



May 2025

THE LINK

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

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Victoria, BC

Easter is over, but the joy we experienced when we celebrated the resurrection of Christ is far from over. That joy and hope continues because it is an everlasting truth. Christ is Risen!

We have a risen Saviour and He is alive and living in our hearts and minds, not just on Easter Sunday, but throughout the year. When we realize that Christianity is the only religion that has a living God, we recognize that we place our hope and trust in a living God. All of the other religions worship a God that is dead or is an inanimate object. If Christ did not rise from the dead, that would mean that He did not have power over death and our hope for eternal life would be in vain. But fortunately for us, He did rise from the dead and demonstrated that as predicted, He does have power over death.

We need only read about the many instances in the Bible where Christ revealed himself to various individuals after he rose from the dead. He truly did rise from the dead, as Jesus himself and various Old Testament prophets had predicted and prophesied. He appeared to the women who came to embalm his body and instead found the empty tomb. He appeared to Cleopas and Simon on the road to Emmaus and their eyes were opened when he broke bread with them. And on returning to Jerusalem where the eleven disciples were locked in a room, Jesus stood among them. We are told in Luke 24 that as they were speaking, Jesus stood among them. He proved that He was not a ghost by asking for something to eat and He then ate a piece of fish. There is no question that Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to over 500 witnesses before ascending to heaven.

So the joy and hope of the resurrection continues for us today and until Christ fulfills the promise that He will come again. Since Jesus had power over death, that means that our faith is not in vain. He has promised that if we believe in Him we too will have eternal life.

The world is in turmoil at the moment with the tariff war that is currently a global concern. Many are anxious about the future. Let us remember that God is in control and that He answers prayer. Canada has elected its current government. Let us pray that the leaders of our government will be guided by the hand of God and that they will do His will. Do not let your heart be troubled – God is in control!

Link Editors

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Session Clerk Report

Session is pleased to report that all the Sundays over the summer have been filled with pulpit supply from various sources. Rev. Wes Denyer, who we have had the pleasure of filling our pulpit during the Lenten season, will cover two Sundays a month until the end of August.

Organ music will be supplied by two organists on a four-week rotation. Both are accomplished musicians and have played at St. Andrew's from time to time. Darby Howard will direct the choir with every second practice being led by the choral scholars.

On the recommendation of the Personnel Committee, session agreed that the search for a new organist for St. Andrew's be delayed until the congregational profile has been approved by presbytery.

Several persons from St. Andrew's attended the Maundy Thursday service held at Knox Presbyterian. The combined Good Friday Service at St. Andrew's was well attended by visitors from Trinity and Knox. Our Easter service was also very well attended, to the point where we had just enough Communion elements, as it was with our Lord when He fed the thousands with a few loaves and fishes. Rev. Denyer provided us with an insightful sermon.

On Sunday, April 20, we welcomed Mark Alchuk who transferred from St. Andrew's Toronto.

After worship on Sunday, April 27, Rev. Dale Woods, will lead us in a search to determine our congregational vitalities in order that the congregational profile can be completed. It is session's hope that many will have participated in this process. Lunch will be provided.

May 4th will be a service of remembrance for the 80th anniversary of VE day (Victory in Europe, May 8th) led by retired Chaplain for the Canadian Scottish, Rev. Andrew Gates. We will also celebrate the re-dedication of our four memorial windows.

Session was asked if there was interest for a combined service/picnic this summer, possibly at the end of July. Further information will be forthcoming.

Jerry Verwey
Session Clerk



What's new at St. Andrew's? A vegetable garden!

Lettuce, Swiss chard, tomatoes,
carrots, peas, cabbage,
peppers, 3 kinds of potatoes
and pumpkin.

The Activity Group, with Grant's help, has transformed St. Andrew's laneway into the beginnings of a vegetable garden.

Stop in and have a look, gardens enjoy visitors!
If you would like to help with this project let us know.
Help is always appreciated!

Now we'll wait patiently for our "crop".

Sheelagh Garson

A big **thank you to Dorothy** for sharing "Zentangle" with our Activity Group and some very welcome visitors. We all discovered hidden artistic talents and can now create more tiles at home.

In a few weeks we'll plan a second workshop, so please consider giving Zentangle a try.

Celebrating the Choral Scholars and our Retiring Music Director, Christine Purvis – April 6, 2025



Choral Scholars Noah Mellemstrand, Dylan Syrnyk, Darby Howard, and Eva Smith sitting with organist, Christine Purvis and Eva's husband, Ian.

April 20 - St. Andrew's welcomes new member, Mark Alchuk



Mark comes to Victoria by Transfer of Certificate from St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Toronto
He is officially received by Rev. Wes Denyer, and his elder, Jim Ferguson.



