

**St. Mark the Evangelist  
Anglican Church**

**Our Story**



**Living to the Glory of God**

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This is our parish story. It tells a story of who we are, what we believe, what our mission is, and why it is so important to us. It tells a story of worship, outreach, education, fellowship, human talent and commitment. It tells a story of hope, anticipation and optimism for the future.

*"In God's family, there are no outsiders. All are insiders. Black and white, rich and poor, gay and straight, Jew and Arab, Palestinian and Israeli, Roman Catholic and Protestant, Serb and Albanian, Hutu and Tutsi, Muslim and Christian, Pakistani and Indian, Buddhist and Hindu – all belong... God's dream wants us to be brothers and sisters, wants us to be family... Go and tell my brothers and sisters. Go and tell my family. We are all God's family."*

**Richard Desmond Tutu**

St. Mark's is an inclusive and welcoming parish that celebrates its Christian faith through the beauty of its liturgy, its music and the sharing of all God's gifts. We share in the sacraments and seek to carry God's love into the world. We believe God calls the heart of each individual he chooses to become part of St. Mark's family; "there are no outsiders." St. Mark's cherishes all persons regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender, social or economic status or physical ability. We welcome all regardless of where they may be on their spiritual journey.

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### St. Mark's Parish Prayer

**Almighty God, by your acceptance of our patron, St. Mark the Evangelist, you showed us your way of love and acceptance. Direct us in following your example, so that we may respect the dignity of every human being and further your kingdom of justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**Amen.**

## INTRODUCTION

St. Mark's is a growing church in the north east end of historic St. John's Newfoundland. It is ideally placed within a largely residential area with new subdivisions opening yearly and shopping, recreation and business enterprises nearby. St. Mark's was established just 36 years ago and currently serves around 440 families. Weekly attendance averages over 250. Attendance peaks at Christmas and Easter; in 2014 about 1,170 attended worship during the Christmas season and about 450 attended worship during Easter.



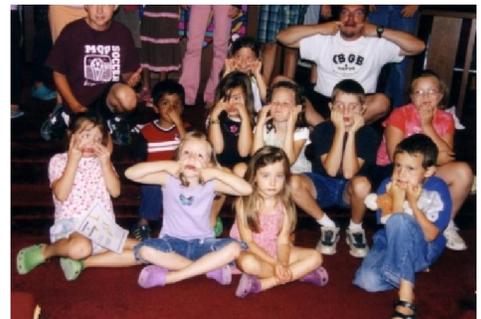
St. Mark's takes pride in that it is a friendly, inclusive parish which welcomes all people, regardless of gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or age. There are a large number of children and young adults as well as older adults. We are very much a local parish church, broadly reflecting the make-up of the area around us. We welcome visitors to any of our services and activities. Our doors are open to any who seek to worship and serve Jesus Christ.

Our parish can be likened to a patchwork quilt. Just as the hands and spirit sew together a variety of parts with strong thread, the strong common bonds of spirituality and love hold together the individuality and diversity, which create the community of St. Mark's. We are a Gospel-believing people who hold true to the Word of God and are open to the various traditions of the Anglican Communion, which enrich our understanding and worship. Our strength is unity in diversity.

Our community life is centered around worship on Sunday mornings at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. and on Saturdays at 5:00 p.m. where we gather to hear the word of God, to pray, and to give thanks for and to celebrate God's presence among us. Everyone is welcome to receive communion at our altar. We celebrate the Eucharist at all times when we worship.

We work with other community groups in a range of local prayer, outreach and social action activities. We are a two-priest parish. There is a solid committee framework led by vestry and strong lay leadership which supports our clergy.

