

THE LINK

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church



July 2020
(Extra Pandemic
Edition)

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Victoria, BC



Shelbyville was a small town with an elementary school, a restaurant and a mom and pop grocery store. There were two churches on opposite ends of town. The smaller of the two found my name while I was still in seminary and sought out an interview concerning their pastoral vacancy. The three-person search committee offered to drive the 35 miles to interview me. The interview was set for the parking lot of a local burger establishment at 8:00 pm. I was early and they were right on time. I remember only one of their questions: "Does your wife play the piano?" When I answered negatively, it seemed to set the tone for the rest of the interview. I'm sure the pastor they eventually called was a better fit than I seemed to be.

Forty-one years have come and gone since that interview. I have served congregations in college towns, rural communities, manufacturing towns and coastal garden towns. In each and all, I have learned the church is made up of a vast array of personalities, differences and needs. Cora (not her real name) made sure my candy dish was always full, but was first in line on Monday to point out the deficiencies in the previous day's service. Mandy could deliver an impressive Sunday School lesson but was known to haggle the children for being much too noisy on the stairs between the sanctuary and basement. Ned never missed our denominational quarterly meetings but found himself quite at odds with our church's response to the homeless. Forty-one years of ministry underscore that people are people and while none are perfect, all are part of God's beloved family!

Over the past four months, St. Andrew's is still the St. Andrew's we always have been, in fact, even more so. During the quarantine, worship has continued to be provided weekly. Elder visits have been prioritized under strict guidelines of safe physical distancing. Effective communication has been paramount through the monthly Link (now either delivered or mailed to you) and our bi-weekly newsletter. The website has a new look and a weekly update of the latest news and happenings.

What is the church? Who makes up the church? Over the coming month of July, the virtual meditations that I will deliver during the worship services will ask these questions. Through the parables of Jesus, we will again be reminded of who we are as God's beloved family known as the St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. Like any other congregation anywhere in the world, we will again embrace our imperfectness (pastor and people alike) and we will welcome the diversity of our culture, spirit, talents and gifts and how those are and can be used in our worship and service. Tune into the worship services each Sunday via our website!

With Love,
Pastor Mitch

(For special announcements, please see page 3)

Message from Session

Greetings!

Session is getting more proficient at meeting via Zoom; we get the work done but it is just not the same as being in the same room!

As a congregation we appreciate the communication and virtual worship services that we receive each week. This has been a steep learning curve for many. As a session and a congregation we are very grateful to Martin Perez who stepped up as a volunteer to do what was required to keep us up and running. Session is pleased to hire Martin on a part-time contract through until the end of the year to maintain our current website and to make the necessary updates as and when required. This seven month contract provides time for research and discussion about how we will proceed with our communications in the future and what is needed to make this happen. These are exceptional circumstances and it was most important that we have someone able to keep virtual worship services accessible to the congregation. Thank you Martin.

You will recall that at the beginning of the year, session sought nominations for new elders. We have three members who have agreed to be elected as elders. The next step will be to have a congregational vote. As we are unable to physically meet together as a congregation we will be sharing the names of the three nominated elders and seeking your vote through a variety of response options (email, mail and phone). Although the new elders cannot be ordained as elders until we can come together in a communal worship service in the sanctuary, they can begin some training with Rev Coggin.

Ballet Victoria has signed a one-year extension of their lease. There will be further discussion about the details of an ongoing lease. BV will be holding dance classes in the Kirk Hall over the summer. The fall schedule will depend on restrictions associated with COVID.

Session has agreed to guidelines presented for the creation of an annual report. These guidelines will be shared with all of the committee and activity coordinators. The intent is to streamline the process and share the workload.

With reference to the work of the Sanctuary Worship Committee who are making preparatory plans for a safe return to worship in the sanctuary, Rev. Coggin emphasized the need for due diligence as we seek to determine best practices and how they apply to St Andrew's. The committee appreciates any suggestions that you may have given to your elder or Rev. Coggin regarding how we can take steps toward a safe return to worship in the sanctuary.

Rev. Coggin encouraged us "Let us not be weary in well doing" and for all of us to hold each other up in prayer. These are hard and challenging times.

The next step in the transition process for St. Andrew's is to engage in Mission Study: questions that need to be answered: 'Who are we?' and 'Who are we going to become?' This study process will commence in the fall and is an important step in the preparation for the next stage in the life of St. Andrew's.

These are indeed exceptional times, and unlike our usual practice, Session will continue to meet via Zoom through the summer.

