

Mar-Apr  
2023

St John's  
United Reformed Church

# Record

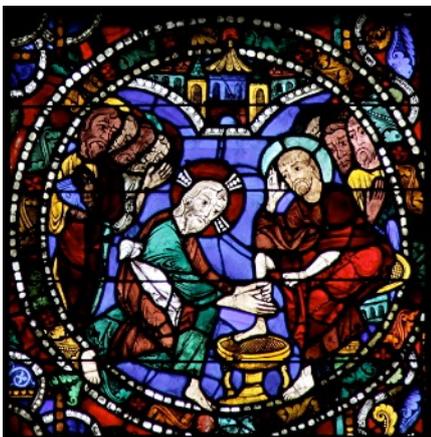
Somerset & Mowbray Roads, New Barnet, Herts., EN5 1RH

## The common things of life

"Happiness is to find our joy in the common things of life,  
for so will youth abide in our hearts till the end of our days."

*~Eric Liddell, Christian missionary and Olympic champion*

IF YOU WERE TO ASK an ordinary churchgoer who they considered to be the people serving the church they would most likely name the more prominent ones like the minister and the elders. But there is a lot going on behind the scenes, and we often forget that there are others who also serve the local church. Just take a moment to think of what contribution other members are making to the church in the Sunday service, midweek meetings and in the general running and maintenance of our church buildings.



Our church community relies heavily on reliable and trustworthy volunteers - Sunday by Sunday, week by week. They aren't doing it for fame and glory but in service to the Lord and to our Christian family.

There is a verse in the hymn by Horatio Bonar, 'Fill thou my life, O Lord my God in every part with praise' which goes:

*Praise in the common things of life,  
Its goings out and in;  
Praise in each duty and each deed,  
However small and mean.*

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### Trusting God by:

Walking the way of Jesus  
Putting faith into practice  
Valuing all people equally

## Contacts

**Website:** [www.stjohnsnewbarnet.org.uk](http://www.stjohnsnewbarnet.org.uk)

**Record Editors:** Richard & Janet Harvey, Email: [churchrecord2023@gmail.com](mailto:churchrecord2023@gmail.com)

**Church Secretary:** Alison Bond, Tel: 020 8440 1941 Email: [aegbond@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:aegbond@hotmail.co.uk)

**Church Administrator:** Alison Cousins, Tel: 07816 115 817 Email: [info.stjohnsurc@gmail.com](mailto:info.stjohnsurc@gmail.com)

Bonar is saying that in even the most menial and everyday task we are giving praise to God. The hymn's theme is that all of life is giving praise and glory to God. Lip service is not enough; we must live our Christianity in every aspect of our everyday lives - at home, at work and with our church family.

In a few weeks time we will remember, during Holy Week, how Christ took a bowl of water and a towel, knelt down and washed his disciples' feet. An act that was essential after walking through the dusty streets of Palestine, but one with huge significance for the disciples and for us. God, in Christ, became the servant. Jesus showed us how to serve.



How can we serve?

*"Wherever you turn, you can find someone who needs you.  
Even if it is a little thing, do something for which there is no pay but the privilege of doing it.  
Remember, you don't live in the world all of your own."*

*~Albert Schweitzer, physician, organist and Nobel prize winner*

There are many opportunities to serve at St John's. Here are a few questions you may ask yourself.



What are your gifts or talents? What do you enjoy doing?  
If you could do anything for your church, what would it be?  
How might you use your gifts in our church?

In this issue of Church Record there are some articles about various activities undertaken by volunteers in the church: Mainly Music, Incredible Edible Community Garden, Together in Barnet Winter Shelter. There is also a questionnaire, 'Opportunities to Serve' on page 7. Please give it some prayerful consideration and think how you may be able to help. Copies of the questionnaire will be available at church so that you do not have to print out the page (if you have received this copy online) or cut it up (if you have a printed copy).