While believing God has greatly blessed us over the years, we must continue to seek God's guidance and discern our purpose



## **AREAS OF MISSION**

We are committed to the following areas of mission:

- **Worship** – we develop and support new and innovative ways to include various groups in the life of the church (i.e., children and youth groups, seniors, church groups and educational groups).
- **Christian Education** – we develop and support programs in spiritual development (i.e., Bible Studies, Confirmation, Pub Theology).
- **Outreach** – we reach out and share our Christian calling with others by identifying additional needs and concerns of our family members, welcoming new believers to our family, initiating activities to bring St. Mark's to the community, sharing parish revenues, continuing companion programs and establishing relationships with other Christian churches.
- **Pastoral Care** – we strive to be an inclusive, accessible and welcoming church by continuing and broadening home communion ministry and clergy and lay visitation, bringing the church to the elderly and those who cannot attend church on a regular basis and seeking ways to reduce or eliminate physical barriers such as those for the hearing impaired and physically challenged.
- **Stewardship** – we strive to promote a better understanding of stewardship and financial development.

## VALUES

Through our life and ministry, we believe:

- in gathering to hear the word of God proclaimed; together we thank God for the gifts in our lives and pray for God's wisdom and help during troubled times
- everyone is made in God's image and has value
- everyone is blessed by God with gifts and talents for ministry and that these gifts and talents should be used
- everyone is a child of God

## OBJECTIVES

We aim to:

- provide Bible-based ministry, teaching and prayer to enable people to develop their relationship with God, and to share their faith with others in their daily lives;
- nurture and develop effective fellowship, with time and space planned to allow people to meet and relationships to grow;
- be a beacon of light for all Christians taking advantage of our central and visible position within the community, and working with local organizations;
- be a resource centre for counseling and the support of individuals;
- be a place with activities to cater for all, where the buzz of life and strong Christian fellowship shines out;
- be a welcoming safe haven offering a place of prayer and responsible professional care, where people are accepted as they are and offered prayers for spiritual and physical healing;
- provide effective care of our youth and children, allowing them to grow in the faith and to develop solid and lasting Christian friendships;
- be a centre of prayer for the wider community and world issues and to support our mission partners through prayer;
- be mindful of the elderly in our church family supporting them as appropriate through home visits and fellowship; and
- work closely with other Christians in the area to the glory of God.



## STRENGTHS

St. Mark's is a vibrant, open and inclusive parish. There are many things on which we can hang our hat. Here are some:

- the mix of traditional and contemporary worship styles
- the openness and inclusiveness of our family
- the friendly, welcoming nature of our people
- the variety and breadth of ministries available
- the support for each other in our ministries
- the energy, drive and vision to pursue new ministries



## CHALLENGES

We recognize that we constantly need to review and adapt our approach in the light of changing circumstances and of the challenges that we face. Some of our strengths are also our challenges; not because we don't do them well, but because we feel the need to take them even further. The most pressing challenges at present are these:

- the struggle with finances (although we are on a relatively sound financial footing, we are always seeking to grow new ministries and opportunities which challenge us financially)
- the need to build and expand emerging new ministries, particularly among young and middle-age adults
- the need to reach out to members of our community who are not actively involved in the parish
- the limitations of our physical space for the variety and types of ministries that regularly take place at St. Mark's

## WHERE OUR FUTURE LIES

**Our future lies within our boundaries.** We don't have to change our boundaries. Our mission will include a vigorous outreach to the people of this neighborhood. This includes folks living in new housing areas such as Clovelly or in established housing areas such as Virginia Park, whether in houses, apartments, subsidized housing, or condos. Anglicans living in our parish should know about St. Mark's.

**Our future lies with young adult ministry.** Our mission will include reaching out to students of all ages and adults in their twenties, thirties and forties. Our parish should be crawling with young adults. There are many directions in which this can grow from working on practical issues such as tenant-landlord issues, resume writing, and how to thrive academically at the MUN, to growing new ministries such as new parents, single parents, and unmarried adults.

**Our future lies with leadership.** St. Mark's is a congregation known for its commitment to God. It is a wonderful community of caring people. You don't need to be well educated, highly talented or have an outgoing personality. We believe everyone is uniquely created for a larger purpose in life, and that our highest fulfillment comes in serving others.

