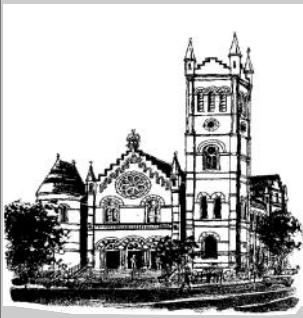


# THE LINK

## St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church



April 2020

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Victoria, BC



This has been a discouraging difficult week. Feeling stir crazy and isolated is agonizing. Molehills keep growing into mountains and the last of the climbing gear was just handed out. Frustrations mount which leaves you feeling that the closest and easiest object of your impatience is actually someone or something you love the most and they just happened to be the closest to your escape valve. Stop. Take a breath. Time out.

Hold the phone. Consider: in the span of 89 days, the world has changed perhaps forever. In that three-month time period 170 nations have been infected with a virus that has sickened 600,000 people and taken 27,000 lives. Our lives have been turned upside down and we have barely taken a breath before the next wave of bad news. On December 31, the first cases of a new virus were diagnosed in Wuhan, China. January 25 was the first diagnosis in Canada. Thursday, March 5 we were notified of the first eight infected in British Columbia and less than a week later a man infected on Vancouver Island was identified.

You need no further explanation or reminders of the vast life changes that our lives and culture have undergone by necessity within this last month. It does not appear this “new normal” is likely to subside within the near future. How do we adapt and cope? How do we not allow our anger at feeling so out of control not to be misdirected at those not at fault? How do we nurture and maintain our faith that while we may be isolated and distancing from others, God is in fact, not isolating or socially distancing from us? How can I be so sure? This is easier to detect when you pay attention to what we are learning in the course of these difficult days.

A week before the virus hit full-force, I suffered the theft of something valuable to me. Someone stole my backpack. Inside the backpack was a piece of computer equipment packed with sermons, funerals, transitional ministry presentations, and a host of other valuable items. Over 20 years were reflected in that devastating loss. A week later the extent of this devastating virus forced us to cancel worship, Bible Studies, home visits and the hope of a quick return to church as we know it. Suddenly worship needed to be delivered from our home and recorded on an iPad so that it could be received by anyone who might be able to access it. I learned quickly that I am not a recording star. I am a pastor. I learned that all decisions must heretofore be made via email or over a phone. I learned there are no experts in a pandemic and that no one is an expert in the steps necessary to guide a face-to-face congregation to the “new normal” of needing to reach out to others via phone call and letter as opposed to catching up over a cup of tea. I learned that my dependence upon all that was in that backpack was actually a crutch that is no longer necessary!

These weeks have taught me that I only thought I was in control before the theft of a valuable backpack or the loss of seeing dear church members weekly in worship. I am learning that God will give us the words when they are most needed. I am learning the value of making mistakes while learning new methods of doing church and ministry. I am being reminded that the church was never the building but the people who filled the building and that being church now requires that I/we call each other more often than ever. I am cognizant of the fact that God has not given up on us so we must not be

(Continued on page 3)

## Message from Session

In some ways, our session meeting on 17 March seems a long time ago, much has happened and our situation changes day by day. But through all of this we know that our God is constant, unchanging and is with each one of us in our individual situations.

Psalm 121.8 - 'The LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.

We are pleased that we have three members of the congregation who, after discussion and prayer, have agreed to accept a call to eldership. As soon as we are able to meet, there will be a congregational meeting at which together, we may approve the names of these elected elders. As a session we are excited and grateful to these three individuals who are willing to accept the responsibility of leadership within the congregation of St. Andrew's. The newly elected elders will be provided training as they prepare for their journey of serving God as elders.

Much of the remainder of the meeting was spent in COVID-19 planning. Hard decisions had to be made: foremost, how we can keep ourselves and members of the community safe and continue to be a church. Sadly, many events had to be postponed.

You may have seen a poster on the door of the church, informing the community that although we are unable to meet for worship in the sanctuary, we continue to be the church of St Andrew's. The poster reflects the lyrics of a hymn by Richard Avery:

I am the church! You are the church!  
We are the church together!  
All who follow Jesus,  
all around the world!  
Yes, we are the church together!

