

# St. Andrew's Episcopal Church



## From Your Rector

Alleluia, Christ is Risen!

The Fifty Great Days of Eastertide, which begin with Easter Day and end with Pentecost, are feast days of the Church. The 50 comes about because the Resurrected Christ spent 40 days on Earth until His ascension, then another 10 days passed before Pentecost. Also, our faith is a joyful one. We have only 40 days of Lent but 50 days of celebration afterward. To me, this foreshadows our eternity with Jesus. We have a short time on Earth, some of which is struggle and suffering. Yet, we have eternity in the blissful company of the God who loves us.

Resurrection is not only about eternal life, however. God brings about new life in many ways. I invite us to use these 50 days to praise God and to look for signs that God is actively working among us. We can see God's handiwork in nature, a beautiful time of year in Niagara County. We can also see ways in which God is creating new lives in our ministries in the community. We feel an excitement and good Spirit within St. Andrew's. We are seeing more and more children among us. We look forward to a bright future ministering with God in this place.

Enjoy Eastertide. Celebrate the new life around us. And prepare your hearts for the birthday celebration of the Church that will come with Pentecost.

Randi+

**Join Us Sundays**

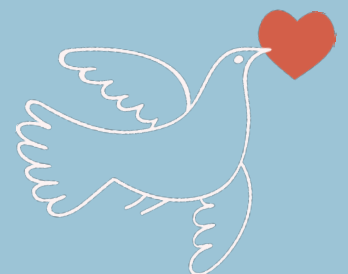
**10:45**

**In-Person or on Zoom**

Sunday School at 10:30

**StAndrewsBurt.com**

*St. Andrew's  
Seeks to Share  
the Unconditional  
Love of God*



# Solar Eclipse 2024



## NIAGARA COUNTY RESIDENT'S GUIDE TO PREPARE FOR THE SOLAR ECLIPSE ON APRIL 8, 2024



**Expect heavy traffic** Thursday 4/4 - Tuesday 4/9. Especially Monday, 4/8.



**All Niagara County Schools** will be closed on Monday, April 8th.



**Fill up your gas tank** during the week prior to Saturday, April 6th.



**Stock up on supplies prior to Thursday, April 4th**

Things to think about: Groceries, Medicines, Water, Eclipse Viewing Glasses  
<https://eclipse.aas.org/eye-safety/viewers-filters>



**Avoid scheduling appointments or running errands** on Monday, April 8th.



**Coordinate with your employer about your options.** Can you work from home? If you must commute, have a plan for additional traffic.



**Be aware of mass egress post totality.** Plan to delay your departure from Eclipse Events to avoid extreme traffic delays and overcrowded roadways.



**Cell and internet service may become overwhelmed** with additional crowds and demand. Be sure to have a backup communication plan.



**Be mindful** that First Responders, and Law Enforcement will be in extreme demand during this event.



Download our Prepare Niagara App to stay informed



AMERICAN ACADEMY™ OF OPHTHALMOLOGY  
 Protecting Sight. Empowering Lives.

## Solar Eclipse Eye Safety

Looking directly at the sun during a solar eclipse is unsafe, except during a brief phase when the moon entirely blocks the sun's bright face. This phase is called totality. The path of totality for the Aug. 21, 2017 eclipse stretches from Oregon to South Carolina. Unless you're in the path of totality, keep your solar eclipse glasses on throughout the eclipse. Four manufacturers have certified that their eclipse glasses and handheld solar viewers meet the standards for eye protection: Rainbow Symphony, American Paper Optics, Thousand Oaks Optical, and TSE 17

**NOT SAFE**  
 Ordinary sunglasses are not strong enough to protect your eyes.

**SAFE**  
 Use specially designed solar eclipse glasses and viewers to block the sun's harmful rays.

**NOT SAFE**  
 Wearing solar eclipse glasses to look through a camera, binoculars or a telescope will not protect your eyes.

