



THE LINK

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

February 2024

Session Report 2

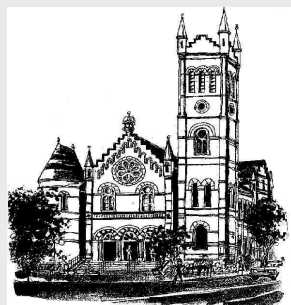
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Victoria, BC

Lenten Opportunities

Consider the intense preparation each of us accomplished before Christmas. Decorating and buying presents. Attending Christmas parties and family get-togethers. Planning and buying the perfect dirty Santa present. Of course, there were the Advent worship services, The Gift of Christmas Music and Christmas Eve worship! You must be tired just remembering how exhausted you may have felt before Boxing Day rolled around!

Now, less than 2 months later we have the opportunity for a slower more meaningful pace as we enter the season of Lent. Lent provides us a rare opportunity in our culture for self-examination, letting go of the old, and readying ourselves for something new. According to Walter Brueggemann in *A Way other than Our Own*, "Lent is a question, a gift, and a summons. The questions of Lent are: What are we doing? Are we working for that which does not satisfy?"

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14 with a noon Ash Wednesday service at St. Andrew's. This 30-minute worship provides us an opportunity to answer the questions that Brueggemann has recommended. Just as Christmas Day is empty without the celebration of Advent, Easter without the deeply personal spiritual journey of Lent will leave us unprepared for Easter celebration.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and continues through the Holy Week services of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday before reaching the celebration of Easter morning. The weeks in between allow us an opportunity of study and reflection.

This year our Lenten study is still being formed, but here is what we are currently thinking. Using the Sunday lectionary (the four scripture readings from the Old Testament, Psalms, a Gospel, and the Epistle), we would like a Lenten study centered on the readings for the upcoming Sunday. You will have the readings in hand before the study each week. When we gather, we will read each of the scriptures in the ancient style of *lectio divina* in which each scripture is read three times slowly. Following each reading you will offer a word, a phrase or where you saw yourself in that particular scripture. What is the scripture saying to us as an individual and as a community? How does each scripture help prepare us to hear it in worship the following Sunday?

A time and location have yet to be decided for the Lenten study as it is our goal to collaborate with the other Presbyterian churches. For now, mark your calendar for Wednesday, February 14 at noon for Ash Wednesday.

Anticipating Lent
Pastor Mitch

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Session Report

Session met earlier than our usual third Tuesday night meeting in January so that our session representative could attend the annual presbytery retreat.

At this time the final budget was presented to Session and it was recommended that we present it at our annual budget meeting. The budget included a request for additional funding to complete our estimated cost of the refurbishing of the Lecture Room.

Session learned that we do not have the resources to staff Christian education so we agreed to seek collaboration in that area with the other local Presbyterian congregations. Christian education is a prime responsibility of session, both for juvenile and adult education. It was noted that we do not have a continuing adult Bible study but seasonal ones attended by a few members. It was agreed to remove any reference to nursery/Sunday school from our signage until such time that we have volunteers to staff these areas.

Session agreed to present to the congregation at the budget meeting the following motion: "That session seeks the authority to proceed with collaborative/ amalgamation discussions from the congregation."

At the budget meeting the proposed 2024 budget was unanimously approved as presented by the treasurer, Jack Reimer. He noted that our shortfall for employee expenses is about 10%. He said that our building operating costs are covered by rental income so therefore the buildings do not cost us any funds. Rental incomes exceed these operating costs so the difference assists in the shortfall of the employee expenses.

The second question placed before the attendees regarded the approval of additional funding of \$16,500 from the reserves, to complete the renovations to the lecture room which are now in progress. This was approved unanimously.

The motion from Session about further collaborative talks with other local Presbyterian congregations was then introduced to the budget meeting. After lengthy discussions, those present at the meeting altered and passed the following motion: "To seek the encouragement and the participation of the congregation in proceeding with the collaborative discussions with the view to collaborating together in whatever ways are possible."

Jerry Verwey
Session Clerk

ANNUAL MEETING



St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
Annual General Meeting
February 25, 2024
12:00 pm.

CUORE PIANO TRIO

FEBRUARY 27, 2024

2:30 PM

DOORS OPEN AT

2:00 PM

St. Andrew's Presbyterian
Church's Sanctuary
924 Douglas Street



Cuore Piano Trio was founded in 2017 in Warsaw and it has quickly established itself as one of the leading Polish chamber music groups of the young generation. It's current members - Zuzanna Budzyńska (violin), Jadwiga Roguska (cello) and Szymon Ogryzek (piano) - are passionate about introducing new audiences to the unknown classical music pieces written by less popular Polish composers.

Accessibility entrance is available on Broughton Street.