It would indeed be an omission to neglect expressing our thanks to *The Link* team who have kindly agreed to keep *The Link* running through July and August. *The Link* helps to keep us all connected. Please send them your news - even staying at home we all have stories to tell of how we enjoy our days.

Take care, keep safe and keep well.

Colina Titus
Clerk of Session

For I am the LORD your God who takes hold of
your right hand and says to you, do not fear; I will
help you. Isaiah 41:13

O God, give me the strength to look up
and not down,
To look forward and not back,
To look out and not in,
And to lend a hand.

Amen

(from the Skene Parish Church Prayer Booklet)

Do It Anyway

People are often unreasonable,
 illogical, and self centered;
 Forgive them anyway.
 If you are kind,
 People may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives;
 Be kind anyway.
 If you are successful,
 You will win some false friends and some true enemies;
 Succeed anyway.
 If you are honest and frank,
 People may cheat you;
 Be honest and frank anyway.
 What you spend years building,
 Someone could destroy overnight;
 Build anyway.
 If you find serenity and happiness,
 They may be jealous;
 Be happy anyway.
 The good you do today,
 People will often forget tomorrow;
 Do good anyway.
 Give the world the best you have,
 And it may never be enough;
 Give the world the best you've got anyway.
 You see, in the final analysis,
 It is between you and God;
 It never was between you and them anyway.

~ Mother Theresa ~

In Loving Memory



Alex P. Brown - June 8

(Continued from page 1)

Also please be aware of these important opportunities:

Committee to examine safest and best options for a return to worship within our sanctuary.

This committee needs your input by answering the following questions, and forwarding your answers to your elder, the pastor, or the church office:

- What would make you feel safe/comfortable to attend worship in the sanctuary?
- What are the barriers to you personally attending worship in the sanctuary?



Please join us for the virtual coffee hour!

The coffee hour is hosted by Pastor Mitch, bi-monthly on Thursdays at 10am, and offered via a video link which will be sent to you by the church office.

Upcoming dates will be:

Thursday, July 9 @ 10am

and

Thursday, July 23 @ 10am.

Contact Pastor Mitch or Whitney for more information.

In the Life of the Congregation

Grade 12 Graduation!



Graduating from high school is a significant moment in the lives of young people. And “Graduation” itself is an exciting part of the process. It marks an ending, an ending of school life as the students know it. Friends will be parting and going in different directions. Some students will be leaving parents and friends behind as they go off to other cities to pursue additional studies. A lot of adventure awaits the recent high school graduate. This is when they realize that they will go out into the “big world” and make it on their own. Hopefully, many will realize that their parents are a safe harbour and that they will be anxiously waiting to see how their offspring fare once they leave the nest.

The virus has robbed the 2020 graduates of a chance to celebrate years of hard work and transition into the next phase of their lives. Students did not get the chance to stand on stage in front of their families and friends and receive their diplomas and awards. They did not get to experience the magic of the prom in dreamy dresses and fancy tuxedos. They did not get the chance to sign yearbooks and say their final farewells. They missed out on parties with fellow classmates in the tradition that most of us have taken for granted when we graduated.

Yes, graduation is an exciting time and yes, 2020 grad students are having to step out into the future in uncertain times. One such graduate is **Jade**, granddaughter of **Dawn and David McLean**. Jade has been accepted into the Digital Communications

program at Camosun College from which she can transfer to a university in journalism. This summer she has been hired by the YM-YWCA to be a counsellor for day camps at Camp Thunderbird at Glinz Lake in Sooke. (She has been a counsellor in training there the past couple of years.) In the spring while completing grade 12 online at home, Jade worked at Thrifty’s in the seafood section pre-packing food as an essential worker.

We all agree that Jade looks lovely in her graduation photo and certainly looks like she is ready to take on whatever comes her way. We at St. Andrew’s wish Jade all the best. We will pray for her as she ventures forth into the world.



Bill & Nancy Duke Welcome a New Great-Granddaughter!

A beautiful 7.5 pound baby girl named Sterling Presley arrived this past week, to the great joy of Nancy and Bill Duke.

Sterling is the second great grandchild for Nancy and Bill. Their growing family now has 7 grandchildren (5 girls and 2 boys) and two great granddaughters. Granddaughter, Nadine, is the mother of both, Sterling and her sister, Scarlett.



Congratulations to Nancy and Bill on this new addition to the family!

