



THE LINK

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

October 2025

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It is that time of year when our church year has truly begun again with the fall now upon us. This used to be a time when we would begin Sunday School and other youth programs but now, with attrition and an aging congregation we are focussing on our adult and senior members. Fortunately, our choir is back along with our excellent musical scholars. Their contribution to the music at St. Andrew's is very much appreciated!

We have just learned that our congregation has, after many long years of being without a permanent minister, reached the point where Session has appointed a Search Committee. This committee will be led by elders Patti Jackson and Jim Ferguson. (see page 3). It is wonderful to see that this committee will represent the wide variety of backgrounds and ages that are needed to have a truly representative search committee. We pray that their deliberations will result in the selection of a minister who will serve St. Andrew's for years to come.

We also pray that the committee receives a broad range of applicants from which to choose. We recall that the late Rev. Ian Victor once said that applicants for the ministry are not all of the same calibre. Some applications actually arrived written in crayon and others were clearly not suitable for consideration for various reasons.

We were well-served as a congregation during the tenure of Rev. Mitch Coggin for the past 6 or 7 years in his capacity as our transitional minister. Not even he anticipated that the transition would take as long as it did. Because of COVID and despite everyone's wish to "get on with it", we were simply not ready to call a new minister. We needed to clarify our vision for the future, and solidify what kind of minister would best suit the needs of St. Andrew's. After many meetings, and workshops, and an attempt to see if we could collaborate with other congregations, it appears we are finally ready to move forward.

We have been blessed by a variety of preaching styles from the various ministers who have graced our pulpit since Mitch's retirement. We have seen and heard the Bible preached in various ways to give us an idea of what we feel our congregation needs in a new minister. We have enjoyed the preaching of Rev. Wes Denyer for a number of months and are sorry that he is already retired because he would be an attractive candidate! We pray that God will provide the committee with the most suitable candidate for their consideration and selection. Let us hope that although "man plans, but God decides" will lead to the right result.



Victoria, BC

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Session Report

Session met in person for the first time with our new Interim Moderator, the Rev. Irwin Cunningham, from Saanich Peninsula Presbyterian, a church plant from this congregation many years ago. Rev. Cunningham encouraged us to be faithful and forward-looking as we embark on our search for a minister as God wills. In that process, session discussed the setting up of a search committee and appointed two elders, Jim Ferguson and Patti Jackson, to co-convene and to approach members of the congregation to participate in the process. As you know, our profile was approved by Presbytery, and with a search committee now in place we can move forward in this process. We were admonished not to approach any possible candidates as that may hinder their continuance in their present congregation, but to allow our interim moderator to approach any suggested candidates privately to gauge any possible interest.

Session received for information referrals from the 2025 General Assembly which included a report on Gaza and the West Bank which was deemed to be very one-sided. Most of these referrals do not require a response. However some action is required regarding the 2026 Minimum Stipend Schedule with more updated definitions of utilities as part of a call.

Session was saddened to receive the resignation of two of our members of session: Brian and Colina Titus. They were thanked for their many productive years of dedicated service to both the church at large and in particular to St. Andrew's. Their service will be sorely missed.

Session would like to encourage professing members to consider serving as leaders in the congregation and becoming elders.

We received notice from the owners of the Broughton Street Parkade that a redevelopment proposal is being presented to Victoria City Council. How this will affect St. Andrew's is in question. Our own possible redevelopment of the Kirk hall property might face challenges going forward.

Due to the British Columbia Synod meeting on October 17-20 and the holiday status of both the Interim Moderator (vacationing in South Africa) and of the clerk, our next session meeting is being postponed to Monday, November 3, which replaces the regular planned meeting on the second Mondays of both October and November.

It was decided that session's budget meeting, normally held in November, will be held in December and we will bring forward the December session meeting to Monday, December 1.

Jerry Verwey
Session Clerk

Letter from Germany

George Smith was delighted recently to receive a letter from Ben Vordtride, who is now living at home and attending school in Gifhorn, Germany. Last year Ben, an international student in Grade 11 at Lambrick Senior Secondary School, frequently attended St. Andrew's and sat with George in the balcony. Since returning to Europe in June, Ben has travelled to Austria to visit his grandmother and to Paris with his parents. He said that he misses Canada and St. Andrew's and wants to come back to visit sometime.



