

THIS WEEK AT ST. ANDREW'S



ISSUE # 292 January 8, 2026

Open Church: Sanctuary

Wednesdays at 12:00 - 1:30 pm

Meditation Hour: Sanctuary

Wednesdays at 4:00 - 5:30 pm


Activity Group: The Gathering Room

Thursdays at 10:30 am - 12:30 pm


Worship Service: Sanctuary

Sundays at 10:30 am - 12:00 pm


Announcements

 **THANK YOU:** A big thank you to everyone who contributed to the [Soap for Hope](#) donation bin over the last few months. Folks from St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Knox Presbyterian Church, Ballet Victoria, The Sequoia Choir, The Village Choir, and The Pandora Chorus Choir pitched in every week to make sure my little car was practically bursting with donations! A great effort by a great community for a great cause! My heartfelt thanks to all of you.

- Shannon

 **UN-DECORATING THE SANCTUARY:** Thursday, January 8th at 10:30 am. Please give of your time to help un-decorate the Sanctuary of the Christmas decorations we enjoyed in December. Please come for an hour to pack the decorations away for the year, enjoy coffee & goodies, and fellowship with one another. See you there!


- Sheelagh and Dorothy


 **ELDER NOMINATIONS:** The Session of St Andrew's. Having resolved to add to our number, now only 9, gives notice to the congregation that we are requesting nominations for elders from the congregation. The nomination must be supported by two nominees. The nominated and nominees must be professing members of the congregation. The nomination period will extend


till Jan 10th 2026. Nominated forms must be in writing and signed and can be deposited at the church office or emailed to either the clerk at session.clerk@standrewsvictoria.ca or the office at office@standrewsvictoria.ca They may also be given to your elder.


- Session Clerk, Jerry verwey


\$ CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET MEETING: The meeting will be held on Sunday, January 18th after worship service.

 **THE LINK:** Contribute to St. Andrew's monthly newsletter! Next month's deadline for submissions is **Sunday, January 25th**. To contact the editor or make submissions please email: thelink@standrewsvictoria.ca.

 **PRESBYTERIAN CONNECTION:** There are a couple of great articles featuring Knox Presbyterian Church in Sooke in the latest Presbyterian Connection newsletter! [Read](#) 'From Backpacks to Blessings' and 'A Call and an Answer' to find out more.

 **PCC WEBINAR:** Tuesday, February 3, 2026 at 1:00 PM (Eastern). Join Amberlea Presbyterian Church for a practical, encouraging webinar on making Sunday mornings more welcoming for children with autism and other neurodiverse needs. We'll explore ways to support kids in worship and Sunday school, share real-life stories from families, and offer practical tips to help church staff, volunteers, and members implement inclusive practices. [REGISTER HERE.](#)

 **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:** The meeting will be held on Sunday, March 8th after worship service.

 **PCC WEBINAR:** Wednesday, March 25th 6:00 p.m. (Eastern). Anti-Jewish sentiment is an ongoing global issue and a force that generations of Christian churches have grappled with. And, much to our dismay, the church at times has been complicit in perpetuating this sentiment, with devastating results. In light of the PCC's commitment to address and dismantle anti-Judaism we explore one vein of the complicated history of Judaism and Christianity with invited speaker Dr. Patricia Ahearne-Kroll, noted Judaism scholar. Her lecture will expose

the role of biblical scholars whose misinformed interpretation of New Testament passages stoked the flames of anti-Judaism. [REGISTER HERE.](#)

🏠 **VIP SUMMER CAMP 2026:** A program of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. This year's locations and dates are as follows:

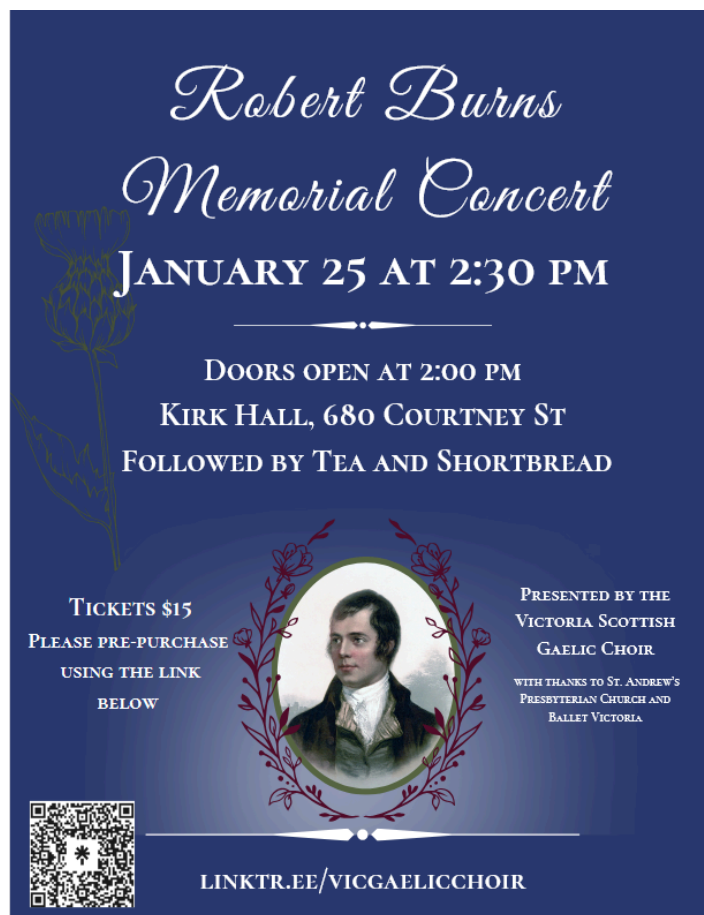
- Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park
◆ June 8-12
- Rathtrevor Provincial Park
◆ July 25 - 30
- Rathtrevor Provincial Park
◆ July 30 - August 3

