The Community

The parish is in the mostly rural and agricultural Municipality of South Dundas (https://southdundas.com/) which stretches along the St. Lawrence River for 20 km. The river was key to the early history and development of the area. The construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway in the 1950s caused enormous disruption that still has ramifications. Two churches and considerable portions of Morrisburg and Iroquois, and the hamlet of Riverside, were destroyed, along with other settlements. New communities were created, including the hamlet of Riverside Heights. The expected prosperity and development did not really occur, and the marginal agricultural character of the area was not changed.

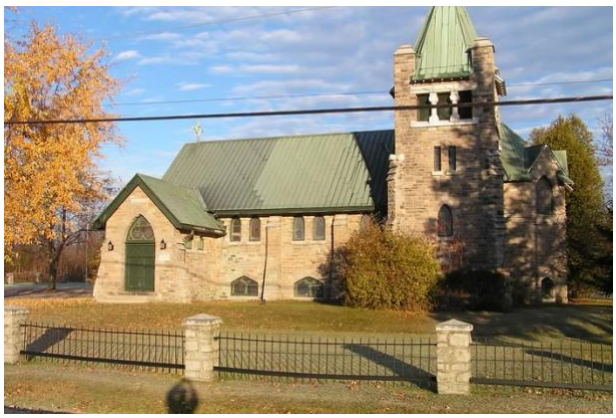
The population of South Dundas at the 2021 census was about 11,044, with the village of Morrisburg having about 2,400 residents and Iroquois about 1,400. There is a substantial senior population, the area being well known as a retirement haven. Riverside Heights has about 85 houses, and the parish also draws from Ingleside, 12 km to the east, and Williamsburg 10 km to the north. There are elementary schools in Morrisburg and Iroquois, and a high school in Iroquois. The closest hospital is in Winchester, 25 km to the north. South Dundas is 30 minutes from Brockville to the west and Cornwall to the east; Ottawa is an hour to the north. Morrisburg is about halfway between Kingston and Montreal.

The parish has two churches and four cemeteries; two of the latter are closed.



St. James', Morrisburg, built in 1894, is the second stone church sited, along with the Rectory, on High Street in the center of the village. The first church was established in 1857; the current one in 1893. St. James' is known for its beautiful stained glass windows and the stenciled interior finished in 1903 and repainted in 1984.





Holy Trinity Chapel, Riverside Heights, is a stone church on County Road 2 about six km. east of Morrisburg. Mother church of the parish, and originally Lutheran, it was established in 1811 near the original shore of the St. Lawrence. Built in 1902, it was moved and rebuilt stone-by-stone during the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1957. It became a Chapel in 2017.

The former rectory, on the same property as St. James', is rented by the House of Lazarus and functions as a Community Hub and Warming Centre (its official title) known as both the Hub and Martha's House. About – House of Lazarus Members of the parish work closely with the staff to support the broader community.

Administration: Our new Communications Assistant, paid for 8 hours per week, prepares Sunday bulletins and uploads or prints them; helps prepare any large mailings, notices, letters or reports that need compiling; and will maintain the parish website. While the lawns and gardens are maintained by volunteers; snow removal and cleaning are done by contractors. St. James' Music Director is paid by contract, and Holy Trinity's musician is an employee. The Pastoral Associate, the Reverend Canon Pat Martin, (retired) has been incredibly generous with her time and talents. The Venerable Peter Crosby provides service at Holy Trinity on a per diem basis.

Parish Council meets monthly, except during the summer. Various committees are established and operate well with lay leadership. The task force, 'Developing Our Future', addressing the church rehabilitation project has been stalled for the past 18 months.

Worship: St. James' holds Holy Eucharist at 10:30 Sunday morning, using BAS and supplementary Eucharistic prayers. There is lots of lay participation (altar guild, decorators, liturgical assistants, servers, greeters, readers, prayers of the people, Chalice administrators, PowerPoint operators, sound board operators, live stream operators, collection, a scheduler, etc.). Coffee time precedes the 10:30 service. There is a new Contemplative Service held at 9:00 a.m. on the second and fourth Sundays. Holy Trinity Chapel holds services on the first and third Sundays at 10:00 a.m., using the BAS, led by the Venerable Peter Crosby. It important to note that our parish has always been a Broad Anglican Tradition community (low Anglican) combined with a touch of contemporary evangelical and Celtic elements. It is a very relational parish.

