



THE CATHEDRAL

OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

PARISH PROFILE

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Located in downtown Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, the Cathedral Church of St John the Evangelist is many churches in one: a cathedral, a downtown church, a neighbourhood church, and a destination church. The diversity of our city is reflected in our congregation, our styles of worship, and our ministries. Equally important is our sense of place in the history of our community. During our search for a new incumbent, we have spent considerable time developing an understanding of who we are as a parish, and the kind of leadership we need. We are excited by the possibilities ahead!

Our Community

Situated in the prairie parkland on the South Saskatchewan River, Saskatoon serves as a regional centre for the northern prairies and as a gateway to northern Saskatchewan. The estimated city population was 282,900 in 2021 with an additional 35,000 persons living in the surrounding rural municipality. Saskatoon has glorious summers and cold winters with moderate snow.

This city is currently one of Canada's fastest growing. The health care and social assistance, retail trade, educational services, manufacturing, and accommodation and food services sectors account for about one-half the employment in the city. The energy, mining and life sciences sectors also provide significant employment. There is also an important research sector focused on Innovation Place, the largest of the mid-sized research parks in North America. At 35.8 years, the median age of the Saskatoon population is lower than the Canadian norm. About nine percent of the population is of aboriginal origin; another five percent of the population is made up of other visible minorities. Our dynamic, diverse city offers countless cultural, recreational and educational opportunities.



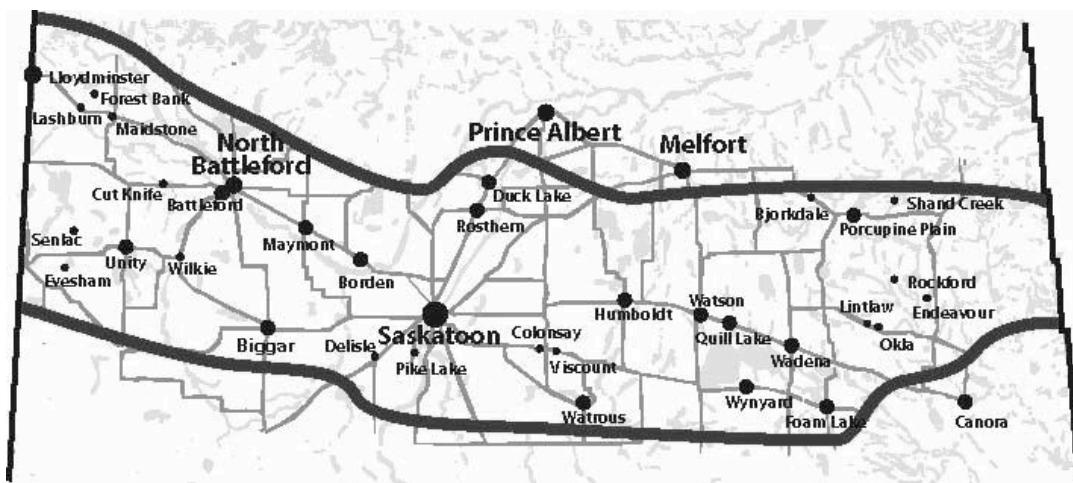
St. John's Cathedral is located in the central business district of the city. In the vicinity of the Cathedral are many high-rise apartments and condominiums occupied by older couples or seniors living alone. The downtown area also features a cohort of young professionals in the 25 to 40 age range. The age mix and family structure of surrounding neighbourhoods are more representative of the city as a whole. The University of Saskatchewan is immediately across the river, as well as a large number of students in residence and rental housing. People attending St. John's tend to reflect the composition of these neighbourhoods and of the city as a whole. It is important that the incumbent be able

to relate to a heterogeneous mix of people with differing needs.

Downtown Saskatoon features several large churches, all constructed at about the same time over one hundred years ago. There is a general feeling within the parish that there are both opportunities and mutual benefits in working closely with these churches.

Our Current Diocese

Spanning the central agricultural area of Saskatchewan, from Manitoba to Alberta, the Diocese of Saskatoon covers 75,000 square kilometres. Saskatoon is the See city and the location of the College of Emmanuel and St. Chad at the University of Saskatchewan – official seminary of the Province of Rupert's Land.



