

Newsletter of St. James United Church

# THE VISITOR

I am about to do  
a *new* thing;  
now it springs *forth*;  
do you not perceive it?  
I will make a *way*  
in the wilderness  
and rivers in the desert.

Isaiah 43:19

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Welcome.

Fall is a season of beginnings, and with it comes the perfect opportunity to forge new connections. As schools reopen for both the young and the old, we find ourselves settling back into regular routines after the summer break. This rhythm extends to the church as well, with committee meetings resuming, the choir gathering for rehearsals, and the building coming alive with various groups and events.

St. James thrives because of its strong community. Both within the church and in the broader neighbourhood, there lies a unique opportunity to cultivate friendships and form new bonds that enrich our lives.

This fall, I encourage you to connect deeply with your community and embrace the chance to try something new. Whether it's joining a new group, striking up a conversation with someone you haven't met before, or renewing your commitment to making St. James a vibrant and welcoming place, your involvement matters.

Sincerely,  
Glen Warren, Editor

St. James United Church  
330 Elizabeth Avenue  
St. John's, NL A1B 1T9

Phone: 709-722-1881

[www.stjamesuc.org](http://www.stjamesuc.org)

Minister:  
Rev. James Ravenscroft



@StJamesUnited



st.JamesUC



StJamesUCNL

**WORSHIP WITH US!**  
**SUNDAY, 11:00 AM**



## MINISTRY MESSAGE

Rev. James Ravenscroft

Each September as school begins and cooler temperatures draw people back into town from around the Bay, we regroup as a community after the slower pace of the summer. It is an exciting time as I get to see people who have been away and hear tales of where they went and what they did. It is also when we meet people who are new to the area, be it for school, a new job, moving closer to healthcare facilities, as they come to worship to see what we're up to. Both meetings remind me of the value of relationships, both new and older, It is important then for us to nurture a welcoming community where everyone feels seen and able to share their gifts, where we can be there for each other in happy times and in sad as we provide opportunities to grow in faith, to worship together and to serve the community in Jesus' name.

We want to highlight the nurture of such relationships this year in a few different ways. First, we plan to launch renewed neighbourhood groupings, a bit like the zones that we put together to help with the delivery of "The Visitor," but more consistent in size, each no more than twelve households. The idea is for us to have people in our local neighbourhood to turn to, check in on, share a laugh, perhaps some food with, all with the aim of strengthening the relationships that we share. One neighbourhood group may choose to do this with regular phone calls, another with a progressive dinner, a third with regular coffee gatherings. The what is less important than the why, which is to get to know each other and to grow in our shared relationship in faith.

**THERE IS NOT  
ONE BLADE OF  
GRASS, THERE  
IS NO COLOR IN  
THIS WORLD  
THAT IS NOT  
INTENDED TO  
MAKE US  
REJOICE.**

**JOHN CALVIN**





## MINISTRY MESSAGE

James Ravenscroft

Another way we hope to nurture relationships is related to the neighbourhood groups, and that is to encourage people to join small groups. The neighbourhood group could be someone's preferred small group, but they also may prefer to join a group based on demographics, shared interests, a mutual desire to study the bible, learn a prayer practice, or be of service in the community. We already have a few of these in operation, such as AOTS. the UCW, the young adult bible study group and InsideOUT. We aim to plant a few more and encourage people to start one if they wish.

The final idea is to establish a couple of "connection teams," one directed to the neighbourhood around the church and the other to our main post-secondary campuses. Both of these teams are focused on engaging with our neighbours, be it folks living and working nearby or attending classes. The neighbourhood connection team will begin by walking in the neighbourhood, doing so with an eye for who is there and what is going on, making connections as they go. The MUN-CNA team will start with a consultation period to learn the best ways to engage with students and faculty, again to make connections and discover where we can offer love and support. Let me know if you want to take part.

In all of the above, the aim is to keep nurturing relationships with folks we know, folks that we don't, folks that we want to know, even folks that we aren't sure about, all because the bigger purpose is to be a community where we model the love of God, where we live into God's kin-dom, where we care for others, all in Jesus' name.

**TO DESTROY  
IS ALWAYS  
THE FIRST  
STEP IN ANY  
CREATION.**

**e.e. cummings**





# MUSIC NOTES

As we look ahead to a new year of music at St. James, we first want to thank all the people and groups who make our music ministry so vibrant. We are grateful for the gifts of our Senior Choir, Guitar Group, Young Adult's Ensemble, St. James Quartet, and the many guest groups and soloists who have shared their talents with us.

