

# THE LINK

## From the Pastor's Desk: GRACE IN EXCELLENT MISTAKES

*"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.  
I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." ~ John 10:10*



Mistakes are a human experience, but they can be a means of grace, if we let them.

Dr. Kennon Callahan, a popular church consultant and speaker, described one such experience. He was taking his two sons and wife on a sailboat trip. They departed from Florida and were crossing the Gulf Stream to spend a few days on Bimini, in the Bahamas.

Now the entrance to the harbor in Bimini was long and narrow, and it turned frequently. There were coral reefs and sandbars that created a twisting and winding course. Thankfully, if one were on the bow, the water was clear enough to see these obstacles and pilot to safety. But, this can only be done during the day, so Kennon and his family decided to sail all night and arrive at Bimini in the morning.

That evening the sailing was some of the best they had ever experienced. The winds were strong, but not too strong. The waves were gentle and the skies clear as Callahan piloted the sailboat towards a cluster of stars. It was breathtaking.

As the sun came up, they had made excellent time and could see Bimini in the distance. Near the entrance of the harbor was a cargo vessel. Callahan knew that cargo vessels need deep water to sail, and so pointed his vessel towards it. They were getting closer and closer, fully expecting to follow the cargo ship into port, when their sailboat abruptly stopped to the sound of a loud and painful crunch. The sailboat had hit a coral reef and gotten stuck.

Thankfully, with the help of a local fisherman, they were able to get the sailboat off the reef with little damage to the vessel.

Callahan later discovered that three days before their arrival, a captain who had sailed those waters for over thirty years had run his cargo vessel aground on the coral reef. And that's where it still was when Callahan had arrived that first morning.

No wonder there is a saying in the Bahamas where there are lots of reefs and shallow water: "If a skipper says he has never run aground, his boat has never left the dock."

Grace can be found in mistakes, so rather than avoid them, we ought to value excellent mistakes. Creative vibrant living is a part of the heavenly life that Christ came to provide. When He promised abundant life in John 10, it was an end to the drudgery of routine, dull and sluggish living. Yet, this simply can't happen without mistakes. So rather than avoid them, let's embrace the grace that comes from making excellent mistakes.

These might be small and seemingly insignificant, or they could be larger more painful mistakes. The latter are far more likely to be means of grace for us. That's not to say that these mistakes are painless.

*(Continued on Page 3)*



## PRAYER CORNER

### *Doodling as Prayer*

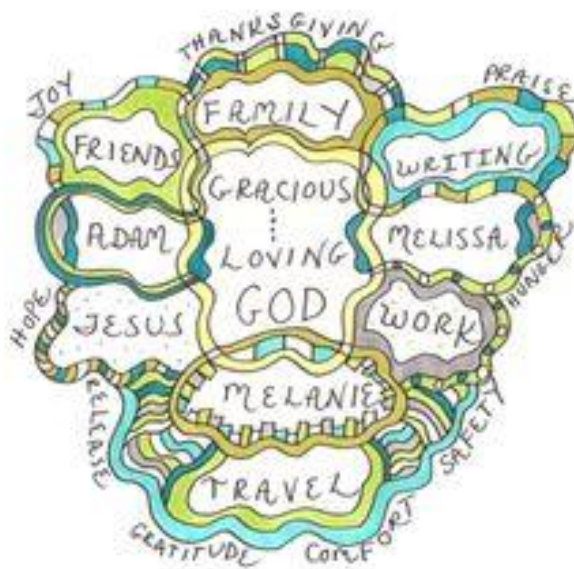
*"Prayer is the inner bath of love into which the soul plunges itself." ~ St. John Vianney*



Prayer is often about taking the ordinary and using it to immerse ourselves in an awareness of God with Us. On the heels of Christmas, here is an interesting way to immerse the heart and mind in God. It is especially helpful for those with artistic leanings, who are more visually oriented, or who find rhythmic movements in prayer helpful. It is a combination of meditation, adoration and intercession, though sometimes these are wordless.

1. Write your favorite name for God in the middle of a page
2. Doodle a space around it and decorate the doodle, meditating on this name and offering thanks and praise for what the name evokes.
3. Now do the same with the name of someone you're praying for, doodling both the space around the person's name and the connection between that person and God.