There are about fifteen rural parishes in the Diocese, many with part-time clergy and some with predominantly lay leadership, and eight urban parishes. In terms of average Sunday attendance only three Saskatoon parishes, including St. John's, and one rural parish can be considered as mid-sized – 70 to 150 persons attending. Ministering to this diverse Diocese poses many opportunities and challenges.

The costs of operating the Diocese are apportioned using a fair-share formula. St. John's Cathedral honours its Diocesan financial commitment.

The Bishop presides and preaches at the Cathedral on many occasions throughout the year, including major festivals. Diocesan services are often held at the Cathedral. The Cathedral has also been called upon as a place of gathering for civic services that include representatives of other churches and governments, including Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's visit in 1987 and the Saskatchewan memorial service for the Queen Mother. The parish conducts an annual civic lessons and carols service and has hosted services of reconciliation. More recently, the parish conducted a memorial service for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Over the years both clergy and lay members of the parish have assisted Diocesan programs and activities by contributing time, talent and in-kind support. In past years lay members of the congregation have been members of Diocesan Council and the finance committee, and have led Diocesan level refugee resettlement programs.

The Diocese currently has an episcopal vacancy following the resignation of Bishop Christopher Harper to assume the position of National Indigenous Archbishop. The electoral process is on hold as conversations take place among the three dioceses in the Province of Saskatchewan. While the incumbent at St. John's Cathedral has typically been appointed by the bishop as Dean of the Diocese, at this time we are searching for a rector for the parish.

Our People

Our parishioners make their homes in all areas of the city and beyond and they come together to worship in this central location. Of the 130 families and individuals on the parish rolls, approximately half live within a few kilometres of the cathedral. Despite the fact that we have an aging congregation, all age groups and many backgrounds are represented.

This brings richness to the congregation and a broad array of gifts. Individuals have taken many different faith journeys all leading to this one place. The variety of personal needs, preferences in



worship, and opinions on matters of theology often makes for spirited discourse and debate; we welcome the challenge of finding a happy medium. One of our parishioners describes the congregation as “a group of quite different people worshipping together, focussed on one common thing: Jesus Christ.”

In the midst of this diversity, a common trait is shared by most: we have a strong connection to history and tradition. We have been described as progressive thinkers in an historical context, supported by the three-legged stool of scripture, tradition, and reason: the history of the Anglican Church, the parish and its buildings, and our place in the City of Saskatoon is woven throughout our spiritual and liturgical lives. The traditions we share, both old and new, shape our worship, but we are not content to simply “relive the past;” instead we seek to find new forms of expression that complement our rich history.

Saskatchewan is known for its high rate of volunteerism, and the people of St John’s strongly reflect this trend. At any time throughout the year, many events and activities are taking place and parishioners are quick to lend a hand whenever needed. Engaged and committed volunteers participate in our many committees and groups. Of course, the blessing of such a large number of volunteers requires significant coordination and direction. Leaders do an admirable job but there is, at times, the risk of uncoordinated work and possible breakdowns in communication. We are searching for a rector who encourages and supports lay ministry in leadership roles and who has strong, facilitative leadership in the area of volunteer management.

Our parishioners are strong financial supporters of the mission and work of St John’s. Discussions of financial stewardship in recent years have been vigorous and productive in securing funds for a significant cathedral restoration. Our regular giving is generous but parish seniors provide about 60 percent of regular offerings. Additionally, the responses to emergent financial needs for ministry work, outreach activities, and emergency operational needs are equally strong. The property committee has been vigorous in adding tenant revenue; St. John’s derives one-third of its general revenue from parking and rental of the parish hall. Coupled with the vestry’s history of sound financial management, St John’s is on a solid financial footing. Audited financial statements are available to potential incumbents on request.

At St. John's, the incumbent holds the sole stipendiary clergy position assisted by a non-stipendiary deacon. Additionally, we are blessed by the ministry of several honorary associate clergy including two retired bishops, who regularly worship and celebrate with us. Our relationship with the College of Emmanuel and St Chad provides an opportunity for postulants to participate in the liturgy and other leadership roles during their studies.

