



ST. JAMES' JOURNEY

DECEMBER 2025

Volume 21, Issue 3
December 2025



*Welcome to the Church of St. James', Orillia
Whether you are a follower of Christ, or on a spiritual
journey, all are welcome to this Holy and Sacred place.*



FROM THE DESK OF ARCHDEACON JOHN

Dear Friends in Christ,

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'"

This is Advent, and this means that John the Baptizer greets us once again. Advent time is John time, as we are not quite ready for the time of Jesus. In this time before we celebrate the Incarnation, we are told to get ready.

Getting ready is supposed to be a time for preparation, deliberation, meditation, and praying on what it means to wait for the one who will prepare the way of the Lord and make his paths straight. However, we also use this time during Advent to be busy planning our social functions or gift buying as we move towards Christmas Day. Understandably, focusing on the latter is more appealing than the image of John crying out in the wilderness. John evokes images of joy, but also the hardship faced by Israel as they wander the wilderness.

As we sit on any given Sunday in our beautiful and sacred worship space, and we busy ourselves with normal Christmas activities, we may be able to suppress the idea of the wildernesses that we may have to face.

However, the idea of being in the wilderness is not unfamiliar to many.

The wilderness is an experience felt by those who are sick, suffering, and feeling spiritually lost. I think of our friends at St. David's as they travel from Sunday to Sunday to the different parishes of Huronia. They are warmly received and welcomed by each parish, making space for them because they are part of our parish as a whole. However, they are in the wilderness as they feel the damage to their church and not being in it at this time of year. Be assured that those in the wilderness are not alone.

In many ways, John was on the margins. John was a creature of the old ways, but John was also pointing to the kingdom to come. In this time of Advent, we are reminded that there is a pathway out of the wilderness. Our faith in Jesus Christ is a reorientation for a new way of life. While we may be in the wilderness personally or as a church community, and there is hardship to be sure, the Holy Spirit has a way to keep nudging us on in the direction of Jesus and the new life and experiences that can bring. For many of us, we spend a lot of time looking back or to the past to inform us about our church experience, and that makes us feel good. And we must celebrate those wonderful experiences. But like John, the experience of those in the wilderness tells us there is comfort each and every Advent as we look forward and wait with expectation for the One to come.



Continued on the next page

Our Vision - A strong faith community, reflecting God's Love to those around us
Our Mission - To serve and share Jesus Christ
Our Values - Faith, Compassion, Integrity, Respect

Director of Music Search Committee

As we all know, our Director of Music, Jeff Campbell, will be leaving us at the end of June 2026 to take up a similar position at St. Andrew's, Presbyterian Church. He described to us that this was always his dream, and we want to encourage him to live out his dreams. And while I may continue to poke fun at Jeff, I thank him for all his contributions to music ministry at St. James', but also to the life of our parish.

In 2020, just before COVID, I met with Jeff to tell him that I was going to start to introduce more contemporary liturgy to our Sunday services. I explained that we needed to have a greater diversity of voices and backgrounds, and that we needed to explore Anglicanism from other parts of the communion. I also wanted Jeff to begin the process of introducing more contemporary hymns and anthems, and to bring in more instrumentalists and vocalists. Together, we found interesting and joyful ways to connect more contemporary liturgy with a new music direction. While it may not be for everyone, most of you have told us that you like these changes.

The wardens and I are in the process of forming a Director of Music Search Committee, composed of three to four members of the choir and one or two representatives from the congregation. Leslie Fortune, as a warden and member of the choir, will chair the committee, and I will act in an advisory role as I am canonically responsible for all aspects of worship, including music. I want to be forthcoming with you that I remain committed to a broader and diverse form of worship and music.

It is also important to name a reality that the position will be for a person who can both direct the choir and play the piano and/or organ. In part, this is due to monetary constraints, but it is also because it is becoming harder to find organists. This is true not only for smaller communities like Orillia, but we are seeing it throughout the larger urban settings in the Diocese. Many churches in a similar situation have had to bring in guest organists to complement their music ministry when there is a particular need for an organist's presence.

Throughout all of this, I am confident the Holy Spirit will lead us, and I ask your continued prayers as we begin this process.

