

March 6, 2024

56 Victoria St. E., Alliston L9R 1L5

Church Office: 705 435 6732

○ **Office Hours:** Mon. - Thurs.

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Closed 12:30-1:30 p.m.

E-mail: stjohns unitedchurch@bellnet.ca

Church Website: www.stjohnsalliston.ca



Minister: Rev. Sungmin Jung ex.202

E-mail: minister@stjohnsalliston.ca

Contact The St. John's Messenger :

Themessenger@stjohnsalliston.ca

Facebook: facebook.com/stjohnsucalliston/

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that we meet on Indigenous land, covered by Treaty 18. We thank the Petun, Anishinabek, and the Wendat, the most recent stewards of this place.



https://clipart-library.com/clipart/march-clipart-images_49.html #3990196

THIS WEEK IN ST. JOHN'S

Thursday March 7th, 2024

2:00 pm	Cribbage Group	Shilton Hall
4:30 pm	Children's Choir	Sanctuary
7:30 pm	Choir Practice	Sanctuary
7:30 pm	A.A.	Faith Hall

Sunday March 10th, 2024

10:30 am	Worship Service	Sanctuary
----------	-----------------	-----------

Monday March 11th, 2024

2:00 pm	Book Club	Dermott Room
---------	-----------	--------------

Tuesday March 12th, 2024

7:00 pm	N.A.	Dermott Room
7:30 pm	A. A.	Faith Hall

Wednesday March 13th, 2024

1:30 pm	Library Committee	Library
---------	-------------------	---------

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

A new broom sweeps clean, but the old brush knows the corners.

- Irish Proverb

Daylight Savings Time
2:00 a.m. Sunday, March 10th



Time to
Spring Ahead

<https://clipart-library.com/clipart/1204523.htm>
#2430266



Congratulations to Liz and Brian
who are celebrating their 60th Anniversary
on Thursday, March 7th.



<https://clipart-library.com/clipart/flower-clip-art-5.htm> #2957304

March 3 Lent 3 - Armageddon (I) 2024

PRELUDE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TERRITORY

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

In times of struggle, **Jesus Christ is the Light of the World.**

In times of wonder, **Jesus Christ is the Light of the World.**

In times of anxious anticipation, **Jesus Christ is the Light of the World.**

In this time and place, here and now, and in all the days of our lives,

Jesus Christ is the Light of the World.

(The Christ Candle is lit.)

As we continue to journey toward the cross, let the light of this Christ candle remind us of who we are and whose we are:

struggling, wondering, and anxiously anticipating people of the Way.

- *Jessica Knoyle, Ottawa, Ont*

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS & SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST QUIET MUSICAL REFLECTION

CALL TO WORSHIP

Come away and be still. **We come to worship God.**

Come find rest for your weariness. **We come to worship God.**

Come with your joy and sorrow. **We come to worship God.**

In this time, in this place, God waits for us! **Let us worship together!**

Wetaskiwin Writers, Grace Lutheran Church and First U.C., Wetaskiwin, Alta.

OPENING PRAYER

In our lives and in the world, we bear too much mourning.

We seek your presence, O God, to make our hearts new and sustain us in your love.

With setbacks and crushed expectations, we have known too much crying.

We crave your comfort, O God, to make our dreams new and refresh us in your love.

Despite our striving, our hoping, and even our praying, we feel too much pain.

We need your healing, O God, to make our souls new and strengthen us in your love.

Be with us, O God, and make us your people.

Wipe away our tears and renew us in your love, through our worship and in our lives. Amen.

- *Gill Le Fevre, Walton Memorial U.C., Oakville, Ont*

****HYMN VU 409 Morning Has Broken**

LENTEN TENEBRAE: Praying our confession with Psalm 19

Four candles are lit before the service.

“The precept of our God give joy to the heart” (Psalm 19 Refrain 1, sung twice).

One: For the most part, we like lists. We like to know what is expected of us; we like to know when our job is done. And we really like to know what our reward will be at the end of it all. And we generally do a pretty good job with tasks placed before us. And yet, as glorious as this world and the people who love upon it are, we make mistakes.

Sometimes they are small mistakes; sometimes they are really big ones. Either way, we are called to lay these sins before our God in confession. Let us pray:

Two: God of the rainbow, God of the Stars, your hand is upon all creation. Your fingerprint is found upon us all. Our hearts rejoice when we worship you, and our souls are revived when we study your laws. And yet we know the many times we fall short of your hopes for us. We find your laws hard to follow, or difficult to remember, or terribly inconvenient. Forgive us those times we fail to keep your commandments. Forgive us the faults we hide, those things we are ashamed of and consequently keep buried deep within ourselves. Free us from this weight and touch us with light and mercy.

Silent confession as third candle is extinguished.

One: You, God, are the rock upon which we stand firm. Your forgiveness is sweeter than drippings from the honeycomb. We give thanks this day for your ever-present love that is offered to us and the endless supply of mercy you shower upon us.

