



January 11, 2022



## *Parable of the Pastor*

Do you ever read articles that hit you squarely in the mouth because they are so accurate? The Times Columnist recently posted one entitled “Empathy for others and ourselves is key right now, says therapist”. Jennifer Thuncher, editor and journalist at The Squamish Chief said it well...

A national Canadian Mental Health Association survey found that 42% of B.C. respondents reported their mental health has deteriorated since the onset of the pandemic. And that was after Wave 2 in the pandemic. Most of us have lost count of what wave we are in now.

Squamish counsellor Nicole Thomson says she is seeing folks feeling depressed, anxious and angry.

"Depression relating to trying to stay hopeful and being told to 'keep hanging in there,' and wait[ing] to be able to see loved ones, or for things to go back to normal," she told The Chief.

"Anxiety about how many things are out of our control now compared to before. Not to mention having to be extra careful around germs," she said.

She is also seeing folks' anger at others increasing, as "we're looking for something to blame for the way things are dragging on."

The article identified for me several of the emotional challenges most of us are experiencing. As I left worship Sunday, I suspect that if masks had been removed for those who attended in person (thankfully the masks stayed on) there would have been few smiles if any. These are just discouraging times for all of us!

We continue to “hold out hope and hang in there” but some feel that we are only running in place. The emotional challenges of the pandemic may be behind an abundance of feedback which lately comes in the form of “anonymous”.

Their critique comes from others who share it on their behalf. Is it the pandemic or merely culture that causes persons to be afraid to offer ideas, opinions, or suggestions? I long for St. Andrew's to nurture a culture in which beliefs can be shared person to person without fear of rebuke or ridicule. I hope I live up to that ideal for myself as well as hope for that for each of you. Please do not bring feedback my way if it is anonymous. Please help the person who wants to give anonymous feedback to contribute to a culture which is safe and trustworthy. You might even offer to come with them to give support to anyone afraid to share feedback.

On the opposite side of the coin, we also have a rise in the number of Good Samaritans at St. Andrew's. These are those who step up in other ways to help or contribute. Once such example of late is the person who hung a picture that was missing in the St. Andrew's gallery of pastors. No one, including the Church Officer, knows the identity of the person who stepped forward. It would be helpful to know the name of this Good Samaritan so that we can work collaboratively to add the pictures of previous ministers who remain missing from the gallery, thus making our historical timeline incomplete. Please let me (us) know who you are so we can finally enjoy a full gallery of previous pastors so that we may begin to prepare for the next permanent pastor.

I know that you have heard it before. We are in this unprecedented time together and together with God's help we will see our way forward. Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Lean not upon your own understanding and God will direct your path. May it be so.

## Notice from Session

St Andrew's has maintained tight safety measures in the sanctuary for in-person worship.

Renters, Ballet Victoria, and members of our church community use the Kirk Hall public spaces, some of whom are not compliant to the mask-wearing regulations. Session will address this safety concern as soon as possible.

Until we have a plan to achieve compliance with mask-wearing, the church office will be closed, and the Church Administrator will work from home.

### *Presbyterian Prayer Partnership*

*We pray for Syrian refugees and host communities in Lebanon, and we give thanks for the church's support of Presbyterian World Service & Development programs and partners that provide aid to this deeply struggling country.*

## Choir Practice Cancelled

We have been blessed over the Advent and Christmas season with music from Christine and our choir! As we continue to move through the pandemic, St. Andrew's choir rehearsals are on pause until further notice. We all look forward to their music again in the future.

In the meantime, singing during church will be provided by our two choral scholars- Lauren Steinmann & Jorge Carrizales.

ah, kindness.  
what a simple way  
to tell another  
struggling soul  
that there is love  
to be found  
in the world.

alison malec



## 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.

### *Read From Your Bible This Week*

- Isaiah 62:1-5
- Psalm 36:5-10
- 1 Corinthians 12:1-11
- John 2:1-11