Yours in Christ,
Archdeacon John



BISHOPS LEAD ADVENT SERIES

As part of the Season of Spiritual Renewal, the Diocese's bishops, along with Bishop Mauricio Andrade, will lead "The Bishops' Advent Retreat Evenings," a series of four evenings of prayer and reflection. These gatherings will give Anglicans a chance to pause, connect and deepen their spiritual journey during this holy season. Each gathering will feature a reflection by the bishop and time for personal reflection, concluding with a short service of Compline. The series will take place on Tuesdays starting Nov. 25 from 7:30-8:30 p.m. on Zoom. [Sign up online](#) for each evening. Registration will close at 5 p.m. on the Friday before each session. If you wish to join Archdeacon John in the Upper Room he will host an Advent zoom party.



Greetings from your Wardens!

After a long and glorious fall, December has arrived. While technically still fall until the Dec 21st (when the daylight hours start to get longer, yay), my fingers and cheeks tell me that the season has changed already. Winter is on its way. It's cold out there!!

However, it's warm in the church building, and it's warm in the church community. We welcome the parishioners from St David's Anglican/Lutheran Church as they await the refurbishment of their church premises following the unfortunate fire in October. They have made a friendly and lively addition to our Sunday mornings. We also welcome some new faces to our congregation, so please reach out to them and say hello.

Advent starts for many of us on Nov 30th with a Family Ham Supper prepared by the capable hands of Andrew Hill and his team. This will be on St Andrew's Day, so it will have a Scottish theme to it.

That event will be followed on Wednesday, Dec 3rd with the first of 3 Christmas sing-alongs at 12:15 p.m. to enhance our holiday spirit. See the details elsewhere in this newsletter or speak to Rosemarie Freeman. Then on Saturday, Dec. 6th, the auditorium will be buzzing with little children doing their very own shopping at St Nick's Shopping Day from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, while their parents will be browsing the crafts, baking and sewing available in the parlour, brought to you by the hardworking ACW ladies. The ACW of St James', joined this year by the ladies of St Athanasius, is also deep into their plans to bring Christ's love (and a touch of Santa Claus) to many families in the Orillia area who otherwise would face a disappointing Christmas morning. Thank you to all who have supported this endeavour this year. Jeff Campbell and the choir are hard at work preparing uplifting anthems for this Advent season. The Chancel Guild is preparing to add décor to our worship area, suitable to increase our enjoyment of this time of year. Thank you to all involved.

Thank you to the new and returning workers who prepare, cook, serve, and clean up at both the Sunday Community Breakfasts and the Wednesday Loonie lunches. A very important ministry to our neighbours outside of the established church community.

Our thanks to everyone who pitches in with their time and talent to enrich our church community in all of these events. You are a treasure to St James'.

With all the "busy-ness" of the season, we hope that you take some time to reflect on the year that has been, and the year yet to come: the challenges that we face, both in our personal lives and within the church; the successes we have accomplished and those plans we hope to bring to fruition.

May the wonder of the birth of a baby, over 2000 years ago, bring us all lasting Hope and Joy. Wishing you all a deep Peace.

Your Wardens, Leslie, Julia and Sue

NAMING CONTEST



NAMING CONTEST

We're hoping to come up with some new and creative names for three, currently unnamed rooms in St. James'. As of now we have, 'Stubley Auditorium' and the 'Blair Ashmore Library'.

We would like to have names for the '**youth room**', the '**parlour**' and the area in the basement known as the '**gymnasium**'.

Put on your thinking caps and submit your ideas to the office.

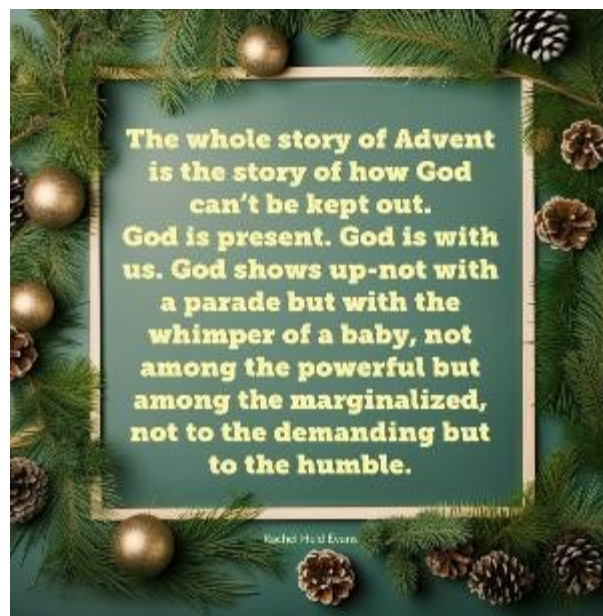
Forms are on the bulletin board in hall.