Vancouver Island Presbytery

(via Zoom) on June 16th

As your elder rep. to Presbytery I am sharing some of the highlights of that meeting:

Several of the churches within our presbytery have begun different variations of Sunday services in their buildings. Others are doing a service online, and still others are doing a combination of both. All are learning as they go, sharing knowledge and resources as we move forward. In the Fall, presbytery will be looking at the possibility of some assistance to churches doing online projects.

In this time of reduced use of buildings, churches are reviewing projects which would maintain or improve their facilities and looking at ways to accomplish these projects.

Unfortunately the kids' summer Island program that was planned for July and August has been postponed until next year. All camps have also been postponed.

Good news from Knox Church, Sooke - their new minister – Rev. Stephen Bell, newly ordained, will be inducted on June 28th, 2020.

St. Andrew's, Duncan continues with their process to call a new minister but with the restrictions due to Covid 19 the process has been slowed.

Presbytery will be financially assisting a Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator for Nanaimo. This is a three-year project.


With the expectation of uncertainty for the fall and into 2021 our Presbytery retreat has been cancelled. Synod meeting is also cancelled, as is next year's General Assembly.

Rev. Reid Chudley will continue as our Moderator for another year.

Rev. Laura Kavanagh, who works with the UVic chaplaincy service, indicated that the chaplaincy service is reviewing how best to accommodate this service to a very different UVic campus. While much can be accomplished online not everything can be.

For those of you who remember Rev. Dr. John Allan, it was announced that he, and his wife Marjory, are moving from Nanaimo to the mainland to be closer to family.

Sheelagh Garson,
Representative Elder



Recruiting now!

JOIN A PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STUDY

This research study will provide you with tools to increase your physical activity!

HAVE YOU RECENTLY RETIRED OR HAD YOUR LAST CHILD MOVE OUT?

For more information on how to participate
CONTACT: bml@uvic.ca

University of Victoria

BEHAVIOURAL MEDICINE LAB UVIC

I am a research assistant with the Behavioural Medicine Lab at the University of Victoria. We are trying to understand if a significant life change, like retiring or having your last child leave home, is a good time to promote behaviour change and encourage physical activity through an online activity program. We are hoping to recruit people who have either recently retired and/or become empty nesters (within 6 months) and who are currently engaging in *less* than 2.5 hours of moderate to vigorous activity per week. We know that living an active life has many benefits for both physical and mental health, so we hope to find participants and help foster an even healthier community. Furthermore, the study is done entirely online and through email, so there are no concerns with COVID-19 and physical distancing.

For anyone who fits the criteria, is interested in taking part in a 10-week exercise program, or has any questions about the study, they can email us at bml@uvic.ca.

Thank you so much,
Quinn Fitzgerald

Property Committee



fotosbygarson

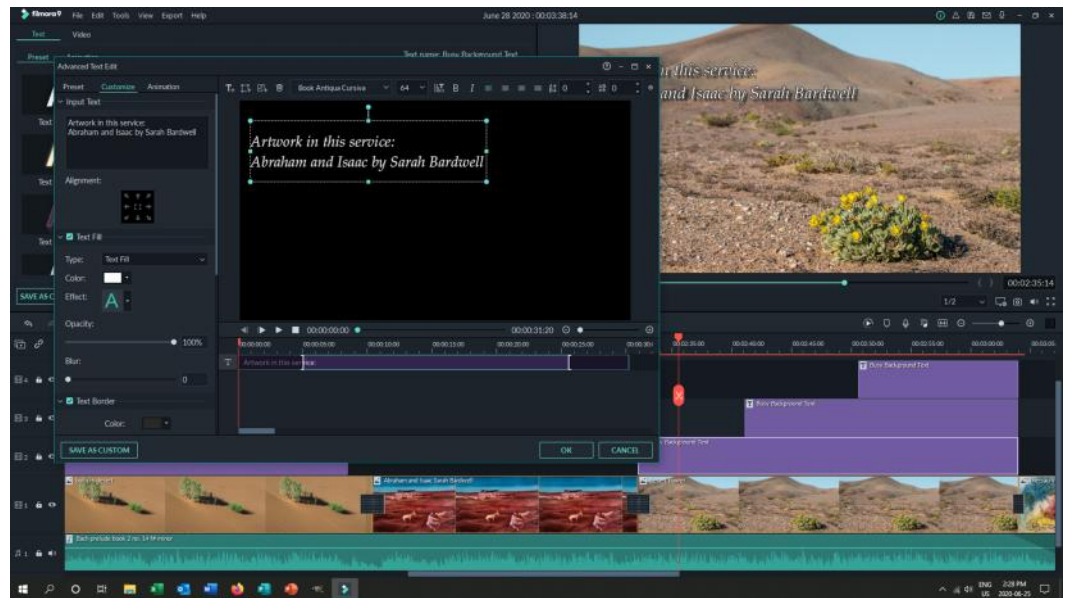


For months it was only a few who walked by St. Andrew's, but recently many more are passing by daily.