For more information go to our [website](#) or contact the registrar at jermareng@outlook.com.

Community Events

🍷 **AROUND THE TABLE:** Laura Kavanagh is continuing as a Spiritual Care Provider at UVic in 2026. One program she is involved with is Inclusive Christians: Around the Table. This is an ecumenical communion service hosted by Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian and United SCP's on Wednesdays at 5:00pm during the university term. The simple service focuses on reading and reflecting on the gospel, prayer, song, silence and sharing bread and wine. While this service is centered on students, all are welcome. After worship everyone is invited to enjoy a meal. We usually have about 20 participants. Help is needed to provide these meals. If you, or a group from your congregation, would like to help prepare a meal in the coming term, please be in touch with Laura as soon as possible by email at lauratodd60@gmail.com or phone at 250-415-8173. The dates are February 4 and April 1. The meal is simple – vegetarian/vegan soup or chili, bread & butter, and salad, fruit or veggies. Thank you for supporting students and Inclusive Christians on campus in this way.

🙏 **TAIZÉ PRAYER:** Prayer in the style of Taizé resumes WINTER 2026 at Holy Cross Catholic Church, 4049 Gordon Head Road, 6pm on the 3rd Friday of the month: January 16, February 20 and March 20th. Come, you have a place among us. 'Feeling we are not alone can strengthen our life.' www.taize.fr



The poster features a dark blue background with white and gold text. At the top, 'Robert Burns' is written in a large, elegant cursive font. Below it, 'Memorial Concert' is also in cursive. The date and time 'JANUARY 25 AT 2:30 PM' are in a bold, serif font. A decorative flourish separates this from the event details: 'DOORS OPEN AT 2:00 PM', 'KIRK HALL, 680 COURTNEY ST', and 'FOLLOWED BY TEA AND SHORTBREAD'. In the center is a circular portrait of Robert Burns, framed by a decorative wreath of red and white flowers. To the left of the portrait, it says 'TICKETS \$15', 'PLEASE PRE-PURCHASE USING THE LINK BELOW', and a QR code. To the right, it says 'PRESENTED BY THE VICTORIA SCOTTISH GAELIC CHOIR' and 'WITH THANKS TO ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AND BALLET VICTORIA'. At the bottom, the website 'LINKTR.EE/VICGAELICCHOIR' is listed.

🇬🇧 **ROBERT BURNS MEMORIAL CONCERT:** Presented by The Victoria Scottish Gaelic Choir and on January 25 at 2:30 pm in the Kirk Hall. Join us for an afternoon of Scottish entertainment in celebration of Scotland's beloved bard! Go [HERE](#) for more information and tickets as they become available.

🌸 **TEA FOR TUTU 'RITE OF SPRING':** March 10, 11, 12 at 2pm in the Kirk Hall. Reserve your free seats! Email: tea4tutu@balletvictoria.ca Phone: 250-380-6063. The performance includes an introduction to the dancers, the story of the work to be performed, a 45 minute dance performance, the opportunity for seniors, parents, and young children to enjoy the friendly, intimate atmosphere of the theatre, tea, coffee, and cookies offered while mingling with the dancers after the show.

Presbyterians Go to the Movies

Join us for part two of our Presbyterians Go to the Movies series: *Smoke Signals*, directed by Chris Eyre and loosely based on the book of short stories, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, by Sherman Alexie.



Watch the film, and then meet online for a discussion with Dr. Lee Johnson.

Set on a Coeur d'Alene reservation, *Smoke Signals* is a journey film of two Indigenous young men, Victor and Thomas, who travel to Phoenix, Arizona to recover the belongings and the ashes of Victor's father who abandoned him and his mother when he was a boy. The two protagonists have both lost their fathers but relate to their familial heritage very differently. They clash at various times on their journey of discovery of themselves, their heritage, and their history. The numerous flashbacks reveal the impressions that the Catholic Church has left on these two as they reflect on their troubled relationship with Western religion and their position in a society that does not understand or value their Indigenous traditions.

