



The St. John's Messenger

Celebrate Christ, Proclaim His Gospel, Live His Love

July 30th, 2025

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: ChurchAdmin@stjohnsalliston.ca



Minister: Rev. Sungmin Jung ex.202

E-mail: minister@stjohnsalliston.ca

Church Website: www.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.

Thursday July 31st, 2025.

2:00 pm Cribbage Group Dermott Room

7:30 pm A. A. Faith Hall

Sunday August 3rd, 2025.

10:00 am Joint Worship at Trinity

Centennial U.C. Rosemont

Monday August 4th, 2025.

Office Closed

Tuesday August 5th, 2025.

7:00 pm Private Use Shilton Hall

7:00 pm N. A. Dermott Room

Wednesday August 6th, 2025.

Office Closed

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Rev Sungmin will be on vacation for the month of August. During this time, he will be attending General Council in Calgary, where he is one of five Nominees for the position of Moderator of the United Church of Canada.

If he is elected, he will take on the responsibilities of the Moderator, immediately following his installation, which is the final act of the in-person General Council meeting.

AUGUST REMINDERS: We will be travelling to Trinity Centennial U.C. in Rosemont to continue our joint summer worship. Services will be at 10:00 a.m.

Offerings designated for St. John's will be collected and returned to SJUC each week in order for your givings to be recorded as usual.

We will return to St. John's for 10:30 worship on Sunday, September 7th.

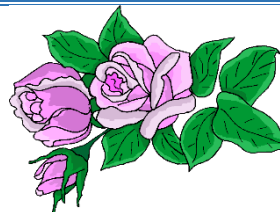
Happy Birthday and Best Wishes

to

Ellen V

who celebrates her birthday

Sunday, August 3rd



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Joint Summer Service 2025 * July 27

Prelude

Greeting: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Response: **And also with you.**

Acknowledging the Territory

Lighting the Christ Candle and Peace Candle

Welcome/Announcement & Introit MV # 18 Lord, Prepare Me to be a Sanctuary

Call to Worship

Welcome to this summertime place of gathering and of witness.

We come to worship God as revealed in the risen Christ.

Open your hearts to the movement of the Spirit within.

We come to live our faith in a world of need and of opportunity.

Widen your understanding of the movement of God within and without.

We come to pray in mind, in body, in spirit, and in action.

- *Gord Dunbar, Kincardine P.C., Kincardine, Ont.*

Gathering Hymn: MV 79 "Spirit, Open My Heart"

Prayer of the Day

God who seeks justice and abundance for all, we yearn for but have not lived up to your vision of the world.

Some live in abundance, while many remain in poverty.

Some are treated with dignity and respect, while others are rejected.

God of passion and compassion, do not let us be comfortable with the way things are.

(a time of quiet reflection)

Help us be part of your work of feeding, empowering, and transforming our communities and our world. Amen.

- *Beth W Johnston, Bridging Waters P.C., Nipawin, Sask.*

Singing VU 400 Lord, Listen to your children Praying (B.C.D.& E)

Prayer of Illumination: (all) inspired by Psalm 14

We come seeking, O God. We seek wisdom. We seek knowledge. We seek what will restore our spirits and provide refuge from the chaos of the world. Bless to us your word, this day, and guide us to the wisdom we need. Amen.

Scripture: [Exodus 16:31-36]

The House of Israel called it manna. It was like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. 32 Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Let an omer of it be kept throughout your generations, in order that they may see the food with which I fed you in the wilderness when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.'" 33 And Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar, and put an omer of manna in it, and place it before the LORD, to be kept throughout your generations." 34 As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before the covenant for safekeeping. 35 The Israelites ate manna for forty years until they came to a habitable land; they ate manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan. 36 An omer is a tenth of an ephah. Herein is Wisdom.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon 18 Manna – a symbol of divine nature

Are you familiar with the story of manna in Exodus 16? Jesus mentions it in the Gospel of John, too.

Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written,
'He gave them bread from heaven to eat. [John 6:31]

According to Exodus 16, the Israelites ate manna for forty years in the wilderness until they came to the border of the land of Canaan. Are you still reading it literally that the manna fell from the sky every day to feed the people of Israel while they wandered in the wilderness for forty years? I heard the story through Sunday School when I was young and believed it as I was told. Why not? God can do anything. It's a miracle. "Nothing is impossible with God". That is what the angel Gabriel told the virgin Mary about her pregnancy with the Child of God in Luke. Stay away from me, Satan! The more one takes the Bible literally, the stronger one's insistence on this matter. What about you?

When I was young, physically and spiritually, I was excited to listen to the stories of the Bible, just as I am now. I had no doubt, question, or challenge against my Sunday school teachers, preachers, pastors, or church authority! Today, church authority in the Western world seems to be gone. Christianity has lost its spiritual authority in society, though its forms remain since scientific knowledge became normal. The church icons are used with mockery and caricature. Trust between the church and the people seems to be broken. People have left the church and seldom come back. Spiritual emptiness seems to be everywhere.

If you go to the main street in town, meet younger people, and preach that God sent bread from heaven to eat for two million Israelites in the wilderness for forty years, how many are excited to believe it as good news? Some intelligent students might respond like this: ask for your God to send the same bread to those who are starving to death today in the third world! If you go to a big city downtown like Toronto, Vancouver, or New York City, you have no problem encountering homeless street people who lost jobs, families, and houses and who look for daily food and shelter. Stealing, theft, and even looting are everyday daily news today. Real help comes through when natural persons like the Good Samaritan take real bread to them, not from heaven but from their belongings. Yes, many downtown churches and hands participate in such missions and ministries.

Do you recognize the gap between the miracles described in the Bible and the miracles that we perform today, the gap between what we believe and what we live? Is God no longer functional? Does God no longer provide manna from heaven to eat for modern hungry people who live in the wilderness? It is not good enough for the church to give physical people physical manna. The church has been missing an important mission to provide spiritual food for spiritual people.

The Bible is not a historical record. The only option I could imagine, if it is a historical record, is that God sent a UFO (unidentified Flying Object) over the wilderness of Sinai

around 4,000 years ago, dropping food hanging with parachutes for about two million people every day for forty years. Why two million people? The Bible says 600,000 was the number of people in the exodus from Egypt. Yes, right. But the number is counted only for men. Heaven cannot open to rain down food for people to eat; it is an empty space. If so, how can we read the Bible?

As Jesus mentions in John, manna, the bread from heaven, the bread from God, symbolizes divine nature in the physical human body. Manna is derived from the Sanskrit "Manas," the principle of intelligence, which was the gift of God to MAN (all humanity). MAN must eat Manna – divine intelligent principle for this journey of life in the wilderness for forty years.

The word MAN is composed of A (alpha—beginning of divine principle) between two rivers, M and N, the Red Sea and the Jordan River. When you cross the Red Sea, the Blood Sea, Alpha, your spiritual life begins to be thrown into the body in the dark. As the physical body needs daily bread, the spiritual body needs to be fed with daily manna. In the Lord's Prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," is the prayer for both. So, in the story of Exodus, manna falls at night. When the dew fell on the camp in the night, the manna would fall with it. [Numbers 11:9]

Parents repeatedly teach their children and grandchildren the principles of life until they grasp them. If not, children act like animals. Brothers and sisters are mean to each other, fight, and even kill each other. They claim that everything is theirs. Why? Because we were born spiritually poor and hungry in the dark. Read this Bible verse: He humbled you by letting you hunger, then by feeding you with manna, with which neither you nor your ancestors were acquainted, in order to make you understand that one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. [Deut. 8:3]

Without manna, the divine principle of intelligence, humans, and animals have no big difference. The Hebrew slaves must be born again with manna to become the children of God through the dark of the wilderness for forty years. I want to repeat the meaning of the number forty in the Bible. It represents the whole life on earth. Therefore, the Israelites, the children of God, consider education to be the priority of their parental duty. Read another Bible verse in Nehemiah: You gave your good spirit to instruct them, did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and gave them water for their thirst (9:20).

The whole life of Jesus in the gospel represents the divine manna. He says, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty (John 6:35).