December 15 is the deadline for entries.

A DIFFERENT ADVENT CONSPIRACY EVENT FOR 2025

At this blessed time of preparing to celebrate our Saviour's birth, please consider Orillia's urgent food insecurity problem. Many of our citizens do not have enough money to buy food for themselves and their families. During Advent, consider bringing non-perishable food items to church EVERY Sunday to support the local Sharing Place Food Bank. Deposit your contribution in the narthex baskets provided near our Advent Conspiracy display. Donations will then be transported to the Sharing Place every Monday morning during Advent. This is a simple thing for everyone of any age to participate in and is a significant contribution for those in need.

Christmas is hard to celebrate on an empty stomach!
St. James' Social Justice and Outreach Committee.



ALBERT GREER MEMORIAL WINDOWS



It was with great excitement that we saw new lighting installed in anticipation of the new memorial windows, and even greater excitement when the windows actually arrived on Friday, November 7th. I hope by now you have had an opportunity to see them for yourself, as they are quite simply stunning. The scene depicts a sunset over Georgian Bay, with various elements of nature which Albert loved...water, rocks, trees, a few loons, and a dove. When contemplating the windows, you are invited to be in that sacred space, breathe deeply, and allow calm to enter your soul. God created this beauty for us to give us strength to face our daily tasks and challenges. The caption quotes, "My Life Goes on in Endless Song; How Can I Keep from Singing", and my wish for you is that you can leave with a song in your heart.

Now, a little back story: I am deeply grateful to Archdeacon John Anderson and the Wardens of St. James' for the opportunity to have these windows created in Albert's memory; I truly believe he would have loved them. It was a privilege to be able to donate the funds from Albert's estate (i.e. the sale of our home) to pay for them, and at first, I selfishly wanted to do it all myself. However, when I spoke of the project to friends, the response was invariably, "I would like to contribute to that". It was then that I realized it would be unfair to deny them that privilege. Therefore, I would rather say thank you to all who so generously gave toward this memorial tribute, and to say that the majority of the funds raised came from outside the St James' church family. Albert was greatly loved and admired by so many people during his lifetime, and friends were happy to commemorate him in this way.

May I also give my deep gratitude to Rosemarie Freeman, who was my co-pilot on this project. Her assistance and support have been invaluable! A "shout out" to Dean Jobin-Bevans as well, for his initial input while he was still with us at St. James'.

Yours in Christ, Nynka Greer

Will you help our St. James' Annual Christmas Project?

Did you know? It's been well over 40 years that St. James' ACW has been heading up our Christmas Project. Long ago at its start, we managed gifts for six families through their social workers with an agency in Orillia called "Tamarac" - which later became "Catulpa-Tamarac". The number of families grew and what we provided did, too: from random presents to a "Special Wish Gift" plus extras, plus mittens and hats; from any food we were given to food to prepare a Christmas Dinner plus extras, and the choice of a turkey or ham. Our number of families not only grew to come from more agencies - Couchiching Jubilee House, New Path and Community Living Huronia, as well as Catulpa - but we also added single teens from the Orillia Youth Centre - from perhaps 20 people to over 100! (We used agencies because they know their clients' needs already.) We also have added some people who came directly to St. James' to ask for help...

Then came COVID. Like everyone else, ACW had to "pivot" but we didn't miss a Christmas! Now we provide GIFT CARDS: in November, cards to buy children's presents (\$50 per child); in December, cards to buy Christmas Dinner plus (\$25 per person in the family). It's not as much fun as our "Wrapping Day" used to be, but it's safer for health reasons and it's cost effective because we purchase the gift cards through our St. James' FUNDScrip program, which brings in at least a bit of money for St. James' on the side.

WILL YOU HELP US? **All through November and especially on ACW Sunday (Nov. 16),** we will be collecting money for our FUNDScrip gift card orders for November and December. Simply note that your money is for the **"St. James' ACW Christmas Project"** and it will get to us - on a Sunday or through the Church Office, Tuesday through Thursday. Any amount will help. THANKS!

Mae Cox

*"As a Christian, my calling is clear. In this life I don't get to play God,
I get to imitate Jesus"
John Pavlovitz*

WEDNESDAY ADVENT MUSIC



When: every Wednesday in Advent, Dec.3, 10, & 17

Time 12.15 p.m. to 1.15 p.m.