**SAFE**  
 Use only specially designed filters for lenses.

# Diocese

## Earth Day Healing Circle

The Commission to Dismantle Racism and Discrimination will host racial healing circles to explore the power of nature to heal and the harm that environmental racism has done to the earth and its people:

**Earth Day, April 22, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Arnold House on the campus of Grace Episcopal Church, 100 Genesee Street in Lockport, New York. The theme of this circle is healing the earth. This circle is an opportunity to discuss environmental racism and how to repair the harm it has caused to earth and its people. A light lunch will follow the circle.**

Each circle can accommodate 20 people and is free to attend. To reserve a spot, email the Rev. Deacon Diana Leiker ([gdllart@aol.com](mailto:gdllart@aol.com)) and put RHC 4/22 in the subject line.



# Around Our Parish

**Our Beautiful New Sign!  
Many thanks to Iris Waters for  
organizing this important endeavor,  
and for all who made donations  
toward the purchase!**



## March Vestry Highlights

- Vestry will submit a grant application to the Diocese for a possible outdoor pavilion.
- Love Rising dates have been finalized for July 15-21st events. (see page 12 for details)

## Fish Fry 2024

Hello Everyone!

What a success this fish fry season has been!!! As I write this it is technically not over, but we have done so well, with only 2 more to go!! Thank you to all the volunteers, the Honor Society students, the bakers, the box makers, and of course the people who come every week to order our fish and support us. There are so many moving parts, its truly amazing when it all comes together so smoothly.

I want to especially thank Tom for all his hard work during this time. Countless hours cooking, ordering, picking up, putting away deliveries, driving, inventory every week, baking, and managing all that comes with the food portion of fish fry. His blood, sweat, and tears do not go unnoticed. I appreciate him and all of you to help make this fundraiser a success.

As soon as we have a final count of our total profit, I will be sure to share with all of you.

Jamie Gailie



# From Your Warden

*Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Galatians 6:9*



We can be so proud of St. Andrew's! We have been putting in the prayer and hard work, and are reaping the rewards!

Last spring, we all rolled up our sleeves and studied "The Autopsy of a Deceased Church", by Thom S. Rainer. This book study caused us to look within ourselves, pray, and examine our practices to see what areas needed work. Honest reflection is uncomfortable, yet we didn't shy away from the discomfort. Instead, we recognized the importance of making adjustments to how we did things to fulfill our mission of sharing God's unconditional love for many years to come. Our resulting vision "We seek to share God's Love with a faith and outreach presence that is welcoming to all" grew from this process, with a focus on "Connecting With Community".

Let's take a look at how we've been doing: Chicken Dinner, Pumpkin Painting, Bazaar, Magic Show, Easter Egg Hunt, Pet Food Pantry, Adopted Families, Fish Fry, Love Rising, Newfane Rehab, Kidventures, and The Community Store are all ways we positively connect directly with our community. On top of that, our budget is improving, we had our first Confirmation class in years, our weekly attendance is up, and our choir is singing like angels! Although there is always plenty of work that still needs to be done, let's take a moment and recognize the fruits of our labor, and to give thanks to God for giving us the opportunities we have to make a difference in our community. Let's celebrate the accomplishments of our hard work, and then let's keep moving forward in prayer and action together, sharing God's Love with a faith and outreach presence that is welcoming to all.

With Love and Gratitude,  
Lynn



The 4th Saturdays at  
Newfane Town Hall

Next Distribution:  
**Saturday, April 27th**

We welcome any wet or dry  
dog or cat food donations!

# Sermon

Pastor Randi, 3.3.24

Last week, we talked about how we come close yet miss the mark as disciples of Jesus. This week, we talk about how the church, especially our congregation, may miss the mark and need to be cleansed.

A seventeenth-century motto speaks to the cleansing of the church. *Ecclesia reformata semper reformanda secundum verbum Dei* translates as the church always reformed to be reformed according to the word of God. The motto means that the church is always reforming itself to align more with the will of God. Phyllis Tickle, a church historian, was famous for her declaration that every 500 years or so, the church holds a giant rummage sale. In that sale, the church pulls out all those things in its theological storeroom, re-examines them, and then disposes of those things that are weighing it down. Sometimes, we call this getting back to the basics.

