

THE LINK

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church



January 2019

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Victoria, BC



Barbara Kingsolver, author and poet, widely known for works that include *The Poisonwood Bible*, the tale of a missionary family in the Congo, and *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*, a non-fiction account of her family's attempts to eat locally. She speaks about a phrase she uses to encourage her children, "You can do hard things." This idea acknowledges the difficulty of the task at hand, and yet, at the same time it completely affirms that the child has everything they need to move forward. Consider all the times in our own lives that someone has given us that kind of sound advice and encouragement. With the inspiration gained from Kingsolver's writing, Carrie Newcomer, a Quaker, folk singer from Bloomington, Indiana composed a song that speaks of our ability to "do this hard thing."

You Can Do This Hard Thing

There at the table with my head in my hands. A column of numbers I just could not understand. You said "Add these together, Carry the two, Now you."

Chorus: You can do this hard thing. You can do this hard thing.
It's not easy I know, But I believe that it's so. You can do this hard thing.

Here we stand breathless and pressed in hard times. Hearts hung like laundry on backyard clothes lines. Impossible just takes a little more time.

From the muddy ground Comes a green volunteer. In a place we thought barren New life appears. Morning will come whistling Some comforting tune, For you.

You can do this hard thing. You can do this hard thing. It's not easy I know,
But I believe that it's so. You can do this hard thing.

St. Andrew's should be proud that throughout this year, you have consistently "done the hard thing." You may have wanted to throw up your hands and cry, "What's the use?" But you persisted, carried on. In your frustration and fatigue, you said to yourselves and to one another, "We can," and with the help of God, you have! Half of the way through 2018, God called on the Coggins to join you in your quest to "do the hard thing of building and re-building this church." We have been blessed, encouraged, supported, loved, and buoyed by your support. We love it here and we love each of you!!

Over the last several months, I have watched you paint doors and walls. You have pulled together to accomplish a successful Bazaar, Hallowe'en Hullabaloo, Community-wide Carol Sing, church luncheons, multiple funeral dinners, Children's pageant, Blue Christmas services and Christmas Eve worship. This, in addition to regular offerings of Open Church, Saturday breakfast, choir practice and a 6-week study related to our congregational purpose and core values (Defining Our "Why"). St. Andrew's, you have proven to yourselves and to me that "You can do this hard thing."

2019 is here and awaits us with even greater challenges. The transitional work ahead of us will be difficult. With God all things are possible. You can do this hard thing. Keep up the good work!

Rev. Mitch Coggin

Share the Joy of Christmas Wrap-Up

Thank you to everyone in the congregation who helped *share the joy of Christmas* in the city of Victoria this past Advent 2018. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church provided 25 turkeys (over 10 kilograms each) to feed persons in need. The frozen turkeys were delivered from Thrifty Foods (Fairfield branch) on Tuesday, December 11th to Our Place. The next Tuesday, December 18th was the day of a big Christmas lunch for a thousand of Victoria's most vulnerable.



The meal has been a holiday tradition since Our Place, an inner-city community centre, opened in 2003. Every year, a steady procession of hungry citizens sit down for a meal of turkey and all the fixings, served by politicians, police officers and others. This year St. Andrew's provided 523 pounds of that turkey.

We also prepared 45 bags full of gifts...warm toques, gloves, socks and personal toiletry items for the residents of Our Place. These folks live on the top three floors of the Our Place building where they are using this quiet sanctuary to try to pull their lives back together.

The Sunday School children at St. Andrew's wrapped 90 gifts to go into the Christmas bags on Sunday, December 16th. After the church service and coffee hour, two families...Angus, Susie, Findlay and Hamish Henderson and Scott, Monica, Isaac and Anne Yu ...accompanied me and my husband, Jerry, to Our Place to deliver the gifts. The staff at Our Place used two large wheelie-carts to transport the gift bags inside the building. We were thanked for our efforts and gifts. Then we were photographed and since December 21st, our picture has appeared on Our Place Society's Facebook page, acknowledging St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church's generosity and kindness.



The Mission and Outreach Committee wants to thank everyone who donated to the Share the Joy of Christmas campaign. Your generosity more than covered the cost of everything that was shared with Our Place.

Submitted by
Debra Verwey



Robbie Burns Supper

Ticket sales for the Robbie Burns Supper, Saturday, January 19th are approaching the upper limit for seating. As of the end of December we have about 15 tickets left.