The work of a number of paid and contracted staff is absolutely critical in support of the administration and maintenance of the parish. The cathedral office is managed by a part-time administrative assistant. Our gifted organist leads our musical pursuits. We do not have a verger position, but instead have contracted cleaning services from a local firm. The Columbarium is managed by a full-time executive director.

St John's has a history of engaged and committed lay leaders responsible for the administration of the parish and for the support of the clergy in their ministries. The rector's warden and peoples' warden work closely with the clergy and facilitate the work of the vestry, typically comprising about 12 elected and *ex officio* members. The vestry actively oversees the operations of the parish and provides input on matters of ministry and spiritual life in the parish.

Given the magnitude of administrative tasks, the vestry delegates much of the day-to-day operations to a number of key committees and groups:

- Financial operations are overseen by a volunteer treasurer and a finance committee. A volunteer envelope secretary is responsible for the receipting of all donations.
- Maintenance and repairs to buildings and grounds, including restoration and asset management, are overseen by a property committee consisting of 8-10 members.
- The Columbarium at St John's is managed by a paid executive director reporting to a management board appointed by the vestry.

The parish has an active ACW that organizes or assists events such as turkey pie making, bake sales, funeral receptions and other parish gatherings. These events provide fellowship as well as fund-raising.

Our Worship – Blending Traditional and Contemporary

The experience of worship at St John's is a blending of the traditional and the contemporary. Our churchmanship is neither "high" nor "low;" rather, it is a mix of personal approaches to ritual and expression, each of which enhances the overall experience of worship. Involvement of the laity, children and youth in all aspects of the liturgy is of particular importance. Our worship is further enriched by the many visitors to Saskatoon who regularly choose to join us.





There are three regular services: two on Sunday morning and one mid-week. Each of these services has its own unique, but not separate, congregation. A common theme throughout all services is provocative, biblically-based preaching aligned with the lectionary. The *Book of Alternative Services* is generally

used for all liturgies while the *Book of Common Prayer* may be used for special services. *Common Praise* is used as our hymnal.

- The 8:00 a.m. Sunday Spoken Eucharist is a quiet and reflective service typically attended by a small group of early risers and clergy. One attendee described this service as “a time when a person can worship without a great deal of ritual.”
- The 10:30 a.m. Sunday Choral Eucharist is our major service and includes Sunday School classes for children. Music plays a very important role in this service. Typical attendance since the pandemic has rebounded to about 70 and previously was about 120. The service is followed by a time of fellowship and sharing. This service is live streamed, available on YouTube and archived there .
- The Wednesday noon Spoken Eucharist is celebrated in the Lady Chapel. This intimate service is attended by a small group of individuals followed by a time of fellowship over a bag lunch in the Parish Hall.
- We have recently reinstituted a monthly Evensong service.



Prior to Covid our 10:30 service featured a choir master and a small choir. At present we use a cantor, small choir or soloists in some services. Our pipe organ is used extensively and Vestry has recently approved the purchase of a pre-owned concert grand piano. Our FamJam group adds contemporary music to the service. From time to time, our director of music invites local musicians and singers, on both stipendiary and

voluntary bases, to supplement the fine musicians we have in our congregation.

Our Ministry

For many years, our mission statement has been:

“We at St. John's Cathedral are a Christ-centred community. We strive to be the heart, hands, mouth, ears and feet of Jesus Christ in our parish, the Diocese of Saskatoon, and the contemporary world through worship, education, and service.”

While this is an inspiring statement, we have found that it has not provided a clear call to action for the congregation.

Our approach to evangelism is understated; most prefer to be open and welcoming in the greater community, and to nurture others' faith by quietly allowing people to find God in their own way, while providing supportive liturgy, environment, music, and teaching. We are extending our reach through Facebook and Instagram accounts and anticipate these becoming significant modes of communication about parish life.