The church is not a building;  
the church is not a steeple;  
the church is not a resting place;  
the church is a people.

Indeed we remember that we are the church, the people of God. St. Andrew's is God's, we are his, and we are called to care for one another.

Ephesians 6:18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

**Colina Titus**  
Session Clerk



March 1 - Communion Sunday

## In Loving Memory



**Maureen (Mary) Brown**  
**Dorothy Barss**

*(Continued from page 1)*

tempted to give up on God. These will indeed be days of frustration, anger, fear and panic but, if we pay attention, days of learning new and valuable lessons. Someone sent to me this week a letter as if were penned by the virus itself. Can you imagine what this dreaded disease might say to us if it could speak. Perhaps something like this...

With Prayerful Affection  
**Pastor Mitch**

### **An Imagined Letter from the Virus**

"Stop. Just stop. It is no longer a request. It is a mandate. We will help you. We are not well. None of us; all of us are suffering. Last year, the firestorms that scorched the lungs of the earth did not give you pause. Nor the typhoons in Africa, China, Japan. Nor the fevered climates in Japan and India. You have not been listening. It is hard to listen when you are so busy all the time, hustling to uphold the comforts and conveniences that scaffold your lives. But the foundation is giving way, buckling under the weight of your needs and desires. We will help you. Despite what you might think or feel, we are not the enemy. We are Messenger. We are Ally. We are a balancing force. We are asking you: to stop, to be still, to listen; to move beyond your individual concerns and consider the concerns of all; to be with your ignorance, to find your humility, to relinquish your thinking minds and travel deep into the mind of the heart; to look up into the sky, streaked with fewer planes, and see it, to notice its condition: clear, smoky, smoggy, rainy? How much do you need it to be healthy so that you may also be healthy? To look at a tree, and see it, to notice its condition: how does its health contribute to the health of the sky, to the air you need to be healthy? Stop. Just stop. Be still. Listen. Ask us what we might teach you about illness and healing, about what might be required so that all may be well. We will help you, if you listen."

by **Kristin Flyntz**  
3.12.2020

## **Report from Presbytery Meeting March 31, 2020**

A few weeks ago we would all have thought that "zoom" was a verb, now it is a noun and it is front and centre in our vocabulary as all of us who need to continue to meet for decisions, adapt and gain new skills. Vancouver Island Presbytery met by "Zoom" on the 31<sup>st</sup> for some very important discussions and decisions. First on the list was the good news that Knox Sooke asked Presbytery to confirm a call to a new minister to fill their vacancy. This was agreed to by Presbytery and we look forward to being able to announce the completion of this in the weeks to come. Knox Sooke is a small but very vibrant church community and looks forward to embracing God's work with the help of a new minister.

The Administration Committee of Presbytery had several recommendations for decision. The committee recognized that all of our congregations are struggling with financial commitments, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. They recommended, and Presbytery agreed, that each of the 12 congregations comprising V.I. Presbytery be offered a grant of \$10,000. It was also agreed to have further discussions with each congregation regarding the payment of presbytery dues.

It was good to hear from others that they are finding new ways for congregants to continue the financial support of their congregations. St. Andrew's will hear more about this and our Session will keep us informed as to how you can help.

One final news item: General Assembly, which would have taken place in June, has been postponed until 2021.