Where: in St. James' Church

Join us for a relaxing hour of special performers,
beautiful Christmas music and Carol singing

Served up with Hot Apple Cider

Bring a bag lunch if you wish.

Your spirits will be uplifted !!

Dec. 3 - Alex Teske, soprano
Celtic Harpist and pianist Susan Smith

Dec. 10 - Rebecca Campbell, soprano and Mary
Jayne VanPypen, soprano
Nancy Harris, storyteller
Pianist - Blair Bailey

Dec. 17 - Alan and Sophie Cooper, eclectic musicians

CHRISTMAS PROJECT



**You Are Invited
To Our Sunday Services**

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 23rd 10 a.m.
Reign of Christ
Dedication of the Albert Greer
Memorial Windows
Alexandra Teske, soloist
The St. James' Choir

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 30th - 10 a.m.
First of Advent
Alex Andrews, violinist
Angela Lewis, soloist
The St. James' Choir

SUNDAY DECEMBER 7th - 10 a.m.
Second of Advent
A Service of Lessons and Carols
Marta Solek, cellist
The St. James' Choir

SUNDAY DECEMBER 14th - 10 a.m.
Third of Advent
Yuletide Brass Quintet
The St. James' Choir

SUNDAY DECEMBER 21st - 10 a.m.
Fourth of Advent
Faith King, flute
The St. James' Choir

Please join us for our
8 a.m. Service
Eucharist is offered
at both Services
each Sunday

**Christmas Eve & Christmas Day
Services**

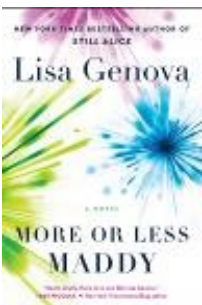
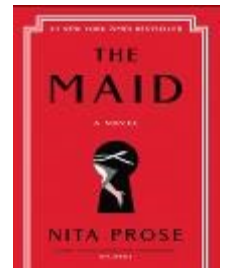
Christmas Eve
4:00 p.m. Family Service
with St. David's Anglican-Lutheran

Traditional Christmas Eve
7:30 p.m. Carol Singing
8:00 p.m. Eucharist

Christmas Day
9:00 a.m. Eucharist

ST. JAMES' BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

The St. James' Book Discussion Group will be meeting on December 8th in the Church Parlour at 10 a.m. We will be discussing 'The Maid', the debut novel of the Canadian author Nita Prose and the first in a series. In Prose's novel, the main character becomes the chief suspect in a murder and finds herself in the position of having to clear her name. Prose provides a look at the ways that we judge others, as well as discovering the assumptions of friendship. Please feel free to come and join our group - even if you haven't read this book - because there's lots to talk and think about while we share thoughts and opinions, along with fellowship and a cup of coffee.



Please note that the following St. James' Book Discussion Group starts the year off on January 12th with the novel 'More or Less Maddy' by Lisa Genova. The author explores the onset and evolution of bipolar disorder, looking at how the main character learns to navigate and manage her disease. We will be meeting at 10 a.m. in the Church Parlour, so please feel free to join us for an hour and simply choose to just listen, or comment with your thoughts while you enjoy a cup of coffee.

Linda Davidson



Volunteers needed please!
To serve coffee and clean up.
Sign up sheet on board outside kitchen.
Thank You!

ANGLICAN

Spiritual
Learning

CHURCH

Compassion
Worship

WOMEN

Service
Fellowship

After having a successful High Tea in September, the ACW was happy to be able to give \$2,500 to the church in November.

Some of our members attended a meeting at St. Athanasius, on October 25th. 13 people were in attendance representing ACW groups from churches in our area. Discussions were around working together for events and hosting an event together with all 8 of the community of churches in the future. Another meeting is set for March 7th, 2026.

We celebrated ACW Sunday on November 16th and were blessed to have Rev. Samuel's wife Opeoluwa Fayomi speak at the 10 a.m. service. Ope spoke about her experiences in Nigeria and moving to Canada, and about answering God's call even when it isn't part of your plan. An honorarium was made to SAFIF, which is a non-profit organization based in Nigeria focused on empowering vulnerable groups. Cake and coffee were served after the service.

The Christmas project is well underway; we will be supporting 80 people, 47 of whom are children, this year. Please consider donating to support the purchase of gift cards for these families.

St. Nick's Day is approaching on Dec 6th, with a visit from St. Nicholas himself. We would appreciate any volunteers to be elves. It is such a delight to assist the children as they shop for their loved ones and see them enjoy the gift of giving this season.