**Our future lies among ourselves.** We believe God is calling us to stretch our faith and to be open to the possibilities that await us. Each and every one of us is the future of St. Mark's. Great things are just ahead.



## OUR COMMUNITY

St. Mark's is located in the north-east of St. John's in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. St. John's is a modern city with a 500 year history. Attractions include Signal Hill National Historic Site (where Marconi received the first transatlantic wireless transmission), the Battery (a neighborhood that still looks like a 17th-century fishing village), the Newman Wine Vaults, and scads of historic buildings and churches including St. Mark's on Logy Bay Road.



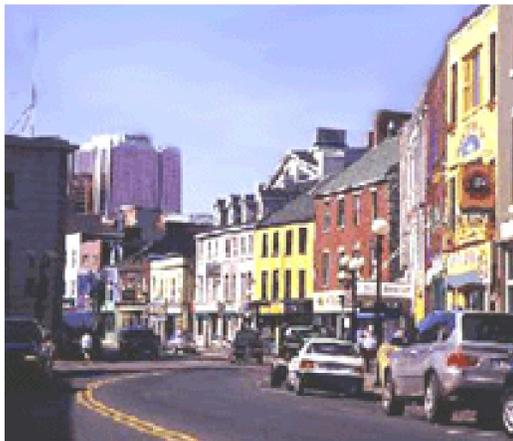
The Confederation and Colonial buildings, the Arts and Culture Centre (a theater), and the Johnson GEO Centre (which tells the geological history of Newfoundland and Labrador going back 3.7 billion years) are all worth visiting, and the Royal St. John's Regatta is held here every August. Downtown one will find museums, galleries, historical buildings, parks, restaurants, pubs, and specialty shops along narrow, winding streets and lanes. Whale tours and icebergs can be seen on boat excursions. St. John's is a walker's paradise – walking trails wend through the heart of the city, and one can hike magnificent coastline on the 400-km East Coast Trail.

The metropolitan area, which includes the city of Mount Pearl and the towns of Torbay, Conception Bay South and others, has a population of 181,000 (2006).

The major industries in St John's reflect the community's role as the seat of government, as a major East Coast harbour, and as the province's largest city. The top industries include oil and gas, government services, education, health and social services, retail trade, and accommodation and hospitality. Over the last decade the fishery has reduced its importance, offset by the growth in the offshore oil industry.

For further information about St. John's and the available services check out the following web site:

<http://www.stjohns.ca/index.jsp>



## HISTORY OF ST. MARK'S

In March, 1977, at the suggestion of the Deanery of Avalon East, the Diocesan Synod Executive granted approval for the formation of a Parish in the Northeast area of the City of St. John's.

A meeting of the Anglican community of the northeast area of St. John's was organized for Sunday, May 8, 1977 in the Virginia Park School. There were 70 residents in attendance. The Rev. Charles Hiscock chaired the meeting and informed those in attendance that establishment of a new church in the area was approved and that permission was also granted to use the auditorium of the Virginia Park School.

A Worship and Programme Committee of 15 people was formed and began to meet regularly at the home of Eric Squires. It was not recorded who suggested the name, however the parish quickly became known as St. Mark the Evangelist.

The first service was held in the Virginia Park School on May 22, 1977 and a year later, the Rev. Charles Hiscock was inducted as the first rector. In 1982 it was decided to build a new home for the parish and work began on its construction within a year. The first service in the new church was held on Christmas Eve, 1983.

Two years later, the Rev. Canon Wilson Tibbo was inducted as the parish's second rector. In 1995, the Ven. Thomas Moulton was inducted as the third rector. The fourth rector, the Rev. Sandra Tilley, was inducted on November 28, 2002 and remained until January, 2009 when she accepted the position of Diocesan Archdeacon. In 2009 The Rev. Dr. Wayne Short became rector. In 2014, The Rev. Robert Cooke became Priest-in-Charge.