Like with all forms of prayer, there will be distractions that arise. Acknowledge them and then simply come back to the creative act of doodling. Once your time of prayer is finished, pause to notice what the doodles look like. What sort of ideas do they evoke about God, the person(s) prayed for, and the connection between them.



### IN LOVING MEMORY

**Gordon Le Breton**  
**December 13, 2016**

**Nina Hollisley**  
**December 26, 2016**



And God shall wipe away all  
tears from their eyes; and  
there shall be no more  
death, neither sorrow, nor  
crying, neither shall there be  
any more pain....

Revelations 21:4

*(From The Pastor's Desk: Continued from page 1)*

Many of us know how much hurt our mistakes have caused ourselves, and others. But, when we own the mistake, apologize, make amends and learn from it, then we are experiencing grace—the grace of becoming better people as we learn how to live this life of freedom, the joy of learning a new skill and the love of improving our relationships as we discover better ways to relate.

However, sometimes we hear voices of parents or teachers or colleagues who demand that no mistakes be made. We then recite these voices over and over until they sound like our own. We relay these voices to others and make demands for a perfect existence. No doubt these voices are well intentioned as they demand “excellence” from us, but this mistake-less standard is both unrealistic and unsustainable. It’s like the thief Jesus mentions in John 10; the thief comes to steal, kill and destroy. At its worst, these perfection demanding voices create an obsessive, perfectionistic approach to life that steals joy while it slowly kills and destroys our ability to be our truest selves. People listening to these voices never leave the proverbial dock, not because they’re lazy or indolent, but only because they believe they aren’t allowed to make mistakes.

There is no grace in that. That’s not the abundant life we’ve been called to live.

We cannot try new things without making mistakes. But if we’ll risk them, those mistakes can become a way for us to learn new skills and grow into better versions of ourselves.

How do we handle our mistakes? At one of my children’s schools, they taught a wonderful four step approach: own it, apologize for it, learn from it, move on. It’s something my family has come back to over and over again as we try new skills, learn better ways to treat each other and discover the full, free life Christ came to give.

New Year’s is often accompanied by new resolutions. What might life look like if we kept a resolution of extending grace to ourselves and others by allowing for mistakes? How might we grow and learn if we tried owning our mistakes, apologizing for and learning from them, and then moving on in the grace we’ve received. As we do, we will realize what it’s like to be recipients and channels of the grace Christ has brought us. We’ll be free to leave the harbor and live as truer versions of ourselves, a people who are discovering the abundant life Jesus brings.

After all, like ships, we were meant for sailing, not for staying in port.

*Rev. Jeremy Bellsmith*

## MUSIC NOTES

*O come, let us sing to the Lord;  
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!  
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;  
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!  
Psalm 95:1-2*

Choir rehearsals will resume the second week of January, as follows:

**Stained Glass Singers—Wednesday, January 11; 3:45-5:00 p.m.**

**St. Andrew's Choir—Thursday, January 12; 7:15-9:00 p.m.**

**Both choirs rehearse weekly in the sanctuary. Please join us!**

If you are interested, but not sure what is involved, please ask.

If anyone wishes to share in the music ministry at St. Andrew's let me know and I will find a place for you to contribute.

**HYMNS:** Submit the names of your favourite psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs—especially if we haven't sung them in years. This is an ongoing quest, and I would love to hear your suggestions. You can send them to me or hand any suggestions to Whitney, in the office.

**Contact Sandra Fletcher, Director of Music Ministries at: [standrewsmusic@outlook.com](mailto:standrewsmusic@outlook.com)**



## January 2017

Our elders are asking us to pray as we seek God's will for our congregation, and the mission of Jesus Christ in the world. If you have items you would like included, please write to Pastor Jeremy [revjbellsmith@gmail.com](mailto:revjbellsmith@gmail.com), or by talk/text (250) 415-2226.

