

THIS WEEK AT ST. ANDREW'S



ISSUE # 301 March 12, 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

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Palm Sunday: Sunday, March 29 at 10:30 am

Good Friday: Friday, April 3 at 10:30 am


Easter Sunday: Sunday, April 5 at 10:30 am


From the Pulpit


This Sunday's sermon is entitled *That's When the Trouble Starts*, as we reflect on the story in Chapter 9 of the Gospel of John - the story of the healing of the man born blind. When Jesus heals this blind man, it's not the end of his troubles, but the beginning. True "seeing" disrupts comfort, challenges injustice and demands action. Through stories of church communities confronting poverty and homelessness, this sermon leads us to understand that faith is about having our eyes opened to suffering, and responding with courage, compassion and costly commitment.


- Rev. Wes Denyer

Announcements

 **LENTEN STUDY:** You are warmly invited to join a Lenten Study on March 20th & 30th at 3:30 pm at 1740 Patly Place. Experience Visio Divina, a similar practice to Lectio Divina, by meditating on select scripture and artwork. If you would like to attend please RSVP with Colina at 250-418-0730 or email colina.titus@gmail.com


 **LENTEN DEVOTIONAL GUIDE:** "The season of Lent is not about striving harder or proving ourselves worthy, but rather allowing God to create something new within us—a softened heart, a clearer vision, a renewed spirit. As you read these daily reflections, may you find space to breathe, listen, and encounter the God revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who meets us with compassion and calls us toward new life." This is from the introduction to The St Andrew's Hall Lenten Devotional Guide, available for you to download and view [HERE](#). Please contact the church office for a printed copy.


 **ACTIVITY GROUP:** There's still a couple of weeks to bring in donations for [Compassionate Resource Warehouse](#) overseas shipments to Sierra Leone, Ethiopia and Kenya. We're looking for: neckties, men's dress shirts, thread, belts, wallets, change purses, soap, lotion, toothpaste, toothbrushes, scissors, nail clippers, towels, washcloths, dishcloths, coloring and activity books. Bring your donations on Sundays, there's a basket inside at the front door, drop off at the office, or join us on Thursday mornings and share a coffee and a chat. Thank you to all for your generous contributions so far. Your help is very much appreciated. We were excited to see donations from every part of our request list and we know that those receiving these donations will be even more excited.


 **SPRING CONCERTS:** Presented by St. Andrew's Music Outreach program in partnership with UVic School of Music. Donations are appreciated, and support our music program, and our musicians! Everyone is welcome to attend.


- **GUITAR CONCERT:** On Sunday, March 15th at 2 pm in the Sanctuary. Guitar students from the classes of Simon Farintosh, Instructor, UVIC School of Music
- **CHAMBER & VIOLA CONCERT:** On Sunday, March 22th at 2 pm in the Sanctuary. Chamber and Viola music from the studio of Joanna Hood, Associate Professor, UVIC School of Music.
- **VIOLIN CONCERT:** On Sunday, March


29th at 2 pm in the Sanctuary: Various violin selections from the classes of Ann Elliott-Goldschmid, Associate Professor, UVIC School of Music.

 **THE LINK:** Contribute to St. Andrew's monthly newsletter! **April's** deadline for submissions is **Sunday, March 29th**. To contact the editor or make submissions please email: thelink@standrewsvictoria.ca.


 **SESSION MEETING:** The next in-person meeting is on Monday, April 13, at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary.

 **SEQUOIA ENSEMBLE CONCERT:** Presented by St. Andrew's Music Outreach program on April 19th in the Sanctuary. More information will be available soon!

 **TEA FOR TUTU 'ALICE IN WONDERLAND':** May 5, 6, 7 at 2:00 pm in the Kirk Hall. Reserve your free seats - email tea4tutu@balletvictoria.ca or phone 250-380-6063. For more information about the program go [HERE](#).

 **CHOIRBURST PERFORMANCES:** Presented by St. Andrew's Music Outreach program in partnership with [Podium 2026](#). In the St. Andrew's Sanctuary from 10 am - 5 pm on May 15th & 16th. These are short and informal performances given by choirs from across the country! More information will be available soon.