Editors



# HOLY WEEK

- Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 11:00am **Palm Sunday**
- Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April 8:00pm **Maundy Thursday**  
at Barnet URC, Wood Street
- Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2:00pm **Good Friday**  
a service of readings, images and music led by the Elders
- Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> April 11:00am **Easter Day**  
Worship with the Lord's Supper

# St John's Fellowship

United Reformed Church

## Trussell Trust & Chipping Barnet Food Bank

**Victoria Miller - 18<sup>th</sup> January**

THE TRUSSELL TRUST supports 1,200 food bank centres across UK. Carol and Paddy Henderson founded Trussell Trust in 1997 based on a legacy left by Carol's Mother, Betty Trussell. Initially the Trust worked on improving conditions for 60+ children sleeping in Central Railway Station in Bulgaria.

In 2000 Paddy had a call from mother in Salisbury who was struggling to afford food and faced sending children to bed hungry. He investigated data on poverty and deprivation in UK and found a significant number of people faced going hungry as result of sudden crises, so he started Salisbury Food Bank in a garden shed and garage, providing 3 days emergency food to local people in crisis. This food bank model spread rapidly through church networks.

By 2020, Trussell Trust was supporting a network of food banks across the UK, supported by thousands of volunteers. 1.3 million emergency food parcels were provided in the last six months. There is a nationwide network of food banks and together they provide emergency food and support to people locked in poverty and campaign for change. Trussell Trust values are compassion; justice; community; dignity.

Non-perishable, 'in date' food is donated by the public, schools, churches, businesses and supermarkets, collected and sorted into emergency food parcels by more than 28,000 volunteers and then given to people in crisis. An individual must have a foodbank voucher to receive help; these may be issued by Citizen's Advice, Children's Centres, Health Visitors etc. The voucher can then be exchanged for a parcel of food, designed to last three days.

1.9 million food parcels were distributed in 2019/2020 - a 74% increase in 5 years. After paying rent people referred to foodbanks have an average of £50 a week for all other essential costs-e.g. food, travel, clothing, bills. 88% of the public think hunger is a problem in the UK.

Our local Trussell Trust food bank is based at Mary Immaculate and St Peter's RC Church, 63, Somerset Road, New Barnet, Herts EN5 1RF (07716 890 535 or 0300 102 1680). At St John's we have crates for donated food in the sanctuary foyer and at the Mowbray Road entrance, or you can take it direct to St Peter's (Sat 10am-11.30am; Tues.12-1.30pm; Mon.7.30pm-8.30pm; Thurs.10am-11am). A useful website is [info@chippingbarnet.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@chippingbarnet.foodbank.org.uk), where you can check to see which items are currently most needed.

To volunteer or for information contact Victoria Miller, manager of Chipping Barnet Food Bank [manager@chippingbarnet.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:manager@chippingbarnet.foodbank.org.uk) or Andrew Summers or David Paul of St John's. It is a registered charity.



Marjorie O'Connor

# Winter Shelter News - March 2023

AS IN PREVIOUS YEARS Together In Barnet (TIB) have organised many different churches and synagogues to host the Winter Night Shelter from November 2022 to April 2023. We at St John's were pleased to be able to offer accommodation for six weeks in November and December on Saturday nights.



**Together in Barnet**  
SHELTER FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

We were supported by our loyal band of volunteers from both St John's and St Peter's along with some new friends. A number of other local churches have also offered accommodation, including St James's, and East Barnet Baptist.

Each week we had between six to ten guests, all of whom found themselves homeless in recent weeks and many of whom have now been able to move into more permanent accommodation. This has been a change from previous years when we accommodated a mixture of long term and recently homeless guests. During the pandemic everyone was found accommodation of some sort and this really helped those who had been homeless for many months to become used to being settled again and therefore helped them back into normal housing.

We have been asked to host a further four weeks in April as a new venue is no longer available and I'm pleased to say our lovely volunteers have stepped forward to help again.

At the end of 2022 TIB were recipients of The London Faith and Belief Community Award for their work during the pandemic. This is a recognition of the work done by all the different faith venues that make up TIB, coming together to provide accommodation for homeless people irrespective of their beliefs or nationality. As venue coordinators Eileen and I attend meetings with all the other coordinators from across the borough to organise the running of the Shelter. I always come away thinking it's such a privilege to meet and work with people from different communities ... it's not just the guests who benefit from the shelter!



Lesley Calder and Eileen Brandrick



In July St. John's will be welcoming 27 members from our twinned church in Svitavy. Filip Keller, their minister, was our minister here at St. Johns for a year during 2008-09.

