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Victoria, BC

# THE LINK

## St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

Lent is another one of those times in the Christian calendar that is a time of waiting. Waiting seems to come up a lot in the scriptures. Two years ago, I was inspired to take a hands-on approach as a Lenten practice.

What was something I would have to struggle to learn to see anew? I am not a gardener and yet, our yard was an opportunity to “practice resurrection.” This would be our first spring in this house that had sat empty for a few years. So, Mitch and I began our 40 days of hands-on care to nurture new life in our own backyard.

The daffodils and crocuses helped. They appeared—a shock of bright life even when clouds filled cool days. I noticed a hint of new growth at the base of an old rosebush. An old stump promised unknown beauty—lush mosses and unknown greenery rested in and around the sturdy base. We could learn to care for the life that is already here, even if we couldn't see what it was, yet.

Together, Mitch and I participated with those shoots of new life. We dismantled an old cement block structure that once burned trash and replaced it with soil and grass seed. We placed our swing in a corner that had caught the fall leaves and sticks. I planted two star jasmine that I imagined would grow around the sturdy swing frame and surround me with fragrant blossoms.

And then, the next day came and the next. All I could see was the weeds, the cracks in the driveway, and the parts of

this yard that I did not know how to manage. I asked my friend Jean about pruning the rose bushes but she said it wasn't time yet. I tried to imagine flowers filling the hanging baskets of dirt I had waiting.

Hidden in the corner of the shed was an outdoor broom, a stiff one with worn-off bristles that might look useless. I do know how to sweep. So, I did.

Whether the bottom of that broom was purposefully cut off or simply worn down with use, that dense pack of straw made a hearty sweeping sound and loosened grime on the time-worn cement. I scooped up the debris in the corners, disrupting my many legged friends who scurried off to find another shelter.

Sweeping was an act of restoration for that moment. All those leaves and sticks and dirt will return in a few days. The little creatures will come back to re-inhabit those corners. The grass will grow back in the crevice between the cement and the asphalt of the driveway.

I sat in the swing and watched the sun illuminate the lacy growth (that I am sure you might call weeds) surrounding the daffodils. I knew those bulbs were planted by the family that lived in this house many years before me. When we struggle together to bring healing and newness in our own backyard, we practice resurrection.

**Linda Coggin**

A selected essay from  
The Lenten Reader 2024.

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## Session Report

The Session Visioning sub committee is following up on the mission and vision information gathered in the past few years to come up with a sense of where we are.

The Property committee reported on various repairs including the door lock mechanism at the Broughton Street entrance, the Kirk Hall dishwasher and fridge repairs, and replacing two electrical breakers that were near failure. It was noted that the Lecture room renovation is proceeding as planned with final completion expected approximately mid-March.

Rev. Mitch will be away on leave from February 26<sup>th</sup> to March 7<sup>th</sup> visiting family. We wish him and Linda safe and happy travels and look forward to their safe return.

The Maundy Thursday service will be held at Knox on Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. The Good Friday service will be at St Andrew's on Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup> at 10:30am and Easter service will be at St. Andrew's on March 31<sup>st</sup> also at 10:30am.

At our Annual Budget meeting held in January, the congregation approved the proposed budget for the year 2024. Our interim moderator, Rev. Wayne Stretch, produced a motion proposed by session with regard to the collaboration/amalgamation discussions with our sister churches. After much discussion, the motion passed read: *To seek the encouragement and the participation of the congregation in collaborative discussions with the view of collaborating together in whatever ways are possible.*

Our AGM on February 25<sup>th</sup> was attended by about 40 persons as well as two people via Zoom. The members approved the motions presented regarding the minutes of the 2023 budget meeting, the minutes of the 2022 AGM, as well as receiving the reports attached to 2023 AGM report.

**Jerry Verwey**  
Session Clerk



### In Loving Memory



**Elsbeth Charsley - January 29, 2024**

**And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain....**

**Revelations 21:4**

The CUORO PIANO TRIO gave a wonderful concert in the sanctuary at St. Andrew's on Tuesday, February 27th. This young Polish group played pieces from Haydn, Tailleferre, Twardowski and Schoenfield. Pictured are:

Zuzanna Budzynska - Violin

Szymon Ogryzek - Piano

Jadwiga Ruguska - Cello



## SUNDAY CLASSICAL MUSIC

MARCH 10  
& APRIL 7  
AT 2:00 PM  
DOORS OPEN AT  
1:30 PM



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

The March 10th performance features students of Pam Highbrow-Aloni of UVic's School of Music.

The April 7th performance features students of Anne Elliott-Goldschmidt at UVic's School of Music.

Accessibility entrance is available on Broughton Street.

Free parking on Sundays and holidays at the Library Parkade at 745 Broughton Street.

