

# ST. JOHN'S NEWS

## FEBRUARY 2021 EDITION

### From the Minister's Desk - Signposts



For over thirty years, Colleen and I have driven across this vast country time and again to visit family. Each day, we depended upon those green signs on the side of the road to answer our questions: “Where are we now?”; “How much further to our next stop?”; and finally, the signpost that told us we had reached our destination. Each signpost contributed to the story of our trip.

Likewise, in the Gospel of Mark there is an important signpost, that appears several times throughout the gospel. Mark reports that when Jesus was baptized, he heard a voice from heaven saying, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.” (Mark 1: 11). Halfway through the gospel, at the moment of Jesus’ transfiguration on the mountain-top God speaks again, this time to the gathered disciples: “This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!” (Mark 9: 7). Finally, at the moment of Jesus’ death upon the cross, the centurion affirms: “Truly this man was the Son of God!”

As I write this letter, we are entering The Season of Lent. Lent is bracketed by the Transfiguration at one end and Good Friday at the other. Both events included this great confession of the church: “This is the Son of God”. As we make our way through the next six weeks, let us be attentive to how the gospel readings reveal Jesus’ identity as the Son of God; and let us consider what that identity means for those of us who would claim to be Christ’s own.

Blessings.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Robert'.

Robert L. Adams

Minister

A photograph of a bright sun shining through a blue sky with white clouds. The sun is in the lower center, and its rays are visible. The text is overlaid on the image.

And there came a voice from heaven,  
saying, Thou art my beloved Son,  
in whom I am well pleased.

Mark 1:11 (KJV)

versaday.com



# February Birthday Wishes

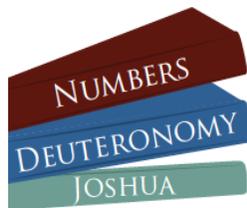
Happy birthday wishes are extended to Donna Doyle, Elizabeth Adams, Linda Lee Barlow, Rhodes Brown, Katalin Kennedy, Earl Esdale, James Macfarlane, Debbie Plant, Kerry Adams, Janice Walker, John Adams (Reverend Adams' son), Ryan MacGregor and to all those wishing to remain anonymous.

## Kids' Corner Challenge

Calling all kids 10 – 12 years of age! We challenge you to complete the crossword puzzle. The first person to correctly finish it and return it to Susan at: [susan.macdonald5@sympatico.ca](mailto:susan.macdonald5@sympatico.ca) or drop it off at the church office will receive a prize. We will publish the name of the winner in the next newsletter. Your Mom and Dad can help.

There were no entries for January's challenge.

## BOOKS OF THE BIBLE WORD SEARCH OLD TESTAMENT 1



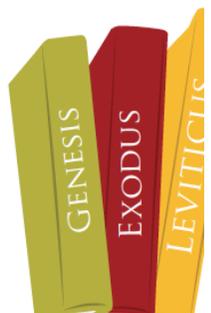
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Genesis  
Exodus  
Leviticus  
Numbers  
Deuteronomy  
Joshua  
Judges

Ruth  
Samuel  
Kings  
Chronicles  
Ezra  
Nehemiah  
Esther

Job  
Psalms  
Proverbs  
Ecclesiastes  
Song of Solomon





## Hey Phyllis, Joe and Clarice!

As Presbyterians, we are probably familiar with the term ‘the patience of Job’, however this past year of the Covid-19 pandemic has been a real testing ground for everyone’s patience. With the forever changing regulations, along with the redundant and often depressing news reports, sometimes it felt easier to just stay inside and hibernate. We were given this wonderful gift of ‘time’, but what to do with it? Last summer was fairly easily taken up with gardening and spending precious permissible time with grandchildren, going so far as constructing a functional skateboard with the assistance of Google and Amazon.

We happen to live on a short cul-de-sac along with many other very active seniors, a few of whom organized a ‘driveway line dancing’ activity once a week. Thus, we could get some exercise, learn new steps, have a glass of wine, and discuss books we were reading, all safely distanced. For many years I have enjoyed listening to audio books, and with access to the Library so limited, I finally took the time to learn how to download books on to my mobile phone, both audio and in print. Sometimes it is the one incentive I need to get out walking so I can listen to a gripping novel at the same time. I had started sewing masks for the family near the beginning of the pandemic but admittedly the novelty wore off after a while. Eventually this morphed into sewing clothes for my granddaughters’ 18” dolls, all thanks to You Tube tutorials and free patterns downloaded from Pinterest. It has brought back many memories from my youth of 4H Homemaking Clubs, and Home Economics classes at Central Public and St Lawrence High School. Plus, I am using up lots of ancient fabric scraps! Again, going back to my youth, I started to make a point of practicing piano more than once every 6 months.



Armed with my grandson’s discarded piano books and my own books gleaned over the years, I have been trying to hone my limited skills just a little bit several times a week. So far Joe hasn’t kicked me off the piano bench, so I persevere in spite of a couple arthritic fingers on the right hand! At one time, when I first retired from

Physiotherapy, I was determined to use my spare time to become more functionally bilingual in my remaining years. You can guess how well that worked in spite of various serious attempts. So Covid lockdown has become my last resort, and I try to spend a bit of time each day on the Duolingo App practicing the French lessons that were much clearer back in the 1960s. At this point though, I am more realistic regarding the outcome.....

