



THE LINK

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

November 2025

Lest We Forget

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Two thousand years ago, Jesus and his disciples were sitting opposite the Temple Treasury in Jerusalem. This was a hall, named for the chest with a trumpet shaped tube, into which were dropped coins for the support of the Temple worship.

Of course, many rich people came and with much flourish dropped large sums of money into the tube.

As Jesus and his disciples watched ... a certain poor widow came into the hall. She didn't have much. In fact, for her to give what she could afford to give, would mean giving nothing at all. But she didn't give what she could afford to give. She gave everything – all the money she had.

Now, I have to ask myself: "Why did she do that?"

I believe she did it because she wanted to make the ultimate sacrifice. She wanted to make a statement about who she was - what her life and her God meant to her. *She wanted to create an identity.* In the midst of hopeless poverty, she wanted to say, "This is who I am? *I am first and foremost a child of God!*"

When my Dad turned seventeen, in the middle of World War II, he went down to the local recruiting office for the Royal Canadian Navy, lied about his age and signed up to go off to war. He was assigned to a corvette on convoy duty in the North Atlantic. It was a hard and difficult episode in his life. There was the enemy - the German U-Boats lurking under the surface. And there was another enemy - the frightening storms that would blow up on the North Atlantic.

Why did he do that - my Dad, a veteran of the Battle of the North Atlantic?

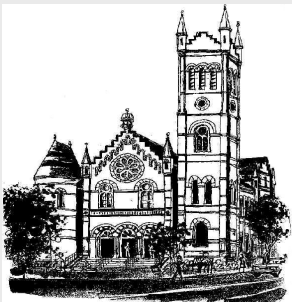
Why did so many volunteer for such gruelling and dangerous work? Were they completely naive? Did they not know what they were getting themselves into? Was going to war over glamorized and painted with a wide romantic brush of adventure and excitement?

No doubt there was some of that ...

But there was also something else ... called *patriotism*. They identified themselves - they knew themselves to be - very proud and patriotic Canadians. Their country and the freedom of future generations were more important to them than life itself. And when they found themselves in the midst of the hardest and most challenging circumstances of their lives, they acquitted themselves admirably and with honour.

When they came back, being *a Canadian* was even more their identity than when they had left. They left with a dream, and like the widow in the story of Jesus, they returned home, having paid for that identity with blood, sweat and tears for the preservation and protection of generations yet unborn. Like the

(Continued on page 2)



Victoria, BC

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British Columbia Synod 2025

Representative elders and ministers of the Presbyteries of Vancouver Island, Westminster, Kootenay, Kamloops and Western Han-Ca met for the annual business meeting of the 133rd Synod of British Columbia in Kimberley, October 17-19, 2025. The Synod inspected the minutes of each the presbyteries, something that is mandated to be done on a regular basis for congregations and presbyteries.

Rev. Curtis Bablitz, from the Presbytery of Westminster, was elected as Moderator of the Synod. Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart, the outgoing moderator, was thanked for his service.

The Synod discussed regional resource grants available from the Synod, which total \$61,000. It was decided that to be fair to all presbyteries, that initial applications from the presbyteries for grant money will be limited to \$10,000. If funds are still available, after July of the application year, subsequent requests would be entertained from all. Presbyteries would be informed by June of the approved grants and the total allotted.

The Synod received the reports of those grants given in 2025 which included a report about the Vancouver Island Presbyterian Women's retreat held at Camp Imadene in April.

Synod discussed two appeals from the General Assembly of 2025, which need to be acted on by the B.C. Synod.

After completion of the business meeting, which included the approval of next year's budget, Dr. Mark Glanville, Director of the Centre for Missional Leadership at St Andrew's Hall, led a teaching session. Using jazz music and post Christian contexts and Biblical scholarship, Mark taught how we could re-imagine what we could be in this post Christian era using music.

Synod closed with communion on Sunday, October 19th.

It was wonderful to reconnect with four of St. Andrew's past ministers who were present at the Synod.

Jerry Verwey
Representative Elder

Continued from page 1

widow, they gave everything!

I suspect if this country ever comes apart at the seams, it will be because too many of us never had to make any kind of sacrifice for Canada. What has been passed on to us so freely and at such small expense, we may not honour and cherish as we should. I'm not saying our country isn't important to us, but it is certainly more precious and valuable to those who have had to pay a greater price and make a greater sacrifice.

This year, and every year, we owe to each and every one of our veterans, a deep and lasting gratitude ... *lest we forget ... lest we forget ...*

Rev. Wes Denyer



Four past ministers of St. Andrew's-Victoria who attended the recent British Columbia Synod, from left to right: **Rev. Mitch Coggin** (attending as interim moderator for Trinity-Victoria), **Rev. Jeremy Bellsmith** from St. Andrew's-Nanaimo, **Rev. Jennifer Geddes** from Comox Valley Presbyterian, and **Rev. Geoff Jay** from St. Andrew's-Newton-Surrey.

Around the Table

Supporting students with meals at Inclusive Christians

University of Victoria students gather for a simple Christian service of prayer, song, scripture and contemplation in the Multifaith Centre with a Spiritual Care Provider on Wednesday evenings during the school terms. The worship is centered around a Bible reading. The students take time to discuss and share different interpretations of the passage.