Admission is by donation.

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



**Don't forget to set your clocks  
forward an hour before you go to  
bed on Saturday, March 9!**

**Daylight Savings Time starts on  
Sunday, March 10.**



## Letter From our Treasurer

February 2024

To the Congregation of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church:

### **Re: Financial Support**

I want to reiterate my thanks to all members and adherents of St. Andrew's for your ongoing financial support. You may recall that last fall I asked each donor to consider a nominal increase in their donations because the expenses and our commitments have seen a steady yearly increase. And especially for those using PAR, I would ask that each consider a nominal increase as those amounts, while generous and appreciated, often stay unchanged year over year. (Please note, if you would like to increase your PAR donation, it is a simple matter of sending a note or email to the Envelope Secretary, Shannon Cummings - [office@standrewsvictoria.ca](mailto:office@standrewsvictoria.ca), with the amount of the increase and the date you wish it to commence.)

As was brought forward at our budget meeting, even with an increased incomes budget, we will face an approximate 10% shortfall in givings in 2024. Closing that shortfall is possible, but not without an increase in donations from the congregation.

We expect an increase in incomes from non-congregational sources and those incomes essentially cover the expenses related to the operation and day to day expenses of maintaining our physical buildings. However, the congregation is responsible for the expenses related to those we employ, and the miscellaneous expenses related to our office and non-employee expenses.

I am of course available to any who wish to review their donation plan and the budget as presented. I look forward to reporting back to the congregation periodically on how we are doing in relation to our targets for 2024.

Sincerely,  
**J. (Jack) E. Reimer**  
Treasurer  
[treasurer@standrewsvictoria.ca](mailto:treasurer@standrewsvictoria.ca)

## LENTEN STUDY & LECTIO AT KNOX CHURCH

February 20, 27, March 5, 12, 19, & 26  
Tuesdays at 11:30 am



Each Tuesday until March 26th we will use the ancient spiritual practice of *lectio divina* to listen to each of the Lenten passages for each of the coming Sundays in Lent. *Lectio Divina* is a method of praying the scriptures that has been around for a long time. It aims at giving an awareness of God's presence through a fourfold Process: *lectio*, *meditatio*, *oratio*, and *contemplatio*. *Lectio* is receiving the word of God, *meditatio*, allowing the Word to be present in the awareness –giving rise to *oratio*, prayer, and *contemplatio*, resting in the presence of God. Bring a bag lunch and engage in spiritual listening to scripture as we prepare for the Sundays in Lent.

## NEW COOKS IN ST. ANDREW'S KITCHEN!

If you happen by the Kirk Hall on a Thursday afternoon you may be lucky enough to smell delicious aromas coming from our kitchen.

The Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA) has started a "Cooking Club", for recent immigrants to Canada. We wish them well and promise to try not to be too jealous of what the club produces.

For more information please email [workshops@icavictoria.org](mailto:workshops@icavictoria.org)

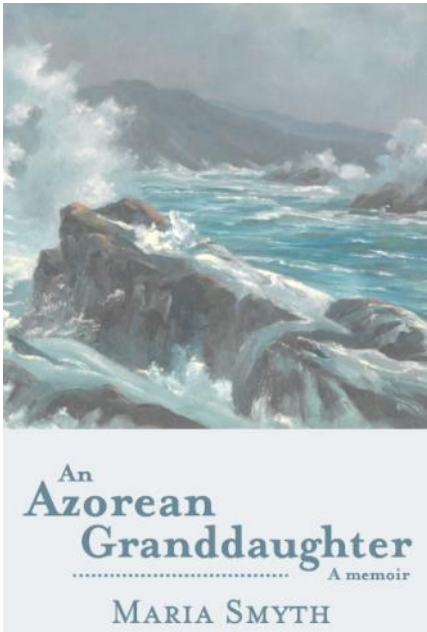


**You may have noticed a new person in the choir for the past few weeks and I'd like to introduce myself to you.**

My name is **Maria Smyth** and my husband Rob and I are visiting your beautiful city as "snow birds" from Edmonton. It is nice to escape the chilly winter in Edmonton for a few months.

We visited St. Andrew's on our first Sunday in January, because we were looking for a church with a choir. St. Andrew's Church immediately popped up on the internet and we immediately felt a very positive feeling upon our first attendance. We attend a Baptist church in Edmonton and church community is very important to me. I also wanted to keep singing in a choir since singing is so important to me, so, after chatting with your Music Director, Christine, I was invited to join the choir for the ten weeks that we will be in Victoria. I have enjoyed my association with your church very much.

As I got to know some of the members at St. Andrew's, I was invited and encouraged to introduce and tell about my newest and most exciting venture and that is the recent publishing of my first book called **"An Azorean Granddaughter"**.