In Loving Memory

Cornelis (Kees) Middelkoop - Sept. 6

Search Committee

UPDATE 1

Patti Jackson and I were named as the team leads for the Search Committee for St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (Victoria). It might seem to those, who are regular readers of *The Link* or access our Church webpage, it is superfluous to be so specific. It is very clear we are the Presbyterian Church rather than St. Andrew's Cathedral and we are located in Victoria rather than some other location. Within the Presbyterian Church in Canada there are many churches named St. Andrew's.

The team is made up of Patti Jackson, Mark Alchuk, Janet Eastwood, Darby Howard, Arthur Marcellus, Angus Henderson and me. We will be following the process as defined by the National Church while at the same time taking advantage of recent experiences of other Presbyterian churches.

This is a 'report of no report' to make you aware we are moving forward. We will take our time in searching for the right minister for St. Andrew's. Please be patient.

Sincerely,
Jim Ferguson
 searchcommittee@standrewsvictoria.ca

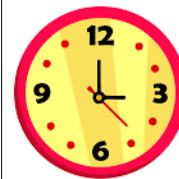
Presbytery Camp Report

The presbytery held three successful camps for Island Presbyterians this past year. One mid-week camp, taking advantage of seniors discounts in Provincial Parks, in early June at Little Qualicum River Falls campground, attended by 4 members of our congregation and two family-style camps. One of which was at Goldstream group site and a very successful camp at Rath Trevor Beach group site.

The Presbytery Camp Committee has been able to secure Rath Trevor group site for camps July 25th through to Aug. 3rd. The committee decided to split the camp into two segments July 25th to July 30th, 2026 and July 30th to Aug 3rd, 2026. Cost has not yet been determined but the ability to camp for the whole time is possible. Speakers and children's program leaders are being looked for.

Save the date if you wish to camp. It has been a long time since we were able to secure a site over the August long weekend.

Jerry Verwey
 St. Andrew's Camp Rep.



Fall Back

Don't forget to turn back your clocks on Sunday, November 2 at 2 am.

First Aid Kits

Our church building has many First Aid Kits that are situated in various parts of the church. We have rarely needed them but it is vitally important that we are aware of where they are and how they are stocked for the needs of our congregation, should we need them.

Please come to our Activity Group Session in November: November 6, 13, 20, 27



We will talk about the First Aid Kits, explore the recommended guidelines through Work Safe BC, purchase refills, (new or donated by any of you) discuss periodic checks several times per year and replace outdated items, discuss keeping a log/documents and to discuss your thoughts about any new ideas.

We welcome you for coffee, friendship and the task to update and improve our First Aid Kits in St. Andrew's.

Sincerely,
Dorothy Reimer

On Holiday!

The Verweys have been on holiday these past few weeks as may be noted by Debra's absence from choir and the steady hand at the audio desk missing. Thankfully, our son Neil, has filled in while we enjoy a very fine holiday in



Holland, biking and sight seeing. One place we visited was a church located in Delfshaven, a borough of Rotterdam, where the Pilgrims met before commencing their arduous journey in their first vessel the 'Speedwell', before changing over to the 'Mayflower' in Plymouth, England due to mechanical difficulties. Amsterdam and Leeuwarden still beckon us before our return after Thanksgiving.

Jerry and Debra Verwey



We Asked, and You Helped

- ❖ In September the Activity Group learned that a shipment of supplies bound for five schools and two orphanages in Burundi, was in need of toothbrushes, toothpaste, hair combs, hair brushes, facecloths, small towels and plastic plates and bowls for their lunch programs. There was only a very short time to collect donations but word spread and many donations were brought in. The Compassionate Resource Warehouse was thrilled with our contribution and we were very grateful to the folks at St. Andrew's who not only shared what they had, but also shared the need with friends and relatives so that even more people had an opportunity to contribute.
- ❖ Over the past 16 weeks the produce from our laneway summer garden has been collected and donated to James Bay New Horizons for their food programs. We will, in the spring, plant more vegetables but in the meantime we are trying some fall vegetables. We'll let you know what grows.
- ❖ In November, Dorothy Reimer, is beginning a review of the First Aid Kits at St. Andrew's. The Activity Group is happy to help with this task. We all need to know where the kits are located and what they contain so we'll look at what's appropriate for our first aid needs and how we maintain them in good order. Give us your thoughts. If you have time in November join us on a Thursday morning, enjoy a coffee and share your thoughts.