Prior to the pandemic we had a Pastoral Care Team, a group of 8-10 individuals who regularly visited parishioners, their family and friends in homes, in hospital, and in assisted living facilities, often accompanied with Holy Communion. This group was made up of members of the laity along with support and oversight from the clergy, and helped to ensure parishioners had a connection with the parish community, even if they cannot attend worship regularly. During the pandemic, a Cathedral Shepherds ministry consisting of regular phone calls was substituted. This has continued along with a card ministry. Clergy visits are now a priority and the pastoral care team is being revitalized. We will be looking for direction and support in rejuvenating our pastoral care ministry.

We have an “inner-city” location. We lend support to local organizations such as the Saskatoon Food Bank, Egadz (an organization that provides programs to children, youth and their families), women's shelters, and The Lighthouse (supported living). We have a dedicated group who help serve hot, nutritious lunches on a monthly basis at the Friendship Inn. At Christmas, we distribute presents and gift cards to help families have a happier season. A number of self-help and support groups make use of our buildings for their meetings. In years past St John's has had a tradition of sponsoring refugees.

Our Sunday School had grown over several years with more than 10 children attending routinely. Covid has had a negative effect, however, and we are striving to rebuild the Sunday School.

We have an active Prayer Team that meets regularly to pray for our parish and people. This group prays both privately and publicly for members of the congregation, their families and friends. Members also participate in two-person prayer teams in the Lady Chapel during the Sunday services.

Our Deacon leads a bible study group on-line. The Cathedral has an active role in hosting marriage preparation classes for couples in the diocese preparing for the sacrament of marriage.

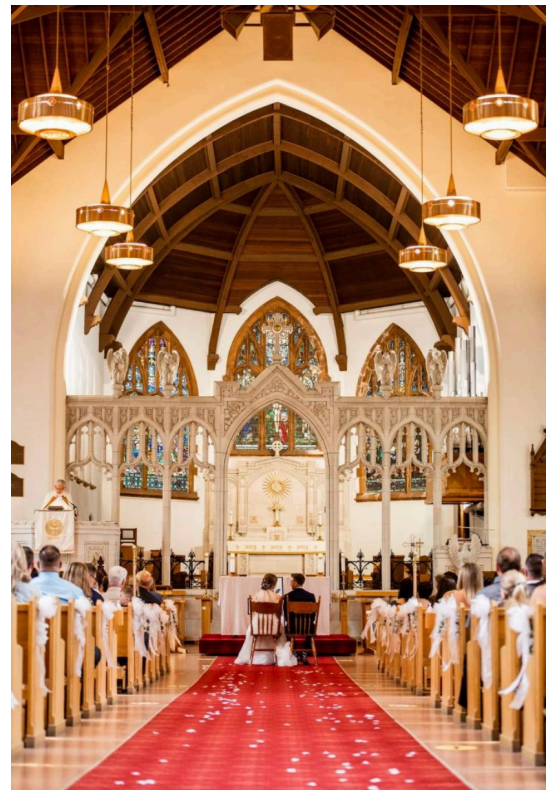
The Columbarium at St John's is a unique part of our parish life, providing an important ministry to the community outside the parish. As a multi-faith facility, it supports the broader community in addition to those of the Christian faith.

Our Property and Buildings – Then and Now

The first service of the Church of England in the Saskatoon area was held in the “Little Stone Schoolhouse”, now on the University of Saskatchewan campus, beginning in 1887. In 1902 a group of eight Anglican families formed the parish of St. John's and built a wood-frame building on Third Avenue using volunteer labour. In 1910 decisions were made that led to the purchase of the present cathedral site on the left bank of the South Saskatchewan River.