Normally there are monthly services at the Hartford Retirement Centre. There have

been a late afternoon Christmas Eve family service and early evening service with Christmas Carols. Services are also held on Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter.

Music: St. James' has a paid Music Director/Organist. There is a music team that leads traditional and contemporary music for services and may include organ and/or guitar, and piano accompaniment. Music is from Common Praise, Sing a New Creation, Voices United and other sources. Holy Trinity`s musician is an employee.

Pastoral Care: There are several members of the congregation trained to provide pastoral care and who support their designated contacts in the parish. There are about 21 names on the pastoral care list. There is an Emergency Prayer Team that may be called upon in urgent situations. There is also a Prayer Shawl ministry, knitting or crocheting shawls which are given to people who are experiencing illness or other difficulties.

Children's Ministry: Great efforts have been made to establish various children's ministries, but there are simply not enough children to make use of them. Our congregation and community are heavily weighted in the direction of seniors.

Adult Education: is really important to the congregation. It is led primarily by the Reverend Canon Pat Martin and lay members. This past year *Education for Ministry* program from the University of the South came to a close after many years of participation by members of the congregation. The Rev. Canon Pat coordinates a weekly Coffee Morning Gospel Conversation by Zoom. A book study of Better Ways to Read the Bible took place during the summer. Currently the study is Rediscovering / Reclaiming the Way of Jesus and the God of Love and Healing, on Mondays, Sept 14 - Oct 5 at 2 pm at the church, also available on Zoom.

Building Christian Community – Inside and Out: Cornerstone to our community service and outreach, the Apple Tree Ministry provides assistance for those who are struggling with food, clothing, transportation, or financial needs, from gas cards to anonymous envelopes. Apple Tree is the "host" of the annual noon Christmas Dinner held at the Legion. The free "dinner for people who need people" is coordinated by the Reverend Canon Pat and team, staffed by the parish and friends, and supported by donations, which bring in funds not only for the dinner but that provide for Apple Tree Ministry throughout the year. The full dinner is attended by well upwards of 230 people and is available in take-out or delivery format as well as at the Legion.

The Martha`s Ministries include Martha`s Drop In Lunch, a twice-monthly free lunch and fellowship program. (The Hub provides lunch alternate weeks with the added opportunity to participate in various wellness groups and schedule free counselling.) Martha`s Closet offers a popular monthly access to free clothing, donated by Mark`s Work Warehouse and others. In addition to preparing Christmas knapsacks for individuals struggling during the season, Christmas trees are filled with mittens and

hats which are provided to local schools to give to children missing those items.

The parish is a strong supporter of the Madagascar School Project, hosting an annual special event to fundraise for it. A team from St. James' volunteer at Centre 105 in Cornwall on a weekly basis.

We hope in future years to continue the annual Christmas Youth Orchestra concert which have been hugely enjoyed by the community. We participate in the Eastern Ontario Small Halls program and have hosted wonderful concerts in the church.

Our treasurer and team provide a well-used free income tax preparation service for all below a certain income level, through the church or through Martha's House.

Parish Social Events – Fundraising, Fun-raising, Funds: Events are coordinated and run by groups/members of the parish during the year, some of which include luncheons before Playhouse performances; a spring yard sale and barbecue; various church suppers; a murder mystery play every second year; and breakfast at Iroquois' Applefest. Members of the parish provide catering for various events. Parish Council keeps an Events/Fundraising Calendar to monitor our efforts. We have weekly envelopes, on-line donation and encouragement to use PAR (direct debit). Envelopes are provided with a letter from the Rector at Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter.

The parish has consistently met its apportionment and C.O.P.S. commitments to the diocese. We have appreciated diocesan support in past years as we work to balance the budget and maintain or increase our level of outreach, as well as keep our buildings going. A stewardship/pledge program was begun in 2017 but was not maintained. Developing a stewardship program is a priority going forward.

Developing our Future: In recent years we have sought input from parishioners and community representatives to determine how we may better serve and partner with the community, what we would like to see in building resources and services, and how we might support our parish and community initiatives financially. A study by Queen`s students in Urban and Regional Planning provided planning guidance and subsequent possibilities for the adaptive reuse of St. James'` as we try to benefit the community and adopt new uses while still retaining worship space.

A *Building Condition Report* on St. James' was completed by Barry Padolsky Architects and Heritage Consultants in 2019. The assessment was intended to serve as a tool for repairing/maintaining the building in good condition through appropriate and timely efforts, aimed at preserving the building's heritage character and integrity, while addressing health and safety issues, and looking at how the building might be renewed for more pastoral, outreach and community use. The building study identified considerable and very costly deferred maintenance and other issues to be addressed.

