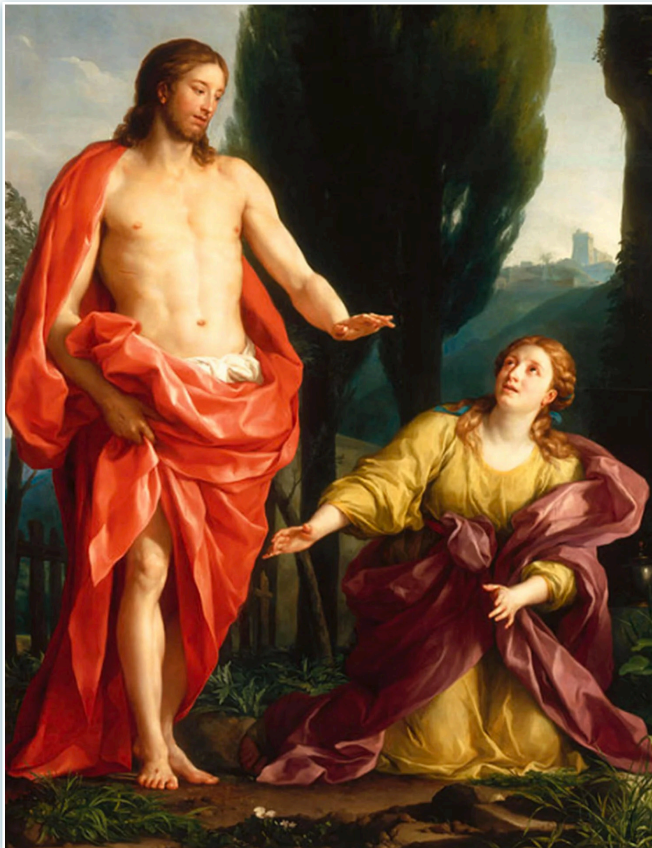




Christ is
Risen!

PENNIES & SPARROWS

Easter 2026



Mary Meets the Risen Lord (John 20:11-18)

A Sudden Recognition

In some of the Biblical resurrection stories, a curious detail emerges: the initial failure of the grieving disciples to recognize Jesus even as he stands risen and triumphant before them. And, in each of these stories, there comes a sudden moment of joyful realization when their eyes are opened and it dawns on them that their Lord indeed lives. Interestingly, in every instance, their epiphany is triggered by something Jesus either says or does.

As a particularly touching example of this, consider Mary Magdalene's encounter with Jesus outside of the empty tomb (John 20:11-18). As she stands frozen in her grief, she's approached by a man whom she initially assumes to be the gardener. "Dear woman, why are you weeping?" He tenderly asks. To which a still clueless Mary replies, "Sir, if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him" (John

20:15). It is only when the "gardener" speaks her name— "Mary!"— in the warm, familiar tone of her Master that realization finally dawns: "Rabbouni!" She exclaims, her tears of grief now becoming tears of joy. "My teacher!"

Unlike Mary none of us will ever stand face to face before the presence of our Lord (in this life, at least). Nor will we ever eat breakfast with him around a charcoal fire or touch the scars on his hand and side. This doesn't mean, however, that our Lord is absent. In fact, through the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus' presence among us is more perfect and intimate now than it ever was for the apostles. Like the apostles, however, we don't always know he's there— that is, until something happens to suddenly open our eyes to the fact!

Over the many years of our ministry with Pennies and Sparrows, we have occasionally been blessed with such moments of realization. Recently, during one of our regular drop in sessions, we watched as one of our team members (Jennifer) held a guest from the community tightly in her arms, hugging this grown woman for ten minutes straight as if she were a small, hurting child. For at least a few minutes on a dismal Thursday afternoon in February, this woman— a soul to whom the world had been unspeakably cruel— felt safe, loved and valued. In hindsight, I'm convinced that Jesus himself was involved in that hug— making himself known to us through that long embrace. "Surely, the Lord was in this place and I did not know it" (Gen. 28:17).