This past June was one for the books. Our Senior Choir joined in the national celebration of the United Church of Canada's 100th anniversary at Gower Street United Church. Later that month, we were ecstatic to welcome Islington United Church's Senior Choir, directed by Jason Locke, who led our June 29th worship service and then joined our Senior Choir for a wonderful Centennial Hymn Sing in the afternoon.

Throughout the year, the Senior Choir sings regularly—usually two or three times a month. Our Guitar Group leads worship five or six times annually, and other groups and ensembles alternate in leading so that every service is supported with diverse, thoughtful and uplifting music.

We are always excited to welcome new members! If you would like to sing with the Senior Choir, play with the Guitar Group, or join the Young Adult's Ensemble, please reach out to Amy or Bob.

- Senior Choir rehearsals: Wednesdays at 7:30 PM (in the sanctuary)
- Guitar Group rehearsals: Thursdays at 10:15 AM (in the Fellowship Room)
- Young Adult's Ensemble and Quartet: rehearsals as needed

Over the summer, we purchased copies of the United Church's new music resource, *And Let Us Sing*, for the Senior Choir. We look forward to sharing selections from this resource in worship and introducing the congregation to some new gems. Thank you for your continued support—we appreciate how warmly the congregation receives and encourages our music ministry.

This year, we also hope to include more small ensembles from within our congregation. If you have any interest in getting involved in the music program, why not let Amy or Bob know? We would love to find ways for you to join our music community.

We are excited to work with Rev. James in the year ahead as we continue to enhance our worship together through music.

With gratitude and best wishes,  
Amy Dalziel & Bob Rose



# Growing Together

A few months ago, a group of Methodists from Ghana approached the leadership of St. James, hoping that they may be able to rent space from us on Sundays to worship. After a few meetings and conversations about their needs and ours, a relationship between St. James United Church and the St. John's Methodist Society was formed. Their growing congregation of newcomers from West Africa gather from 8:00 to 10:00 am in the Sanctuary and Fellowship Room for worship as well as programs with children, wrapping up with lots of time for members of St. James to get ready for our worship service and other activities. The overlap time is always a joy, friendly hellos and thank yous exchanged between the members of sister congregations. Sometimes they even like to share a bit of food. It is quite lovely.

Sisters is a good way to think of each other because we are all Methodists, looking to John Wesley for some theological inspiration. In addition, The United Church of Canada has an agreement with The Methodist Church of Ghana, what we refer to as a migrant church. These are Methodist (as well as Presbyterian) congregations set up in Canada as a way for them to keep ministering to their members who are working far from home. Rooted in our shared heritage, we have pledged to offer support and fellowship to our siblings in Christ.

In honour of this new relationship, we are planning a joint service on October 12, that is Thanksgiving Sunday. There is a logistical reason for this. This congregation is supported by ministers from Toronto who come to St. John's every six weeks, the other Sundays their worship being lay-led. Understandably, they want their pastoral leaders to be present for this shared service. Beyond that, Thanksgiving feels like a wonderful time spiritually to celebrate together. Thanksgiving is more than a harvest celebration. At its heart is the celebration of kinship as families and friends come together to share food and deepen their relationships. That is the spirit in which we can come together as two congregations. The details are yet to be worked out, but the shared service will be a time to sing and pray together, to lift up what we share, to affirm what is distinct between us, and most importantly to prayerfully mark the beginning of our relationship, giving thanks and seeking God's blessing.

# MINISTRY PLAN FOR ST. JAMES

Over the next year, leaders of St. James will focus on three main priorities to ensure the church remains sustainable, lively, and strengthens connections.

First, our ongoing strategic planning team will create a detailed plan to use the property better and communicate financial matters clearly. In addition, there will be a renewed focus on stewardship through a committee, annual campaigns, more giving options, and a donation drive.

Second, to strengthen the internal community, they will encourage small groups, and form a team to match volunteers' skills with church needs. In addition, reach out to members of the congregation who are still affiliated with St. James but haven't been involved in some time

Third, they will enhance engagement with neighbours and local partners, including the college and university, through promotion and dedicated teams for outreach and partnerships. These changes aim to make the church a lively, financially stable, and active community centre in our local neighbourhood.

## ENHANCING HOW WE USE OUR RESOURCES

**Make the most of our property.** We can take a good look at how we're using our space and maybe chat with a rental consultant to see how we can boost our rental opportunities.

**Keep everyone in the loop about our finances.** It's important to make sure we reach out to not just those who come to services regularly, but also our affiliates and folks who live a bit further away. We want to highlight the positives, talk about what we've achieved, and show how every donation helps us do great work.