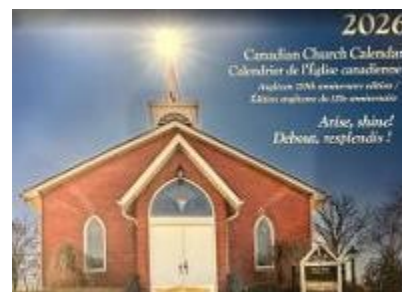
ACW Executive



A.C.W. SUNDAY



2026 Canadian Church Calendars
are available at the church office or following the service.
Cost is \$8.00



the cellar singers
 Michael Pardy, Artistic Director

CHRISTMAS FANTASIA

Fantasia on Christmas Carols
 R. Vaughan Williams

Messe de Minuit pour Noël
 M. Charpentier

Saturday, December 20, 2025 4:00 pm
 St. James' Anglican Church
 58 Peter St N, Orillia, ON

Tickets: \$30 / \$15 under 30
www.thecellarsingers.com

Hey Kids (12 years & under)
Saturday, December 6 10 AM to Noon

St. Nick's Children's Shopping Day

- An "elf" will help you - All items are \$3.00 or less -

Bring your adults for coffee in the church and
Mini-Bazaar & Bake Sale in the parlour

to
St. James' Anglican Church
 58 Peter St., N., Orillia
 705-325-2742 <http://www.stjamesorillia.com>

FOOD BANK SUNDAY

First Sunday of every month

Our Green Bags are located in the narthex for your use. Fill them with any item listed here. They will be delivered to The Sharing Place Food Bank.

Thank you!!

TOP NEEDED ITEMS

- Canned Soup
- Weg / Chicken Noodle / Noodles / Tomato
- Canned Vegetables
- Corn / Beans / Beans / Tomatoes
- Peanut Butter
- Canned Meat and Fish
- Pull Tab Canned Goods
- Rice
- Sugar
- Flour
- Tea Bags
- Instant and Ground Coffee
- Whole Grain, Low-Sugar Cereal
- Cooking Oils
- Broth / Bouillon Cubes
- Toilet Paper

FündScrip

Where Shopping is Fundraising!

A Great Way to Support St. James' While Giving to Others!

WHAT: Gift card program that gives a percentage to our Church

WHO: Most major retailers and more (gas, groceries, entertainment, etc.)

WHERE: Across Canada

WHEN: Right now! Great way to budget for household shopping

WHY: To support St. James' Church

HOW: Pick up Order Forms by calling the church office.
 Place order the **FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH**.
 Pick up gift cards the following Sunday

ST. JAMES' LOONIE LUNCH

Every Wednesday
 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon

Hot Soup,
 Donuts or Muffins,
 Fresh Rolls,
 A Frozen Dinner To Go.

A Free will donation of a Loonie or more is greatly appreciated

FREE SUNDAY COMMUNITY BREAKFAST



ALL ARE WELCOME

*Every Sunday
 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.
 in St. James' Auditorium*

PENNYWISE THRIFT SHOP

St James' Pennywise Thrift Shop has entered the 21st century with our newly purchased electronic cash register. We have officially retired our beloved cash box. This new cash register will be a great time saver and provides a much-needed total sales by department.



WEEKLY ACTIVITIES and WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday December 7, 14, 21

8 a.m. Holy Eucharist

10 a.m. Holy Eucharist

8:30 – 9:30 a.m. Community Breakfast

Tuesday December 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

12 noon Centering Prayer

12 - 3 p.m. Pennywise Shop

(Closed Dec. 21 to Jan 7)

Wednesday December 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

10: 30 a.m. to 12 noon Loonie Lunch

11 a.m. Holy Eucharist

12 - 3 p.m. Pennywise Shop

(Closed Dec. 21 to Jan 7)

Thursday December 25

8:00 - 9:00 a.m. Community Breakfast

9 a.m. Christmas Day Eucharist

Thursday December 4, 11, 18,

12 - 3 p.m. Pennywise Shop

7 p.m. Choir Practice

Sunday December 28

Morning Prayer



CHURCH FUNNIES



- The Lord moves in mysterious ways but you don't have to. Please use your blinker.
- The Inventor of the wind chill factor died recently. He was 82, but he felt like he was 64.
- I'm going to start collecting highlighters. Mark my words!
- So, I got on my bathroom scale this morning and let me tell you, the full armor of God is heavy! Hallelujah!
- Moses was the first man to download files from the cloud using a tablet.
- How many Episcopalians does it take to change a light bulb? Ten - one to actually change it, and nine to talk about how much they liked the old one.