By 2005, St. Mark's had grown sufficiently to support the hiring of a second priest. In August, 2005, the Rev. Jean Smith came on board for a one year period. The vestry assessed the experience and concluded that the only way the parish can continue to move forward and complete the ministries is with the addition of a second priest. In 2007, the Rev. Lynn Courage joined the team as a full-time Associate Priest. In 2010 Rev. Lynn left to become rector of the Parish of New Hope and the Rev. Robert Cooke became the new associate priest.

Since 1977, the parish has grown and matured to establish its well-known warm and friendly atmosphere. It owes its success to the vision, leadership and guidance of each of these clergy as well as numerous lay leaders involved in mission work throughout the parish.





## **OUR MINISTRY TEAM**

### **Rectors:**

The Rev. Charles Hiscock	(1978-1985)
The Rev. Canon Wilson Tibbo	(1985-1995)
The Ven. Thomas Moulton	(1995-2002)
The Rev. Sandra Tilley	(2002-2008)
The Rev. Dr. G. Wayne Short	(2009-2014)
The Rev. Robert Cooke	(2015- )

### **Associate Priest:**

The Rev. Jean Smith	(2005-2006)
The Rev. Lynn Courage	(2007-2010)
The Rev. Robert Cooke	(2010-2014)

### **Non-Stipendary Priest:**

The Rev. Dr. Alex Faseruk

### **Youth Minister:**

Robert Cooke	(2005-2010)
Allison Billard	(2010-2013)
Melissa Cullen	(2013-2014)

## OUR FACILITIES

Our facilities include a church, reception area, chapel, music room, meeting room, kitchen, offices and a pre-school. The church holds about 450 people for worship. The reception area, which serves as the parish hall, can seat 169 people for a meal. While most of the fellowship takes place in the reception area in the front of the church, all the rooms are used extensively for meetings and events. The offices are small, outdated and poorly suited for those who work there or those who visit. The pre-school is operated independently. It is comprised of several recycled portable buildings that are attached to the main facility.

The church has disabled access and assisted listening devices (ALDs) for the hearing impaired.

The church building is in relatively good shape. The roof was recently upgraded with new shingles and several other minor renovations were made at the same time. In 2014 we launched a capital campaign to raise funds to build new office space. Plans are also in the works for other renovations.



## ADMINISTRATION

The day-to-day operations of a parish the size and scope of St. Mark's requires dedicated and capable individuals. In addition to the clergy and lay ministers, St. Mark's has several paid staff. These include:

- Office Manager
- Caretaker

Additionally, each week a great deal of administrative work is done by dedicated lay leaders.

## OUR FINANCIAL POSITION

The financial position of St. Mark's is relatively sound. Over the years, significant work has been done to focus on stewardship. Stewardship at St. Mark's involves the full spectrum of financial contributions, offerings of service, and gifts of time and talents from our members to support our ministries and carry the parish forward to the future.

In 2007, we took a giant step forward and made the decision to become a permanent two-priest parish. We will continue along this path as it provides enormous benefits to the rector, to the parish, and to our congregation.

We will continue to work to maintain a sound financial position by focusing on the needs and aspirations of Anglicans in the area and encouraging good stewardship of all God's gifts.

Our electronic offerings program has been a great success at St. Mark's. It has provided most consistent givings and enabled us to do more accurate budgeting and fiscal planning. Direct debit, VISA and MasterCard are used. When in church, parishioners put their regular envelopes in the offering plate, marked Electronic Offering. Currently, about 180 families take part in the electronic offerings program (see statistical table which follows).



Although St. Mark's is not a fundraising parish, additional revenues are realized from special events such as fall fairs, dinners, auctions, and singular collections for such things as building renovations.

## SELECTED STATISTICS

### Year ending 2014

432	Families
22	Baptisms
12	Confirmations
5	Marriages
4	Funerals