Parking at the Library Parkade at 745 Broughton Street.

Admission is by donation.

CONTACT:
250-384-5734
office@standrewsvictoria.ca



Open Church

One of the ways we work out our vision as a church is to be open to everyone when possible. This vision is worked out every Wednesday over the noon hour and after work when people come into St. Andrew's sanctuary to meditate silently or to talk about their problems. They seek someone who will listen with a receptive ear, someone who is non-judgmental in hearing their stories. I have done this listening from time to time, whether it be for someone lost and seeking spiritual guidance and assurance or just needing a place to voice their troubles in life to ease their burdens. A burden shared is a burden eased.

This is how I see our mission at St. Andrew's. Because of our location we are in a good position to help each other and help carry each other's burdens. Is that what Christ wants us to do, to be His proxy doing His work?

Jerry Verwey



Property Report - Lecture Room Update

Work has begun on the refurbishment of the Lecture Room. To date the old cabinets and kitchen have been removed, the wall has been repaired and (at the time of printing) the final coat of paint has been completed on the North wall. The South wall (with the mirrors) is nearly covered with fresh paint. Laying of the new flooring will start on Feb 12th with a week needed for completion. Soon after that the new cabinets will be installed. Painting of the other walls will be done when practical so as not to interfere with the contractors. We hope to have the renovation just about finished by the end of February.

Jerry Verwey
Property Committee

Robbie Burns Concert and Tea

On Sunday January 21st, The Victoria Scottish Gaelic Choir presented a Robbie Burns Concert and Tea in St. Andrew's Kirk Hall. The audience was given a full one-and-a-half hours worth of Scottish entertainment in honour of the Bard of Ayrshire.

Ken Wilson opened the program with several traditional tunes on the bagpipes. This was followed by a display of Highland dancing by students of Kathleen Laurie's School of Highland Dance. Several young girls, including a wee four-year-old, showed how to do the Highland Fling and the Sword Dance!



Irene Jazwinski recited some of Burns's most well known poems---"A Red, Red Rose" and "A Man's A Man for A' That". Then the Vancouver Island Scottish Country Dance Society performed several jigs, reels and strathspeys.

The highlight of the concert arrived when the Victoria Scottish Gaelic Choir, directed by Janice Beckett, sang several songs by Robert Burns, including "Flow Gently Sweet Afton", "Green Grow the Rushes O", and "The Bonnie Banks of Loch Lomond". Among the singers were two members from St. Andrew's, Joyce Nordwall and Janette Hennigar.



Ken Wilson

The concert ended with everyone in the hall singing "Auld Lang Syne". The emcee, Sean MacUisdean wished everyone "Slainte Mhath!" ("Good Health" in Scottish Gaelic) and then tea and shortbread were served.



Victoria Scottish Gaelic Choir, singing "Flow Gently Sweet Afton"



Dancers from the Vancouver Island
Scottish Country Dance Society

Students from the
Kathleen Laurie
School of Highland
Dance



Vancouver Island Presbyterian Women's Retreat

Be sure to reserve April 24th, April 25th and April 26th on your calendar for the Vancouver Island Presbyterian Women's Retreat! It is being held at Camp Imadene on Mesachie Lake (near Lake Cowichan) and will be a wonderful chance for Vancouver Island Presbyterian women and their friends to get away to relax, recharge and to focus on their relationship with God. Watch for camp and registration details in TWASA in early February.

A Meditation to honour the life and ministry of Rev. David Stewart

A minister dressed as a homeless person before he was to be introduced as the new pastor to the congregation. Only 3 people spoke to him, and the others turned away after he told them that he was hungry. Once in the sanctuary, he sat in the front row but was told by an usher that he would need to sit in the back. He greeted some with a smile but was only met with cold looks and dirty stares. He watched the service as the newcomers were welcomed, but no one recognized him as new or welcomed him. People continued to look his way with suspicion. Then the elders announced that they were glad to introduce the new pastor. They indicated they were happy with their choice and felt the congregation would be as well. The congregation began clapping as they looked around in anticipation for their new minister until the homeless man in the back stood up and began to make his way forward. The clapping stopped and only blank stares greeted the homeless man as he stood behind the lectern, took the microphone, and stood silently before he began reading, Matthew 25:31-36.

31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him... I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."

After he read, he introduced himself as the new minister and told the congregation what he had experienced that morning. He said, "Today I see a gathering of people here, but I do not see the church of Jesus Christ. The world has enough people that look the other way. What the world needs is disciples of Jesus that follow his teachings and live as he did. Is anyone here willing to do that?"

Matthew 25 is the last teaching of Jesus before his crucifixion and death. Jesus on this side of death looks ahead to the other side of death as an opportunity to say, "Pay attention now to how you live." Pay attention to those you encounter and see them for who they are, not who we think they should be.