They will be travelling over by minibus and the majority of the group will be staying in the halls at St John's. There are two families both with 2 children – who are aged between five and nine and one couple who would like to stay in homes. If you would like to host, please get in touch with me. There is no need to worry if you cannot speak Czech as the families and the couple speak English

The group will be leaving Svitavy on 30<sup>th</sup> June and arriving at St John's on Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> July. The group will stay until Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July when they begin their journey home.

We hope to plan and join our friends from Svitavy for a number of shared events, meals and outings during the week, so please put the dates in your diary.

Paul Elsdon

# Community Garden

THE COMMUNITY GARDEN at St John's United Reformed Church, New Barnet, in North London has been recognised by Barnet Borough Council for its work for the local community.

The garden, which is run by the church together with Incredible Edible Barnet, has been featured in Barnet Council's BarNET ZERO campaign which aims to help Barnet become one of London's most sustainable boroughs.



Church member, Heather Elsdon, and Wendy Alcock from Incredible Edible Barnet, who have been helping to run the garden since it was set up in 2017, even found themselves featuring on a poster on local bus stops and in a video on the Barnet Council website.

Heather Elsdon, a community garden co-ordinator, has been working in horticulture, maintaining, designing, and planting gardens for 19 years. She studied for the Royal Horticultural Society general certificate in Horticulture and Garden Design at Capel Manor College, and she gardens with biodiversity at the forefront of her practice.

Wendy Alcock, from Incredible Edible Barnet, set up the community garden project with the aim of increasing the amount of food grown in public places for the community to share. The garden also aims to raise awareness of the environmental, nutritional and health benefits of home growing and is run organically with nature and the planet in mind.

Roz Douglas



.....  
 COME TO INCREDIBLE EDIBLE BARNET'S annual seed swapping event on Sunday 5 March from 2pm until 4pm if you would like to save money on seeds, try new plants and get to meet some lovely local food growers and gardeners from your community. There will also be cake!

- Bring along spare seeds or small plants - whether veg, herbs, fruit or flowers that you've saved or sown, a packet you no longer want or cuttings from your garden. Don't worry if you don't have any to bring, there are plenty to share!
- We also welcome any gardening bits and bobs you've got lying around looking for a new home - all swaps welcome.
- Swap them with someone else.
- Take home new seeds, plants and stuff for free.
- Please package up and label your seeds or plants in advance if you can but there will be some pens and envelopes on hand to make small seed packets on the day.

*We hope to see you there!*

The bi-monthly community garden sessions take place on the second and fourth Saturdays each month. Come along to one of our regular community sessions between 10am and 12 for as little or as long as you like.

You can find out more about the community garden and chat about what you're growing, or want to grow, at home. Depending on the time of year tasks will include planting, watering, weeding, harvesting, drinking tea and sometimes eating cake!

Wendy Alcock



ON THURSDAY 12TH JANUARY we welcomed back our lovely Mainly Music group after the Christmas break. Meg was on the door to greet the families, Janet was in the kitchen preparing the drinks and snacks, Alison was in the tech booth, getting the songs ready, and Valerie was all set with her props (cuddly animals, ladybird finger puppets, bubble machine, blue lycra 'sea'). The mums, grandmas and childminders were delighted to see each other and the children (aged between a few weeks and 3 years old) headed for the mats where we make our circle. Every session begins with the Mainly Music song, followed by a selection of other rhymes and songs, some you would all know and some original Mainly Music ones, some with actions, other with percussion instruments or scarves to wave. Even the babies respond and there's lots of rocking, swaying, dancing and joining in! There's a Thinkspot, with a thoughtful message for the adults, and a couple of 'God songs', so the Christian basis of the group is clear but subtle. The 'thank you for our food' song is the final one and little hands are wiped in preparation for a drink and a healthy snack from the selection of prepared fruit and baby snacks available. Once these are cleared away the toys come out and the children play on the mat with Valerie and Eileen while the carers have their tea, coffee and homemade cake, and a chance to talk to each other. When you spend all day with babies and toddlers, a conversation with other adults, and a coffee while it's still hot, are a welcome treat!