The church has indeed gone through many reforms – both major and minor. We're all familiar with the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century. In the 11th century, the Church endured a Great Schism when the Eastern branch of Christianity split apart from the Western branch, and both branches developed separately. The schism occurred when the Pope excommunicated the Patriarch of Constantinople from the Church. However, the seeds of schism had been brewing for some time. The two branches disagreed on whether priests needed to be celibate and on the wording of the Nicene Creed. They also disagreed about whether the Pope should have authority over the Patriarch. The 4th and 5th centuries brought the Monastic movement in which the Spirit led many Christians to leave the institutional church because it had grown too luxurious and less strict about keeping the commandments of God.

So, here we are in the 21st century. What does God call the Church, and particularly, our congregation, to dispose of that might be weighing us down and taking our attention away from the true worship of God?

I like to suggest a few things.

We're called to be good stewards of the things of God – the buildings, the money, the altar linens, and such. But we're not called to control or hold onto them too tightly. We have to strike a balance. Sometimes, we do a great job of caring for these things, but other times, we cling to them too tightly or tend to think of them as ours instead of realizing that they are God's. My sending parish in Virginia had a retired Episcopal priest in its membership. He often stood up at the annual meeting to comment, "I see the property here is worth \$4 million. Why don't we sell it and give the money to the poor?" Or when the clergy was contemplating having an oil portrait commissioned of their retiring bishop, he said, "Why don't we just frame a large photograph and give the rest of the money to the poor." Now, this man was a far-left radical. But, his radicalness does have a lesson within it. We should always consider how God wants us to use God's resources, realizing that the answer may change over time. We shouldn't attempt to control the use based on our comfort. We need to drive the need to control out of our congregational life.

We're also called to be willing to change our traditions if the changes will spread God's love to more people. We don't change for the sake of change, but if we find new ways of making the Gospel relevant to a new generation, we should pursue the new ways. God calls us to eliminate our need to feel comfortable if our comfort prevents others from coming to God.

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# Sermon

Pastor Randi, 3.3.24, *continued*

*continued from page 6*

We also need to drive from the church murmuring and negative triangling. We don't call around on the phone or stand outside in the parking lot trying to get people on our side in a church dispute, especially when we haven't gone to the person we disagree with to try to resolve it. Minor conflicts between people can cause schisms in the church that prevent it from being Christ's body in the world. To truly be the church of Christ, we work directly with each other to solve disputes. And we do so in love, remembering that the world judges God's love by what they see in us.

We also need to get rid of our need to be right and to have things our way. When we make decisions as a church, we do so based on what best serves God and the community, not ourselves. After all, the church is God's. It is not ours.

We are disciples within a church. We put God first to be the church God calls us to be. We rid ourselves of all the stuff that prevents us from putting God first because we remember that anything that we love more than God is an idol. If we hang onto our need to control or to be comfortable, we've made control and comfort our god instead of the true God. If we make our need to be right or have someone take our side in a dispute a priority, then we've made our own needs god instead of the true God.

Our congregation is warm and loving. Yet God always calls us to make it better – to make our congregation more like the Kingdom of Heaven – to continually reform ourselves to better spread God's love. We proclaim Christ crucified and Christ risen. Sometimes, that proclamation means getting rid of some old habits we no longer need and starting again. When we continually reform ourselves through the will of God, we continue to be the beacon of light that God intends us to be in the world.



# Sermon

Pastor Randi, 3.17.24

The passage in Hebrews describes Jesus as the High Priest on the Order of Melchizedek. As we approach Passion Week, I'd like us to reflect on what that means and how it comforts us and encourages us to live boldly in a sometimes difficult world.

Let's start with a few illustrations from our society today. In several professions, the professional advocates for their client's needs to another professional. A real estate broker is one. The real estate agent knows their client's housing needs --- whether to sell or to buy. The agent works with the other party to meet those needs in the real estate transaction. Or, consider an attorney. He or she advocates before a judge, jury, or other party for their client. Either they want the judge/jury to understand that their client is innocent of whatever they were accused of, or they want the court to understand their client was severely injured in an accident and needs compensation to enable healing. In both cases, the agent or attorney speaks on behalf of their client to another person, advocating so that others understand how their client feels, thinks, and needs. They intercede with others on behalf of their clients.

