George, BC. Based on Matthew 15:21-28, the story of how a Canaanite woman approached Jesus with a request to heal her daughter. He shockingly refused, treating her as an outsider, but then changed his mind after she stood up for herself, helping him realize that she deserved to be treated with the same respect he showed others. Rev. Bob highlighted how this story of courage has been lived out in our time by 2SLGBTQIA+ people standing up for inclusion in both society and the church, by the United Church in 1988 when we affirmed that all people are eligible to be ordained or commissioned regardless of sexual orientation, by St. James as we commit to being a safe space for all identities and orientations, where everyone has a place at the table, not just to receive crumbs but share in the full meal deal of participation in all aspects of congregational life and beyond. This idea was playfully recognized in a time of fellowship as people shared not just coffee and tea but tarts in a rainbow of colours .



As inspiring as Rev. Bob's message was, the reason for everyone gathering came next as Council Chair, Marilyn Adams was presented with the certificate from Affirm United, officially recognizing St. James as an Affirming Ministry within The United Church of Canada, joining Gower Street United and Carol United Church in Labrador City as the third Affirming congregation in our province. We pray that we inspire still more communities of faith in our region to do the same. Everyone needs a place to belong, and it is gratifying to know that St. James United Church has made a public commitment to offer just that.

Rev. James Ravenscroft



GOD IN A GLASS

This is an excerpt from "Of Beer and God" by Andrew Faiz and was published in Broadview Magazine April/May 2022 issue.

It was one of those “Beer and God” nights ever popular with congregations that want to keep it real and relevant. Nearing Easter, a decade back, 13 people met in the Upper Room (yes, 13; and yes, it was actually called that) of a Toronto pub’s second floor. We ordered our pints, our greasy plates. The early career minister led us in prayer, and then we watched a video featuring a slick evangelical talking about the Resurrection.

Most of the people were from the minister’s mainline Protestant congregation. I was there as a friend of the minister and an observer. I sat at the back, kept my opinion, sipped my beer.

As the group members went around the table to discuss the Resurrection, to my surprise, they stated they did not believe it actually happened.

I watched as they twisted themselves into complicated theological contortions. Three congregants in their 20s spoke of a generic God and spirituality. They didn’t understand why there had to be miracles. “Magic tricks,” one said.

“Nobody ever taught me these things,” said the 70-something woman. “We were told the stories when we were kids, but we weren’t allowed to ask any questions. I’ve never dared to ask any questions.” Those may not have been her exact words, but that’s how I remember them. I’ve heard that speech before, and since, from many people who regularly go to church.

We see that throughout the Hebrew Bible: God is a pillar of smoke, a gust of wind, a voice, an actual human-like presence in the garden, and every time the followers are like, “Yeah, that can’t be happening.” Church hasn’t changed much in a few millennia.



GOD IN A GLASS

We crave awe. We crave beauty. God places these before us, and we shake our heads in disbelief. And the people in the Bible did not have to contend with the post-Reformation obsession with rationalism like we do. “It’s not scientific,” we say.

So, I have some compassion for the dozen of us in that room above the noisy pub, dipping our fries into ramekins of ketchup, sighing our doubts about the Resurrection. If Jesus did rise from the dead, then that means God does exist, and that means there may well be more to life than the prosaic pursuit of our daily bread and weekend pleasures. And that would mean that church, regardless of the denomination or ideology, is about much more than filling pews and paying for bureaucracies and old buildings.

Do you have questions about theology, the church, life, the universe, and everything?

Join us monthly
for Pub Theology
at the Guv'nor Inn and Pub.

Contact the church for more
information at 722-1881
or info@stjamesuc.org



cook with kids

CAMPFIRE PIZZA

Summer is here and your family can enjoy a meal outside on the grill or on the beach. Anywhere there's fire, you can have a great meal with the kids with this easy and quick dinner idea.