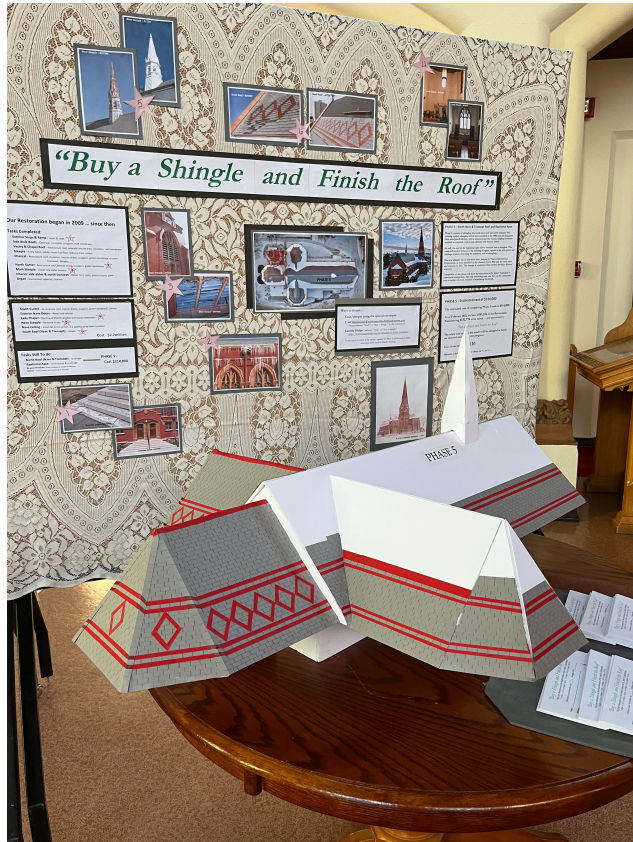
Construction of the new church got underway in 1912 during a great building boom. The Governor General, HRH the Duke of Connaught, and other dignitaries participated in laying the foundation stone on September 2, 1912. The first service was not held until October 7, 1917 due to an economic recession. Built as a parish church, St. John's was granted pro-cathedral status in 1924 and became a cathedral in 1932. The cathedral is gothic revival in design. The 44 m-high steeple is the tallest in western Canada. During construction the church was identified as “a source of pride to the entire city” – something that continues to the present day. The Cathedral organ was built by Casavant Frères and was installed in 1981. The exterior of the cathedral was designated as a Municipal Heritage site by the City of Saskatoon in 2004.

The Columbarium at St. John's Cathedral was constructed in the undercroft of the Cathedral and opened to the public in spring 1997. This development won two Saskatchewan architectural heritage awards. One is for the external design and the other for adaptive reuse. The Columbarium is a form of outreach to the broader community and is self-sustaining. The Columbarium also made a significant financial contribution to the recent restoration of the Cathedral. The parish is well aware of its commitment, in perpetuity, to the families who have placed remains of loved ones in the Columbarium. This commitment is embedded in the Cathedral's approach to maintenance and restoration.



During its one-hundred year history, the Cathedral building has been the subject of several restoration ventures, notably in the 1950s and 1980s. Since then the building had been subject to various water leaks and other defects. In 2010, with the assistance of a generous donation, consultants were engaged for the conduct of a thorough building envelope condition assessment. This assessment identified several deficiencies in the building envelope as well as deficiencies that could potentially affect public health and safety. The minimum cost of correcting all the deficiencies

was estimated at \$1.3 million. The restoration was carried out at a cost of \$3.1 million through five phases ending in October 2022.



While the main outcome is a new polymer-slate roof incorporating the red diamond pattern of the original 1917 roof, many other tasks were undertaken to improve the “bones” of the cathedral. These included re-structuring and, in some cases, completely re-building the flat roofs and correcting structural deficiencies in the main roof. The roof gutters, the source of the building envelope failure, were totally re-constructed and the drainage system improved. Other tasks included re-setting steps and repairing step surfaces, replacing the cedar louvres in the steeple, restoring the small nave steeple, and various measures to improve building safety. In addition, all of the building ceilings were sealed and insulated, leading to improved comfort, lower heating costs and, a bonus, improving the already superior acoustics of the building. At the same time the building’s organ was cleaned and refurbished.

In 1951, a two-story deanery was constructed adjacent to the Cathedral. The deanery was

sold to a developer in 2009 and the proceeds used in the cathedral restoration. The incumbent at St. John’s will receive the standard Diocesan housing allowance.

The parish hall was constructed in 1961 as a stand-alone building. The hall contains parish offices and other office space and a residential suite currently occupied by the organist. A lift has been installed permitting wheelchair access to all areas except the lower meeting room. The physical separation of the hall and the Cathedral presents challenges for some activities. We have three long-term tenants in the hall – a music academy for children, an amateur dinner theatre group and a quilting school - that provide a steady source of revenue. In addition, several community groups use the hall for minimal rental as part of our outreach program.