**Sheelagh Garson**  
Presbytery Elder Rep.



## Property Committee

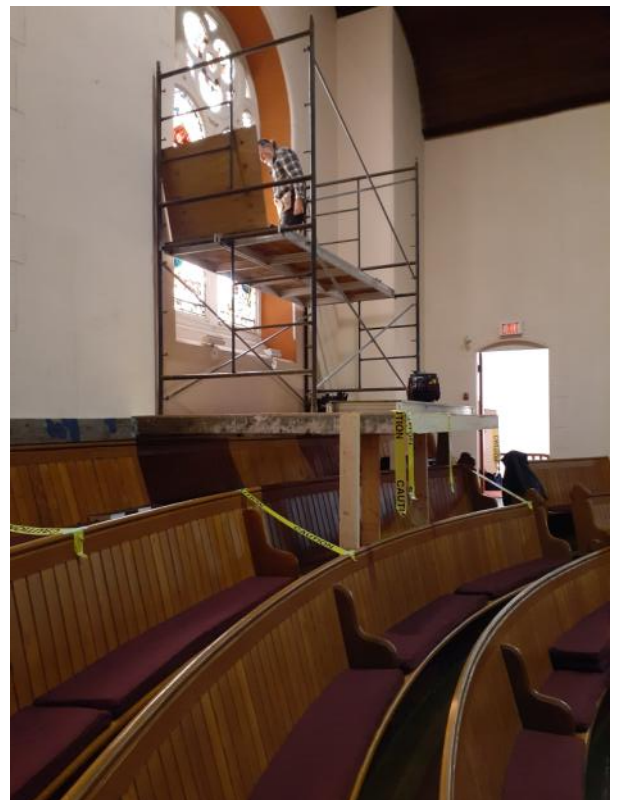
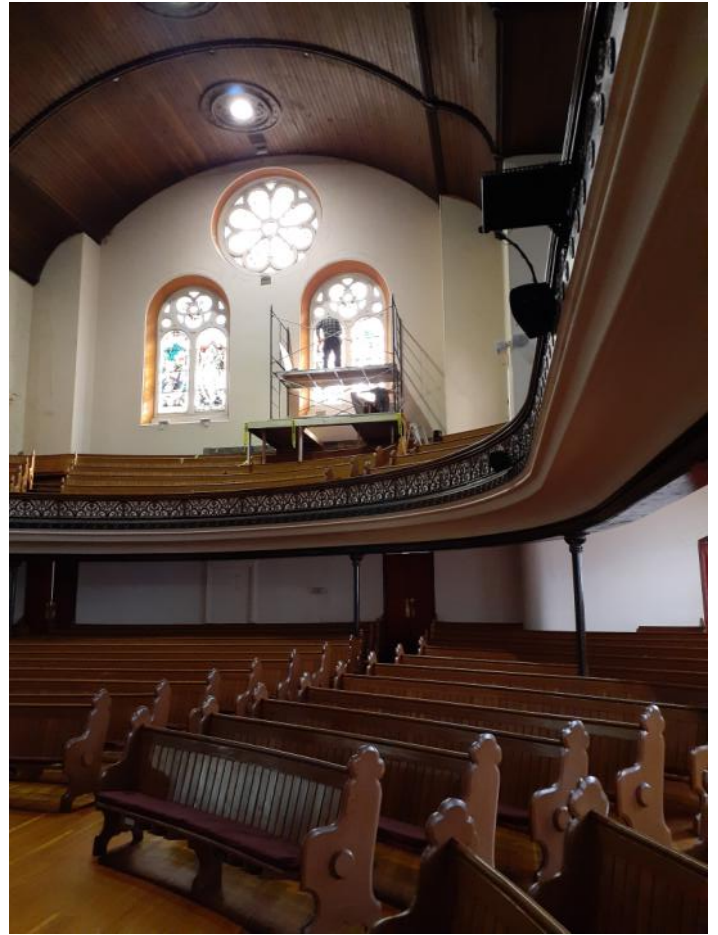
Much as all of our lives have been impacted by the current pandemic, Property Committee projects have been impacted as well. The restoration of the exterior of the Broughton entrance was almost complete when the masonry contractor had to make the difficult decision to shutdown. They hope to restart in early April, but that is undecided at this time. Once they get back to work, they should be able to finish in 4 - 5 days. Work on the stained glass windows has begun and the first Dunsmuir window has been restored. The plan is to continue until the other three Dunsmuir windows are restored. This work is being supported by a \$15,000 matching grant from the Victoria Foundation..



The AA group has moved from upstairs into the gym so they can continue to hold meetings while practicing good physical separation. They are the only group still using the hall.

Finally, our custodian, Grant Shepard, was advised by his doctor to stay home for the foreseeable future. This has left us with no one to clean and maintain our buildings. We wish him all the best and look forward to his return to St. Andrew's, as we look forward to everyone returning healthy and well.