***"I have so much to do that I shall spend the first three hours in prayer" – (attributed to) Martin Luther***

***Please pray for...***



***"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer." Romans 12:12***

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Christian Education volunteers and all teachers.	All those with Birthdays and anniversaries in January	Our plans as we discern what 2017 might look like for each of us.	The homeless young people who find a warm place to sleep in the Kirk Hall with Out of the Rain.	People in hospital and those who visit them.	Our neighbors in need and the St. A's team serving them breakfast on Saturday	Compassion and courage to welcome and care for strangers in need.
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Those involved in music ministry who give of their time and talents.	All those with health concerns (mental and physical)	Presbyterians seeking to make their spaces accessible to people with different needs.	Peace for those who are suffering in the midst of conflict.	Presbyterians across Canada advocating for an end to homelessness.	Women accessing loans through PWS&D to start businesses and become educated.	All those who use our building for events that bring joy to the community.
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Our minister and church staff.	All who are grieving the loss of a loved one.	Wisdom for elders who guide and decide for St. A's.	Thanksgiving for all contributions to Presbyterians Sharing	Treasurers of Presbyterian congregations who work hard to keep our books in order.	Those making final plans for Study Tours offered by the PCC.	Presbyterian mission staff in the Ukraine ministering to Roma people.
29	30	31				
Youth, children and young families.	Hospital and armed forces chaplains.	The words to invite people to know God in fellowship with believers.			.	



### REJOICE

attend and participate in the service with us. During the service worshippers were invited to come forward and light a candle or two in memory of others.

Last year on Christmas Eve, we had 350 to 400 people attend.  
This year we had two Christmas Eve Services.

3) Our new All Ages Christmas Eve Service at 3:30 p. m. had about 90 people attend. Children came forward and were helped to put on Christmas pageant costumes as the Christmas story was told and Christmas carols were sung. Rev. Ruth McCowan was our reader.

4) Our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service had about 260 people attend. Special music was provided by Ardath Shand, Lorna Nelson, David Rogers and Larry MacQuarrie. David McLean and Jade McLean-McKinnon were our readers.

5) Our Christmas Day Service fell on a Sunday this year. It was lower in attendance than most Sundays, but probably had about 90 people in attendance as evidenced by the number of left over bulletins.

*Submitted by Bruce McCowan*



### SERVE



### GIVE THANKS



### WORSHIP



### SHARE

*Fotos by Mitchell*

### WORSHIP COMMITTEE—ADVENT AT ST. ANDREW'S

We had an extra service on Christmas Eve this year. This was in addition to our Blue Christmas Service on December 21 and the one on Christmas Day. Rev. Jeremy Bellsmith officiated at all services and was assisted on the organ by Esther-Ruth Teel. *Many thanks to all* others who sang, ushered and assisted in many other ways.

1) Our Carol Sing on December 15 was well attended. Dirk Ryneveld and David Barss provided special music.

2) Our Blue Christmas Service is usually very quiet and reflective. We had about 24 people, including Rev. Reid Chudley from Trinity and Rev. Laura Kavanaugh from Knox,

## LEADING WITH CARE - IMPORTANT NOTICE

***Leading With Care***  
information sessions will  
take place in one of the  
Kirk Hall meeting rooms  
**January 15 and 22,**  
immediately following the  
Sunday Service.

If you are one of the lucky  
people who are engaged in  
caring for the children at St.

Andrews or have the pleasure of visiting our Congregational members in their homes, this opportunity is  
especially for you.



The Leading With Care Policy is the 'standard of care' used by all  
Presbyterian Churches in Canada.

Those involved in our Ministry should be familiar with this policy.

All who are interested in how we care for the people of St. Andrews are  
also cordially invited to attend either of these sessions.



In order to ensure that adequate seating is provided, it is requested that you contact:

**Duncan Mackinnon at: 250 479 0119**

**or by email at:**

**[dmmackinnon@shaw.ca](mailto:dmmackinnon@shaw.ca)**

stating which date you wish to attend.

For more in depth information please refer to the Presbyterian Church in Canada web site: [presbyterian.ca](http://presbyterian.ca)  
Within the site, look for 'Resources' then 'Policies', or contact our Church Office for a copy of the Policy.

