



THE LINK

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

February 2025

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Rev. Dr. Dale Woods has been vitally important in the collaborative conversations that occurred with Trinity, Knox and St. Andrew's. Dale participated in several on-site joint sessions with the three congregations to help define a vision for collaboration should it have led to a possible merger. Dale has a long-standing history as a presbytery leader, college principal and congregational minister. He brings a wealth of experience to help St. Andrew's over the coming months in creating a vision for the future that will help determine what is next for you as a congregation.

Dale is the Presbyter for Mission and Vision in the Presbytery of Westminster, BC. Prior to taking that position in 2020, he was Principal of The Presbyterian College, Montreal, one of three seminaries of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. He joined Presbyterian College in 2008 as the Director of Pastoral Studies and was appointed Principal in 2015. Prior to his work at Presbyterian College, Dale served for fourteen years at First Presbyterian Church, Brandon, Manitoba.

At the recent meeting of the Presbytery of Vancouver Island, upon the recommendation of the Ministry Committee, the following motions were passed:

1. That effective February 1, 2025, and with the agreement of the session of St. Andrew's, Victoria, the Rev. Dale Woods be appointed by presbytery to begin an assessment of ministry vitalities at St. Andrew's, Victoria. Costs to be covered by the presbytery.
2. That the presbytery appoint the Rev. Dale Woods to guide the Visitation Committee in conducting the exit interviews with St. Andrew's and Knox, Victoria. Costs to be covered by the presbytery.

Dale will be meeting with the St. Andrew's session in February to draft ideas for planning the meetings to take place during March and April with session and the congregation. These will help guide St. Andrew's in a positive direction toward the future that God has for you.

Wayne Stretch, Interim Moderator and I will be available for questions about Dale and the skill and experience he will bring to these conversations in the coming months.

Blessings,
Mitch



Victoria, BC

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Session Clerk Report

Session held its regular meeting on Monday, January 20th at which time the Property Committee reported that our insurance for the year will cost \$35,705. The building, stained glass windows and organ are valued at \$16,231,000.

Our rental agreements go up by a Cost Of Living Allowance of 4%. Our sanctuary rental rates now have a base rate of \$330.00 per event for up to 100 persons and increases \$2.00 per ticket to a max of 400 attendees (\$1.50 for non-profits).

The Broughton Street Parkade now uses automatic tap payment with no attendant in the kiosk. There is an attendant on site, but they need to be called via a call button at the kiosk at which time they will swipe for St Andrew's. A bit cumbersome but it retains our 'free' privilege.

There is no further information on our grant requests at this time.

The Presbytery ministry committee met with Session to report that no interim moderator had yet been found. At present four out of eleven churches are without a minister and a fifth soon will be. The Presbytery is hard pressed to provide an interim moderator for all the vacant charges. Further to the Presbytery meeting in January, Presbytery announced that as of March 1 until July 31, Rev. Laura Kavanagh is named as our interim moderator. As of August 1, 2025, Rev. Irwin Cunningham will be appointed as our interim moderator.

The committee requested session's view on providing Rev. Dale Woods to do an 'assessment of ministry vitalities' with the session and congregation. Session concurred with the suggestion and the presbytery ministry committee will present that request at the next Presbytery meeting (to be held on January 21/22). They

also indicated that an exit interview done by the presbytery visitation committee will occur involving not only the session but also the congregation. Dates are not set for either of these initiatives.

Session received with regret, the resignation of member of session, Dirk Ryneveld. Dirk cited his health concerns and as well quoted Joel 2:28 .. *'your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions'*. Session also received a request for a sabbatical from Brian Titus to give him time to focus on his health. This too was regretfully granted. That leaves only nine elders on session, a woefully small number for our congregation. We are praying that God will provide new elders to step forward to lead us in the upcoming times.

Jerry Verwey
Session Clerk

Save the Date

VIP Ladies Retreat
April 25-27, 2025



More details to follow
Contact ringmybellsmith@gmail.com
with questions.



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.

Baptism - January 12, 2025



The congregation of St Andrew's was pleased to witness and participate in the baptism of **Barbara MacKeigan's** granddaughter on January 12, 2025. The Reverend Coggin baptised **Alison Cameron Little**, the daughter of Alex and Caitlin Little. It was great to see a baptism in our sanctuary and the attendance of so many young people who were friends and family of the young couple. Following the service, at coffee hour, we all loved seeing baby Alison, and we enjoyed fellowship with her parents. We also enjoyed a delicious piece of cake in celebration of the occasion.