 **PRESBYTERY MEETING:** on Tuesday, June 23 at 10 am in the Sanctuary and Gathering Room of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church.


 **QUARTET FEST WEST:** Presented by St. Andrew's Music Outreach program in partnership with Quartet Fest West, one of the finest chamber music programs in North America! The festival runs from June 29 - July 10 in Victoria. A concert will take place on July 5 in St. Andrew's Sanctuary as part of the festival. More information will be available soon.


 **SHANNON SAYS GOODBYE:** St. Andrew's


administrator, Shannon, will regretfully be leaving us at the end of August. She and her partner will be moving to northern BC to be closer to her family - especially her new baby nephews! Session will start advertising for the position soon. If you have questions related to the position, or want to recommend someone for the position, please contact Jean Marcellus or Colina Titus. Shannon will do her best to make the transition as easy as possible for everyone. If you have any questions related to the transition, please contact Shannon.

Community Events

 **AROUND THE TABLE:** Join 'Inclusive Christians' on Wednesdays, from 5 - 6 pm, at the UVic Multifaith Center, for a simple Christian service of prayer, song, scripture, and contemplation. Our worship is centered around a gospel reading for which we take time to discuss and listen to student interpretations of the text. All are welcome. A free simple dinner is provided following the service. Hosted by the Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and United Spiritual Care Providers. For more information contact the [Rev. Laura Kavanagh](#).

 **THE VILLAGE WORKSHOP SERIES:** On **Saturday, March 14**, from 9 am - 4pm, Oak Bay United Church and St Mary's Anglican Church will host Kathi Camilleri's [Building Bridges Through Understanding the Village](#). Cost is \$30. Lunch and refreshments included. To register, please contact the Oak Bay United Church office by email at admin@oakbayunitedchurch.ca or phone at 250-598-502.

 **PCC WEBINAR:** Wednesday, March 25th 6:00 p.m. (Eastern). Dr. Patricia Ahearne-Kroll, lecture will expose the role of biblical scholars whose misinformed interpretation of New Testament passages stoked the flames of anti-Judaism. [REGISTER HERE](#).

 **COLLECTIVE 2026:** Join us on April 15th at 1:00 pm for an in-depth webinar designed to walk you through everything you need to know about Collective 2026, an event for youth, young adults, and their leaders. [Register here](#).

 **VIP WOMEN'S RETREAT 2026:** At Camp

Imadene, Mesachie Lake, Cowichan on April 24 - 26, 2026. Join us for a variety of workshops and worship throughout the weekend! Register before March 16 for \$230 by filling out [THIS FORM](#). For other information please contact vipladiesretreat@gmail.com or 250-668-3299.

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), Rath Trevor Provincial Park (July 25 - 30), and Rath Trevor Provincial Park (July 30 - August 3). For more information go to our [website](#) or contact the registrar at jermareng@gmail.com.

Lenten Liturgies

Without Water, There is No Life



Felicita Tomás Velásquez used to have to fetch water from a source 30 minutes away because her home in Tuilelén, Guatemala, lacked piped water. Installing pipelines was too expensive for her family. After years of effort,

Felicita, who is now married with 11 children, finally obtained water access from the nearby community of La Libertad. Since then, both Tuilelén and La Libertad have placed restrictions on new users, because water flow has decreased. That means Felicita's adult children and their families often rely on wells or neighbours for enough water. To help address this problem, PWS&D and local partner, Maya-Mam Association for Research and Development, have installed water tanks. Now Felicita's family and others in the community will have access to enough water. "I am deeply grateful to the donors for providing water tanks. I recommend that the institution continue to supply other families with this type of support, since, without water, there is no life," she shares. This Lenten season, faithfully respond with PWS&D to help communities access clean, safe drinking water and appropriate sanitation and hygiene facilities.

Fourth Sunday of Lent

I was blind but now I see. (John 9:25) These words are the punch line in the response of the blind man Jesus had healed to the Pharisees. This group of Jewish leaders were twisted up in knots because they could not comprehend how Jesus—whom they viewed as a "sinner" and definitely not the Messiah—could heal someone. In his dialogue with them, the healed man doesn't argue with their assessment of Jesus: "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" (v. 25). Eventually the blind man regains not only his physical but also his spiritual sight, "seeing" that Jesus is truly the Messiah.

