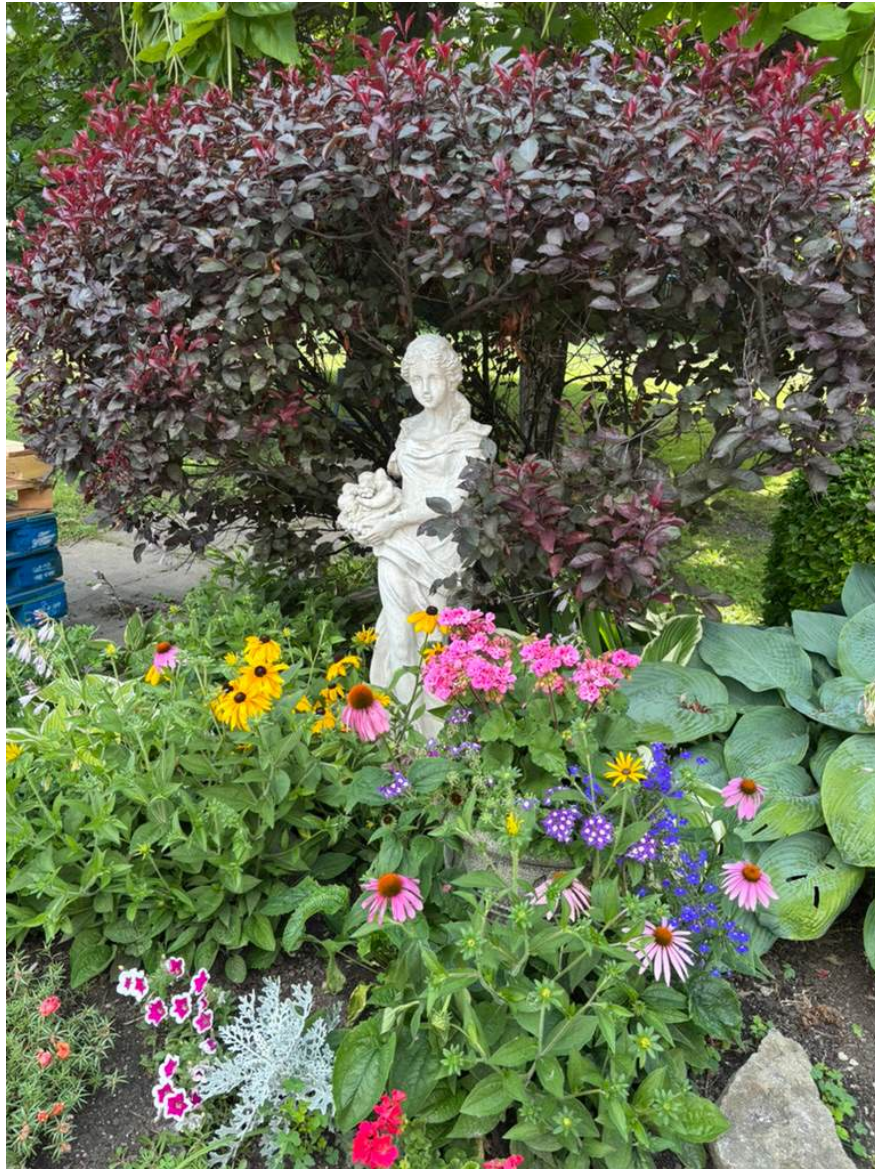


News from the Pews
September 2026



St. James United Church
400 Burnhamthorpe Road. M9B 2A8
www.stjamesunitedchurch.com

Happy Retirement!



After 49 years of loyal service, Elizabeth Leigh retired on August 1st, 2026!

We wish you a very happy and healthy retirement from work, but we do hope you have not retired from your very valued services to St. James!

May God bless you always, as you are a blessing to everyone who knows you.

Look Who's 90!

Hearty congratulations to Allister Graham, who turned 90 on July 8th, and celebrated with a lovely party for family and friends on July 11th.



Al, you are such a blessing to St. James. May you continue to be with us, hale and hearty, for many years to come. God bless you always.

Do we really welcome people?

Submitted by Jennifer Ling

I love this **quote from Rev. Mike Killeen** which was posted on FaceBook.

“I’ve been “church shopping” as a guest these last few months while on sabbatical, and I’ve noticed something that concerns me deeply about the future of the church.

It’s not robes or no robes.

Screens or no screens.

Bulletins or no bulletins.

Music styles.

Coffee quality.

It’s this:

We are often so glad to see the people we already love that we miss the new person sitting right next to us — the person Jesus may be asking us to love.

The future of the church will not be secured by a pastor, a program, a screen, a robe, or a style.

It will be shaped by ordinary people who trust the nudging of the Holy Spirit. Reluctant disciples like you and me who decide that the person sitting next to us is worth the risk of one awkward hello.

“Hi, my name is _____. I don’t think we’ve met yet. What brought you here today?”

That little moment may feel uncomfortable to you.

But it may feel like grace to them.

So here’s the Sunday challenge:

Leave with a name.

Learn the name of someone you don’t know yet. Invite them to coffee hour. Ask their story. Make room.”

You never know who came to church wondering if anyone would notice them.

Search Team



Chair Marie Truelove called a ZOOM meeting at 7:30pm on Wednesday July 29th to vote on the people suggested by the Transition Team, and ratified by the Unified Board, to become the Search Team. This was a well advertised meeting, for a very important process to make a final decision as to whom we, as a congregation, give the power to determine, with God's help, who will be the minister to take St. James U.C. into the future.