We feel so privileged to be involved with this group, it clearly meets a need locally and is a valued part of the week for these children, parents and carers. As children start nursery they move on, but our childminders remain, and bring new children, and we are now enjoying the company of the younger siblings of children who were in the group when it began in 2018 and are delighted to meet these parents again. Relationships are warm and supportive and it's lovely to see the 'old hands' welcome newcomers; new mothers receiving encouragement and reassurance from more experienced ones and childminders helping each other out. We all have a most rewarding morning!



Janet Harvey

# Opportunities To Serve

*"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." - 1 Peter 4:10*

I would be willing to help in the following way/s:

### On a Sunday

Welcoming people at the door

Reading the Bible passage

Helping with the A/V operation and Zoom

Serving tea and coffee after the service

Helping with children's activities

Singing with the music group

Locking up after the service

Book stall representative



### Before a Sunday Service

Contribute money for flowers

Arrange flowers (informal arrangements)



### At other times

Managing the tea and coffee rota

Assisting with catering

Getting supplies for Sunday morning refreshments

Become a member of a prayer web (be notified of requests)

Assist with website

Assist with Church Record

Help with monthly prayer diary supply

Help with heating controls for Church and Halls

Update Notice Boards

Help with Community Garden

Help at Mainly Music

Help with Messy Church

Help with our Charity links

Join the Management Team

- to help with ongoing maintenance jobs

- cleaning contracts, insurance negotiations etc.

Volunteer for Night Shelter

Volunteer for CB Foodbank

Help with emptying bins during holiday periods

Prayer Handbook Distribution

Help at St John's Fellowship

Promote links with other local churches

Help put up Christmas decorations and put out candles

Help with Communion preparation each month



Your name: .....

Please circle, underline or tick any of the tasks you could help with in future.  
Hand the form to one of the Elders in person at church.

**Thankyou!**



**St John's**  
United Reformed Church

# Fellowship

## DABS and DNA Detects criminals

Chris Truran - 15<sup>th</sup> February

FORMER MET POLICE SCENES OF CRIMES OFFICER, Chris Truran, gave an interesting talk, describing how forensic science has helped to solve crimes, from the first use of fingerprints in 1901 to the use of DNA today. He told us about William Herschel, a British Officer in the Indian Civil Service, who realized that fingerprints were unique and permanent by documenting his own fingerprints. In a pre-digital age, a system of classification was developed which helped match fingerprints from a scene of crime to suspects. A national fingerprint collection grew up which eventually held more than 6 million sets of fingerprints. These were all paper records, and very heavy, which meant strengthening the floor where they were held at Scotland Yard. Chris told us how we were at the forefront of the technology to scan them so that the digital

images could be stored and matched using computers (although it seems that the last stage of matching is still done manually).

He also described how fingerprints and dental records, and now DNA, are used not only to solve crime, but also to identify victims of disasters such as the Tsunami in South East Asia in 2004. The first use of DNA to solve crime was the case of Colin Pitchfork who was convicted for murder because of DNA matching. Professor Alex Jeffreys of Leicester University applied his research on DNA to look for a match amongst all the men in the area near the crime scene, who were all asked to give a DNA sample. 28 years later we now have a DNA database which already includes more than 6 million records-as large as the fingerprint database which started 121 years ago.

Marjorie O'Connor

Membership queries: Marjorie O'Connor. ([marjorie.oconnor@btinternet.com](mailto:marjorie.oconnor@btinternet.com) 0208 445 6580 or 07515 910514)

Zoom link: contact Ron Mobbs ([mobs.ron@gmail.com](mailto:mobs.ron@gmail.com))

Annual membership is £10. Monthly members entrance £2 including refreshments. Visitors £5.

All are welcome. Bring a friend!

## Memories for St John's 60th Anniversary

*St John's will be celebrating our 60th anniversary on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April and we would like to mark the occasion by recalling some memorable times. So if you have a particular event or moment that you would like to feature in the morning service, please email me at [andrewjsummers@btinternet.com](mailto:andrewjsummers@btinternet.com)*

*It would be great if a few people could talk about their memorable event - or maybe delegate the talking to someone like me!*

*There is likely to be a celebratory cake for us to enjoy with our after-church coffee.*

*I look forward to venturing down "memory lane".*

Andrew Summers

# Lent courses

These are the details of the Lent Groups that we have been invited to attend:

**St Mary's Church East Barnet & Brookside Methodist** are meeting in person on the first four Wednesdays in March with details on the flyer (shown on right).