The film can be viewed beforehand on these platforms: Sundance, Now, AMC+, CTV or Amazon Video

You can [borrow *Smoke Signals* for the Greater Victoria Public Library here](#).

Join Dr. Lee Johnson for an online discussion about the film *Smoke Signals*:

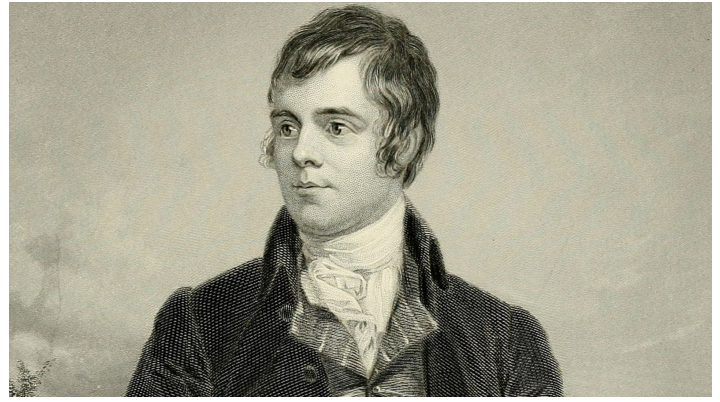
Date: Wednesday, January 21

Time: 6:00p.m. (Eastern)

Register for the discussion [here](#)

Download the [Smoke Signals Companion Resource](#)

Alternatively you can [Order the resource here](#)



The First Psalm

By Robert Burns

The man, in life where-ever plac'd,
Hath happiness in store,
Who walks not in the wicked's way,
Nor learns their guilty lore!

Nor from the seat of scornful Pride
Casts forth his eyes abroad,
But with humility and awe
Still walks before his God.

That man shall flourish like the trees
Which by the streamlets grow;
The fruitful top is spread on high,
And firm the root below.

But he whose blossom buds in guilt
Shall to the ground be cast,
And like the rootless stubble tost,
Before the sweeping blast.

For why? That God the good adore
Hath giv'n them peace and rest,
But hath decreed that wicked men
Shall ne'er be truly blest.

"One of Burns' impressive verse versions of the Psalms. Although unconventional, indeed unorthodox, the poet's religious convictions were firm. The man was schooled in, though sceptical about, strict Calvinism and retained a Presbyterian's sense of 'humility and awe' whilst sometimes believing himself to be one, whose '...blossom buds in guilt'. Robert Burns' own oeuvre has been called a 'secular psalmody'."

- [Donny O'Rourke](#)

Social Action Spotlight

Refugees and Immigration

At the end of 2024, an estimated 123.2 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced due to persecution, conflict, violence and human rights violations. This represents an increase of 7 million people or 6 per cent compared to the end of 2023. In recent years, narratives around refugees and immigration have become increasingly polarized. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has a long history of advocating for the rights and dignity of refugees, immigrants, migrant workers and asylum seekers. The church's actions stem from the biblical injunction to love and protect the "alien," the "foreigner" and the "stranger" in our midst. Increasingly, language in public and government spheres appears to scapegoat immigrants for issues such as the housing shortage in Canada. Recent changes to Canada's immigration policy, including closing programs that previously welcomed immigrants, changes to visa requirements, and rhetoric and increased policing around the border in response to the demands of the United States are equally concerning. Cuts to the number of refugees that sponsorship agreement holders like The Presbyterian Church in Canada can help resettle to Canada are also troubling. (Read more about this in the PWS&D section of the winter issue of the Presbyterian Connection.) Canada needs to continue to open its doors to refugees, given the already comparatively low levels of refugees being admitted into Canada. Furthermore, Canada should work to address the causes that force people to seek refuge away from their home country, including conflict and climate disasters. Given global cuts to international assistance budgets, we can only expect larger numbers of people to become vulnerable and become refugees.

Questions for reflection

1. When have I personally experienced being a "stranger" or an "outsider"? How did others treat me?
2. Do I carry any unconscious biases or assumptions about immigrants or refugees? Where do those come from?
3. What does it mean for me to share my resources (social, financial, spiritual) in a world of growing need?

What can we do

Read the letter from the Moderator sent to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship on many of these issues and share your concerns with the government. You can find the letter here: bit.ly/Moderator_Letter2025_Minister-of-Immigration-Refugees-and-Citizenship

Learn more

Visit the Social Action Hub to learn more about what the church has said and done in response to refugees, immigration and migrant workers: presbyterian.ca/justice/social-action/immigration-and-xenophobia

Mission Moment



"The lack of drinking water in the home is tiring and disappointing," explained 28 year old Carolina Coronado. "During this year, the water pressure of the piped [municipal] system has decreased a lot. We have asked the community authorities for the expansion of drinking water, which hasn't been possible due to the low water pressure." To help respond to this challenge in Guatemala, PWS&D, together with our partner, the Maya-Mam Association of Research and Development, provided water tanks to families in need. Carolina explains: "The water tank will be very useful to me. Now I will be able to continue planting vegetables in my family garden. I am very grateful."