Our faith tradition differs from that of more Protestant denominations in that our clergy are priests. A priest is called to lift up and bear the needs of the people to God. The priest is human, just like the people we represent, with the same human struggles as the people we represent. We don't have high priests in our tradition, but the term high priest suggests that they bear the needs of their people with more intensity. A high priest in the tradition of Israel was one who, alone in the most sacred part of the Temple, bears the greatest human need to God. The high priest approached the mercy seat of God on Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement) to make a sacrifice on behalf of himself and the people. Only the High Priest could make this holy sacrifice on behalf of the people. In Jewish tradition, the man who carried the title of High Priest was a descendant of Aaron. When one High Priest died, another inherited the role of intercessor and representative of the people before God.

Jesus is a High Priest, but not one who inherited the title from Aaron. Jesus existed in the beginning and still exists. The character Melchizedek appears a couple of times in the Bible. He is neither born nor dies. He just is. He appears after Abraham wins a battle with an enemy to bless Abraham and the location and to bring bread and wine. The phrase "the high priest of the Order of Melchizedek" also appears in a Psalm. Jesus - a high priest of the order of Melchizedek- is the intercessor on behalf of the people forever. No one else inherits that role. The role is unique. Jesus then was a human being, just like us, who made a once and for all sacrifice on behalf of the people. Jesus refers to that sacrifice on the cross as his being lifted up. Jesus is also a High Priest who continually bears our needs to God, carrying them deeply within Himself and fostering a deep connection between us and God. The intensity with which Jesus bears our burdens sometimes causes Him to scream and cry to God on our behalf. Jesus also is God, who responds with mercy to the cries of the people, nourishing us with love.

*continued on page 9*



# Sermon

Pastor Randi, 3.17.24, *continued*

*continued from page 8*

So, what difference does Jesus being the High Priest forever make in our lives? First, we have to accept that Jesus is this priest. We have to be willing to be drawn to Jesus. We must be willing to embrace His humanity and be audacious enough to realize that when we approach Jesus, we approach the Holy. When we are eager to approach Jesus for all that He is, we can see the future in a new way. The future always has light within it because of Jesus. We struggle with many issues in our lives – sickness, death, disappointment, hurt, failure, and sin. We struggle with many unfair and difficult conditions, such as injustice, violence, and war. Yet every emotion we fear --- every tear we shed – every cry of pain we make, Jesus makes with us and for us. Jesus knows exactly how we feel because He was human and felt the same way. When we weep with hurt, Jesus's whole body sobs with us. When we cry out against unfairness, Jesus cries with us. Jesus takes all that hurt – that hurt caused to us and that hurt caused by us – into His Being. We traditionally think of the sacrifice of Jesus as the High Priest as Being Himself for our sins. While that is true, the sacrifice is even more than that. The sacrifice is Jesus's continual bearing and holding the great weight of all of our pain within Him.

Yet Jesus, who is also God, also does something else. Jesus redeems our pain and finds a way to bring light into it. Sometimes, the light is the assurance that our sins are forgiven. Sometimes, it's the assurance that death isn't final. Sometimes, it's the knowledge that while injustice and war are a part of the temporal world, they have no part in the eternal.

Richard E. Spalding, a Presbyterian pastor and theologian, writes, "Those who would see Jesus are invited to meet him in the peace of the sanctuary: at the font, at the Table, and sometimes in the sighs too deep for words of the body, his body, at worship. There, the intercessions of the pioneer and perfecter of our faith will teach us the audacity of prayer. And we will go from the true tent of the Lord, in the strength of the gifts we receive there from God at the hand of our high priest, to join him in the work of together believing the future into being."

Because Jesus is our Great High Priest, we have a holy connection with God. We can always be assured of a better future and work with God to bring about that future.