Thanks to several dedicated elves, the gardens and window boxes are blooming and showing those who walk by that St. Andrew's continues to be cared for and will soon, once again, become a vibrant part of downtown Victoria.

Making the Worship Service Video

Back in March, we all had to start doing things differently. Mitch, Christine and the worship participants all started spending a lot of time planning, practicing and recording. For me, these different services meant a kind of “baptism by fire” as I learned on the job how to create videos. Somewhere, in the recesses of my mind, I had faint memories of having learned some video editing back in high school but, oh boy, have things ever changed!



Here is a little bit of information about how the video is made each week:

Christine, Mitch, and the readers all submit videos and service music. After reading over the scriptures, I look for copyright free pictures and videos or art that we can credit to an artist. I create some title images and background slides for the hymns using separate design software. I download all these different files onto my desktop and upload them into the video editing software. Each service video contains about 25 to 30 separate files that need to be organized and turned into a cohesive worship experience. This doesn't even include all the text and title tracks

As each sound and video file is added as a track in the editing software, they are clipped and adjusted so that everything fits together and sounds as good as we can make it with the time and technology we have. Panning and zooming is purposefully added to static images. This highlights certain aspects of the scene and creates visual interest. Different kinds of transitions (fade in/out, dissolving pictures, page turns etc) are added between each part.

Each text track (such as the readings, lyrics or prayers) is added separately and synced up manually to the sound of the reading or hymn. Each text track needs specific timing and animations. There are about 30 individual text tracks in each service.

When the video is finally ready, it is rendered, downloaded as a specific kind of file and then uploaded to YouTube. The uploading can take an hour or more and I have to check back every so often to make sure nothing is frozen.

Downloading, uploading, waiting, praying for a strong internet connection - those are the worst parts of making the video. The best parts are watching all the different bits come together. It seems like a small miracle each week when 30 separate image, sound and video files, 50 transitions, and 30 text tracks suddenly become something unified! It's been a fantastic

experience to do this creative work, learn new skills and get feedback from so many of you that the services are a meaningful part of your week.

Whitney Hanna
Office Administrator
(from home)



Whitney at her desk with her feline assistant.

photobyanna

Whatcha Upto??

This is not so much – “what I did on my vacation” but rather a story about “grandchildren who have too much time on their hands.”

I had the opportunity to spend time with my son Matthew & family (Kristina, Maia & Jamie) in Penticton. Matthew works for the IT Department of the School Board in the Okanagan and Kristina is a nurse with the Interior Health Authority. Matthew was working from home with the two children, and Kristina was part of the COVID-19 response team.

I took both children for a fun afternoon at a little place called “Loci Landing”. I visited Loci Landing in 2015 to celebrate the end of the school year – (picture on the left) and did my best to recreate a similar picture 5 years later (on the right). I think I am shrinking with old age.



June 2015



June 2020

Both children have a wonderful sense of humour. With reference to too much time on their hands and in a rather playful way they showed their creative side, as evidenced in these pictures.



The milk is sour



The toilet is smoking!

COVID-19 will be a time of memories – both good and bad. It is an opportunity for us to take the time and express appreciation of our families, our friends and our neighbours. Enjoy the moment the best we can.

Jim Ferguson



fotobybitus

Colina makes weekly bike trips to the beach to collect seaweed for the compost. After a windy weekend, she made an extra trip as the seaweed harvest was plentiful!



Who is this? With masks becoming de rigueur during this pandemic, it's hard to know who is who. The person on the left is a member of our congregation and no, they are not going to rob a bank.

Whatcha Upto??