The Developing Our Future task force made significant progress in planning and conducting initial investigative work. They stopped short of developing a proposal for the diocese on the rehabilitation of St. James' and a new build addition. A key next step is to explore what funds might be raised to support such a project. The Communications & Development office provided some resources; Further consultation with the parish and preparation of a proposal for our Diocese are required.

1. **Where are we, as a parish, now?**

Our parish is open, faith-filled, welcoming, oriented towards outreach, and honest about our imperfections. We have high morale with lots of people eager to be involved in ministry, and share a culture of mutual care.

The Parish of South Dundas is focused on the community around us. We are proud of the fact that our church is known as a place where people can come for help and aware that there are fewer such places in the area. Our partnership with the House of Lazarus, which rents the rectory, is a source of joy as are the ministries of Martha's Closet, Martha's Lunch, and community suppers. These can also cause some stresses: space is at a premium in the church, the rectory is no longer available as clergy housing, and the rent received from the House of Lazarus does not cover the cost of the clergy housing allowance.

Worship at St. James' in Morrisburg emphasizes accessibility and friendliness. We enjoy a diversity of music and embrace an informal, relaxed style with lots of lay involvement in the service (which is livestreamed). Parishioners come from a wide variety of backgrounds and we seek to ensure we are welcoming to all and reflect the "broad umbrella of the Anglican tradition". Approximately 50-60 people attend weekly, mostly elderly parishioners. The age of parishioners reflects that of the town. In addition, Morrisburg has become a retirement community.

The parish values Christian education. Education for Ministry (EFM), Cursillo, and Alpha have all been embraced by St. James. The Rev. Canon Pat Martin provides a great deal of well attended learning opportunities.

Finances and property decisions are key stressors for us. There is a great deal of deferred maintenance, although much work has been done in recent years. In particular, the main entrance is unusable due to the danger posed by the steeple above the doorway. There have been ongoing discussions for years (decades) regarding redevelopment of the property but the costs and the demands of fundraising are formidable. The historic church building is very beautiful and very beloved.

In addition to St. James', Morrisburg, the Parish of South Dundas includes a chapel, Holy Trinity in Riverside. Currently, the Ven. Peter Crosby (retired) presides at a Eucharist twice a month with roughly 20 people in attendance. Holy Trinity has significant funds in the diocesan Consolidated Trust Fund. It needs new septic and

water systems. While the relationship between the two communities is sometimes strained, the ministry of Holy Trinity is valued by the leadership of St. James and everyone is very grateful for the ministry of Archdeacon Peter.

2. **What is important to us as we look to the future?**

Over all, we hope for a future that looks much like the present: a community focuses on outreach and community engagement, with relaxed and welcoming worship that is actively welcoming to people with different religious backgrounds, people of all sexualities and genders, and people experiencing poverty.

We recognize the need to focus on financial sustainability and to reach decisions regarding the physical plant. One priority is to continue the discernment and planning work of the "Developing our Future" task force in order to finalize decisions regarding the property.

We hope to see the revitalization of teamwork in the parish for day-to-day church operations and not only at special events or community outreach projects.

3. **What are the qualities we seek in an incumbent?**

We are seeking an incumbent who will share our orientation towards the wider community and embrace the role of St. James in Morrisburg. This involves being involved in community life beyond the doors of the church as well as being able to welcome people of all backgrounds into the church. In particular, it is important that the incumbent be comfortable with and gracious to people experiencing poverty.

We are seeking an incumbent who is a collaborative leader, willing to work with retired clergy and lay leadership to set the vision and work towards its fulfillment. It is important that our priest recognize and encourage the gifts for ministry and leadership of others in the parish. Being tech-savvy would be a bonus, too!

We are seeking an incumbent with a deep spiritual life who is able to share their faith with others through preaching and teaching with the focus on the love of God and pastoral care that demonstrates that love.

We are seeking an incumbent who is mature; someone who knows themselves, is comfortable in their own skin, and has a good sense of humour. We recognize the importance of good boundaries and know we need an incumbent who will be clear about their own.

Links:
The parish web site: https://www.southdundasanglicans.ca
Facebook page: https://m.facebook.com/southdundasanglicans
YouTube: Anglican Parish of South Dundas Anglican Parish of South Dundas - YouTube