When I heard that a **Book Circle** discussion was coming up, I was eager to participate. The book we are discussing for 5 weeks (hosted by Linda Coggin) is called *An Altar in the World* by Barbara Brown Taylor, a Theology professor at Columbia Theological Seminary and Piedmont College.

The author discusses ordinary things like greeting strangers, washing clothes and even walking as ways to encounter God in every day life

Her words work magic to help the reader see how we can live with purpose and use our customary tasks and activities to build an *Altar to God*.

As we discussed the chapter on 'walking' I was reminded of a poem I wrote about 10 years ago and decided to share it with the group. As I walked each day I sensed God's presence in my life.

While I cannot say that I "built an altar" like Barbara Taylor did out of so many things, I was able to thank God each day for the opportunity to walk and enjoy.

I highly recommend this beautiful book and it is available from either Linda Coggin or Munros Books. (Cost \$10.00)

The Path Is Made by Walking

Walking is one of my favourite pastimes.

Walking back and forth to work each day, I feel that I have many bonuses that car drivers do not experience.

Walking gets me to my work without the worry or stress of parking, gas costs and car upkeep.

It doesn't cost me a thing except extra time.

It keeps me in shape.

Walking enables me to use my eyes to see many things that I would not normally see.

I get to see people walking their dogs and talk to them and realize how important they are to them.

I can think problems over and solve them

I can pray for people

I can anticipate the day or solve a problem

I can write a poem in my head or sing a song or hum my favourite Mozart Concerto.

I get ideas about flowers and landscaping from seeing other plants/yards.

What kind of a path have I made by walking?

My life is better because of it.

Dorothy Reimer

St. Andrew's & Inclusive Christians at UVic

Every Wednesday, students at the University of Victoria have an opportunity to meet for an ecumenical service and dinner in the Multi-faith Chapel. Reverend Laura Kavanagh of Knox Church provides a Presbyterian perspective once a month for this program called Inclusive Christians. She asks the other Presbyterian churches in Victoria to provide the meal for one of the months that she covers each season... fall, winter and spring. Volunteers at St. Andrew's have stepped forward, prepared and delivered the provisions to feed 20-30 people. The meal is simple...a vegetarian/vegan soup or chili, bread and butter, salad, fruit or veggies. Please uphold in prayer students exploring or nurturing their faith.

Anyone from St. Andrew's is welcome to attend any Wednesday at 5 pm.



Patricia Shuckburgh & Debra Vervey preparing soup for the January 15th Inclusive Christians program at UVic.

Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D)

Presbyterian World Service & Development is the relief and development agency of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. PWS&D works with local partners in different parts of the world to provide support to those who are most vulnerable.



During the month of February, Mission & Outreach will highlight where PWS&D is working globally and also encourage donations from those who wish to donate to those areas. More than one year later the Gaza response continues and the need is great. Tens of thousands have been killed or injured. Due to damage to much of the infrastructure there is more population movement leading to overcrowding, lack of proper shelter, and poor water and sanitation conditions.

The World Health Organization estimates that only 16 of 36 hospitals are partially functioning and just 44% of primary health facilities are functioning. In Gaza, PWS&D's partners, including DSPR (the Department of Service to Palestinians, part of the Near East Council of Churches) and Catholic Relief Services (through Canadian Foodgrains Bank) continue to provide food, clean water, health care and psychological assistance to as many people as possible. We pray for the tireless work of all who provide humanitarian work and assistance to those in need and we pray for peace in that region and throughout the world.

Donations to PWS&D can be made by cheque or cash or e-transfer indicating PWS&D. Each and every dollar donated does make a world of difference.

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

Patti Jackson
Mission & Outreach

Robert Burns Concert and Tea

Gaelic Choir - January 19th



Scottish dancers, bagpipes, and the Gaelic choir all performed and everyone enjoyed shortbread and tea afterwards. Some might recognize our own Joyce Nordwall singing in the choir.

The space and the use of the kitchen in the Kirk Hall was donated by St. Andrew's.

Dawn McLean

After the baptism on January 12, 2025, Rev. Coggin invited the congregation to “remember” their own baptism. He encouraged everyone to come to the baptismal font and dip their fingers into the water as a symbolic re-enactment of their own baptism. The invitation was well received and many availed themselves of the opportunity to participate as a form of rededication of their lives.



Photos by Dawn McLean

ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH'S
MUSIC OUTREACH PROGRAM PRESENTS

GUITAR RECITAL

**FEBRUARY 9
AT 2:00 PM**

*Featuring guitar
students from the
class of
Simon Farintosh,
Music Performance
Instructor at the
University of Victoria.*

FREE PARKING
Sundays and holidays
745 Broughton Parkade

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**DONATIONS
APPRECIATED**

Support our music program and
young musicians!