Tickets will be available after Sunday Worship on January 6th at \$20 for adults and \$10 for children [under 13 years of age]. For tickets not paid by January 7th the price goes up to \$25 per person for adults. For those who really procrastinate, tickets will be on sale on January 20th at half price.

The plan is to open the door of the Kirk Hall at 4 pm for meet & greet and to get settled in. The Bon Accord Highland Dancers will put on a display of dance & music at 4:30 pm followed by the ceremonial piping at 5 pm.

After supper there will be the usual Burns celebration - with perhaps a bit of reading and of course a sing-along to close the evening.

It is an opportunity to have some fun - (yes, Presbyterians do have fun) - and enjoy the company of folks from the Presbyterian and Scottish community in Victoria.

We have volunteers offering to help with the decorating (Saturday morning). I'm looking for

volunteers who will help us do the kitchen clean up at the end of the evening.

Catering is provided by Connoisseur Catering and I must let the caterer know no later than Monday, January 14th, the final count for the following Saturday. Let me know if you have any special dietary needs as we will do our best to accommodate those on a gluten-free diet.

If you would like a ticket to this celebration and/or would be prepared to help out with the decorating and/or cleanup please contact Jim at jpfergus@gmail.com or by phone 250-415-3687. Tickets will be available after Sunday service in the Kirk Hall.



Notes from Session

Session did not meet formally in December. As we reflected on the past year we saw God's care and love for St. Andrew's. We have been blessed with the arrival of our transitional minister, Rev. Mitch Coggin, along with his wife Linda. Many have stepped up to help when needed. We have been there for each other and our church in good times and in difficult times. We have shared joy with each other and with strangers through Open Church and the gifts of baking received with surprise and delight on Christmas Eve by the US Junior Hockey Team.

In 2019 we pray that:
The LORD bless you and keep you;

The LORD make His face shine
upon you, and be gracious to you;

The LORD lift up His countenance
upon you, And give you peace.
(Numbers 6:24-26)

The Session of St. Andrew's

In Loving Memory



Eduard Mann

Kay Reston

Hetty Shergold

Kay Perkins

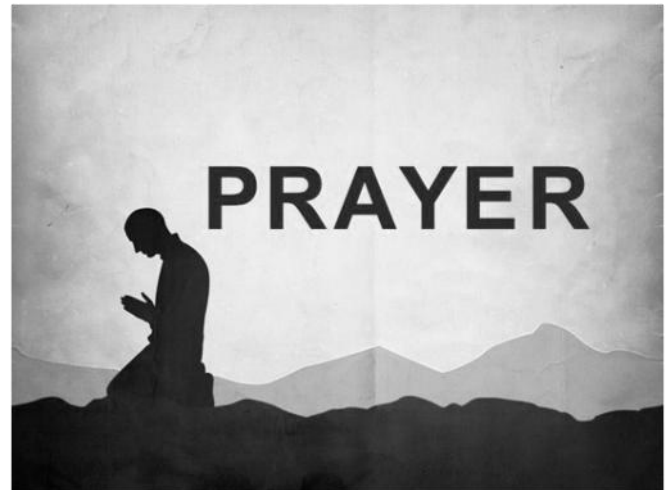
**And God shall wipe away all
tears from their eyes; and
there shall be no more
death, neither sorrow, nor
crying, neither shall there be
any more pain....**

Revelations 21:4

January 2019

“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer.” Romans 12:12

“I have so much to do that I shall spend the first three hours in prayer” ~(attributed to) Martin Luther



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
		That we may be a blessing to others in the year to come	All those with Birthdays and anniversaries in January	Campus ministry chaplains and the students they serve	The mission and ministry supported by Presbyterian Sharing	Any friends or family who are sick or hurting
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Those involved in music ministry	Students at seminary starting studies in January	Anyone considering applying to participate in a mission experience	Wisdom for elders who guide and decide at St. Andrew's	Seniors and others in care homes, group homes and hospitals	Our neighbors in need and the St. A's team serving them breakfast on Saturday	Families of people in the armed forces and chaplains who serve
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Ministers, church staff and many volunteers	The words to invite people to fellowship	All refugees fleeing violence and poverty	Those who advocate on behalf of oppressed people	Anyone grieving or feeling lonely	Thanksgiving that we are made in the image of God	Presbyterians in remote congregations
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Youth, children and young families	All who are sick or hurting	Wisdom for elders who guide and decide at St. Andrew's	PWS&D partners in Nicaragua teaching young people about reproductive health	Presbyterians telling their experiences through the rainbow communion process	Anyone struggling with mental illness.	Caregivers who provide compassion to those they care for
27	28	29	30	31		
Peace for all suffering in the midst of conflict	Mission groups presenting to their local congregations	Thanksgiving for the witness of fellow believers	Christian Ed leaders making plans for the year	The UN Interfaith Harmony week promoting "Love of God and Neighbour"		

A Word from Pastor Mitch about Music and Worship

Hopefully you have been able to sense the importance that I place upon music (instrumental and vocal) within our worship services. In fact, I believe that music is just as important as the sermon, the prayers, or the offering and for some people, even more so. For many, the music may be the most lasting feeling and/or message that person takes away from the hour they spend in worship.

