

## St. John's Anglican Church, Ridgemount PARISH PROFILE

### LOCATION

St. John's Anglican Church, Ridgemount, is a lovely country church with an interesting history. Located outside of Stevensville, Town of Fort Erie, St. John's was established in 1840 by the rector, John Anderson, and the wardens of St. Paul's Anglican Church, Fort Erie.

St. John's is a well maintained historical church that provided services to the community and its members for over 170 years. The facility includes the church with a balcony, which holds a capacity of 120 people in total. A hall with a stage and kitchen facilities holds a capacity of 135 table settings and 200 chair settings. Both have updated wheelchair accessibility. (Level access is provided, but not automatic doors.) A well-groomed active cemetery is adjacent to the church and is maintained by the Cemetery Committee. It contains two significant memorials marking graves of a mother and daughter who survived the sinking of the Titanic. The United Empire Loyalists presented a plaque to St. John's Cemetery in May 2008 to honour those resting in peace here.

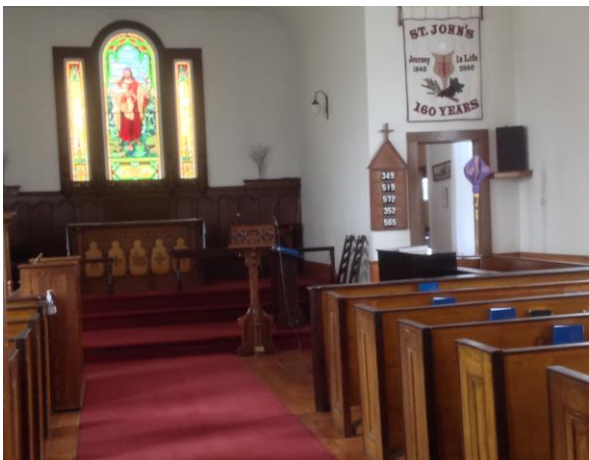


### MEMBERSHIP

The congregation consists primarily of seniors, 80 members, 31 identifiable givers, and the average Sunday attendance is about 19. There has been a decline in members due to our aging congregation which could be problematic in filling various roles.

### WORSHIP

Sunday service is held at 9:30 a.m. The liturgy used is Morning Prayer and Holy Eucharist from *The Book of Alternative Services*.



Since November, 2011, St. John's has entered into a covenant relationship with St. Paul's, the "mother church". The rector of St. Paul's has assumed pastoral care and liturgical oversight of St. John's. Monthly services consist of a lay-led Morning Prayer on the First Sunday of each month, and Morning Prayer on the third Sunday of each month, led by the Deacon of St. Paul's. On the second and fourth Sundays of each month, the rector officiates at services of Holy Eucharist. On the fifth Sunday of the month, the people of St. John's join for worship at the 10 a.m. service at St. Paul's, and share in a pot luck luncheon after the service.

A devoted group of parishioners are involved in Sunday services which include lay ministry, reading, intercessions, serving, altar guild and sidespeople, who are always ready to step in when needed. There is presently no need for Sunday School.

We do not have a choir but our organist is able to bring variety to the congregation by playing either the piano or the pump organ.

Special services include Memorial Sunday, World Day of Prayer – being held at St. John’s this year, Christmas Eve and Palm Sunday. St. John’s also joins with St. Paul’s for Christmas Day, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.



### **THE CORPORATION**

The Corporation consists of the rector, the Rector’s Warden, and the People’s Warden. Its purpose is to administer and control the operation of the Church. The Parish Council consists of the Corporation and elected and appointed members. Its purpose is to support and assist the Corporation.

### **PROGRAMS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

Adult Education and Bible Study: Diocesan leadership programs are attended by church leaders when available. Study groups, Lenten series are available at St. Paul’s for members of St. John’s.



Visitation: The rector and the deacon (from St. Paul’s) do pastoral visits for shut-ins and for emergency care when needed. Our People’s Warden assists with visitations for members when a need is identified and the visit can be done.

Mission and Outreach Programs: St. John’s currently supports a Foster Child. We participate in the PWRDF and collect for the food bank. In 2016, we accepted the challenge outlined in the Niagara Anglican and were successful in purchasing cows and goats for the Anglican ministry in other countries.

Social Activities: St. John’s congregation enjoys coffee hour once a month and a potluck with St. Paul’s whenever there is a fifth Sunday in the month. We have a church picnic/summer barbeque every August, and several well-attended church functions throughout the year. We are invited to participate in all church and social activities at St. Paul’s.



### **FINANCES**

St. John’s is debt free due to congregational financial support and fundraising. The various fundraising activities - Fall Fair, Strawberry Social, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper – are all well supported by the friends of St. John’s in the surrounding community and the proceeds add to the stability of our church budget.

A memorial maintenance fund is used for repairs and restorations to the church, church hall and cemetery. Some years ago, the rectory was sold and the interest income contributes to the rector’s housing allowance.

Our weekly offerings in 2016 totalled \$31,057.45. Our annual budget is based on the previous year's finances and expected expenses. Diocesan Mission and Ministry assessment is determined by the diocese and paid in full each year.

## **CONNECTIONS**

Since November 1, 2011, we have been in a covenant relationship with St. Paul's, Fort Erie. This is up for renewal later this year and is reviewed annually. The rector of St. Paul's assumes pastoral and liturgical responsibility for St. John's, and St. John's contributes annually to St. Paul's a mutually agreed amount. The Parish Administrator of St. Paul's assists St. John's in office and fundraising needs.

Other ecumenical involvement includes World Day of Prayer, Lenten Luncheon services, Lenten Study series and the Old Fort Erie service and picnic with five other churches. St. John's also supports Brock Regional Council, Brock Clericus and Diocesan Synod Council.

## **SITUATION ANALYSIS**

St. John's faces many of the same struggles of St. Paul's and indeed many other churches in the area of Fort Erie, namely a declining local economy and an aging demographic. Young families move away in search of employment and this part of Niagara has become a retirement community. Although there are fewer younger members to help shoulder the work of parish life, there are more young seniors moving into the area who have a tradition of participating in church life and worship. There is potential to attract new members in the retirement communities.

There is a current trend for housing development and the housing market is drawing buyers to the Fort Erie area. There is the hope that this will bring new and younger people and young seniors to this area. The development of a racetrack near the church has not moved forward as of yet.

Nevertheless, St. John's maintains a positive spirit of inclusivity and hospitality to all who enter the doors for worship and fellowship. We maintain our membership by providing meaningful worship and community activities that enhance the historical setting of the church.

A future connection to look into – a possibility of a website – a parish profile for ongoing community outreach.

A new rector would be expected to: have direct pastoral interaction with the members of the congregation and the wider community; offer visionary, strategic leadership of the parish, and provide spiritual inspiration through sermons.

The parish of St. John's has been richly blessed and encouraged in the past years by the covenant relationship with St. Paul's, and is eager to continue that association in the coming years, working with the clergy and people of St. Paul's to bring community together to further existing friendships and to develop new ones. Our mission is to continue to provide service and outreach to the surrounding community and its members.

April 3, 2017