All: Amen.

Our Father... (singing)

SCRIPTURE READINGS: Matthew 24:32

"From the fig tree, learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. 33 So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. 34 Truly, I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place.

Rev. 16:16

And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Harmagedon.

ANTHEM The Lord is My Shepherd

REFLECTION

Are you anxious about the future or an impending end of the world?

The worldly events and circumstances since the conflict between Israel and Hamas comprise a range of eschatological beliefs that cataclysmic or transformative events will occur sooner rather than later.

Have you ever worried about the doomsday of the world?

Just a week before his presidential election campaign in 1980, Ronald Reagan told a reporter, "We may be the generation that sees Armageddon."

At that time, Reagan's Secretary of Defense, Weinberger, told students at Harvard University: "I have read the book of Revelation, and yes, I believe the world is going to end . . . And every day, I think that time is running out."

I was in the middle school in 1980 and I was told many times from the pulpits that doomsday was coming sooner, not later. And that if it happened, a third of the world's population would die.

There was a rumor in South Korea that more than a hundred nuclear weapons from US military bases in South Korea headed for the Soviet Union, China, and North Korea. So, if somebody hits the button, it will be the beginning of doomsday.

I was too young to draw the whole picture of the world at that time but I was wise enough to catch a political tension between South and North Korea and between the Democratic World and the Communist World.

After the Soviet Union's collapse, the US alone has been a mighty superpower over the world. Since the two wars now, however, the power game has been shifted, the idea of democracy has been decaying, and the world seems to head back to the tension of the Cold Era.

As a boy living in South Korea, I found the impending disaster realistic. I still remember what I was most concerned about. First of all, I did not expect to live this far. I thought I might die before 20 or, at best, 30 without meeting a true lover.

All I did at that time was go to church diligently and believe in Jesus as the Savior of the world. I read and believed in the Bible with no doubt or questions. My only hope was to be taken to heaven with all Christian believers before the disaster hit the world while the rest were left behind to endure the tribulation as portrayed in the movie 'Left Behind,' released in 2000.

What about you?

Are you addicted to the scenarios of the end of the world by nuclear weapons or by a collision with a passing asteroid?

I do not worry about the collision with an asteroid because NASA will send Bruce Willis and his friends to stop it. (See the movie 'Armageddon' released in 1998.)

A recent report shows that four out of ten Americans believe that the Earth will be destroyed by fire (Nuclear Weapons).

Who created the Earth, God or Man? God

Who created nuclear weapons, God or Man? Man

Who has been destroying the planet Earth, God or Man? Man

Right now, ten countries possess nuclear weapons:

USA, Great Britain, France, Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, Iran and North Korea.

Which country do you think is the most likely to use nuclear weapons on the entire world?

Which country dropped Atomic Bombs to the people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, in 1945?

The Pentagon has always prepared for the last war scenario.

Who is or what group stands behind the apocalyptic scenario?

Is it God? I would say, "No!"

Christian Fundamentalists are always apocalyptic.

For them, everything the Bible says is literally true and historical, has happened, and will happen as described.

They have supported the state of Israel unconditionally because this glorious day can't come until the Jews re-established in the Old Testament Kingdom of David.

Then, a pleasant plain outside Jerusalem called Armageddon will become the site of the last great battle between good and evil, two-thirds of Israelis will be killed, and Jesus will come again to wrap things up.

Their rationale is based on Matthew 24:32-33.

"From the fig tree, learn its lesson: As soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates.

Christian Fundamentalists interpret this section of the Bible as follows:

The fig tree is the symbol of Israel.

In 1948, the New Israel was established, its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, which is a sign that summer is near, meaning Jesus is near at the very gates, to come again to the Earth to make a final judgment.

A lot of Christians around the world follow them.

For they give them a clear and firm message with absolute certainty In this uncertain world.

I want to protect us from them with the Bible:

"Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind.

And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit." Matthew 15:14
NRSV

"all born-again Christians will be lifted off planet Earth at the time, which is called "Rapture."

The left behind would be tormented on this radioactive planet Earth for eternity."

Christian Fundamentalists and their politicians have less concern about climate change or preventing global warming.

For they believe it is going to get a lot hotter than even the environmentalists can imagine.

Christianity, in general, has been preaching that "The End is near." for more than two thousand years.

Christian Fundamentalists have always emphasized it and some set the date to allure their flock.

But it still has not taken place.

Ronald Reagan passed away without seeing doomsday.

A boy who was worried about doomsday so much has been married for 33 years and even has a married daughter.

In the gospel, Jesus repeatedly assures his disciples that the end of the world will come in their lifetime:

34 Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place.

But here we are two thousand years later and none of the things that Jesus predicted have happened literally.

If you read the Bible literally, you make your Lord Jesus a liar and wrong predictor.

To regard the end of the world as God's will is, I believe, Anti-Christ because God so loved the world, He sent His Son to save and not destroy it. Jesus, Son of God, came to bring God's Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. and we are invited to take part in His Ministry. That is the core message of the Lord's Prayer.