As indicated, I suggest that you contact [administrator@stmaryseastbarnet.org](mailto:administrator@stmaryseastbarnet.org) if you are planning to attend.

**Wood Street Barnet URC & St Andrew's Chesterfield URC** are meeting for five sessions both in person and on Zoom, with details below. Places are limited particularly for the Zoom session, so I suggest you contact Revd Dominic Grant if you would like to join one of these on: [revdsgant@gmail.com](mailto:revdsgant@gmail.com)

## St Mary's Church Lent Course



I hope you are able to support one of these groups with our local Christian friends. If the times are not convenient, I am sure that we can all use this season of Lent as a time for personal study and reflection.

Alison Bond

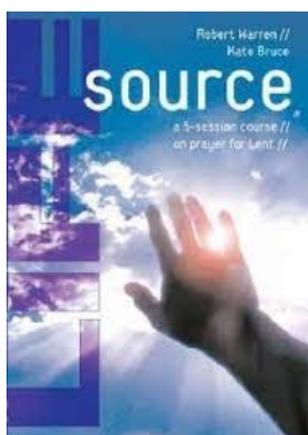
## Lent Group being offered by Wood Street Barnet URC & St Andrew's Chesterfield Road

We'll be running two parallel groups on "Life Source", both starting in the coming days: one on Wednesday evenings 7.30pm via Zoom, and the other on Sunday evenings 6.30pm in-person (venue/s tbc, possibly the Church Parlour at Barnet URC Wood Street).

Revd Dominic Grant

### Life Source

**A Five-Session Course on Prayer for Lent**  
Robert Warren, Kate Bruce



At times prayer can seem like hard work or a bit of a mystery. At other times, it's an encounter with the Living God. Wherever you are on the journey of faith, Life Source will encourage a discovery of new-found joy and delight in prayer for novices and old hands alike.

Ideal for Lent, cell or house groups, the course combines Bible study and discussion with a creative, hands-on exploration of five prayer patterns drawn from Christianity's rich heritage. The interactive sessions explore:

- \* Source of life - prayer as relationship
- \* Source of joy - prayer as enjoying God
- \* Source of light - prayer as listening
- \* Source of wholeness - prayer as honesty
- \* Source of love - prayer as care

# Calendar of Events

## MARCH

Sunday 5	11:00am	Worship with the Lord's Supper led by Tony Alderman
	2:00pm	Seed Swap (see p.5 )
Tuesday 7	7:45pm	Elders' Meeting
Thursday 9	9:30am	Mainly Music
Sunday 12	11:00am	Worship led by Paul Elsdon, followed by a Church Meeting
Wednesday 15	8:00pm	Fellowship: A Week in the Dolomites by Bruce Bennett (RSPB)
Thursday 16	9:30am	Mainly Music
Friday 17	4:00pm	Messy Church
Sunday 19	11:00am	<b>Mothering Sunday:</b> Worship led by Helen Snider & Andrew Summers
Thursday 23	9:30am	Mainly Music
Sunday 26	11:00am	Worship led by Sarah Beaumont
Monday 27	8:30pm	Men's Group at <i>Ye Old Mitre Inn</i>
Thursday 30	9:30am	Mainly Music

## APRIL

Saturday 1	11:00am	Green Christian Barnet
Sunday 2	11:00am	<b>Palm Sunday:</b> Worship led by David Paul & Richard Harvey
Thursday 6	8:00pm	<b>Maundy Thursday:</b> United Service at Barnet URC, Wood Street
Friday 7	2:00pm	<b>Good Friday:</b> A Service of Reflection at St John's Church
Sunday 9	11:00am	<b>Easter Day:</b> Worship with the Lord's Supper led by Tony Alderman
Tuesday 11	7:45pm	Elders' Meeting
Sunday 16	11:00am	Worship led by Alison Bond
Wednesday 19	8:00pm	Fellowship: All over by Christmas - World War One in Barnet by David Berguer
Thursday 20	9:30am	Mainly Music
Sunday 23	11:00am	<b>St John's Church 60th Anniversary:</b> Worship led by Helen Snider & Andrew Summers
Tuesday 25	8:30pm	Joint Men/Women Evening at <i>The Railway Bell</i>
Thursday 27	9:30am	Mainly Music
Sunday 30	11:00am	Worship led by Roz Douglas

## MAY

Thursday 4	9:30am	Mainly Music
Saturday 6		The Coronation of Charles III
Sunday 7	11:00am	Worship with the Lord's Supper led by Rev. Simon Aley

Copy for the May/June edition of *Church Record* to be with the editors  
by Friday 21 April.