So, the days have gone by. A bit of Tai chi exercise, some cross-country skiing in the wonderful local parks, some sewing, some piano, some French, make some bread, and watch a whole lot of Netflix!



We have not been able to visit my mother, Clarice Neill, in person since late summer. She has been living at Sunset Cove Retirement Home in Long Sault since 2018 and that facility has done a wonderful job of dealing with the Covid 19 challenge. She spent a couple months last spring living with my sister Marjorie when the situation in the care homes was looking so dire, but then returned to Sunset in June. I think she would agree that it is just the right place for her to be at the age of 96. She has become reacquainted with people that she met in the past through St. John’s, or square dancing, or teaching as well as meeting new friends. It is easy to drop off ‘care packages’ to her and she still loves her telephone to keep in touch with family and friends. Being pretty optimistic, she MAY even hold out some hope for the Ottawa Senators!

A huge thank you to Phyllis Bateman for this submission.

## Jonah (862 BC)

Jonah was a Messenger of God to the Northern Kingdom during the Rule of Jeroboam II in the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC. That makes Jonah a contemporary of Hosea and Amos. Jonah was commanded by God to give warning to the city of Nineveh (capital of Assyria) so that people may repent. The book has very little prophecy and is mostly an account about his reluctance as a prophet. The Lord sent Jonah to Nineveh to warn them of their impending doom! Jonah disobeys. He flees on a boat toward Tarshish, to get away from God. A storm arose and the men blame Jonah who says he is running from God. They throw Jonah into the sea and the sea is immediately calmed! Jonah is swallowed by a great fish (whale) and prays To God. “Lord, you have rejected me and cast me away. How shall I ever again see your holy Temple?” He is delivered out of the belly of the fish and spit out on the beach. Jonah was told by the Lord to go to Nineveh and warn them of their doom. When he began to preach, the people, even the king, repented. The king declared that everyone was to “cry mightily” to the Lord, and turn from evil, for perhaps God will let us live, and hold back his fierce anger from destroying us! God changes his mind and does not destroy Nineveh.



But Jonah after giving them the message of their doom wanted to have destruction upon them. God refused to do so. The book ends with Jonah waiting in vain for Nineveh to be destroyed. He became very angry at God because a Gentile nation, and such an evil one, would receive mercy from the Lord. God taught Jonah an important lesson about his love and mercy for all mankind, by the lesson of the gourd. The Lord said, “Why shouldn’t I feel sorry for a great city like Nineveh which is in spiritual darkness.

God probably chose the Assyrians to receive his mercy because they were the most wicked, and the lesson needed to be learned that God is a God of mercy to everyone, even the most wicked.

Later Jesus spoke about Jonah as a type of Christ. As Jonah was in the belly of the great sea monster for three days and for three nights and was released the third day, so Christ was in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights and was raised the third day (Matthew 12:40-41).

It is interesting that the very place where Jonah boarded the ship was Joppa, the same city where Peter in the New Testament was called by God to come and share the good news about Jesus Christ.

A special thank you is extended to John Adams for writing this article and submitting it for this edition.

## Your chuckle for today...

A Sunday School teacher began her lesson with a question, "Boys and girls, what do we know about God?"

A hand shot up in the air. "He is an artist!" said the kindergarten boy.

"Really? How do you know?" the teacher asked.

"You know - Our Father, who does art in Heaven... "

A minister parked his car in a no-parking zone in a large city because he was short of time and couldn't find a space with a meter.

Then he put a note under the windshield wiper that read: "I have circled the block 10 times. If I don't park here, I'll miss my appointment. Forgive us our trespasses."

When he returned, he found a citation from a police officer along with this note "I've circled this block for 10 years. If I don't give you a ticket I'll lose my job. Lead us not into temptation."

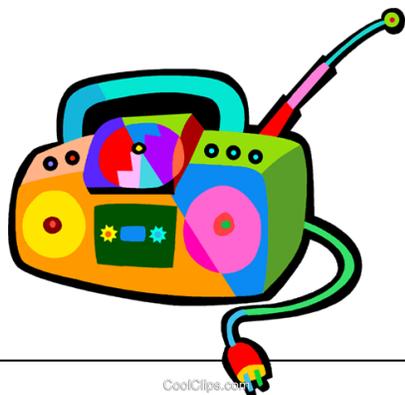
We are grateful to Chuck Eadie for allowing us to share these funny jokes.

Got a good joke, poem, or a funny Covid-19 or isolation story? Please share it with us. We will not reveal any names unless you give us permission to do so. Send your submission to:

[susan.macdonald5@sympatico.ca](mailto:susan.macdonald5@sympatico.ca).



### Making Worship Available for All



Reverend Adams and Dan and Alex Plant are continually upgrading our technology and finding new ways for our members to worship. We have retired the tape cassette ministry and have replaced it with CDs (audio) and DVDs (video). There is something for everyone. Please contact the church (613-932-8693 or [admin@stjohnscornwall.ca](mailto:admin@stjohnscornwall.ca)) to order your preference. Remember to leave a message as we are not there full time due to the Covid-19 lockdown.

**“Be still, and know that I am  
God...” Psalm 46: 10**