These words "I was blind but now I see" are also the famous words used "Amazing Grace," a hymn John Newton wrote after he came to the conviction that his involvement in the slave trade was unjust and evil. While sailing on his ship, the Greyhound, Newton faced a terrible storm in the North Atlantic. For over a week, the storm battered the ship, causing serious damage and leaving the crew hopeless. In this desperate moment, Newton began to think about his life, his promotion of and benefit from the slave trade, and his need for God. In the heart of the storm, he cried out for mercy. After his act of faith, Newton began to repent and to fight against the slave trade alongside William Wilberforce. Their work helped pass the British Slave Trade Act in 1807, which ended slave trading in the British Empire.

The stories of both the man born blind and John Newton call us to open our eyes and see Jesus for who he really is: our healer, saviour, and just judge. They also call us to stop turning a blind eye to the injustices of our times—such as economic policies allow immoral inequalities—in which we can so easily become complicit.

God, open my eyes to see you more clearly, and to love you more dearly by seeing— and acting—against economic inequality and injustice by your Spirit's power. Amen.

The Rev. Dr. Tim Dickau is the Director of Citygate and an Associate at the Centre for Missional Leadership at St. Andrew's Hall.



On War In and Around Iran

Recent and continuing attacks on Iran by the United States and Israel, and subsequent attacks by Iran on other neighbouring nations, greatly increase conflict and violence in a region of the world where we hear from our partners that there is already immense suffering.

Living Faith affirms “that God is at work when people are ashamed of the inhumanity of war and work for peace with justice.” The inhumanity of war and armed conflict includes not only the deaths of all those killed in the fighting—whether they were participating in the fighting itself or not—but also trauma that can linger for generations from displacement, hunger, separation of families, and lives upended. In the context of the 1991 Gulf War, the church said that “a military solution in itself is no solution to international conflict” (A&P 1991, p.300, 57). We reiterate that sentiment in this present context. Along with the [World Council of Churches](#), we pray and urge that disputes between states be resolved through dialogue, consultation, and adherence to international law, and [repeat their four calls that there be](#) :

- An immediate cessation of all military actions.
- The protection of civilian populations and critical infrastructure in accordance with international humanitarian law.
- The urgent resumption of diplomatic engagement and political dialogue through established international and regional mechanisms.
- Coordinated international efforts to prevent further escalation and to restore stability.

War destroys lives while creating intergenerational anger and broken trust that contribute to further cycles of violence. While the church confesses that there exist and are tolerated theologies that lead to violence and do

not support peace, we acknowledge that peaceful co-existence, to which we are all called, is based on treating people as equals in the eyes of God. (“Theology of Peacemaking” statement, A&P 1994, pp. 358-359, 29).

Jesus taught us, “Blessed are the peacemakers.” Wholistic peacemaking is what is needed not only in this present war involving Iran, but also with regard to the roots of the conflict, which are spread throughout the region. And in all things, and amidst all fears, we pray to Christ who is the Prince of Peace.

*Just God who desires healing for the people of all nations,
Prince of Peace
Spirit of truth and holiness
bring peace to places of violence and war
especially in and around Iran.
Inspire those who have power to use wisdom and mercy,
soften the hearts of politicians and religious leaders to act with compassion,
guard and protect the vulnerable and scared,
comfort those who are suffering and in pain,
console those who are afraid and who mourn,
strengthen those who serve and provide care,
and bring peace to the world you love,
in the strong name of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, we pray,
Amen.*

For the ecumenical statement by the World Council of Churches, the Middle East Council of Churches, Lutheran World Federation, World Communion of Reformed Churches, World Methodist Council, Mennonite World Conference, Christian Conference of Asia, and ACT Alliance, please [read here](#). Christian organizations are jointly expressing deep concern regarding the humanitarian and social impacts, and the threat the widening conflict poses to peace and security in the region and the world.

Resources reflecting on peacemaking and detailing the church’s history of advocacy against armed conflict can be found on the [Peacemaking page of the Social Action Hub](#).