

June 28, 2022



Parable of the Pastor

Father Thomas Merton said in his book *Contemplative Prayer*, "Sometimes prayer is like a descent into our own nothingness, a recognition of helplessness, frustration, infidelity, confusion and ignorance. Note how common this theme is in the Psalms."

Father Thomas was remembering, "The Lord heard my cry and drew me up from a desolate pit..." "Do not be far away from me for trouble is near and there is no one to help." "Lord, my heart is not lifted up, my eyes are not raised too high; I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me."

Within the last several days, I have visited with and been in conversation with several within our church family whose lives may be characterized by helplessness, frustration, and confusion. The loss of a spouse, frequent hospitalizations, crippling pain, and challenging, life-altering decisions that must be made have all framed these recent conversations. All allude to sleepless nights and the agony of asking "How long, O Lord?"

Each conversation, without exception, has offered in detail an underlying trust that God is mysteriously present. Their prayers for comfort, healing, and companionship even in the face of crippling loss have been answered. God has surprised when it has seemed that all hope was lost.

Every conversation has included an expression of gratitude for specific persons within St. Andrew's who have visited, brought greetings, news, and worship items to them. Each person has been reassured that they are not forgotten but valued even in their absence. Every one has been strengthened by our prayers. Some have shed tears over the pain and loneliness of his/her situation and yet all have expressed the deep knowing that God is near.

Visiting with and hearing story after story that contains the words "Thank you for not forgetting me. Thank you for praying for me. Thank you for visiting, for calling and for your continued care."

I leave each visit encouraged that I did so little, but God in God's power has done so much. The challenge for each of us is to pick up the phone and call the one that you may not have seen or talked with in awhile. Remind them you care. Listen to their story. Reassure them that you are praying for them...and then do just that. Their life will be strengthened and so will yours!

Father Thomas concludes, "Prayer does not blind us to the world, but it transforms our vision of the world, and makes us see it, and all mankind, in the light of God."

Prayerfully, Pastor Mitch

Reminder: Church staff will be off on Friday, July 1st

Music for Sunday, July 3rd

The organ prelude for Sunday is "A voluntary for the organ stop" by John Stanley. In music a voluntary is a piece of music, usually for an organ, that is played as part of a church service. In English-speaking countries, the music played before and after the service is often called a 'voluntary', whether or not it is so titled. John Stanley (1717-1786) was an English composer and organist. I am playing the first two sections of this piece.

The music for reflection is Air on a G string by Johann Sebastian Bach. This is an organ arrangement of the 2nd movement of Bach's Orchestral Suite #3 in D major.

-Christine



Congregational Meeting

Please plan to attend a brief congregational meeting on Sunday, 10 July immediately following worship. The meeting will be livestreamed and is necessary step to meet the requirements stipulated by the Province of BC to address the revised Landowner Transfer Act.

Further details related to the meeting will be circulated next week.

Music
Notes



It is with sadness that we share that Betty Barwise passed away quietly in her sleep early Saturday morning, after several months of declining health. She and Don have been in Amica on Douglas for several weeks after a period of time in hospital. Funeral arrangements will be announced at a later date. Please remember Don in your prayers, and sons Jim and Glen and their families, especially Ethan.



Continuing Safe Worship

We continue to transition from a "rules-based" approach to "trust" that people will keep others safe from COVID by behaviours that reflect their love for those around them. Starting Sunday July 10th, ribbons will be removed from the south and central sections of pews, and people can freely choose where to sit, while maintaining social distancing. (Alternate pews on the north side will continue to be marked, for those who wish more defined spacing between worshipers.) Secondly, the "family pews" in the gallery will remain reserved for them, but others may sit in them, too, on the understanding that they will move and give way to families who come expecting to use the space.

Thank you for continuing to keep fellow worshipers safe: to date, we are not aware of anyone who has become infected with COVID by attending worship at St. Andrew's!



A Reminder: parking passes are available in the Narthex and can be used for the Robbins parkade by our Broughton Street door, and under the Sussex Building.

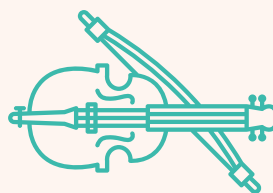
QUARTET FEST WEST

Sunday, July 3

2:00 pm

Four quartets will perform a variety of classical music selections downtown in the Sanctuary of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church after 2 weeks in service workshops at the Uvic School of Music.

Admission is by donation- come out and enjoy the music!



Read From Your Bible This Week

- Isaiah 66:10-14
- Psalm 66:1-9
- Galatians 6:(1-6), 7-16
- Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