Let's not get caught up in the language of sheep vs. goats and final judgement. Instead let's learn from those who saw "need" and how they responded to that need. Those who saw the hungry responded by giving food, the thirsty were given something to drink, the stranger was welcomed, and those without a coat or socks or shoes were provided those. The sick were taken care of, and those in prison were visited.

Our list of needs comes at us from the newscasts and the headlines with blinding speed. But it is **now** on this side of our life that we can make a course correction by doing things that matter with those with whom it makes the greatest difference. And it all begins by seeing.

'Lord, when was it that we **SAW** you hungry, or thirsty or naked? When did we saw you sick or in prison? Granted, our lives are bombarded by such need that we fail to see what is right in front of us, unless...we humanize the one who bears that need.

When David went into the streets, he went without a clergy collar or vestments. He went as Dave and got to know Rebel and Jake as persons with stories to tell about abusive home situations, and addicted parents whose only attention to their family was negative. He saw countless lives that to most were considered throw-away but to him he saw them by name one at a time. He was loving and kind because he saw people and situations for what was there and not what society or the church had dressed them up to represent.

Perhaps Matthew 25 loses impact in our hearts because we have heard it too often to truly be able to see human faces when these verses are read.

"When did I see the underhoused, and come to know and call them by name? When did I take the time to listen to their story? When did I see an Indigenous teenager sitting by themselves in the mall and engage in conversation about their interesting coat, what was their ancestry and what they were studying in school? When did I see a transgender whose has come to know only criticism and judgement and recognize them as God's Beloved? When did I truly see the complex needs we encounter and learn a name and listen to their story in a way that says, "You matter to God and you matter to me."

Meditation delivered at funeral of Rev. David Stewart, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Victoria, British Columbia. Sunday, January 29, 2024 by Rev. Mitch Coggin.

Vancouver Island Presbyterian Camping 2024

Dates of the camps arranged by the Presbytery Camp Committee for 2024:

Little Qualicum River Falls mid-week escape,

June 10 - 14

Reserve a spot yourself through BC Parks for this camp.

Goldstream Provincial Park, \$140 for the weekend,

July 4 - 8

This is at the group camp site 'Prospector', east of the highway.

Rath Trevor Provincial Park, \$250 for the week,

August 5 -12

This is the same group camp site that we had last year.

Please mark these dates on your calendar and prepare to come camping with your Presbyterian friends.



2024 Vancouver Island Presbytery Summer Camps

(A program of the Presbyterian Church in Canada)

Location and Dates:

Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park June 10th-14th

Goldstream Provincial Park July 4th-8th

Rath Trevor Provincial Park August 5th-12th

For Enquiry Contact: Camp VIP Communicator
andrewdmccowan@hotmail.com

Camp Website <https://vipresbytery.net>

Baby Grand Piano Wanted for St. Andrew's Sanctuary

If you or someone you know is downsizing or looking for a home for a grand piano in good working order, please consider lending or giving it to St. Andrew's for use in the sanctuary. The piano will be used during different musical events, concerts and services.

If we could have the use of such a piano, it would be very much appreciated. Please contact the church office if you can help.



Presbyterian World Service and Development

Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D) is the relief and development agency of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Presbyterian World Service and Development works with local partners in different corners of the world to provide support to those who are most vulnerable. PWS&D is committed to Christ's message of love through action.

During February we will highlight where PWS&D is working and also encourage donations from those who wish to donate to the area of greatest need. The need this year is overwhelming, especially for the countries of Gaza and Afghanistan. In Gaza the avenues for assistance to reach those most in need are slowly opening up although hindered by many challenges. The Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees (DSPR) of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) is providing much needed medical care to individuals most in need. The devastation is great due to the destruction of much of the infrastructure, so many casualties and so many people traumatically affected. Cash donations and hygiene kits are reaching those individuals most in need. Continuing assistance will be needed in Gaza for a very long time.

In Afghanistan, the need is also great. Two-thirds of the population need humanitarian assistance because of several years of drought, a devastating earthquake in October, a crippling decline in the economy since the Taliban takeover in August 2021 and decades of conflict. With the passage of Bill C-41 by Parliament in June 2023, Canadian aid organizations can now legally provide Afghans with humanitarian aid, including health care, education services and immigration programs.

We pray for our global brothers and sisters who are suffering. We hope that you will consider donating to PWS&D. We are encouraging donations to go to 'where most needed'.

Donations can be made by cash or cheque using your church envelopes indicating PWS&D.