Pay attention to Psalm and Revelation:

Yet he commanded the skies above and opened the doors of heaven;
24 he rained down on them manna to eat and gave them the grain of heaven. (Psalm 78:23-24)

Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To everyone who conquers, I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give a white stone, and on

the white stone is written a new name that no one knows except the one who receives it. (Revelation 2:17)

The forty years of spiritual life in the wilderness between two rivers, between birth and death, need manna—divine principle. What if we pass over the second river? Read Joshua: On the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. 12 The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year. [5:11-12]

It is a glimpse of life after this life. The Israelites, those who conquer evil with good and pass over the river of death, eat the crops of the Promised Land. The church's mission is clear: Feed the hungry with the hidden manna until the day.

Solo # VU664 What a Friend we have in Jesus by Sungmin with Guitar

Invitation

Offering Hymn MV 191 What can I do?

Offering Prayer (all)

Loving God, we offer these gifts with open hands and open hearts, trusting that your love will transform them into acts of compassion, justice, and mercy, through the power of the Holy Spirit. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

- Sandra Jenkinson, Sundridge P.C. and Trout Creek P.C., Sundridge, Ont.

Hymn: VU# 651 Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

Commissioning & Benediction

Let us go out in love and service.

Let us go out ready to give all that we are and have as disciples of Jesus.

Let us go, committed to persistent love and service.

Let us go, knowing that God is with us. Amen.

- Beth W Johnston, Bridging Waters P.C., Nipawin, Sask

Postlude

*The service is adopted from Gathering and GatheringWorship.ca, The United Church of Canada

LOOKING AHEAD

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!! At least 10 people needed, children, teens and adults, for the St John's float in the Potato Festival Parade on Friday, August 8th. Interested volunteers can contact Andy.

COMING QUICKLY: The Annual Potato Pancake Breakfast is Saturday, August 9th. Booth set up is Thursday evening, August 7th at 6:30 p.m.

Still time to check the sign up sheets outside Shilton Hall!

Pancake Breakfast photos - We'd like to make a display of photos from the past 50 years of Pancake Breakfasts. If you have any photos you're willing to be included in our display,

contact Janice M, or leave a message at the church office. Please make sure you include the year (if known) along with your name and contact info on the back.

The 50th Anniversary of the Potato Pancake Breakfast

by John Morrison

St. John's United Church will be celebrating its 50th anniversary hosting the Potato Pancake Breakfast this year on August 9th, quite a milestone.

In the early days of hosting the breakfast, they held it at the corner of Victoria and Church streets, thinking that if they held it at the church, a block from the downtown, that nobody would come. Apparently they ran extension cords from the hydro office, which is now the Feehley Gastaldy Law office, over to a table to brew the coffee, and helpers ran the pancake batter from the church kitchen up to the grills to cook the pancakes.

We try to keep the ticket prices affordable so that parents with kids are able to enjoy the pancakes and have breakfast as a family. They also promoted that, if you showed up in your pyjamas, you could eat for free. The Breakfast was such a success that it was moved to its present location, to the east parking lot of the church.

The Alliston Potato Festival was cancelled for 2 years because of COVID but before cancelling the pancake breakfast, the profits helped with the cost of installing the elevator in the church and bought new pancake grills for cooking the pancakes.

Over the years we have supported many worthwhile charities as well as giving back to the church. Before COVID, we were serving 1200 to 1400 people. They were lined up around the block and down the street. We have given over \$19,700 to local charities as well as some world wide charities. Through our donations we have supported such organizations as the Loaves and Fishes Growing project, Famine Relief in the Horn of Africa, Habitat for Humanity, Stevenson Memorial Hospital Foundation, Matthews House, South Simcoe Learning Disability, Rotary Polio Eradications, S.H.I.F.T., Good Shepherd Food Bank, Canadian Mental Health Association, Krasmen Centre, Grandmothers Embrace, as well as many other worthy causes. The Breakfast has also helped support the church with its operating expenses.

As we look out over the many families enjoying the pancakes, talking to whomever is next to them, it gives a sense of a community spirit and makes supporting this event so special. It is a "community event".

Holding this event would not be possible without your support and the support of the volunteers who help every year.

This year there is a birthday bonus at the Pancake Breakfast - free pancakes are available to anyone born between August 8th to 11th 1975. You must show proof.

Hope to see you at the Breakfast.