The quorum needed to make the decision was 20. At 7:30 pm, 10 people were present on line. After ten minutes of phoning, there were the required 20 people.

Those present voted in favour of the following people who will constitute the Search Team; in alphabetical order, **Gord Burrell, Karen Forgrave, Jennifer Gray, Phyl Hampshire, Danylo Klufas, Ariadne Reid and Sylvie Ty.**

Congratulations, and may God be with you all to guide you through this important process to find the ideal minister for St. James U.C.

By Mhairi Godley

September Calendar

Sundays:

Sept. 6. Guest Minister Dale Young
Sept. 13. A New Year of Sunday School begins!
Sept. 20
Sept. 27

Mondays:

Tuesdays:

Euchre - 8th, 22nd,

Wednesdays:

23rd - Noon. Grassy Narrows River Run. Downtown
RSVP to <https://actionnetwork.org/events/river-run-2026>

Thursdays:

7:30 -9:30 pm - CHOIR Practice. Now is a great time to join!
Begins Sept. 10

Fridays:

Saturdays:

10:00 am Yoga - begins Sept.12 in the lounge

This first 8 week fall session of Yoga will run every Saturday from September 12 - October 31. Prepay option for the whole session is \$160 (which works out to \$20/class), pay by **e-transfer to joy.wil31@gmail.com or cheque/cash at the first class.**

Alternatively you can choose to pay as go, \$25 per class. This restorative gentle yoga class is ideal for participants of all levels who want to increase strength, flexibility and balance.

For further information please contact Joyce Wilson at joy.wil31@gmail.com

Front cover - Many thanks to our wonderful garden team for our spectacular gardens!

Photo by Mhairi

Wires? What Wires?



Before, near the ceiling

If you have ever looked up when standing in the sanctuary's side aisles, you probably noticed a plethora of wires strung along the ceiling. These wires run between the narthex and the chancel, near the pulpit and lectern. They serve important purposes: for microphones, speakers, video, internet, and electric power for video screens.

After, near the ceiling



Before continuing, a little history. When the sanctuary was built in the very early 1960's, none of these wires were there. It is unlikely anyone at that time thought of a future with these technologies, so no provision was made to accommodate extra wiring. The 60's were simpler times!

Before, from floor level



Of course time moved on, and over the decades wires were gradually added to support these useful tools. An unfortunate side effect of the improvements is that the burgeoning number of wires – all strung in plain sight of parishioners in the sanctuary – had reached the point where I sometimes thought it looked like we are operating “mission control”, or some sort of exotic power system. The wires are of varying sizes, textures, colours, and were suspended from the ceiling and bundled together in a variety of ways. The end result was messy. So I decided to do something about it.

This summer, 120 feet of wooden “channels” were built and installed. All of the wires now lie on top of these channels and are invisible from below (except for a few unavoidable patches). Much tidier! As a bonus, the channels will allow us to add or remove wires easily as the Church's needs continue to evolve.

After, from floor level



The channel exteriors are oak, and stained to match the sanctuary's original woodwork. I hope you find the new arrangement to be an improvement.

Thanks go to Gord Burrell for helping with the installation over several days this summer. The work was faster, safer, and more fun, with his valuable assistance.

The Before and After pictures show the wires as they were previously, and how the same areas look after the installation.

Submitted by Don Monday

News from the Pews is published monthly by Editor Mhairi "Varry" Godley, whose views are her own, unless another author is noted. Articles for October 2026 may be submitted anytime before September 25 to mhairi.godley@yahoo.com or sjepistle@yahoo.com

We need your help

TO MAKE THE AUCTION A SUCCESS!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS! SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2026

Our Silent & Live Auction Dinner is one of St. James' most important fundraising events.



What can YOU donate?



RESTAURANT GIFT CARDS



COFFEE SHOP GIFT CARDS



RETAIL GIFT CARDS
OR CERTIFICATES



EXPERIENCES

(e.g. local attractions, lessons,
services, etc.)

ASK LOCAL BUSINESSES TODAY!

Pick up a generic auction request letter
from the **AUCTION MAILBOX** in the
church hallway.



Take it to local restaurants,
businesses, or service providers
and **ask if they can donate!**



ENJOY AN AMAZING DINNER!

Like in 2024, our 2026 auction dinner
will be catered by...



\$40 PER ADULT

Includes a delicious buffet featuring:

- ♥ Tasty Salads
- ♥ Mouth-Watering Meats
- ♥ Vegetarian Mains
- ♥ Roasted Vegetables
- ♥ Delightful Desserts



PUT IT ON YOUR CALENDAR AND INVITE FRIENDS NOW!



Every donation counts. Every guest makes a difference.
THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR CHURCH COMMUNITY! ♥

ICE CREAM

Sundae / Sunday

SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

after church



Make your
own sundae
and enjoy!



Meet new
friends



Catch up about
our summer
holidays!



SUNDAY AFTER CHURCH!



The official kick-off of the Sunday School year!



Sunday School starts again on September 13th!



We are excited to be starting our Sunday School year off with the story of “David and Goliath” – a story that shows us how little people can do BIG things! David knew that God was with him no matter what – he used his strong faith to do something that no one else thought was possible! *David vs Goliath in a nutshell: “Trust God to help you face giants” (What are some “giants” you might facing in your life right now?)

Submitted by Karen Forgrave