I believe you are familiar with these Bible verses: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

**For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born and a time to die;....
a time to kill and a time to heal;....
a time to love and a time to hate;
a time for war and a time for peace.**

It is all about time.

When do people of God hate each other instead of loving each other and make for war instead of making for peace?

When people ignore God...

When people love themselves most instead of loving neighbors...

When there is a humongous inequality between the rich and the poor...

There is no other option but to destroy themselves, including every human achievement. We can call it Armageddon.

And then, there is a time for people to repent and return to God, and there is a time for peace.

What is a faithful follower's attitude toward the end of the world?

I recommend the words of Spinoza, a philosopher in the Netherlands in the 17th century:

**Even if I knew that tomorrow, the world would go to pieces,
I would still plant an apple tree.
Amen.**

** Hymn VU # 700 God of Freedom, God of Justice

OFFERING INVITATION

In praise and thanksgiving to our God, in response to Christ's love shown on the cross,

and as a sign of our faithfulness, let us offer our gifts to the work of God's church here on earth.

Let us join together in our morning offering.

- *Frances Flook, Emo/Devlin P.C., Emo, Ont.*

****OFFERTORY HYMN** VU MV # 97 Listen, God Is Calling

Offering Dedication

"Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain, but if it dies it bears much fruit" (John 12:25).

O Jesus, work in us so that we might live holy lives, bearing fruit for your coming kingdom.

May we hold loosely to our wealth and to our mortal lives upon the earth.

Through our offering this day, we seek to serve you and follow you.

May it be so, as we pray in your name. Amen.

- *Taylor Croissant, Southminster U.C., Lethbridge, Alta.*

****CLOSING HYMN** VU # 581 When We Are Living

****COMMISSIONING**

Go in peace.

And on your journey, may you have the boldness to come to Jesus just as you are, ready to be transformed into followers led by the Holy Spirit who journey through this world in peace, in faith, and in love.

May the grace of Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you now and evermore.

Amen.

- *Lori Van Santvoort-Jansekovich, Broadway U.C., Thunder Bay, Ont.*

****BLESSING:** Irish Blessing

POSTLUDE

CHURCH NOTES

UPCOMING SERVICES

Sunday, March 24th: Palm Sunday – Communion at the Pews

Messy Church: 4:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Friday, March 29th: Good Friday – 11:00 a.m. at St. John's

Sunday, March 31st: Easter Sunday; Transfers of Membership

Sunday, April 7th: Bright Sunday (aka Holy Humour Sunday)

PLEASE NOTE:

A new e-mail account for The Messenger has been set up. If you have any items, questions or comments relating to our newsletter, please send them to:

Themessenger@stjohnsalliston.ca The former address is no longer in use. Thank you.

LOOKING AHEAD

Lunch after church on March 17th. Appreciations to Janet, Donna and Brenda who have volunteered to make soup for our fellowship time lunch. Free will offering



Since it is St. Patrick's Day, **let's wear something green** if you have it.

<https://clipart-library.com/clipart/AibEBLbi4.htm> #2120403

Friday, March 22nd, 2024 at Alliston Pentecostal Church, 7810 ON-89 West at 2:00pm
. . . a service for **Prayers of the People of the World**. (Formerly, World Day of Prayer)

Invitation to Messy Church – Sunday, March 24, 4:30 – 7:00 pm.

Theme: "A New Life in Jesus (Easter)".

Men's Breakfast – March 28th: coffee on for 8:15 a.m. with breakfast at 9:00 a.m.
Speaker: Andy Owens – "Supporting Paddlers with disabilities"

Memorial Library Books: Review for March

If not already signed out, the following donated books in 2024 are on the shelves in Shilton Hall for you to take home and read – don't forget to bring the book back! :

"Alliston On The Boyne, The Legacy of a Mill Town" by Carolyn Knowles

"All Signs Point to Paris" by Natasha Sizlo

"At the Cottage" by Charles Gordon

"Fool Me Once" by Harlan Coben

"My Darling Winston" by Winston Churchill and Jennie Jerome

"Merle's Door: Lessons from a Free Thinking Dog" by Ted Karasote

"My Name is Barbara" by Barbara Streisand

"Pluck" by Donna Morrissey

"Still Life" by Louise Penny

"Study for Obedience" by Sarah Bernstein

"The President is Missing" by Bill Clinton and James Patterson

"The Road Years: A Memoir" by Rick Mercer

"The Underground Railroad" by Colson Whitehead

"The Red Cross Orphans" by Glynis Peters

"The Daughter's Tale" by Armando Lucas Correa

"The House I loved" by Tatiana de Rosnay

"The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughters" by Jean E. Pendziwol

"The Last Dress from Paris" by Jade Beer

"Time For Christmas, Chicken Soup for the Soul" by Amy Newmark

"Wherever Grace is Needed" by Elizabeth Bass

For a book synopsis, google the book name and the name of the author. - *Ann Price*