Respectfully, Duncan Mackinnon - Leading With Care Committee

### **Usher Teams**

**January:** Dave G., Sheelagh G., Helen G., Don M., Saul P.

**February:** John A. P., Stewart B., Bill D., Nancy D., David S.

**March:** Kathleen M., Laura R., Betty P., John P.

### **Nursery Schedule**

**Jan. 8:** Debra V., Ardath S.

**Jan. 15:** Kellie S., Anaïs H.

**Jan. 22:** Paula M., Saul P.

**Jan. 29:** Ted T., Mary D.

**Feb. 5:** Paula M., Saul P.

*Please review your contact  
information that may appear  
anywhere in The Link.*

To update please email:  
**[thelink@shaw.ca](mailto:thelink@shaw.ca)**

**Look at The Link in COLOUR:**

**<http://standrewsvictoria.ca>**



***Perfect Harmony***, submitted by Debra Verwey

During the evening Christmas Eve service at St Andrew's, the mother/daughter duo of Lorna Nelson and Ardath Shand, accompanied by the talented and enthusiastic Dave Rogers, sang a beautiful selection in the candle glow and hushed atmosphere of the church sanctuary.

The words to the song **"Who Would Send a Baby"** (By Mary Kay Beall) were very poignant.

*Who would send a baby to heal a world in pain?*

*When the world is crying for the Promised One,*

*Who would send a baby, a tiny child?*

*Who would send His Only Son?*

Lorna Nelson, a regular member of Trinity Presbyterian's choir, has sung in churches most of her life. Her daughter, Ardath, a busy grandmother of nine, who recently retired from hospital work and is now editor of the Link, is involved in the lives of all her five children, wife to Kellie and has a large menagerie of animals (2 goats, 3 cats, 2 dogs and chickens)

Ardath has had a life-long wish to sing with her mother in church but over the years was always "too busy" or "too something-else" to actually do it. This year after Lorna had a heart attack and turned 85, Ardath realized that she could not wish much longer. Action was required.

Ardath mentioned to Reverend Jeremy how she had always wanted to sing with her mother in church and wondered if they could do it sometime at St. Andrew's. Jeremy promptly asked "How about Christmas Eve?" Ardath, a bit surprised to have so quickly an opportunity, replied "That might work."

So as we all listened to the two women sing on Christmas Eve (including about 15 of Lorna and Ardath's family in the congregation), Ardath was full of joy. She was singing with her mother in church!



# HYMN SING!!



Come and offer your voice to the Lord in worship, praise, thankfulness and joy with others from Victoria Presbyterian churches and the community, on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month.

**Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.**

**Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Psalm 100: 1, 2**

Dave Rogers accompanies on the piano while we sing together and request favourites.

**January 10 & 24—7 pm in the Kirk Hall—ALL ARE WELCOME!!**

**Contact DAVE ROGERS (250-479-2475) or KELLIE SHAND (778-440-0818) for more information.**

*Free Parking in City Parkade under the Broughton St. Library*



Our **Run With God** training has been revised and will begin on **Wednesday, January 25th at 6 pm at St. Andrew's** (with optional running and walking days on Mondays at 1 pm and Saturdays at 9 am).

Would you like to become more active in 2017? The Run with God training is a 14 week training program based out of St. Andrew's for those wanting to learn how to run, do competitive walking or Nordic Pole Walking either in a race or for your own enjoyment. ***It's a great way of becoming more active and getting to know each other better in the process.*** Maybe you know of someone who would like to join you in this. It is a good way of reaching out to those in our community. **We will be training for the Esquimalt 5K on April 8th and the Times-Colonist 10K on April 30th.** We will be learning the basics of training with a Christian focus of running our race in life. Our training sessions will be Wednesdays from 6-8 pm with optional homework sessions on Mondays at 1 pm and Saturdays at 9 am. The cost is \$35 for written materials and the program.

**Contact Ruth or Bruce McCowan for more information at 250-881-5155 or email: [ruthmccowan@yahoo.ca](mailto:ruthmccowan@yahoo.ca).**





## ADVENT AT ST. ANDREW'S!



- 🔔 Light the Advent Candles
- 🔔 Hang the "Greens"
- 🔔 Congregational Lunch
- 🔔 Feed those in need
- 🔔 Tell the Christmas Story
- 🔔 Share the Joy



*Fotos by  
Mitchell*





## **MEN'S SATURDAY BREAKFAST**

***Saturday, January 21, 2017***

**Bon Appetit Café, 5th floor, downtown Bay Centre @ 10:00 a.m.**

I hope that you all feel refreshed and renewed after our Christmas holidays and services. Come and treat yourself! You will experience a scenic view, some well priced food and some warm Christian fellowship. The view is like you might see in Venice. It is like Canada's Hawaii, Caribbean and Mediterranean all rolled up in one.