I believe that the gifts and preparation that Christine brings to worship each and every week are God-given and are an important component in what God wants to say to us as we enter, participate in and leave worship. For this reason Christine picks the hymns that correspond to the scripture and sermon titles that I provide her. She knows the hymns that you know and is able to match those hymns with your skill and comfort level.

Additionally, I believe that it is the Prelude (not the welcome and announcements) that begins our worship and it is the Postlude (not the benediction) that ends our worship. Consider the significant

amount of time, thought and prayer that Christine (or any church musician) puts into preparing for and playing these musical gifts each Sunday. We should receive them as the gift that they represent - from God and from Christine! This is why I ask that you quietly meditate during the Prelude and Postlude and to use those as prayerful opportunities to reflect upon what you hope God might say to you during the upcoming service or what God has said during the preceding service. It is when we began talking to others, putting on our coats, and/or moving toward the door that we relegate the Postlude as nothing but background music which negates our (and others) being able to recognize it as the gift that it is. I would welcome your feedback, suggestions, and prayerful and thoughtful consideration regarding this important aspect of weekly worship.

Prayerfully,
Pastor Mitch

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★
★ **Link Deadline** ★
★
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★
★
★ Next *Link* deadline will ★
★ be Sunday, January 27. ★
★
★ Link Editors ★
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2019 Communion Dates

March 3

April 21 (Easter)

June 2

October 6 (World Communion Day)

December 1 (Advent 1)



Congratulations

to Linda & Mitch
on the birth of their grandson
Malachi.

Malachi was born on December 20
and weighed in at a hefty 8.5 lbs.



Usher Team January

Colina Titus
Elizabeth Brereton
Miles Craig

Christmas Eve 2018



The congregation was treated to an impromptu Nativity scene on Christmas Eve with baby Audrey Tyan starring as Jesus being held by her mother, Michelle Verwey as Mary and her father, Anderson Tyan as Joseph. The Tyans were visiting from Saskatoon.

Children in attendance along with some adults, dressed as angels and shepherds and kings for the live Nativity. Rev. Coggin clarified that two years later the Wise men (or three Kings) appeared and they too were added to the scene.

Lighting the Christ candle on the Advent wreath were David McLean and granddaughters Isabel and Kaylee. Granddaughter Jade read a portion of scripture.



foto by: jeanmarcellus





St. Andrew's was honoured to have the USA Junior Hockey team worship with us. They are seen in the balcony on Christmas Eve. They were treated to cookies made by the congregation.



The choir anthem was "Child of Peace" with a solo of "Silent Night" within the anthem, sung by Michael Ryneveld. The St Andrew's Bell Ringers played "Lift up your Eyes" as the Introit.

fotosbyjeanmarcellus

Dirk and Michael Ryneveld had been asked to sing a duet of "O Holy Night" They were pleased to be asked as they had not sung together for several years since Michael lives in New York. Ben Parker on trumpet added to the wonderful sound of the organ played by Christine Purvis on the Prelude and Postlude. The Postlude was Hallelujah from Handel's Messiah and it was a perfect way to end the service.



Refugee Committee Report

Early in December, St. Andrew's Session decided it was time to use the money in our Refugee Fund to support a family. A cheque for \$3250 was given to the Refugee Support Group at St. John the Divine Anglican Church on Quadra Street. David McLean, one of the Clerks of Session, received the following letter. It tells how the money will help a recently arrived refugee family and their new baby ... which sounds a lot like the original Christmas nativity story!

Dear David,

I understand you spoke with Rebecca Siebert, our Refugee Program Coordinator, and have offered to pass on funds to the St John Divine Refugee Support Group to support refugees. This generous gift from St. Andrew's parish is much appreciated.

St John the Divine welcomed a family this year in July and unbeknownst to us, the wife was pregnant. We did not budget for an additional child, and it involved a more expensive accommodation than expected. The bills have been high seeing how the mother has health complications. These funds you are passing on will go to support the newborn and the mother as they continue in their settlement year.