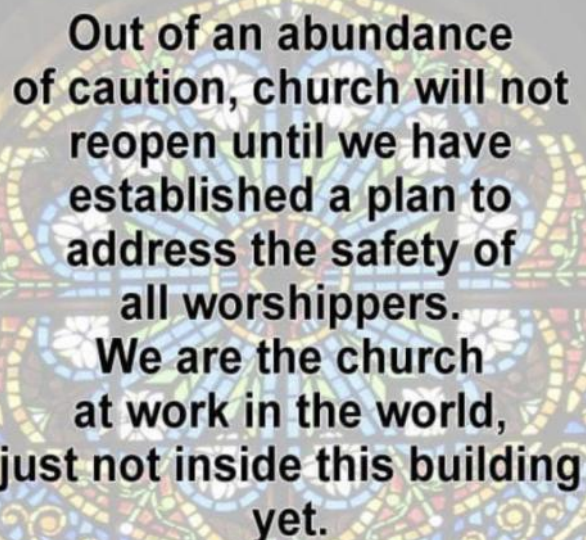


On the Links

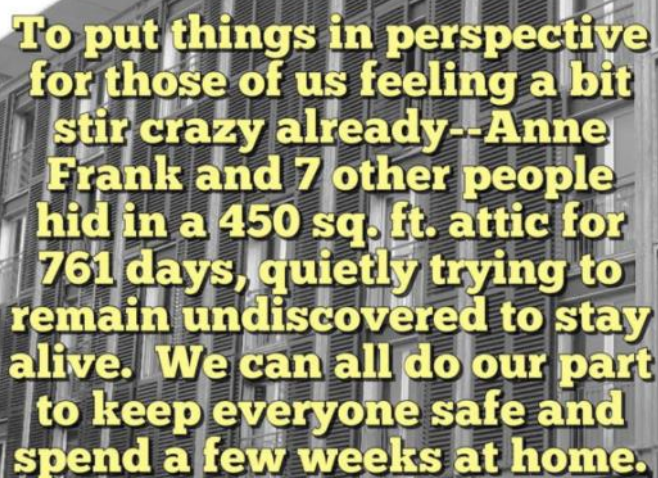
Recently Jim Ferguson was featured for his golf exploits. And now we highlight the other two members of the threesome, **Mitch** and **Dirk** for their own birdies!

Link Deadline

Next *Link* deadline will be Sunday, July 26



Out of an abundance
of caution, church will not
reopen until we have
established a plan to
address the safety of
all worshippers.
We are the church
at work in the world,
just not inside this building
yet.



**To put things in perspective
for those of us feeling a bit
stir crazy already--Anne
Frank and 7 other people
hid in a 450 sq. ft. attic for
761 days, quietly trying to
remain undiscovered to stay
alive. We can all do our part
to keep everyone safe and
spend a few weeks at home.**

www.traveltalesandtips.com

Smiling Is Infectious by Spike Milligan

Smiling is infectious,
you catch it like the flu,
When someone smiled at me today,
I started smiling too.

I passed around the corner
and someone saw my grin.
When he smiled I realized
I'd passed it on to him.

I thought about that smile,
then I realized its worth.
A single smile, just like mine
could travel round the earth.

So, if you feel a smile begin,
don't leave it undetected.
Let's start an epidemic quick,
and get the world infected!

COVID CELLO PROJECT 5 "Hallelujah" by Leonard Cohen

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-as_jiVvOMA&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR3jAc9XmdXv-t3Pd4DZL3vS6PmO5xsWPkO8UFLUOiZ-PicU3m1bFCQXqgw



News from Our Place: July is Our Place Month at Bottle Depot! Drop off your returnables this July at Glanford Ave, Queens Ave Downtown Victoria and Quadra St Bottle Depot Charity Bin locations and 100% of the refund will go to help Our Place. Every bottle counts, as Covid restrictions ease and we are able to move more of our services back into the building at our 919 Pandora location. During the pandemic we

have been serving our street family in new ways, including taking on management of housing at the former Comfort Inn, serving meals outdoors and bringing a shower trailer into our courtyard as well as continuing to provide Outreach, Paramedic and Spiritual Care services outside our building. Our dining room has now re-opened with limited seating, along with our showers inside the building. We are grateful for your support and prayers as we move carefully into resuming more inside services for our family members.

St. Andrew's Children's Page

Jacob's Dream

Maze



Jacob had a dream. In his dream, the LORD said, "I will give to you and your family the land on which you are now sleeping."

Can you find your way through the 'maze of clouds' to Jacob's stairway to heaven?

Jacob's Ladder (Paper Chain)

Craft



1. Cut two strips of paper 1" wide and about 20" long.
2. Lay the strips perpendicular to each other and overlap at one end and then glue or staple these ends together.
3. Taking the strip at rear, fold it over the front strip. Then take the second strip and fold it forward over the first. Continue folding until the entire length is folded according to the illustration. To finish the chain, glue the ends.
4. Pull the ends to open the ladder.