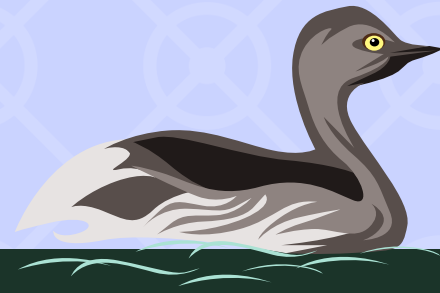




February 24, 2021



## Pastor's Parable

Frederick Buechner in his book *Listening to Your Life* tells of Ralph Waldo Emerson upon reaching senility when his mind became a calm blank. One day the great poet picked up a copy of his own essays and began to read. Emerson remarked that while he could not place the young essayist who had written them, still he thought that all in all, the young fellow who had written them showed great promise. How valuable might our own biographies become void of personal commentary and self-critical editing.

What if we were able to listen deeply and carefully to our lives without the judgment and scorn of seeing and knowing ourselves from a critic's point of view? What lessons would the stories of our lives reveal? How would our experiences reflect a deeper truth long hidden from our knowing due to the vast amount of times that we may have hidden it away?

Some of our best wisdom may be uncovered in the strangest of places – in our obituary! Reading a number of obituaries in a recent paper, a different window thorough which we do not normally view our lives begins to emerge. What do those lives reveal and what deeper truth emerges written by those who may have loved them most and knew them best?

One such obit begins, "Anne had been the family glue, promoting and sharing traditions and family occasions. Her life centered around creating celebrations for those she loved!" Another describes, "Chris was a kind and understanding person who led with compassion and used his authority wisely. He was keen in recognizing the potential within youth that had led troubled lives." George loved a good laugh and even more, a good conversation. Connie was described as being a phenom who knew who she was and what she wanted in life. She was the most determined but gentle person who provided guidance, clarity and perspective through words filled with kindness, positivity and compassion.

The reminders that emerge from these lives compel us: Give your elderly grandparents a hug if you can, even if they no longer realize who you are because you still know who they are! Even now, call and tell them that you love them and are thankful for what they taught you. Watch them laugh and talk and walk and store that deep within you.

Most of the obituaries end with "a celebration of life will be planned when it is safe to do so." Reflecting on the lessons contained above, they inspire us to not wait for the celebration. Do it now as often as you can and in as many ways as you can. Don't allow the Pandemic to rob us of life and of doing and saying the things that ultimately matter.

The biographies of our lives are making an impact today with each person we encounter. Make them count. Make the story of your life rich and purposeful knowing that someone is reading that story each and every day.

With blessings, Pastor Mitch

[Click here](#) for a hymn from Susie and Christine  [Click here](#) for a video message from Pastor Mitch



## Have you seen any interesting birds lately?

If you are looking for a safe activity, look no further than your local park, pond or wetland. There is still time to go out looking for some of the migratory birds that like to spend winters in Victoria. [Click here](#) for a checklist from the Victoria Natural History Society. Go out for an afternoon and see how many you can check off!

To learn how to identify the birds that you see, check out [this website](#). It will help you narrow down the species of bird by shape, colour and size. Perfect for novice bird watchers! If you aren't in BC then [click here](#) for the What Bird homepage where you can search within your own locale.

## Please send submissions for The Link Newsletter by February 28th

The Link is an important way that we stay in communication with one another and especially with people who don't have access to email. Send in a message about something you've been doing, reading, making, watching, cooking or crafting. In these times without coffee hour and seeing one another weekly, it is wonderful to read about what our friends are up to!

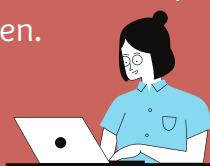
[thelink@shaw.ca](mailto:thelink@shaw.ca)



## Ballot for the Moderator of the 2021 General Assembly

Watch interviews and read Q&A's with the candidates. The General Assembly is the highest decision making body in the church and every year a minister or elder is chosen by Presbytery vote to preside over the Assembly. Once General Assembly is over, the moderator continues to provide for the PCC in an inspirational and ceremonial role until the next moderator is chosen.

[Click here](#) to learn about this year's candidates.



# WELCOME

If you are interested in welcoming people and ushering at St. Andrew's when in-person worship starts again, please contact the office or contact Sheelagh Garson at 250-385-5157

### *Read From Your Bible This Week*

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Psalms 22:23-31

Romans 4:13-25

Mark 8:31-38 or Mark 9:2-9