We run a joint Ministry with First Met, and our group also has members from the Cathedral as well as members with no religious affiliation. So I would also like to extend an invitation to your parishioners who would like to get more involved in this ministry to join our group. We have two sponsorships in the settlement phase now and volunteers to do a variety of tasks - such as escorting children to school, running Mom to medical appointments, etc - would be very welcome. There are some simple insurance formalities - a Criminal Record Check and an evening of Sensitivity Training - to be completed, but any volunteer would be good to go now because we work in pairs and the partner will have these already.

If anyone would like to become involved in this sponsorship they should contact John McLaren jpsmamclaren@gmail.com 250-592-7031 who is the coordinator for this family. And if members of your parish would like to meet with me I would be happy to do that.

Thanks again for your support for this family.

Blessings and peace,

Chris Eve

Co-chair, First Met/SJD Refugee Support Group

2581 Trent Street, Victoria, V8R 4Z4, Phone 250-384-8733,

Email chriseve@shaw.ca

Christmas Sing-Along

On December 13th at noon, St Andrew's presented its annual Christmas Sing-Along which was well-attended by members of the community. The attendance was estimated to be in excess of 350 people who very much seemed to enjoy the music along with the cookies and hot cider. They were treated to three special solos - a flute and organ presentation by flautist Antonia Mahon and our organist Christine Purvis; a presentation of the Gospel pop rendition of "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day" by Dirk Ryneveld and the St. Andrew's Singers; and a trumpet solo by David Barss. Dorothy Reimer emceed the event and invited our guests to call out requests for their favourite Christmas hymns. Judging by the number of requests, everyone thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to hear their favourite songs sung.

There were many people involved in organizing and staging the event. It would not have been the same without the hot cider and cookies. Nancy, Ann and Trudy are shown here in the Narthex as representatives of the welcoming committee as people entered the church. Thank you to all who worked on this event.





Nancy, Ann and Trudy

fotosbyjeanmarcellus



David Barss



Dirk Ryneveld and the St. Andrew's Singers



Antonia Mahon

Pageant 2018



T'was the night before Christmas ...



The shepherds watched their flocks by night!



Mary and Joseph



fotosbyjeanmarcellus



And the angels appeared.

Christmas Luncheon

Adults and children alike enjoyed the Christmas Luncheon held in the Kirk Hall after the children's pageant on December 9th. Delicious hamburger soup followed by various kinds of pies with ice cream seemed to appeal to everyone. As you can see from the photos the luncheon was held in a festive-looking gym and the children had a table of their own with special goodies for a children's appealing menu including hot dogs and chips.

The luncheon which was hosted by the Congregational Life Committee was very well-attended. Even Santa Claus put in an appearance to the delight of the children, who received a gift each along with a 'goody bag' of an orange, candy cane and a gingerbread man.

Everyone enjoyed a great time of fellowship as well as a full tummy!





fotosbyjeanmarcellus



St. Andrew's Children's Page

Bible Verse of the Month:

And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.

Luke 6:31

Happy New Year, 2019!

We have a brand new year, and a new beginning. Many people like to make promises to themselves about how they can be a better person in the upcoming year. Perhaps you could use one or two of the words in the list to help you set goals for 2019. See if you can find the words in the word search.

I E N L E R P R O M I S E S O
 O A P U G R U L U F P L E H L
 I G U F T O A L U E B C L U U
 S N F Y N I O H Z I O U O T F
 H I T O S V L I S N F S I G E
 O T H K I U G N S T P I R N C
 P P H N D O O I C F L F C I A
 E E G S L P D E R P R O P N E
 F C O O S E P I T K U C F R P
 U C P E R S E V E R I N G A C
 L A R A E N N N A T U N I E A
 C O T R D H N G U R I O D L R
 L E E L F A I T H F U L C S I
 L N Y H E N E E V I G R O F N
 T H O U G H T F U L R A A P G

APOLOGIZE
 FAITHFUL
 FORGIVE
 ENCOURAGING
 HONOUR
 PERSEVERING
 POLITE
 ACCEPTING
 LEARNING
 RESPONSIBLE
 FRIENDLY
 COURTEOUS
 HELPFUL
 JOYFUL
 SHARE
 RESPECTFUL
 LOVING
 CARING
 KIND
 CONSIDERATE
 HOPEFUL
 PEACEFUL
 THOUGHTFUL
 PROMISES