Ingredients

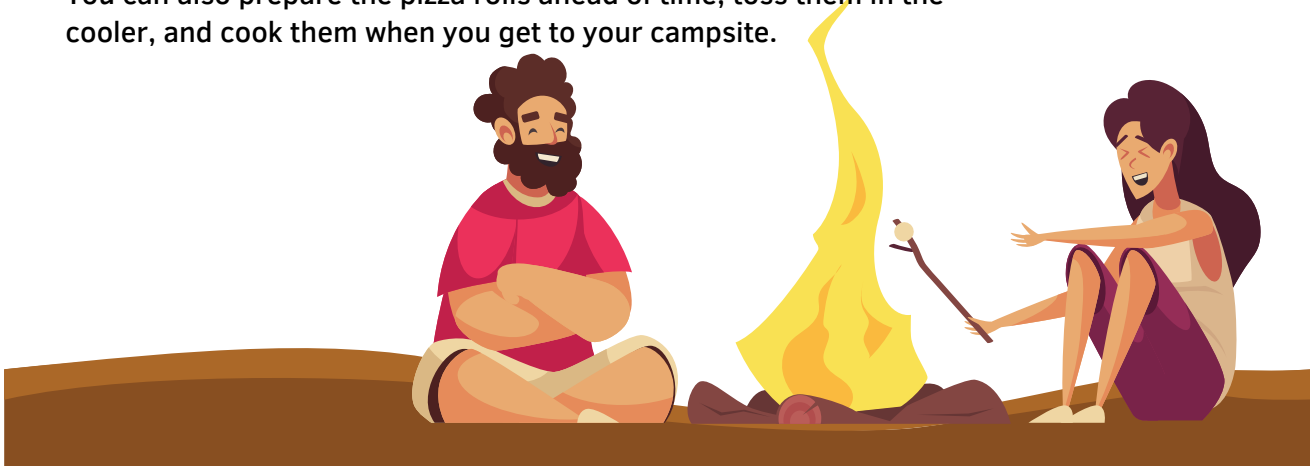
- Italian Rolls
- Pizza Sauce
- Mozzarella Cheese
- Your family's favorite toppings!
- Tin Foil

Directions

Step 1 Slice the rolls in half. Separate and place sauce, cheese and your favorite toppings on it.

Step 2 Close the roll and wrap in tin foil. Place on grill for about 20 minutes.

- You can make this on the grill, but you could easily make it with an actual campfire – just stick those tin foil packets right in the fire for about 15 minutes, and you will be good to go!
- You can also prepare the pizza rolls ahead of time, toss them in the cooler, and cook them when you get to your campsite.



Word Search

N	O	I	T	C	I	D	E	N	E	B	U	F	O
P	E	H	I	N	S	C	R	I	P	T	U	R	E
R	I	N	E	G	R	E	E	T	I	N	G	A	L
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HYMN
 CHILDREN
 COMMUNITY
 FELLOWSHIP
 GREETING
 SCRIPTURE
 JEANINE
 OFFERING
 SERMON
 WORSHIP
 PASTOR
 BENEDICTION
 FRIENDS
 BIBLE

Mark your calendars!

UPCOMING SPECIAL WORSHIP DATES

June 19, 11 am - Indigenous Peoples Sunday and Father's Day

June 26, 11 am - Remembering Memorial Day

July 3, 11 am - Rev. Marion Davis leading

July 10, 11 am - Rev. Marion Davis leading

July 17, 11 am - Rev. James is back from vacation

August 7, 11 am - Communion

August 21, 11 am - Baptism

September 4, 11 am - Communion

October 2, 11 am - World Communion Sunday

In September, we plan to reimagine and revive the in-person contemporary service in terms of both day of the week and format of the gathering.

Join us every week online, Saturdays, at 4:30 pm, for our contemporary worship service with Susan Sheppard, DLM, and Sundays, at 11:00 am, for our traditional service with Reverend James Ravenscroft.

Check www.stjamesuc.org for more information.