[churchrecord2023@gmail.com](mailto:churchrecord2023@gmail.com)



## GREEN CHRISTIAN BARNET - Programme

Thurs.15 March @ 8-00 p.m. via Zoom. Next Planning session.

Come and share your ideas and suggestions. ALL are welcome.

### Saturday Meetings

1 April Rosemary on: 'Africa Responds to Climate Change.'

20 May Terry on: 'Responding to the degradation of the natural world.'

June 17 Sonal on 'Health Care and Sustainability.'

July 15 Sarah Edwards on 'The JustMoney Movement'

Sept. 16 Andrew S. on theme of 'How we respond to climate change: what is the challenge?'

A Saturday in Oct.: Asking: 'Is direct action by Christian Extinction Rebellion an appropriate response to the crisis?'

### N.B.s

Fri. 21 April: 'The Big One'. A non-violent demonstration outside Westminster about the lack of progress on 'green issues,' organised by Extinction Rebellion.

*Let us think and act to involve young people in these and other practical activities and encourage/ respond to their concerns about the environment.*

\*\*\* Please note the dates above, and contact Tony S. (0208 440 6040) if you would like to have your name added to our 'Green' contact list. We will let you have up-dates as the programme is agreed.

Thank you,  
GCB Planning Team

## THANKS FOR FLOWERS

We are all grateful to all those who arrange the flowers in church, also to those who donate money towards this, and those who dismantle the arrangements after services and give them to a member or friend to enjoy.

If you would like to pay for the flowers now and again (some people like to do this on a birthday or anniversary), or you would like to offer to arrange them yourself (assistance can be arranged!) or you might sometimes be able to deliver flowers after the service (especially after a special Sunday, such as Easter or Harvest) please speak to Valerie Mills.



*Flower arrangement, 5<sup>th</sup> February*

*The flowers were given by Dorothy Peryer on February 5th, and by Betty Fanning on February 12th.*

## A PRAYER FOR UKRAINE

God of peace and justice  
With sorrow and lament, we hold the situation in Ukraine before you, a year on from the Russian invasion.  
We long for an end to the conflict and the bloodshed and suffering.  
We remember people in Ukraine living in fear of death and destruction.  
We pray for all who grieve lost lives and opportunities.  
May those who have been displaced find safety and welcome in their new communities.  
We pray that those with authority and influence will work for a just peace which provides security for all.  
As we hold in our prayers all affected by the war,  
we pray that they may know that they are held in your loving arms.  
In your name we pray,  
Amen

*Revd Fiona Bennett,  
the Moderator of the General Assembly of  
the United Reformed Church*

## AND FINALLY ...

There comes a time for most of us when it is no longer possible to undertake the roles and responsibilities we once were happy to perform. But this isn't the end of Christian service, far from it! St John's has always benefitted from a little army of supporters, encouragers and pray-ers, sitting in the pews or at home, and never is it as much needed, or as much appreciated, as in a ministerial vacancy. This is the person who voices their appreciation of the welcome they received on arriving. The person who thanks the people who led worship, mentioning a key moment that has helped them. The person who, by phone call or message, checks up on someone who is busy in their Christian service but under pressure in other areas of their life. The person who finds a positive word to share in a challenging discussion. The person who prays regularly, and without disclosing it, for office holders, church events and those who are ill, lonely or sad. The person who always seems happy to chat over coffee with either a newcomer or an old friend. As we remember past members and friends, we all recall those who continued to make an impact by their encouragement and their prayers, right up to the very end of their lives (even beyond their hundredth birthday!) and those contributions and relationships enabled others to continue with more active roles with new energy and joy. To all you encouragers and pray-ers, thank you. You make a difference and you are a real blessing to the St John's community.

**Editors**