

## St. Andrew's, Burt

### What are some significant moments in the history of your church that have shaped its identity today?

St Andrew's Church was founded in 1949 by two seminarians surveying the need for an Episcopal church in Niagara County. The new little church was admitted to the Diocese of Western New York as a mission at the 1950 Diocesan Convention. After this admission, the growth of the congregation required an expansion of the building. In 1956, this work was done and dedicated in 1959. St Andrew's began our longest running community partnership, our community Store on Main Street in Newfane. The all-volunteer store provides thrift priced clothing and housewares to the people of Newfane including a large migrant population. In 1985 two pieces of property were acquired by the parish filling out the grounds as they are today. After this acquisition, St Andrew's applied for and was granted, parish status in 1987. Since then, the ministries of the parish have grown to include our major annual fundraisers: the Lenten Fish Fry and the Fall Bazaar. Our spiritual growth programs have also flourished, notably our education programs. Since building separate spaces for the Sunday School program in 1994, our classes have outgrown those facilities and now meet in the undercroft.



### What makes your church unique in the region and the diocese?

One of the way St Andrew's Burt is unique in our region in that the church uses a hybrid service to stay connected to the members who can no longer attend Sundays mornings or for those who are out of town. This service is also offered for weddings and funerals for family members/friends who can not attend.

### What are the most vibrant ministries or strengths of your parish today?

St. Andrew's Community Store: offers affordable, gently used clothing and household items to local families.

Adopted family ministry: The church "adopts" three families in the community, every year, who are in need of resources. We provide the family holiday meals, gift cards to support monthly needs, school supplies, and Christmas gifts.

Pet food pantry: pet food is donated and given to families in the community who need support taking care of their family pets.

Love rising: an event that fosters community engagement and regional unity. We are also active in the Niagara Deanery, a coalition of eight Episcopal congregations in Niagara County, working together to share resources, support community agencies, and strengthen our ministries.

**Describe a moment in your community's life when you felt the presence of the Holy Spirit moving among you. What made that moment possible?**

One moment at St Andrew's where the Holy Spirit was felt by all, was during the singing of Silent Night by candlelight at our midnight Mass. Everyone was kneeling in the pews holding their lit candles, as the usher turned the lights down. The choir who diligently prepare for Christmas Eve led us in a four part harmony as we softly sang silent Night acapella. As the final note sounded, we remained in silence for a moment and we could feel the Spirit among us.

**How does your church engage with the local neighborhood, the civic life of your community, or diocesan and/or Episcopal Church-wide initiatives?**

St. Andrew's has a rich history of fostering strong partnerships with churches across the region. For several years, we shared a formal Covenant with St. John's Episcopal Church, collaborating regularly and sharing a priest. Today, we continue this spirit of cooperation with St. Paul's Episcopal Church, sharing clergy and supporting each other. Together, we have hosted shared services, joint fundraisers, and exchanged best practices to strengthen both of our communities. Additionally, St. Andrew's has teamed up with several local Episcopal and Methodist churches to host Love Rising for the past four years—an event that fosters community engagement and regional unity.



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**What are the hopes and dreams of your congregation for its next chapter?**

St. Andrew's hopes to continue to share the unconditional love of Christ across the community, so that the ripple effect will continue throughout the region and eventually the world.