**Dave Garson**



## Dear fellow members and adherents of St. Andrew's:

For most of us, perhaps all of us, the current self-imposed and advised isolation from our broader community is a new and somewhat uncomfortable reality. This step taken for the common good of our communities has many difficult and challenging realities. I wish to take a few moments to highlight some of these that directly affect us all at St. Andrew's.

Let me begin by encouraging each person to stay abreast with our community by taking the time to listen to Rev. Mitch Coggin's weekly televised (YouTube) commentary accessed through the This Week at St. Andrew's email newsletter and a video with worship components found on St. Andrew's web site. It is an important step you can take to remain abreast of our church life and worship.

My purpose in reaching out to you is to bring you up to date with some immediate financial concerns as that is my role as treasurer at St. Andrew's. While we are all separated and restricted in any community activity, the needs at St. Andrew's carry on. Those needs include the ongoing care of the facility and associated burdens such as heat, light and maintenance. But most importantly we need to support those that continue to serve this congregation, and those financial commitments are real and ongoing.

These obligations are concerning as we have now seen an obvious reduced level of financial support from the congregation as many chose to use our Sunday Service times to contribute to the financial need of this ongoing and living congregation. We have as well experienced some significant reduction in rental incomes. Therefore, I am reaching out to all who financially support St. Andrew's and encourage each to carry on with that financial support as much as each find possible.

Many in our Congregation use the Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR) system which from our perspective is excellent as it is consistent with each person's ability to support and very efficient for our volunteers to administer. The Sunday offerings that supplement the

proceeds from PAR are just as vital and I am requesting all who use that giving opportunity to consider how to stay abreast of this need. Obviously using a check mailed to the Church is very possible and appreciated. Or perhaps you can reach out to your elder and make one on one arrangements to transfer your financial support to the church office. The opportunity to use PAR still exists and that would require a minor amount of administrative preparation. (If you wish to enrol in PAR, please contact Leona. Contact information on p. 11.)

We will be short by about \$8,000 per month if the Sunday financial offerings fail to materialize. That's significant and needs to be prayerfully considered by each of you. Of course, I am willing and able to discuss this with anyone wishing to do so (by phone) and can be reached at any time as I too am not able to wander out very far.

Please consider carefully how you can continue to financially support St. Andrew's and help us bridge to a time in the near future when we can physically reconstitute as a congregation.

Sincerely,  
**J. E. (Jack) Reimer**  
Treasurer



View from Leona Johns' back door.

## “WHATCHA UPTO?”

Wash your hands! Social distance! Stay home!

The Link editors hope that is exactly what you are doing. But we want to know what else you are doing while we are all in quarantine or isolation. Are you working in the garden? Send us a photo. With all the restaurants shut down are you cooking more or baking more? We would love to see the recipe. Are you finding lots of time to read? Tell us about what books you are reading. Have you found anything interesting on a site on the computer that you would like to share? Send it to us. Found any good TV shows or movies? Let us know. Have you heard any good jokes lately that you would like others to hear? Send them along. Had problems keeping the kids busy? Share what you have found to be helpful. Have you completed a puzzle or are you working on one? Send us a photo. Organized your sock drawer, organized a closet, or organized a game of Yahtzee? Let us know about it.

We really would like to collect all the things that are keeping you busy these days and put them in *The Link*. Send us anything you like – photos, writings (long or short), gems of wisdom – anything at all. (The editors will still have the right of veto to prevent unintended problems.) After all, in the book **Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban**, George Weasley says “I solemnly swear that I am up to no good”. As they say, everyone needs a little mischief sometimes...

By sending us what is going on in your life and letting us know how you are doing, although we are separated, we can still feel a part of each other's lives. And we can enjoy communicating with one another. We miss you.

The Link is a resource for us at this time of social isolation. We can share our feelings and experiences and even answers to prayer. So please send your contribution to [thelink@shaw.ca](mailto:thelink@shaw.ca) and let's find out what everyone is “upto”.