An adjacent parking lot historically provided \$100,000 in annual revenue. This revenue was significantly reduced because of the Covid pandemic. Parking lot upgrades were financed by a loan from the operator – a loan that is now close to being repaid. Arrangements are in place for free parking for Sunday services and for other parish events.



Now that the occupancy-critical building envelope concerns are largely addressed, we are starting to look to the future of the cathedral in the community ... and the community in the cathedral. We are developing a vision and a plan for sustainable long-term building occupancy in the form of a shared performing arts and worship space within St. John's Cathedral. We are about to engage the wider community in helping us create a facility that is well-suited to the performing arts and other community uses while still maintaining its initial and primary purpose as a place of worship.

Our Strengths and Challenges

In preparation for welcoming a new incumbent, the parish structured a period of consultation and reflection to help us understand more about ourselves as a congregation, our strengths and challenges, and to serve as a basis for future planning and action. We employed some processes and materials developed by the Natural Church Development (NCD) organization. An NCD representative provided us with a summary report of the results of a congregational survey. It was heartening to be encouraged by the presenter to focus on our strengths while not losing sight of the areas where some possible growth may emerge.

The report provided affirmation about parish leadership. We recognize the variety of gifts exercised by individuals and provide space and opportunity to contribute them. We experience fulfilling worship; loving and caring relationships; and parish structures that support the parish mission.

We were not surprised to learn that the parish needs greater confidence and understanding of the Anglican Church's provision for evangelism, and the report suggested we could work on achieving a more passionate spirituality! We say that we need greater confidence because we are aware of many of our activities which we characterize as evangelism or outreach and want to build more awareness and understanding of how these bring the good news of the Gospel to others.

We are challenged to “stretch our faith” so that it is based on the Word, directed by the Spirit and focused on the world. We are looking for inspired leadership to nurture us in these dimensions.

Our Needs for an Incumbent

We recognize that everyone brings different strengths and skills and we will welcome all the gifts a new incumbent will bring. There are, however, some traits that are particularly important in a leader for our parish. Developing this profile has been a journey: we have spent time thinking about ourselves, our strengths and weaknesses. And as a result, we feel we understand those areas where specific leadership would be beneficial. These include:

- **Leadership that encourages other leaders** - It is very important that a leader adopt supportive and coaching leadership styles, is a good listener, is able to deal with differing opinions without becoming defensive, and is able to manage a divergence of opinion or conflict that may arise. Being firm in conviction, with the ability to minister to those having equally firm convictions, is an asset. We are looking for demonstrated experience in building and supporting lay leadership.
- **Experience with urban ministry and parish development** - We are keenly aware of our sense of place as a downtown parish, a cathedral parish, and a destination parish. We need a leader with a solid understanding of this unique environment. Our incumbent will lead us in reflecting on what we have learned about our parish and in implementing a plan for congregational development. We welcome someone with specific experience in managing this kind of change in a parish.
- **Commitment to Pastoral Care** – Caring for those who are in special need of prayer and support, often at difficult times in their lives, is one of the most important ministries in our parish. We are reinvigorating this ministry and are looking for an incumbent with a demonstrated commitment and an openness to innovation to pastoral care ministry.
- **Sensitivity to the liturgy and scriptures** – The liturgy with all that it encompasses is central to our worship and parish life. We require someone who is a skilled liturgist, sensitive to this need in the congregation. But, perhaps even more importantly, someone who has a deep knowledge of and passionate love for the Bible, and who will therefore make the scriptures speak to parishioners in the context of their daily lives.
- **A spirit of inclusivity and engagement** – This is a broad-based congregation, and that is one of our strengths. All who enter the doors of the Cathedral should feel welcome. Our leader should support that and stay connected to the members of the parish, understanding what’s happening in their lives, and being engaged. Our leader should be astute in engagement in public causes.
- **Spiritually and emotionally healthy** – Our parish is busy and has many different needs, both as a whole and individually. It is imperative that our incumbent has the ability to manage competing demands while maintaining a healthy balance between professional and private life.