April 20 – our organist, Christine Purvis received a standing ovation on her last Sunday with St. Andrew's.
Congratulations on your retirement, Christine.



April 27
Worship service led by Rev. Dr. Richard Topping, President and Vice-Chancellor
VST School of Theology



An interesting art activity took place last week in The Gathering Room. A Zentangle Workshop, led by Dorothy Reimer, was held and nine people attended.



We learned the basics of the beautiful Zentangle patterns and had one hour to practise some basic patterns which are known as "tangles" in this lovely art. Each tangle was different and as we put pen to paper ("tile"), different art forms emerged. Some seemed to represent an object (a coffee cup) and others felt they could see the patterns of their lives in each quadrant on the "tile". Some felt a calm as they drew and others were more concentrated on the technique.

It is a beautiful art form, developed in 2004 by two New York artists (Maria Thomas and Rick Roberts) and known throughout the world. It can be learned in a very short time with very minimal equipment (one tile, one pencil and one pen is all that is needed).

We all had fun and we hope to do this again in the Gathering Room.

Thanks to all who came. See you again!
Dorothy Reimer

April 27, 2025

Rev. Dr. Dale Woods, Presbyter for Mission and Vision Presbytery of Westminster, BC, conducted a session with the congregation in order to ascertain the vitalities of the congregation in preparation for the completion of the church profile. This document will move us forward in the process for calling a minister.



Rev. Dr. Woods, Presbyter for Mission and Vision in the Presbytery of Westminster, BC



In small groups we discussed and answered the following questions:

1. What has been one of the high point experiences for you as part of this congregation?
2. Personal reflection:
 - a. What brought you to St. Andrew's?
 - b. What keeps you at St. Andrew's?
3. What are three wishes you have for St. Andrew's for the next 3-5 years? What would you experience or the congregation experience if those wishes came true?
4. Personal engagement:
 - a. What role do you see yourself playing in making this dream a reality?
 - b. What role do you see a new minister playing in making this dream a reality?
5. What prayer would you be willing to pray for the next six months regarding St. Andrew's growth over the next three to five years.

One of the unexpected, but very appreciated, side bars of this meeting was when two individual young people stood up and told the group how they had been welcomed into St. Andrew's by many of the congregation and because of that welcome had decided to continue to worship at with us.

Vancouver Island Presbyterian Women's Retreat 2025

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
To him be glory both now and forever! Amen. 2 Peter 3:18

The above verse provided the foundation for the four sessions that Rev. Dr. Mona Scrivens, from Amberlea Presbyterian Church in Pickering, Ontario, presented to over 35 Vancouver Island Presbyterian women who attended the annual spring retreat from Friday evening until Sunday afternoon on April 25-27, 2025. Her theme was Grace in the Everyday: Forming Holy Habits. Mona emphasized how our daily habits, good or bad, either honouring or denying God, can determine the success or failure of our lives, spiritually, mentally and physically, affecting ourselves, our families, our health, our finances and our happiness.

Jean Marcellus and I enjoyed three days of wonderful weather at Camp Imadene on Mesachie Lake, near Cowichan Lake where the retreat was held. Six other Victoria women, from Knox and Trinity churches, attended also. The beautiful natural setting of the camp contributes to a tranquil environment, far away from our usual day-to-day busyness. All the women are accommodated in two comfortable lodges (Willow and Lakeview). Camp Imadene provides nutritious, delicious meals prepared by a professional chef.

While Mona provided our spiritual food, there was ample time for rest and relaxation and meeting and visiting with old and new friends. Many of the women

spent some time in the hot tub located between the two lodges. Others went kayaking or swimming in the lake. There is enough free time to do lots of things. You could read a book, nap, assemble large 1000-piece puzzles with a friend, discuss how to encounter Jesus in your daily life or have some "alone time" in the quiet room.



Vancouver Island Presbyterian Women's Retreat
April 25 – 27, 2025 – Camp Imadene, Meschie Lake
Jean Marcellus & Deb Vervey.

On Friday night we had a Music Trivia Bingo game which was lots of fun with songs ranging from ones by Louis Armstrong and Elvis to Justin Bieber and Taylor Swift. (The age range of those attending the retreat was from 19 to 80 plus years!) Saturday evening was Movie Night. On Sunday after our fourth session with Mona, opportunity for communion was provided.

If you have never attended the Vancouver Island Presbyterian Women's Retreat, or have not been to one for a long time, I

encourage you to think about registering for the next one in 2026. It is a good opportunity to get away from your regular routine, connect with new and old friends, and grow spiritually in a relaxed natural setting.

Debra Vervey