**Link Editors – Debra, Fiona & Leona**

## Lockdown

Yes there is fear. Yes there is isolation.  
 Yes there is panic buying. Yes there is sickness.  
 Yes there is even death.  
 But, they say that in Wuhan after so many years of noise  
 You can hear the birds again.  
 They say that after just a few weeks of quiet  
 The sky is no longer thick with fumes, but blue and grey and clear.  
 They say that in the streets of Assisi, people are singing to  
 each other across the empty squares, keeping their windows  
 open so that those who are alone may hear the sounds of  
 family around them.  
 They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland  
 Is offering free meals and delivery to the housebound.  
 Today a young woman I know  
 is busy spreading fliers with her number  
 through the neighbourhood  
 So that the elders may have someone to call on.  
 Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and Temples  
 are preparing to welcome  
 and shelter the homeless, the sick, the weary  
 All over the world people are slowing down and reflecting  
 All over the world people are looking at their neighbours in a  
 new way  
 All over the world people are waking up to a new reality  
 To how big we really are.  
 To how little control we really have.  
 To what really matters. To Love.  
 So we pray and we remember that yes, there is fear.  
 But there does not have to be hate.  
 Yes there is isolation.  
 But there does not have to be loneliness.  
 Yes there is panic buying.  
 But there does not have to be meanness.  
 Yes there is sickness.  
 But there does not have to be disease of the soul  
 Yes there is even death.  
 But there can always be a rebirth of love.  
 Wake to the choices you make as to how to live now.  
 Today, breathe.  
 Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic  
 The birds are singing again. The sky is clearing,  
 Spring is coming,  
 And we are always encompassed by Love.  
 Open the windows of your soul, and though you may not be  
 able to touch across the empty square, sing.

**Father Richard Hendrick OFM,**  
 March 13, 2020  
 (Submitted by Anne Bell)

**Hello...** from Dorothy Reimer.

During this time of isolation, much of my time is spent reading and listening to CBC podcasts.

May I share a most moving and insightful 30 minute podcast from The Sunday Edition on CBC with Michael Enright, which aired on Sunday, March 22. If you have never listened to The Sunday Edition before, I highly recommend it as one of the most informative radio programs that I know. It is easy to find on the CBC radio or website, or just download the CBC App. It airs every Sunday morning from 9:15-12:00. In each program, there are three or four segments of documentaries or interviews. This was just one of these.

The podcast is called, "What's One More". It is available simply by clicking on the link below, either with your iPad or any computer (or copy and paste it into your browser). Pour yourself a cup of tea, find a comfortable chair and enjoy this heart moving story of an amazing Canadian First Nations Aboriginal woman, Justine Kennedy, a full-time University student, age 23, obtaining her Masters degree in Social Work, and working part-time, who, along with her husband, adopted all seven of her younger brothers, in order to keep the family together. She comes from a family of 14 children and gives deep insights into her daily life and the challenge of her day to day life. I was moved to tears. Her story gives us a deep perspective and appreciation of stories that we rarely hear. Enjoy and be amazed as she tells us about "What's one more?"

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thesundayedition/the-sunday-edition-for-march-22-2020-1.5500395/i-ll-take-them-23-year-old-student-steps-in-to-care-for-her-seven-young-brothers-1.5500408>



Like many of you I was due for a haircut the day my lovely hairdresser closed her shop due to COVID-19. My hair is usually all one length however one particular day I thought bangs might be a good idea?! Now I have to wait a while until my hairdresser can fix it!

**Patti Jackson**



Flowering tree outside Bev Higgins' house.

## Choral Music for Holy Week

A friend recently sent me a YouTube link to “*The most beautiful choral music ever written*”. I usually avoid music web sites with superlatives in the title because “beauty is all in the eye of the beholder” and some do not live up to expectation – but not in this case!

The two-hour collection consists of pieces from the Renaissance to the modern era. All are beautifully performed, but the real strength of the collection is the uniform quality of “sound and feel” throughout, which is meditative and calming. The transitions from one piece to the next are smooth, with the end of one piece flowing naturally into the beginning of the next without any “jarring” of mood or change in volume. The original words (with English translation beneath, when needed) are produced on a plain background – a useful aid in understanding the blend of music and words in each piece without distracting from the beautiful (often unaccompanied) singing.