More information can be found <https://presbyterian.ca/pwsd/>

Patti Jackson
Mission & Outreach



St. Andrew's 2024 Annual General Meeting

When: Sunday 25 February, immediately following worship

Where: in the sanctuary

Also available via Zoom

Dear Friends,

We value your input regarding important decisions in the life of our church. Please set aside time to participate as we gather to celebrate the year that has passed and make decisions about the future. For those not able to attend in person, we are pleased to offer an option to join the meeting via Zoom. Time: Feb 25, 2024 11:30 AM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82924327974>

Meeting ID: 829 2432 7974

Take time to read the report which is a summary and permanent record of the year 2023 at St. Andrew's. The report will be available for distribution beginning on 6 February. Where can you access the report? The report will be emailed to every household, posted on the St. Andrew's website, mailed to those without computer access and hard copies will be made available at worship from 11 February. We encourage you to ask questions prior to the meeting by either:

phoning the church office (250 384 5734) and speaking with our Church Administrator, Shannon

or emailing session.clerk@standrewsvictoria.ca and we will find someone to answer your question and make sure you get a reply.

DRAFT AGENDA for St. Andrew's 2024 Annual Meeting

(The final agenda will be circulated Thursday 22 February)

Constitution

Memorial Minute

Nomination of secretary (**motion**)

Review and approval of the minutes of '2023 Budget meeting' -January 15, 2023. (**motion**)

Review and approval of the minutes of '2023 Annual Meeting' – 26 February 2023 (**motion**)

Review and approval of committee reports as presented (**motion**)

Approval Trustees (**motion**)

Closing Prayer

Voting

If you attend the meeting in person or via Zoom, you will be asked to vote on the motions presented at the meeting.

A summary of the discussions and motions presented at the meeting will be forwarded to everyone, so that those not able to attend the meeting will be able to vote. This summary will include instructions on how to submit your votes.

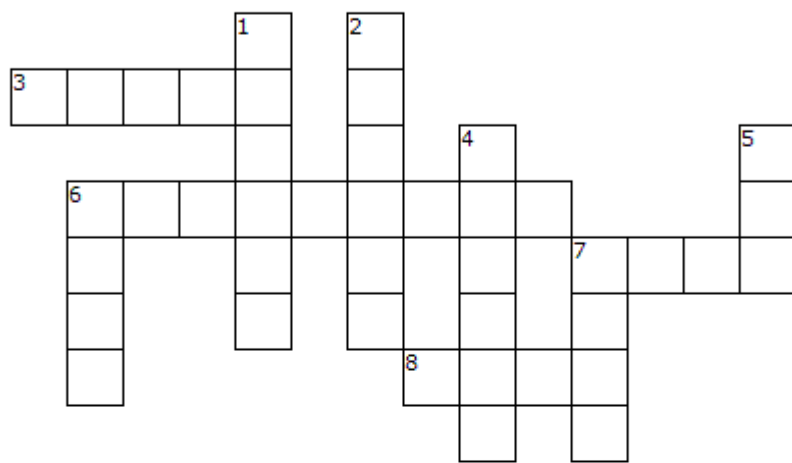
All votes must be submitted by Friday 8 March.

Colina Titus

Jesus Ministers in Galilee

So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons. Mark 1:39

Based on Mark 1:29-39



ACROSS

3. A condition when the body temperature is higher than normal
6. A place of meeting for worship in the Jewish faith
7. The body part used for holding things
8. To cure from sickness or disease


DOWN

1. To deliver a sermon
2. Evil spirits
4. The time of day when the sun disappears below the horizon
5. A piece of furniture for sleeping
6. To be ill or have a disease
7. To give assistance; to aid

FEVER	HEAL	HAND	BED	SYNAGOGUE
SICK	HELP	PREACH	DEMONS	SUNSET

| — |

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church - February 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<div>  <p>Confidential prayer requests can be sent to ryneveld@telus.net If you need us, the prayer chain is here, ready and willing to pray with you or for you.</p> </div>			Open Church 11:30 - 1:30 Meditation 4:00-5:30	1	2	3
				Choir 7:15		
	5	6	7	8	9	10
	4					
Choir 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour Lenten Reader Submissions Due	Curious About Joy 7pm via Zoom		Open Church 11:30 - 1:30 Meditation 4:00-5:30	Choir 7:15		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Choir 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour		Session -7:00	Ash Wednesday - noon service Open Church 11:30 - 1:30 Meditation 4:00-5:30	Choir 7:15		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Choir 9:30 Worship 10:30			Open Church 11:30 - 1:30 Meditation 4:00-5:30	Choir 7:15		Coldest Night of the Year Walk
25	26	27	28	29		
Choir 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour Annual General Meeting Feb. Link Deadline		Cuore Piano Trio 2:30pm - sanctuary	Open Church 11:30 - 1:30 Meditation 4:00-5:30	Choir 7:15		

If you would like additions, updates or changes to this calendar, please submit that information to thelink@shaw.ca