Tuesday December 2

6:30 p.m. A.C.W. meeting

Wednesday December 3

12: 15 - 1:15 pm. Christmas Carol Sing

Saturday December 6

10 a.m. to 12 p.m. St. Nick's Children

Shopping Day & A.C.W. Bake & Craft Sale

Sunday December 7

8 & 10 a.m. 2nd Sunday of Advent

(Lessons and Carols at 10 a.m.)

Food Bank Sunday

FundScrip Sunday

Monday December 8

10 a.m. - Book Discussion

Wednesday December 10

12 :15 - 1:15 pm. Christmas Carol Sing

Thursday December 11

6 p.m. Worship Committee Mtg

Sunday December 14

8 & 10 a.m. 3rd Sunday of Advent

Tuesday December 16

2 p.m. Pastoral Care Mtg.

Wednesday December 17

12 :15 - 1:15 p.m. Christmas Carol Sing

Sunday December 21

8 & 10 a.m. 4th Sunday of Advent

Wednesday December 24

4 p.m. St. David's Christmas Eve Service

7:30 p.m. Carol Sing

8 p.m. St. James' Christmas Eve Service

Thursday December 25

9 a.m. Christmas Day Eucharist

Your Ministry Council

Anyone interested in reading the current Ministry Council minutes may contact the Church office for a copy. A copy is also posted on the Bulletin Board in the Hall.

Are you ill? In the Hospital? Now in a nursing home?

If you or someone you know from our congregation is ill, in the hospital or has moved to a nursing home, please let us know by calling the church office. **We have no other way of knowing**, as the hospital and nursing homes are no longer permitted to give this information out due to the Privacy Act.

Hospital Pastoral Care

Beth Morum is a Pastoral Care Visitor for OSMH now as well as Mae Cox. If you know anyone from our Parish Family who is in Soldiers, please notify the Church Office so a visit can be arranged.

Greeting Cards for Parishioners

Lay-Pastoral Team and ACW have had an important ministry of sending out greeting cards for birthdays, anniversaries, sympathy, or get-well cards. If there is a parishioner that you wish a greeting card to be sent to, please let us know! Contact the Church office to connect with Christine Blair for Birthday or Anniversary Cards or Lynda Harris for Thinking of You, Sympathy, Get Well or Congratulations.

Newsletter Sponsorship

Each month we ask for a sponsor to support the publication of our parish newsletter. Many of our family receive it via the internet but many still enjoy receiving the paper copy and/or they might not have access to a computer. The donation of \$100.00 each month pays to produce our internet copies, the paper copies and their mailing. Please contact the office at 705-325-2742 if you would like to sponsor a month. (There only 4 months left that are unsponsored.)

The Next Newsletter

If you wish to place a submission, announcement, prayer, pictures etc. into any future newsletter, please contact Nancy at nancynoakesmorrison@gmail.com. Please provide any submissions for the **February Newsletter** by **Wednesday January 21, 2026.** **(There is no January Newsletter.)**

FundScrip

The FundScrip deadline is **Sunday December 7**. Orders and cheques (payable to St James' Anglican Church) can be dropped off at the Church office. Pick up will be **Sunday December 14**. Thank you for your continued support of this beneficial project.



December Birthdays

J.A. Code; Sophie Cooper; Rosemarie Freeman;
 Leanora Mason; Doug Nicholls; Julia Nicholls;
 Kristine Preston; Peter Schuepp; Robin Windrem;
 Rev. Carol Hardie; Nynka Greer; Anderson Charters

January Birthdays

Shirley Bromley; Wendy Caston; Karen Hart; Jenn Hill
 Vic Howarth; Jo Lavasseur; Ellie MacPhail;
 Sylvia Smith; Dan Newman

December Anniversaries

Doug & Julia Nicholls; Steve and Lori McClelland

IMPORTANT

Any cheques made out to the church must read as follows: **"St. James' Anglican Church"**

ST. JAMES' ANGLICAN CHURCH
 58 Peter St. North, Box 272, Orillia, Ontario
 L3V 6J6 705 - 325-2742
office@stjamesorillia.com
<http://www.stjamesorillia.com>

Rector: Archdeacon John Anderson
 Editors: The Communications Committee