**Maria Smyth** from Edmonton, Alberta, has recently self-published her memoir, *An Azorean Granddaughter*. It is a creative non-fiction account of her family of origin story. Her extended family left São Miguel, Azores, Portugal, for two reasons. The book reveals not only the underlying economic need for prosperity but also a genuine desire to find religious freedom. The book chronicles Maria's faith journey, which is the source of her consolation. The book portrays the powerful influence of childhood, the courage to live out one's authentic self, and issues of abandonment, forgiveness, and repentance

The book may be purchased directly from the author. Maria, at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church until March 10, 2024. Maria will be in attendance each Sunday at Coffee Hour if any are interested in talking with her about her book.

The memoir may also be ordered at <https://pagemasterpublishing.ca/shop/azorean-granddaughter/>.





### CAMP VIP 2024

Camp Vancouver Island Presbytery is a program of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. For a registration form, or for more information about this year's camps, please visit <https://vipresbytery.net/>

#### LITTLE QUALICUM FALLS PROVINCIAL PARK June 10 - 14

Please book your own campsite through BC Parks near sites U50 - U51. A senior rate is available if applicable! A \$25 donation towards the program and for supplies is appreciated!

BC PARKS: <https://camping.bcparks.ca>.

#### GOLDSTREAM PROVINCIAL PARK July 4 - 8

WEEKEND RATE: \$140 (2 adults 2 children)  
DAY RATE: \$40 (2 adults 2 children)  
ADDITIONAL CHILDREN UNDER 16: \$2 (per night)  
ADDITIONAL CHILDREN OVER 16: \$5 (per night)  
E-TRANSFER: [campvipa975@gmail.com](mailto:campvipa975@gmail.com)  
CONTACT: [andrewmccowan@hotmail.com](mailto:andrewmccowan@hotmail.com)

#### RATHREVOR PROVINCIAL PARK August 5 - 12

Book early! Limited site availability!  
WEEKEND RATE: \$250 (2 adults 2 children)  
DAY RATE: \$40 (2 adults 2 children)  
ADDITIONAL CHILDREN UNDER 16: \$2 (per night)  
ADDITIONAL CHILDREN OVER 16: \$5 (per night)  
E-TRANSFER: [campvipa975@gmail.com](mailto:campvipa975@gmail.com)  
CONTACT: [andrewmccowan@hotmail.com](mailto:andrewmccowan@hotmail.com)

### VIP WOMEN'S RETREAT

This year's retreat topic is 'Identity: what is God calling you to be?' with guest speaker Dr. Mona Scrivens.

Rev. Dr. Mona Scrivens has been the Lead Minister at Amberlea Church since October 2012. Mona has a passion for every configuration of family and believes that it is through families that the church extends its reach in nurturing faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. Her doctoral thesis focused on family ministry outreach and nurturing faithful disciples of Jesus Christ with special attention on pregnancy, spirituality, and the faith growth of first-time mothers.

The retreat will be held at Camp Imadene at Mesachie Lake in Cowichan on April 26th, 27th, and 28th.

Camp Imadene offers a serene and natural retreat from the busyness and noise of our day-to-day. Prepare to enjoy the outdoors, eat excellent meals, and fellowship with friends new and old. Rooms are double occupancy (dorm style). Guests will be housed in two large lodges, providing plenty of space to relax.

Space is limited so register early! If you register before March 1, the fee is \$230, if you register afterwards, the fee is \$250. Registration ends on March 22, 2024.

If you would like to attend but may need financial Assistance, the Bursary Committee may be able to assist!

To get a registration form, or if you have any other questions, please contact: Meredith Reems, Camp Registrar at (250) 668 3299 or [meredithreems@gmail.com](mailto:meredithreems@gmail.com)