**Encourage giving beyond the usual.** Let's share info about things like bequests and annuities. We can also kick off a donation drive to help wipe out our deficit.

**Renew the Stewardship Committee and start an annual campaign.**

**Consider taking out a loan to boost our programs.** This could be a great investment in our future, especially for developing programs for the youth and organizing events for young adults and college students.

# Building a Strong Community and Encouraging People To Share Their Talents

At the heart of this idea is making connections with others in the community. When people feel like they belong, they're more likely to share what makes them unique.

**Small Groups:** How about forming some small groups based on neighbourhood ties or shared hobbies? It would be great if folks felt inspired to start their own groups too.

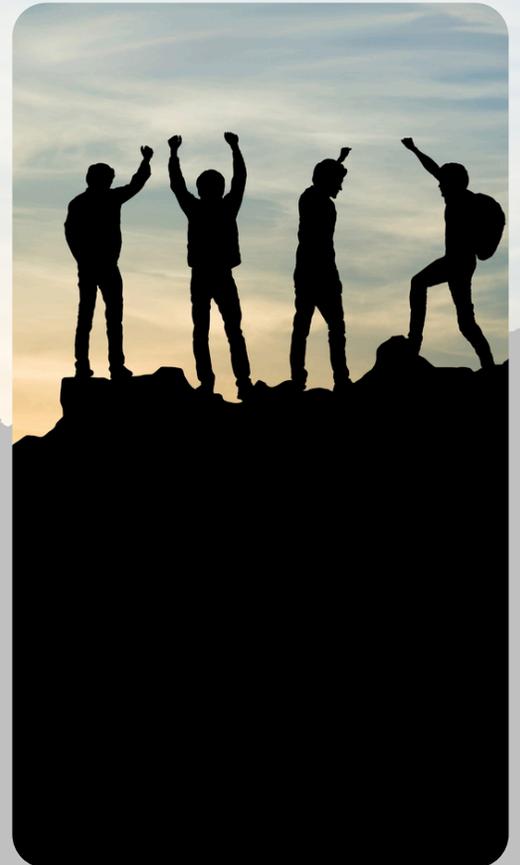
**Volunteerism:** It's important to link people up with volunteering spots. Maybe we could set up a Volunteer Development Team with a couple of enthusiastic helpers who can chat with community members and figure out where their skills could really shine within the congregation.

## Engaging with Our Neighbours and Community Partners

We're all about making connections in our neighborhood, especially with folks from Memorial University and the College of the North Atlantic. Let's team up with members who are already part of these institutions to figure out how we can introduce the church to students and faculty in a friendly way.

**Create a Neighbourhood Connection Team:** This team will stroll through the neighborhood, offering prayers for our neighbors, chatting with locals, and keeping an ear out for what's happening around town. By doing this, they'll spot chances for us to join forces with others doing good work or kick off some new projects.

**Appoint Liaisons for Each Community Partner:** These liaisons will be our bridge, building relationships and addressing any concerns that pop up. Over time, we'll put together a Partnership Council. This will be a regular meetup where reps from each partner can sit down with our congregation leaders to lend support and solve any issues together.



Welcome

Tuesday

Circles

Sept. 16

7:30-  
9:30 PM

To register

[info@stjamesuc.org](mailto:info@stjamesuc.org)

or 709 722-1881

## Welcome to The Community!

Is someone a newcomer whose native language isn't English? Would they like to engage in conversations with others in a relaxed environment to enhance their English skills?

If so, the community warmly invites them to be part of the Welcome Circle! This weekly, informal gathering is designed for adults to practice speaking English in a small group setting.

Participants will explore a diverse range of topics and language relevant to everyday and social situations.

Additionally, they will receive valuable insights into the province, culture, and local dialects while having the chance to share their own experiences and connect with others.

Fellowship Room  
St. James United Church,  
330 Elizabeth Avenue

This fall, we put together a small team to take part in the annual Terry Fox run. Communities across Canada come together each Fall to honour this amazing Canadian, by running and raising money for cancer research. We thought this was a great way to put our faith in action - raise money to support ending a disease that impacts so many, and contributing as a church community within a larger community event.

With our small but mighty team of two, I was hoping we would be able to raise \$200. Imagine my shock when our final tally was over \$700! This money will all go towards cancer research, and I am very proud of our church community for coming together to support this great cause.