# Community Easter Egg Hunt 2024



On Sunday, March 24th St. Andrew's intergenerational group hosted its annual Community Easter Egg Hunt. We had about 60 youth between ages 2 and 12 participate. We stuffed and hid hundreds of eggs and everyone had a great time searching for them in the snow! Kids also received a small prize and had the opportunity to make an Easter craft. Thanks everyone for all your help with this event. We couldn't do it without you! Thanks!

Pam



# Love Rising 2024

Planning is currently underway!  
If you would like to get involved, contact Pam.

## This Year's Events - Stay Tuned for Details

-- Monday, July 15th --

AM Sunrise Service in Olcott  
Reflection/Prayer throughout the day  
PM Sunset Event at Schulze Winery

-- Wednesday, July 17th --

Children's Event at Olcott Carousel Park

-- Saturday, July 20th --

St. Philip's Block Party

-- Sunday, July 21st --

Congregational Conversations



# Schedules

## April

### Altar

Jackie Jordan & Prudy Waters

### Readers/Eucharistic Ministers

- 7 – Dorothy Cheasty & Jerry Harrington
- 14 – Jamie Gailie & Sharon Rhodes
- 21 – Liz Depew & Sue Villeneuve
- 28 – Steve Clark

### Collection Counters

The Harringtons

### Video Producers

- 7 – Natalie Bielein
- 14 – Pam Leibring
- 21 – Lynn Schauer-Bewley
- 28 – Jamie Gailie

## May

### Altar

TBD

### Readers/Eucharistic Ministers

- 5 – Dorothy Cheasty
- 12 – Sue Villeneuve
- 19 (Pentecost) – Jerry Harrington & Tom Olsen
- 26 – Steve Clark

### Collection Counters

Doug Wintersteen

### Video Producers

TBD



**Coffee Hour Clean Up**  
Sign up to help  
at church or online  
(find the link on our website)



# Calendar



## April

- 7 – B&G Meeting, 9 am
- 10 – Vestry, 7 pm
- 13 – Fish Fry Party, Jamie Gailie’s house, 2 pm
- 20 – Spring Clean Up Day
- 21 – Staff Meeting, Noon
- 21 – Newfane Rehab Service
- 27 – Pet Food Pantry
- 27 – Vestry Retreat, 1-4 pm

## Community Store

- Wednesday 11 am - 4 pm
- Thursday 10 pm - 4 pm
- Friday 12 pm - 3 pm
- Saturday 10 am - 2 pm

## May

- 5 - B&G Meeting, 9 am
- 8 – Vestry, 7 pm
- 19 – Pentacost Sunday
- 19 – Staff Meeting, Noon
- 19 – Newfane Rehab Service
- 25 – Pet Food Pantry
- 28 – Office Closed

**Office Hours: 5-8 pm  
Tuesday and Thursday**



RECTOR, I WANT YOU TO KNOW I'M 100% IN FAVOR OF YOUR PLANS FOR CHURCH GROWTH



JUST AS LONG AS NONE OF THESE NEW PEOPLE SIT IN MY PEW.

**St. Andrew's Newsletter**

**April/May 2024**

Bishop of Western New York: Rt. Rev. Sean Rowe

Rector: The Very Reverend Randi Hicks Rowe

Deacon: Martha Faronc

Wardens

Lynn Schauer-Bewley

Jerry Harrington

Vestry

Natalie Bellein

Sharon Rhodes

Steve Clark

Pam Leibring

Melissa Bleiler

Tom Villeneuve

Office Manager: Shawn Slother

Music Director & Organist: Joe Brezka, Jr.

Music Associate: Evan Bleiler

Treasurer: Doug Wintersteen

Sexton: Jerilyn Carney

St. Andrew's Community Store: Cynthia Harrington

Church School Superintendent: Nancy Pestinger

Choir Librarian: Shirley Litz

Altar Guild Director: Jackie Jordan

Deanery / Convention Delegates:

Sarah Harrington

Janelle Dengate

Cynthia Harrington, Alternate

**St. Andrew's Newsletter**

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church  
2239 West Creek Road  
P.O. Box 133  
Burt, New York 14028-0133

Dated Material

To: