

December 14, 2021

This Week at St. Andrew's



Parable of the Pastor

From Reformed Journal Taizé European Meeting, Rome, New Year's 2012-13

Rev. Laura de Jong, pastor of Second Christian Reformed Church in Grand Haven, Michigan writes:

In the cathedral, she lights a candle with a long yellow taper,
her back to us, invited intruders on her three-year old grief.
The church corner is dark, save for the glow of each votive
that flickers with the remembrances of souls still loved.
Around us, St. Ignatius (for whom the brother had been named)
lives yet on the walls and ceilings, perpetually caught up
in acts of service and penance.
On the ceiling he floats, suspended
before the welcoming arms of a heavenly Jesus
surrounded by saints in red and gold and blue.
The brother lived on too, of course,
after the accident, after the phone call on a New Year's Day.
He lived on, but not in this life.
He is one of those saints now in red and gold and blue,
and we – the saints below – stand behind her in this old Roman church
as she remembers and prays and, turning, smiles a soft smile
through her tears, and the three of us walk out of that old cathedral
which has, for my friend,
been a sanctuary.



This year we are not hosting a live Blue Christmas service (stay tuned for a livestream service on our website provided by Knox Presbyterian) but this is not to say our lives are not saddened this year by the grief and losses we have experienced. My mother died in April as well as many within our own church and community that we have not been able to grieve properly. Our grief during Christmas swells in our hearts as we are reminded that our Christmas joy is muted and incomplete from what it may have been in the past.

Rev de Jong experienced a sacred moment in a distant sanctuary that I invite us to consider. During the remainder of Advent and our Christmas Eve and December 26 worship, I invite you to sit quietly within our beautiful sanctuary. Look around and remember the saints who sat in that pew, those who filled the choir, lit the candles, preached the sermon and read the scriptures. Imagine again the smiles of parents sending their children down for the children's sermon and then to Sunday School. Remember the Celebration of Life services where laughter and tears were mixed with the memories of those who had faithfully served.

Advent is a time of waiting. It is also a time to sense again, Immanuel, God with us and among us. It will be easy to be distracted by all that is unfamiliar and not the way we remember but do not allow your senses to be distracted from the glow of each votive that flickers with the remembrances of souls still loved. Listen as God reminds us of the light that came into the world and is with us still that no darkness can overcome.

May your Advent and Christmas worship be rich with a renewed celebration within our sanctuary this season. Peace be with each of us. -Pastor Mitch

Try this Simple and Refreshing Winter Salad!

- 1 tablespoon white-wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Coarse salt and ground pepper
- Flesh of 5 navel oranges (sliced or roughly chopped)
- 3 to 4 fennel bulbs (about 2 pounds total), ends trimmed, quartered lengthwise, cored, and thinly sliced, crosswise
- 1/4 cup roughly chopped fennel fronds (optional)

Whisk together the first three ingredients and toss with sliced fennel bulb and oranges. Sprinkle with fennel fronds.



Adapted from Martha Stewart



We Need You!

Are you willing and able to assist us in welcoming people as an usher at our Sunday services or for special services like Christmas Eve? If so, please contact Bruce Wasylick (bwasylik@shaw.ca) or speak to Sheelagh or Roger on Sunday.

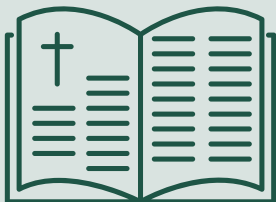
Reservations for Sunday

We are still asking for congregants to register for attendance at the Sunday service. We know that many have stopped pre-registering. However, as more people attend (and we get closer to reaching our capacity of 70 attendees) we need your help to let us know if you'll be there in-person on Sunday. Please help us to prepare for worship by [clicking here](#) for the form to register for Sunday.

[Click here](#) to find the most recent edition of our denominational newspaper, The Presbyterian Connection

Read From Your Bible This Week

- Micah 5:2-5a
- Luke 1:46b-55
- Hebrews 10:5-10
- Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)



Share the Joy of Christmas Update

The total of money donated is still going up...there is now enough to supply almost 28 food hampers to low-income individuals, couples with children and multi-adult families in Greater Victoria!

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 are supplying funds to put together Christmas hampers (full of a variety of food, including a turkey or grocery gift card, fresh produce, milk, eggs, bakery items, treats, and cereal.) The local charity, Mustard Seed Street Church, using its contacts with local food distributors, puts each hamper together for \$147. The hampers also contain a few special gifts for each child and stocking stuffers. Adults are blessed with a few goodies like warm stockings, chocolates and a new toque along with the food. This way we try to touch each person's heart with the joy, peace and hope of the season.

Last Tuesday, we delivered a cheque to the Mustard Seed office, to cover the cost of 25 hampers. More recent donations will be sent there before Christmas.

There are many ways you can donate to Share the Joy of Christmas.

Go to St. Andrew's-Victoria website: standrewsvictoria.ca, and click the Donate tab at the top of the page. There are instructions there to help you donate by e-transfer or by using the Canada Helps app to make a donation by credit card. Indicate that your donation is for Share the Joy.

You can also donate via your church envelopes. Write "Share the Joy" on the line where you enter the amount of your donation. As you come into the narthex of the church off Douglas Street, there are white steel boxes marked Collection where you can deposit your envelope. (The ushers are not collecting the offering during the Sunday service because of Covid-19 restrictions.)

To mail in your donation, send it to: c/o Treasurer, St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 680 Courtney St, Victoria, BC, V8W 1C1

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



Support St. Andrew's by Ordering Preserves!

Anne's delicious preserves are available for delivery or pick up again this year! Contact David McLean or Dorothy Reimer to place your order! d.mclean@shaw.ca / 250-598-4432 or dotreimer@shaw.ca / 250-592-5051

Jams (with number available)

20 Raspberry Jam
12 Loganberry
6 Black Current
12 Blackberry
24 Strawberry
10 Goose berry/Rhubarb
9 Apricot
10 Rhubarb/Strawberry

Marmalade

12 Seville orange
26 Seville Ginger marmalade

Fillings/ relishes etc.

6 Bread and Butter
12 mild salsa
2 Beet root butter pickles

\$5 Each or
5 for \$20