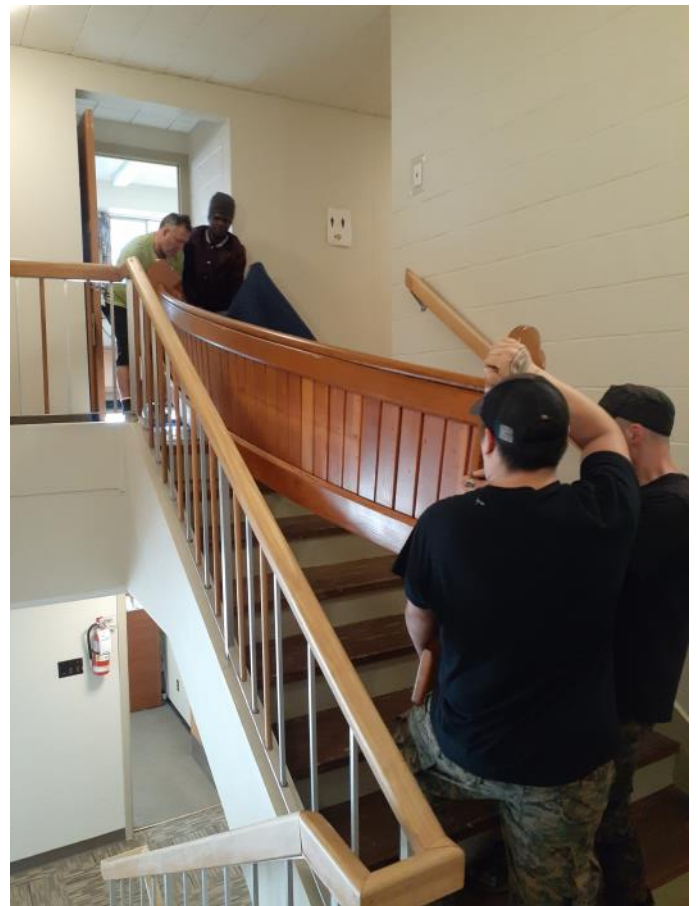
Printed retreat registration forms are also available in St. Andrew's Narthex and in the hallway table next to the church office in the Kirk Hall.

## Progress with Lecture Room Renovations

Each week sees more changes to the Lecture Room.

The very long, and very heavy pews were moved to the second floor in the Kirk Hall and we were grateful for a sunny day and the moving company to accomplish this!

New flooring and new cupboards are now in place. The counter top will be installed on March 11th.





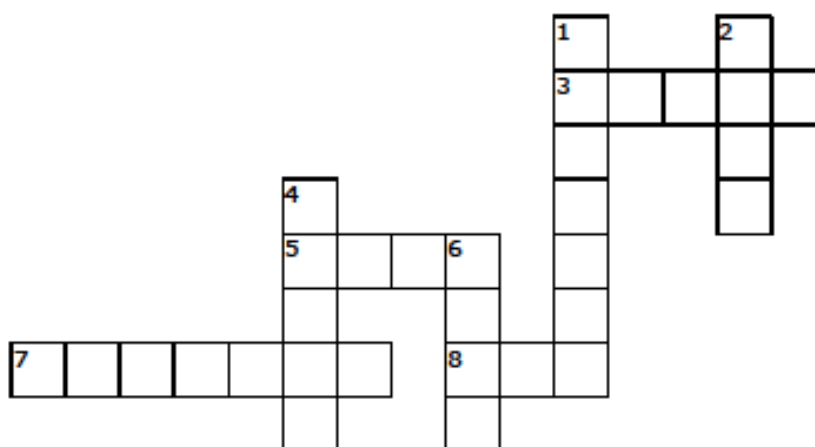
Thank you to Jerry Verwey for his many hours of scraping, patching, sanding and painting. Dave Garson has been working on the installations and electrical “hookups” for the appliances, which will be put in place very soon.

**Submitted by  
Property Committee**



## An Easter Surprise

The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Matthew 28:5-6



### ACROSS

3. "He is not here, he has \_\_\_\_\_."
5. A place where someone, especially an important person, is buried
7. The first or early part of a day
8. A period of twenty-four hours

### DOWN

1. To kill someone by tying or nailing them to a cross
2. A period of seven days
4. A hard solid substance found in the ground which is often used for building
6. The whole physical structure that forms a person

MORNING	BODY	RISEN	STONE
DAY	CRUCIFY	TOMB	WEEK

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church - March 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 Choir 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour	4	5 Lenten Study Knox Church 11:30-1:00	6 Open Church 11:30 - 1:30 Meditation 4:00-5:30	7 Handbells 6:50 Choir 7:15	8	9
10 Choir 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour Classical Music Concert 2:00	11	12 Lenten study Knox Church 11:30-1:00	13 Open Church 11:30 - 1:30 Meditation 4:00-5:30	14 Choir 7:15	15	16
17 Choir 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour	18	19 Lenten Study Knox Church 11:30-1:00 Session - 7:00	20 Open Church 11:30 - 1:30 Meditation 4:00-5:30	21 Choir 7:15	22	23
24 Choir 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour	25	26 Lenten Study Knox Church 11:30-1:00	27 Open Church 11:30 - 1:30 Meditation 4:00-5:30	28 Maundy Thursday Service at Knox 7:00	29 Good Friday Choir 9:30 Worship 10:30 St. Andrew's	30 Choir 11:00
31 Easter Choir 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour Link Deadline			Open Church 11:30 - 1:30 Meditation 4:00-5:30		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.	

If you would like additions, updates or changes to this calendar, please submit that information to [thelink@shaw.ca](mailto:thelink@shaw.ca)