

Celebrating 25 Years



St. Thomas Anglican Church

Table of Contents

Welcome to St. Thomas Anglican Church, Fall River	pg 3
Worship	pg 4
Mission & Service Opportunities	pg 6
Spiritual Development	pg 9
Sacramental Life	pg 12
Place & People of Joy	pg 15



Welcome!

It is our joy to meet you. We truly mean it – you are welcome. We believe that it is not by accident that you have found your way here to St. Thomas Church. Whatever has led you here today, we give thanks. We are eager to know you and to learn how God is moving in your life, and we're excited to share with you the marvellous ways God is working in our church.

St. Thomas, whose name we bear, was the one disciple who wanted Jesus to prove He was alive and real. When Jesus showed him and had him touch his hands and side, Thomas exclaimed, “My Lord and my God.” We believe the heart and spirit of that encounter is still at work here today. As Jesus was pleased ‘to prove it’ to Thomas, so we are pleased to have this opportunity to prove to you and our community that Jesus is real and alive.

Together we pray and worship, we cry and laugh, we learn and search, we share and eat, are touched by God and by each other. Together, we care for each other and we reach out and serve the world around us with the love of Jesus so others can discover the joy we've found in Him.

We've come from all over and chosen to make St Thomas our spiritual home. We are rich in diversity and relationships, varied in gifts, experience and skills, yet we are one in faith. Our doors and our hearts are open to you. We would love you and your family to make St. Thomas and this wonderful congregation your spiritual home. Our hope is you feel blessed by choosing to be part of our family. May this be only the beginning of many new blessings that we share together.

Again, with delight, we say welcome.

Worship

Weekly worship is the heart of our life together. We eagerly hear God's word of comfort and challenge. We celebrate the sacraments to strengthen us to be outward and visible signs of God's love and presence in our daily lives, in our work, in our community. We bound together and renewed together for mission.

Our worship is largely 'informal and easy' in style – come as you are, no dress codes. We use the Book of Alternative Services (contemporary) as well as a variety of other resources for our weekly service.

We try to involve and include the ministry and gifts of all our people – children, youth, adults and families – in our worship. Our music is a mixture of traditional hymns and contemporary songs, played on the organ and guitar.

Our preaching is both holy and humorous (we laugh a lot together in worship), trying always to inspire us with God's truth grace which transforms us and sets us free to live joyfully and faithfully.

At the celebration of the Eucharist (Holy Communion), **ALL** are invited to receive from the Lord's Table, including children (at parents discretion they may receive either the bread and wine or a blessing), but all are welcome to come to the altar rail.

St. Thomas is part of the Parish of Fall River & Oakfield. If you are not able to make worship here on Sundays at 10:30am, you would be most welcome to worship at St. Margaret's Church in Oakfield at 9am.



MISSION & SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

We all have gifts and talents to share within God's world. The following are just some of the opportunities to become involved or deepen your walk with Jesus and with our church community.

During Worship Services:

Perhaps you have gifts to add – add to the Choir & Music Ministry, Sunday School & Children's Ministry, Readers and Eucharistic Ministry, Greeting, Lay Reader, Counting, Prayer Ministry and more! Part of our worship is bringing our offerings for a variety of local causes i.e. our weekly donation to the Food Bank/Feed Nova Scotia. Is your ministry giving?

Altar Guild:

Members of the Altar Guild work to prepare and maintain the holy space of the sanctuary and the sacristy. The preparation of altar, sacred vessels and the Bread and Wine for Eucharist plays an important role within this. They also organize decorating the church for seasonal celebrations and special services.

Celebration Sunday:

On the last Sunday of every month we celebrate birthdays, wedding anniversaries and any other joyous life events, sharing a light luncheon after worship to continue our fellowship.

Cemetery Committee:

We believe that how we honour the departed is an important indicator for how we care for the living. This group is responsible for overseeing cremation and burial plot arrangements and the maintenance of the grounds.

Ecumenical Events – Local Partnerships:

Working together we are stronger. We regularly join with our Christian friends from other local churches to host events such as: Canada Day – breakfast, Gold Rush - Chicken Burgers, ecumenical outdoor Services, Christmas events such as Sprit of Advent

Property and Finance Committee:

This building is not just for our use. We love to see it being used for social and other events by ourselves and other local community groups. This group is responsible for the maintenance of the property.

Volunteer Thursday Group:

This faithful group ‘of not just retirees’ meets every week to carry out a variety of various tasks i.e. collating weekly bulletins and tidying up the Church. They gather in good fun and with loving hearts and are sometimes known as the “Church Elves”.

Ways and Means:

A spirited and strong group (of not just women), who see themselves as “good shepherds” of our church, helping to supply both our needs and our wants. This committee is not just about fund raising, yet they are active and engaged in all kinds of it. Seasonal activities enable the congregation and community to enjoy fellowship; also they support the needs of Church activities by providing resources for spiritual development and other activities.

Outreach & Mission

“Show me a church with no outreach and I’ll show you no church.” *Paraphrase of St. James.*

We take caring for our community and its people to heart, and in hand. We support:

Beacon House – Providing help with clothing and food ministry, and other assistance 4 Saturday mornings per year.

St. George's Soup Kitchen - 4 Saturday afternoons per year to feed the hungry in Central Halifax.

Mission to Seafarers Christmas Shoebox Program

Operation Christmas Child

The Local Youth Theatre Group

PWRDF (Primates World Relief & Development Fund)

Metro Turning Point Shelter

Bryony House (Transition House for Women)

... as well as others as need arises

In 2015 **The River Lakes Compassion Project** began - the four local churches within The Fall River Area working together (St. Thomas Anglican, St. John's United, for the benefit of the local community. All of these initiatives show care and concern for the less fortunate in our community and God's world. Our volunteers are the foundation of their success.



SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

We believe that Christians young, old and young at heart need nourishing in faith and good works. We try to offer a variety of educational opportunities on and beyond Sunday's

SUNDAY SCHOOL:

Our Sunday school program is led by faithful teachers who are committed to God and all children within our community. Sunday School takes place during Sunday Worship in our Church hall with the children joining us for Holy Eucharist. You are invited to register your child and, if you wish, share your gift of teaching and support us in working with children.

MEN'S MINISTRY:

Our men's ministry gathers for breakfast once a month to share in Christian support on the last Saturday of the month at 8:00 am. A guest speaker usually leads a compelling discussion. The Men's Breakfast donate monies for Church Needs.

SENIOR'S MINISTRY:

Our senior's ministry comes together on the first Wednesday of each month between 11:00am-2pm to reflect and experience the joy of music and to appreciate the comfort of tea with friends. VISITING MINISTRY There are so many in our community who spend a great deal of time alone or are shut-in. There are many who are sick and recovering from illness. We believe it is privilege to visit and bring comfort and the blessings of our church family to them. We have a group who go out regularly to visit.

MUSIC MINISTRY: The choir leads the congregation in praise through a range of music. Senior choir practice, Wednesday at 7.30pm and the Junior Choir after worship.

BIBLE STUDY & 'LIFE GROUP'

A study of the Bible. We use a range of resources including video, music and scripture. Cultural resources are also used to stimulate discussion. St Thomas' - Wednesday morning at 10am, following 9am worship.

Monday evenings, the 'Life Group' meets – a small group learning together, discussing a wide range of issues and concerns from daily life and especially how to live for Jesus every day. We use resources from RightNow Media, Alpha Canada and other sources.

RIGHTNOW MEDIA:

Each family in the parish receives a free subscription to this wonderful streaming service, sort of a “Netflix” for Christians, so that they can support, study and learn about faith at home and on the go.





SACRAMENTAL LIFE

We believe that sacraments are a visible and outward sign of God's grace and goodness, generously given to us to bless us. For more information please call the parish office to make an appointment.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM:

To parent(s)/persons seeking the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, we say we're delighted to celebrate with you God's blessing of new life in Christ. Baptism is usually celebrated as part of our Sunday worship, and takes place several times a year (on published dates and times). Typically, one of our clergy will arrange to meet with you prior to the Baptism for some preparation and a rehearsal prior to the day.

SACRAMENT OF EUCHARIST(Thanksgiving):

We celebrate 'eucharist' by giving thanks for Jesus and all our blessings. We remember Jesus' actions and giving of himself and we share in His Body and Blood. All are invited to receive the gifts of God for the people of God. Children may receive at the discretion of their parents.

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION:

Confirmation is a personal reclaiming and remaking of one's baptismal vows and commitment to Jesus Christ, and strengthening by the Holy Spirit with gifts to take our place in the witness and mission of the church. A time of preparation takes place before the actual confirmation. Confirmation classes are open to all who are interested, seeking or questioning faith, life, purpose.

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE:

We are delighted that you've found love and joy in a relationship that is life giving and holy. We are pleased to help you celebrate your marriage and ask God's blessing on it. Please speak with the clergy to begin the process of preparation.

SACRAMENT OF THE SICK:

If you or someone you love are sick you may request a visit from our clergy. During that visit, the clergy can offer communion for you and anointing with Holy oils for healing. These visits can be at home or in hospital and can include all who are present. Your loved one can be included in the weekly bulletin for the congregation's thoughts and prayers with your permission.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:

There are times when we make mistakes, our failings and sins burden us and troubles our conscience. At these times we need counsel and encouragement. Please speak with the clergy if you would like to receive this gift/assurance of God's forgiveness.

FUNERALS:

At the loss of a loved one please know that we will support you, and help you in planning a celebration of their life. This service may include the Sacrament of Eucharist, organist and choir and other personal choices. We can also provide a reception of light refreshments. Costs are available through our Parish Office.

MINISTRY OF GIVING

Our God is the Great & Wonderful Giver – joyful, generous, overflowing always! We believe that God has blessed us richly and that He invites us to walk in the way of the 'giving life' as generous givers. There are many ways you can express your joy in giving:

SOME WAYS OF GIVING:

Time (showing up counts for a great deal)

Talent (sharing your skills, abilities and work experience)

Treasure (yes, you have treasure)

Regular Giving can be arranged through PAR (*pre-authorized remittance*) or **through Weekly Envelopes.**

PWRDF Supporting a variety of projects and initiatives throughout the world, administered by the Anglican Church of Canada (Primate World Relief & Development Fund)

Other Causes Foodbank, clothes, shoes, etc needed for special local appeals

Seasonal Gifts *Easter, Christmas & Thanksgiving*

Dedicated Giving *Building Fund and memorial items*

Memorial Giving Weekly Bulletins, Monthly Calendar, The Gift of Bread & Wine, flowers for the sanctuary can all be sponsored in memory of loved ones. These are but a few options.

The TITHE' We believe in the Bible teaching regarding 'the tithe' – all parishioners are invited to consider the level of their giving as it relates to the tithe (10%) but as a church we also believe in tithing from our profits from various events and fund raisers – ie. Our Dinner Theatre (this is a FUN Raising ministry).

FOOD Weekly collection for local food banks

SPECIAL 'SPECIFIC' APPEALS

Place & People of Joy

We believe the Church be a place and a people filled with holy joy. We do Dinner Theatre and a variety of other activities as avenues to share joy with the people of the are.