The music is particularly meaningful for Holy Week because almost all pieces refer to a longing for God, to confession and repentance, to life after death, or to the crucifixion. It is the kind of music that can be listened to while contemplating the text, or as background music without needing to understand the words. This collection could easily have been entitled “*Meditative music for Lent*”.

The pieces brought back many memories, but the most touching was Allegri’s *Miserere*, a setting of Psalm 51, which is often read at Good Friday services around the world. I first sang it with St. George’s Cathedral choir in Kingston, while a student. On our first run-through at practice during Lent, I was completely awe-struck by the combination of words and music: it was the most striking piece I had ever sung. I was fortunate enough to be in the solo quartet – and participating in singing this psalm remains a highlight of corporate worship for me, even after 40 years. (Perhaps this helped bias my view of this collection!)

The music is performed by choirs conducted by Richard McVeigh (with the exception of Trinity College, Cambridge, and reproduced with permission). Mr. McVeigh held positions at Winchester Cathedral, York Minster, Chester Cathedral, Beverley Minster and Sheffield Cathedral before founding Consort SW1 (who feature in many pieces) in 2018 and becoming the director of music at St. John’s Church, New Alresford.

This background no doubt explains the quality of performance and the meditative “cathedral sound” and unity of temperament created by the pieces, recorded over an 8-year period. The collection runs for 2 hours, and can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z8FCG1wUyYQ>. (Other work by Mr. McVeigh can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkdRXZZXDmLJM6XBnUpIoog> and <https://www.consortsw1.com/>)

I hope you find the music on this web site as moving and meditative as I do, as we consider through Holy Week our human condition, how we have sinned against God and those around us, how Christ died for our sins – and prepare for celebrating his resurrection on Easter Sunday.

**Brian Titus**



22 March Brian and Colina Worship with Mitch (with thanks to technology) , then ‘downstairs for coffee’ with Mitch (frozen on the screen!)

# Sunday School

In an effort to create some normalcy in our Sunday School students' lives we have been providing a weekly Sunday School lesson complete with questions, prayers, blessings, activity pages and a craft. The children have been very creative and have sent us some pictures of their finished projects. We have sent the lesson to those that have been involved in Sunday School this year. If you know of other children who would like to take part please don't hesitate to contact Sabine at [steetzel@telus.net](mailto:steetzel@telus.net).

## Blessings from the Sunday School Team

Angus Henderson, Linda Coggin, Sabine Teetzel,  
Dawn McLean, Brooklynn Trimble, Colina Titus,  
Elizabeth Gichimu, Debbie Verwey

# INDOOR SCAVENGER HUNT

- Find a fork.
  - Find something that is red.
  - Find a tissue box.
  - Find 3 things that have wheels.
  - Find an orange crayon.
  - Find something that is very soft.
  - Find a band-aid.
  - Find a key.
  - Find 2 socks that match.
  - Find something round.
  - Find a sticker.
  - Find a rubber band.
  - Find a pair of glasses.
  - Find an envelope.
- 
- 



<https://primaryplayground.net/scavenger-hunts/>

Submitted by Sheelagh Garson

## The Puzzle of the Apostrophe

The proper use of this little mark ’  
Has many people in the dark  
In shortened words it stands to show  
Where letters dropped would normally go.  
For example: CAN’T, THRO’, and I’VE and WON’T  
Are excellent ways to shorten a phrase.

The second main use is to show us the owner, -- Possession, we call it, so don't make a boner.

For a singular noun put your mark before S  
As in ALICE'S gown, BOB'S team and JEAN'S dress.

But if the word's plural make your mark at the end  
As in TEACHERS' meeting and our SISTERS' friend.

Ah yes! That's easy. You can grasp that I guess  
 But what if already the word ends with S  
 Like CHARLES, JAMES, THOMAS, Mars or old BESS  
 Add apostrophe only as in dear JAMES' success.

If to classical names you should have a leaning  
Simply add the high comma to make clear your meaning;  
Thus ACHILLES' tendon and VENUS' flames  
Take the single mark right after their names.