Sheelagh Garson

Thanksgiving Donations to Mustard Seed Street Church

This Thanksgiving The Mission & Outreach team at St. Andrew's is encouraging our members and adherents to consider donating to the Mustard Seed. As the cost of groceries continues to rise, and the high cost of living continues in Victoria, the demand at The Mustard Seed continues to increase as well. The Mustard Seed, located in Victoria's downtown core, provides 65,000 pounds of food, beverages and hygiene products to families and individuals; equivalent to 1500+ meals a day!



The Mustard Seed has a list of non-perishable items most needed on their website. However, cash donations are always best. Did you know that food banks have the resources to turn cash donations into many more meals for folks in need? Every dollar that is donated has double the buying power and sometimes more!! The Mustard Seed has better access to retailers, manufacturers, farmers, etc. and has the ability to pick up donations directly and save on transportation costs.

Did you know that food banks use donated funds to redirect food waste (Food Rescue) from ending up in landfill sites? They work directly with farmers and grocery stores so that healthy fruits and vegetables and other perishable food items are redirected to families, individuals and other local organizations in need. More than 70 social service agencies in the Victoria region are supported by the Mustard Seed.

If you wish to donate:

You can donate by cash donation or cheque, using your church envelopes indicating Mustard Seed on your envelope. Thank you for supporting this ongoing needy cause in our community. Together we help to make a difference supporting our neighbours.

Patti Jackson
Mission & Outreach

Happy Birthday Jim!

Jim Ferguson celebrated his 80th birthday on September 27 with family and friends at the Masonic Lodge in Central Saanich. Many thanked him for his counsel and support as they pursued new employment opportunities. Speakers commented how he had changed their lives just by 'being Jim'.

Jim commented that he was already looking forward to hosting his 85th birthday and had set a goal for himself—to learn a second language so he could more fully enjoy his rounds of golf with a couple of his minister friends (Wayne Stretch and Mitch Coggin) on those rare occasions when his golf ball doesn't do as it's told!

Submitted by
Jean & Arthur Marcellus



Visiting on the Mainland



Arthur and I had the pleasure of visiting Christine and Richard Purvis in their new home in Langley. Christine was our former organist who retired after Easter Sunday. They are doing well and now feel settled in their new home and location. They look after their 3-year-old granddaughter every Saturday, which is a highlight of their week. Christine and Richard have also joined a choir at Trinity Western University. They send their greetings.

We had the honour of visiting with Rev. Dr. John Allan in Abbotsford. Dr. Allan was our minister from 1987 - 2000 and was Moderator of the General Assembly 1990 - 1991. After retiring, he became stated supply at numerous church on Vancouver Island, while living in Nanaimo. He and his wife, Marjorie, eventually moved to the mainland to be close to family. We had a precious visit with him ... and he always asks: "How is everyone at St. Andrew's?" It warmed our hearts being with John.

We attended worship at Rev. Geof Jay's church, St. Andrew's Newton Presbyterian. Geof is a former associate minister of our church. His message was based on John 10:1-19 - Jesus the Good Shepherd. We had the pleasure of chatting with a Mr. Gibbs at their coffee hour. At 93, he regaled us with many stories of what it was like to be a young boy living next to a British Training Facility during WW2. Afterwards, we went for a fun sushi buffet with Geof, Bonnie and their adult children, Olivia and Isaiah.



Lastly, we visited with Diana Headley a past member of our church. She now lives in the Oakridge area of Vancouver in a very nice seniors' residence. She attends Kerrisdale Presbyterian Church. Past 90, she is still interested in everything and everyone.



Submitted by
Jean Marcellus

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

FALL RECITALS



GUITAR RECITAL
Sunday November 23 at 2 pm

*An afternoon of music from
guitar students from the studio
of Simon Fairintosh at the UVic
School of Music.*

CELLO RECITAL
Sunday November 30 at 2 pm

*An afternoon of music from
cello students from the studio
of Pam Highbaugh-Aloni at the
UVic School of Music.*

VIOLIN RECITAL
Saturday December 6 at 2 pm

*An afternoon of music from
violin students from the studio
of Ann Elliott-Goldschmid at the
UVic School of Music.*

**ST. ANDREW'S
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

924 Douglas Street
250-384-5734
office@standrewsvictoria.ca
www.standrewsvictoria.ca

**DONATIONS
APPRECIATED**

Support our music program
and young musicians!

FREE PARKING

Sundays and holidays
745 Broughton Parkade
next to the Greater
Victoria Public Library.



**VICTORIA
FOUNDATION**