Two millennia have past since his resurrection and the Risen Lord is still in the business of surprising us with his presence. Our part is simply to remain obedient to teachings— loving one another self-sacrificially, ministering to the least of these, welcoming the stranger into our midst. And, as we do so, we are to listen carefully and prayerfully for his voice— keeping our eyes open to any sign of the Spirit's moving. Then, like Mary, he'll come to us, often when we least expect it. And, like Thomas, we will have no choice but to fall before him and say, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28)

In His Service,



Terence and Jasmine Chandra

Our Drop in Program (The Stone Café)

Our drop-in program (the Stone Café) is held three times a week, every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday afternoon. Here, anyone from the community can join us for a hot beverage, snack or (depending on the day) even a game of Bingo. We also provide items such as winter clothing (jackets, toques, scarves, gloves and socks) along with toiletries (shampoo, shaving cream, feminine hygiene items, etc.).

Our Ongoing Ministries:



Stone Café



Seniors Check-In: A monthly program run by seniors *for* seniors. Every session involves live music by Del Worden and his band.



Foodie Friday: A weekly cooking class started by Miriam Westin and open to everyone in the community.

Thanks to our Community Coordinator (Jennifer Hallihan) we recently opened our drop-in space to some of our community partners. This means that, as the Stone Café unfolds, our guests can meet one-on-one with workers from Fresh Start and 12 Neighbours- organizations which help them secure either transitional or permanent housing. Depending on the day, community nurses are also available to administer vaccines, take blood pressure or treat minor injuries.



Introducing Jonathan Kurian

We're thrilled to welcome Jonathan as our newest community partner. Jonathan works for the Waterloo Village Neighbourhood Association which is hosted at Stone Church. Jonathan and his partner, Chantelle, recently moved to New Brunswick from Calgary, Alberta. He works with our drop-in program (the Stone Café), Foodie Friday and Seniors Check-in.

What do you think about Saint John so far?

“Saint John is a smaller community and maritime hospitality is a real thing! It's been nice being able to walk to places uptown and take in a lot of the old architecture. Being so close to ocean is also a nice change coming from a landlocked province. We've been enjoying the fresh Sea food.”

What do you like most about working with Pennies and Sparrows?

“I really value the sense of community that comes from the work we do during the drop-in. It's meaningful to help create a space where people can come in, feel comfortable, and know someone is there to listen.”

What do you do in your free time?

“I love playing tennis, going to the gym during my free time and finding a new recipe to try out at home with my partner. You can find me most weekends also watching some sort of sport or thrifting a new clothing item.”

Other Updates:

Youth Connection: Our weekly Youth program keeps going well with about a dozen kids participating. We had 28 parents and kids attend a Hockey game in March. We are now partnering with the Church of the Good Shepherd and are meeting there every other week. They have a big gymnasium which has been a lot of fun. We have also been learning how to do some Theatre Sports thanks to Rev. Chris Ketch who is at the Church of the Good Shepherd.

Boards and Committees: Part of our work involved staying connected with other non-profit and community organizations. We serve on the Community Council on Homelessness, chair the Waterloo Village Neighbourhood Association, and meet quarterly with the Chief of Police. We also offer our space to a number of groups, including several that provide housing services to the homeless population. These connections help us to know what other services are being offered so that we can continue to serve the community in an effective way.



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Cheering Sam on as he competed at the Indoor Track and Field Championships in February.

Please pray for:

- Safety for our staff and volunteers
- New Hope and New Life for those in difficult circumstances.
- The discipleship of those who have indicated a desire to deepen their faith.

Donations to support our work can be made in the following ways:

By cheque sent to the Diocese of Fredericton with Pennies and Sparrows in the memo line - 168 Church Street Fredericton, NB E3B 4C9.

Or by cheque sent to Stone Church again with Pennies and Sparrows in the memo line - 87 Carleton Street Saint John NB E2L 2Z2.

By e-transfer to Stone Church with a note that the funds are to go to Pennies and Sparrows - stjstone@nb.aibn.com.

Canada Helps (using the drop down tab on the page to select Pennies and Sparrows) <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/13778>.