Grace Marcoux





**Sunday, October 25**

**2:30 - 4:00 PM**

**(OR UNTIL SHELLLED OUT,  
WHICHEVER COMES FIRST)**

**St. James United Church  
330 Elizabeth Avenue**

**No costume required!**

# ANNIVERSARY DINNER

**FRIDAY  
NOVEMBER 21  
7:00 PM**

**\$25**

BAKED HAM, SCALLOPED POTATOES, DESSERT  
CAKE WALK AND SILENT AUCTION

Tickets available  
at church office.



# LEARN AND GROW

## ALTERNATIVE WORSHIP

In addition to the 11am Sunday worship, St. James hosts a variety of alternative worship services.

**InsideOUT:** an LGBTQIA+ spirituality circle at 7:30 pm on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of each month.

**Tapestry:** a conversational format with secular music on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month. 5:30 pm potluck followed by worship at 7:00 pm.

**Wild Light Spiritual Oasis:** an outdoor service to connect us with God in nature. 3:00 pm on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month. Locations vary.

Check [www.stjamesuc.org](http://www.stjamesuc.org) for more information.



There are two opportunities for Bible Study this year.

1. A weekly bible study following coffee time/lunch. This is a look at the readings set in the lectionary. Meet in the library (in the office area of the church).
2. A monthly bible study on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of the month, beginning at 5:30 pm. Contact the office ([info@stjamesuc.org](mailto:info@stjamesuc.org)) for the address.

## BIBLE STUDIES



## PUB THEOLOGY

Do you want to explore questions of faith, spirituality or ethics in a safe space? Then join Pub Theology, an informal discussion group which meets at Guvnor Pub from 7:00 to 9:00 pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month.

6:30 pm on the First Wednesday of each month.  
This is a reflective service of singing, readings and silent meditation, following the format used in the Taize community in France.

## TAIZE WORSHIP



# CONNECT AND BELONG

## COFFEE TIME AND SOUP LUNCHES

Each Sunday after worship, there is a time for connection and conversation, either for coffee time or on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month with a soup lunch. What is most important is your presence, but if you are interested in bringing a pot of soup, rolls or sweets, you are invited to sign the sheet in the vestibule or call the church office.



## CARE AND SERVE

If you like to sing, consider sharing your gift in the Senior Choir. Generally leading music in worship every other Sunday, this SATB choir rehearses weekly on Wednesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:00 pm

## SENIOR CHOIR



On the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month, come for a time of silent reflection and prayer. Beginning at 5:30 pm, this is an hour of quiet in solidarity with all who are under threat because of war and oppression. Stay for as little or as long as you wish. No slogans, speeches. Just quiet in a time of strife.

## SILENT VIGIL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

## GUITAR GROUP

If you like to play guitar, accordion or other traditional instruments, why not join the Guitar Group. This group meets at 10:30 am on Thursdays to rehearse in preparation to play at seniors homes and Sunday worship services.



# CARE AND SERVE

## AS ONE THAT SERVES (MEN'S GROUP)

The Men's Club is planning its regular monthly meetings for the fall and we are hoping all men from the congregation will consider joining us. We currently have approximately 14 active members in our club. We gather in the auditorium on the third Wednesday of each month beginning at 12:30 with lunch served at 1:00 pm. The meetings are scheduled for September 17, October 15, and November 19. In December we plan to hold an evening Celebration Christmas dinner with members of the UCW.

Our main fundraising activity is the ever-popular Fish and Brewis dinner held on two occasions during the year, tentatively set for October 24 and April 24. Attendance at these functions is limited to around 110, a manageable number when it comes time to clean up at the end of the night. We also serve a pancake supper and an Easter Egg breakfast to mark these occasions throughout the year.

Where possible, we arrange a guest speaker on topics of interest for our regular meetings. At each meeting, we update members on Church Board activities and financial status. We report on any known illness among our membership and make every effort to offer support where needed.

Please consider joining this small but vibrant group in our congregation. You are always welcome to be our guest at a meeting to determine if it is for you.



## UNITED CHURCH WOMEN

Any woman "willing to contribute her prayers, gifts, and services for the work of the Church" may join the United Church Women (UCW). Along with providing important networking and social bonding opportunities, the UCW has led discussions on, for example, feminism and restorative justice. Indeed, says former Moderator Jordan Cantwell, United Church Women are the "hands and feet" of the church. The UCW meet on the 2nd Monday of the month starting at 12:30pm. They host fundraising teas each fall and spring.



# Financial Snapshot

The finance report will be done two ways. The first one is what we need to pay the main bills for the month of August and what our guaranteed income is. The second one is what our financial picture is like from January to August 2025 compared to 2024.