The worship service is followed by a meal shared by the participants. The meals are provided by different churches in Victoria. St. Andrew's is one of the Presbyterian churches which supplies a vegetarian meal to feed twenty persons during each of the school terms: fall, winter and spring.

If you want to learn more or to contribute food for a meal, please let the Mission and Outreach Committee know about your interest.

Patti Jackson
Mission and Outreach



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 Sessions 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 when to replace outdated items, learn how to keep a log/documents and 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

ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRESENTS

THE GIFT OF CHRISTMAS MUSIC



**THURSDAY
DEC. 11, 2025
AT 12:00 PM**

A free concert for everyone!

Special Guests

- Susanne Reul-Zastre, organ
- Darby Howard, voice
- Noah Mellemstrand, voice
- Dylan Syrnyk, voice
- David Barss, trumpet
- Mary Byme, flute

**Join us for a special
Christmas carol sing-along!**

**Festive drinks and treats
available to enjoy.**



**ST. ANDREW'S
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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

DONATIONS APPRECIATED

Supporting our music outreach
program helps local amateur
musicians and ensembles.



ST Andrews Pres. Live



Share the Joy of Christmas 2025

Every year St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church has a Share the Joy of Christmas campaign with the goal of making the holiday season brighter for those who have difficulty making ends meet in our community. In 2021, we decided to fund Christmas hampers for needy persons in Greater Victoria. The local charity, Mustard Seed Street Church and Food Bank, using its contacts with local food distributors, puts hampers together, that feed families, couples and singles who are struggling financially.

Each hamper is filled with all the fixings for a Christmas dinner, along with a grocery store gift card. Adults and children alike can select gifts for themselves, ensuring that everyone feels remembered and cherished. Over 1600 people are helped each year through this program.

On Sunday, November 16, Janice James from Mustard Seed Street Church and Food Bank, will attend our church service to speak about the community work of the Mustard Seed and, in particular, about the Christmas hamper project.

The Mission and Outreach Committee wants to encourage all the members and adherents of St. Andrew's to consider donating money to the Share the Joy of Christmas fundraiser, as part of their Christmas planning. Your generosity to Share the Joy will make Christmas miracles happen in the lives of your neighbours in need as we help to cover the cost of these Christmas hampers.

To bring comfort and joy to others in Victoria this Christmas, donate through your church envelopes or follow the instructions under the Donate tab on St. Andrew's website, standrewsvictoria.ca. Remember to indicate that your donation is for ***Share the Joy of Christmas***.

If you have any questions about our Share the Joy of Christmas campaign, please call Debra Verwey at 250-383-1009.

Thank You!

The Mission and Outreach Committee wants to say thank you to everyone who so generously supported our two recent fundraisers with donations and such enthusiastic encouragement.

On September 18 and 20, local Presbyterians participated in Journey for Hope. The Victoria team, called Together in Motion and Song, held a hymn sing at Trinity Presbyterian Church on Thursday evening and then a 5 km walk around Esquimalt Gorge Park on Saturday morning.

Journey for Hope, a national Presbyterian fundraiser, supports Presbyterian World Service and Development food security projects. We exceeded our local fundraising goal of \$2000 with a final total of \$2235.

Thank you also for the contributions of \$460 during our Thanksgiving food drive, with the funds going to Mustard Seed Food Bank. These donations aid in supporting those most in need in our community. Each and every donation is very much appreciated.

Patti Jackson
Mission and Outreach



Victoria Organ Studio visits St Andrew's Presbyterian Church

On Saturday morning, October 18, 2025 some members and their teachers of the **Victoria Organ Studio** visited **St Andrew's Presbyterian Church** hosted by Director of Music, **Susanne Reul-Zastre**. Members had a fun time trying out different registrations to suit music by Thalben-Ball, Buxtehude, Reger, Malingreau and Vierne. The Victoria Organ Studio is directed by **Mark McDonald**.

About the organ:

The 3-manual organ at St Andrew's Presbyterian has 2091 pipes, 72 of those are speaking stops with 124 ranks of which 37 are pipes and the remainder digital, all available through a beautiful Rodgers Organ console installed in 2001. There are still 3 ranks of speaking pipes from the first organ installed by S.R. Warren & Son organ builders from Toronto, Ontario in 1879. Local organ builders Hugo Spilker and Grant Smalley both did some work on the organ, and the latest rank installed was the 'Trumpet 8' built by Casavant organ builders, Quebec. St Andrew's was fortunate to obtain a number of ranks of pipes (built by English organ builder Hill Norman and Beard) from Christ Church Cathedral when they replaced their organ with a new tracker instrument. For more information, check out the following links:

<https://www.standrewsvictoria.ca/music/the-organ>

<https://standrews-media.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/images-videos/organ-history.pdf>

The item above is an article that first appeared in the October 20, 2025 issue of the Royal Canadian College of Organists Victoria Newsletter. It is included here with permission from RCCO.

**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.*

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CHURCH**

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**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**