I hope that this doggerel will help you to know  
In future efforts where the apostrophe should go.

**Mary Allard**

(submitted by Donna McKenzie)  
First printed in *The Link* in 1993

## Link Deadline

Next *Link* deadline will be  
Sunday,  
April 26

## St. Andrew's Children's Page

### Bible Verse of the Month:

**He is not here, he has risen!** Luke 24:6a

### Easter Sunrise Surprise

#### Decoder

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
B	M	W	Q	O	I	U	A	D	Z	S	K	R	X	G	C	Y	E	H	J	V	L	P	F	T	N

1. 22-6-21-6-26-15 \_\_\_\_\_
2. 3-5-2-18-26 \_\_\_\_\_
3. 25-5-2-1 \_\_\_\_\_
4. 13-8-6-11-18-9 \_\_\_\_\_
5. 11-25-5-26-18 \_\_\_\_\_
6. 16-13-7-16-6-24-6-18-9 \_\_\_\_\_
7. 8-3-8-17 \_\_\_\_\_
8. 13-5-22-22-18-9 \_\_\_\_\_

women	stone	away	crucified
tomb	rolled	living	raised

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# ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH DIRECTORY

**Church Office: 680 Courtney St., Victoria, BC V8W 1C1**

**Tel: 250-384-5734 email: [office@standrewsvictoria.ca](mailto:office@standrewsvictoria.ca)**


**Website: [standrewsvictoria.ca](http://standrewsvictoria.ca)**

**Transitional Minister: Rev. Mitchell Coggin**

**Office Administrator: Whitney Hanna Church Officer: Grant Shepard**

Camp Representative	Jerry Verwey	250-383-1009 <a href="mailto:tjeerd@telus.net">tjeerd@telus.net</a>
Clerk of Session	Colina Titus	250-382-2387
Envelope Secretary	Leona Johns	250-598-9450
Friendship Club	Dorothy Reimer	250-592-5051
The Link	Debra Verwey Fiona Rynneveld Leona Johns	<a href="mailto:thelink@shaw.ca">thelink@shaw.ca</a>
Share the Joy	Debra Verwey	<a href="mailto:tjeerd@telus.net">tjeerd@telus.net</a>
Music Director (Interim)	Christine Purvis	250-544-2240 <a href="mailto:purviswalker@gmail.com">purviswalker@gmail.com</a>
Health & Wellness	Dorothy Reimer	250-592-5051
Photographer	Jean Marcellus	<a href="mailto:jeanmarcellus@icloud.com">jeanmarcellus@icloud.com</a>
Prayer Chain Coordinator	Fiona Rynneveld	250-386-4142 <a href="mailto:ryneveld@telus.net">ryneveld@telus.net</a>

Thrift Shop	Janette Hennigar	250-384-8847
<b>TEAMS:</b>		
Administration	Jim Ferguson	250-415-3687 <a href="mailto:jpferguson@gmail.com">jpferguson@gmail.com</a>
Christian Education	Sabine Teetzel	250-658-8998
Congregational Life	Sabine Teetzel Colina Titus	250-658-8998 250-382-2387
Finance (Treasurer)	Jack Reimer	250-592-5051
Mission & Outreach	Brian Titus	250-382-2387
Property	David McLean Dave Garson	250-598-4432 250-385-5157
Worship	Laura Richards	250-360-2346



**I** am the church!  
**YOU** are the church!  
**WE** are the church **TOGETHER!**  
The church is not a building;  
The church is not a steeple;  
The church is a **PEOPLE.**

*Lyrics Richard Avery*

**Our doors are closed. But we continue to  
pray and worship online. JOIN US!  
[www.standrewsvictoria.ca](http://www.standrewsvictoria.ca)**

**News Update:** St. Andrew's donated about 250 individual creamers to the Mustard Seed this afternoon (March 31). The creamers would have been used for the Breakfast for People in Need, but will be outdated when that happens next. We also gave them 6 litres of apple juice that will also need to be used up before we return.

Mustard Seed is still doing coffees and bag lunches and they were happy to get the things we were not able to use.