August 2025:

Guaranteed Income:

PAR	\$5467	
Rentals	<u>4459</u>	\$ 9,926

Expenses:

Heat/Light	\$1222	
Phone/Copier	314	
Insurance	1360	
UC Assessment	1088	
Cleaning	2139	
Payroll	<u>19007</u>	25,130

Net loss \$15,204

This figure does not include the weekly collections, as we have no idea what we are going to receive, it does not include repairs, office expenses, committee expenses or any other expenses that occur.

Here is our income statement for January to August 2024 compared to 2025 and out 2025 Budget.

<u>Revenue</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Collection/Special Envelopes	127,337	106,739	202,707
AOTS	4,000	3,500	---
UCW	4,170	3,000	---
Other Revenue	<u>51,934</u>	<u>41,007</u>	<u>72,600</u>
Total Income	187,441	154,246	275,300
<u>Expenses</u>			
Church	87,516	92,492	130,826
Assessments/Donations	8,525	9,852	17,051
Committees	2,770	903	4,075
Salaries	<u>116,181</u>	<u>114,506</u>	<u>165,700</u>
Total Expenses	214,992	217,753	317,652
Net Loss	27,551	63,507	42,352

In 2024, we had a net loss of \$63,507, and in 2025, the loss was \$27,551. This was mainly because of more donations, extra rentals, and additional fundraising with help from UCW and AOTS. Our expenses, such as heating, insurance, cleaning, and UC assessments, have gone down compared to last year. If we continue this trend for the next four months, our deficit should be lower than what we budgeted for by December's end.

THANKS

GIVING



# MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

DATE	TIME	LITURGICAL THEME	WORSHIP LEADERS	MUSIC	SPECIAL INFO	FELLOWSHIP
Sept 7	11:00 am	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in Creation Time	James	Soloist	Communion/Grandparents Day	Coffee/tea
Sept 7	7:30 pm	InsideOUT LGBTQ+ Circle	TBA			
Sept 13	7:00 pm	Tapestry	James/Young Adults		Potluck begins at 5:30 pm	
Sept 14	11:00 am	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Creation Time	James	Quartet		Coffee/tea
Sept 21	11:00 am	Welcome Back Sunday	James	Senior Choir	Committees promote their activities	Luncheon
Sept 21	3:00 pm	Wild Light Spiritual Oasis	James		Autumnal Equinox	
Sept 21	7:30 pm	InsideOUT LGBTQ+ Circle	TBA			
Sept 28	11:00 am	Reconciliation Sunday	Guest preacher	TBA	everyone encouraged to wear orange	Coffee/tea
Oct 1	7:30 pm	Taizé Service	James			
Oct 5	11:00 am	World Communion Sunday	James	Senior Choir	(Oct. 1 – Int. Day of Older Persons)	Coffee/tea
Oct 5	7:30 pm	InsideOUT LGBTQ+ Circle	TBA			
Oct 11	7:00 pm	Tapestry	James/Young Adults		Potluck begins at 5:30 pm	
Oct 12	11:00 am	Thanksgiving Sunday	James	Senior Choir	National Coming Out/Mental Health Day	
No	evening	service this week.				
Oct 19	11:00 am	Social Action Sunday	TBA	TBA	World Food Day (October 16 <sup>th</sup> )	Luncheon
Oct 19	7:30 pm	InsideOUT LGBTQ+ Circle	TBA			
Oct 26	11:00 am	Reformation Sunday	James	Senior Choir	Halloween on Oct. 31	Coffee/tea
Oct 26	3:00 pm	Wild Light Spiritual Oasis	James			
Nov. 2	11:00 am	All Saints Sunday	James	TBA	Communion (remember deceased loved ones)	Coffee/tea
Nov. 2	7:30 pm	InsideOUT LGBTQ+ Circle	TBA			
Nov. 5	6:30 pm	Taizé Service	James			
Nov 8	7:00 pm	Tapestry	James/Young Adults		Potluck begins at 5:30 pm	
Nov 9	11:00 am	Remembrance Sunday	James	Senior Choir	World Children's Day	Coffee/tea
Nov 16	11:00 am	Anniversary Sunday	James	Senior Choir		Luncheon
Nov 16	7:00 pm	InsideOUT LGBTQ+ Circle	TBA			
Nov 23	11:00 am	Reign of Christ Sunday		TBA	Trans Day of Remembrance	Coffee/tea
Nov 23	3:00 pm	Wild Light Spiritual Oasis	James			