**Best wishes and other treats for this New Year!**

**Bruce McCowan: 250-881-5155 or email: [brucemccowan@gmail.com](mailto:brucemccowan@gmail.com)**

### **NOTE FROM THE OFFICE:**

**Please! Confirm with the OFFICE for  
ALL ROOM AVAILABILITY  
and SCHEDULING!!**

### *Editors' Note:*

*Reviews and submitted articles are the personal opinions of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the minister, Link editors or the Presbyterian Church in Canada.*



## **OPEN CHURCH DURING ADVENT**

We opened 8 times during Advent from about 11 a. m. to 1 p. m. most days. On Christmas Eve we stayed open for an extra hour due to the last minute Christmas shoppers popping in to investigate the choral music emanating from our church. One young man even pounded on our front door on Christmas Eve after I mistakenly locked the doors before shutting off the outside choral music. ***Astonishingly we averaged 181 people entering our sanctuary these days (1449 visitors over 8 noon times).***

The playing of MUSIC from our outside bell tower speakers gained the attention of passers by. Having GREETERS outside proved

very effective on those days we were able to do it. Having Volunteers inside to provide information, play music and offer friendship provides hospitality to visitors.

There were more visitors on drier and warmer days when we could **OPEN WIDE** at least two of our six **FRONT DOORS** and have greeters stay outside. The following are our numbers of visitors in brackets:

Dec. 7 (49), Dec.14 (14), Dec.19 (278), Dec. 20 (78), Dec. 21 (277), Dec. 22 (182), Dec. 23 (167), Dec. 24 (404)

Many thanks to all who assisted in prayer or in person for this outreach ministry. We can not open when we do not have volunteers to act as hosts or hostesses. It is desirable to have at least 3 people signed up before each opening.

I would like to continue this outreach ministry. In addition to opening an hour before each organ concert on the first Wednesday of most months, I would like to **OPEN UP** during 3 seasons in 2017:

- 1) each day in the week before Easter (Holy Week)
- 2) each Wednesday in the July and Aug.
- 3) each day in the week before Christmas.

More information as well as Sign Up Lists will be made available before the Lenten season and Easter itself.

*Submitted by Bruce McCowan*

**Children's Page—THOUGHTS FOR THE NEW YEAR:** [Word search is based on 1 Corinthians 13 in the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible (NRSV)] Before you start the word search, please read 1 Corinthians 13 to find out what Jesus' apostle, Paul, tells the people of Corinth about the "gift of love". Paul's message can help to guide us when we make our New Year's resolutions.

**From 1 Corinthians 13: 4, 5, 7, 8 and 13:**

"Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude...It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends... And now faith, hope and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

Can you think of ways that you can use the gift of love in your own life? **Happy New Year!**

N	K	W	N	E	D	U	R	E	J	O	I	C	E	S	E
A	R	R	O	G	A	N	T	Y	K	E	C	E	B	E	U
N	T	O	N	G	U	E	S	V	A	H	L	E	E	A	E
G	K	N	O	W	L	E	D	G	E	P	A	P	E	S	L
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O	E	S	E	E	G	G	A	V	I	E	E	S	T	C	S

ABIDE	GIVE
RUDE	HOPE
ARROGANT	KNOW
TONGUES	KIND
ENVOUS	MYSTERIES
SPEAK	LOVE
BOASTFUL	MORTALS
TRUTH	HOPES
BEARS	ANGELS
WRONGDOING	KNOWLEDGE
BELIEVES	CLANGING
PARTIAL	PATIENT
ENDURES	CYMBAL
COMPLETE	PROPHECIES
FAITH	RESENTFUL
POSSESSIONS	REJOICES
GREATEST	



**T**he child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

Luke 2:40

