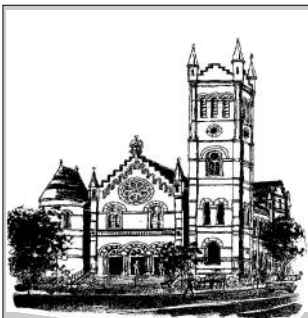


THE LINK

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church



October 2019

Session	2
First Town Hall Meeting	4
Mission & Outreach	6
Bazaar	7
Friendship Club	8
Books!	9
Letter from the Moderator	10

In order to respect the privacy of our contributors, no articles or photos may be re-produced without express written consent of the editors of *The Link*.

Victoria, BC



September 15 was a banner day in the history of St. Andrew's!! The Heritage Town Hall meeting provided a wonderful opportunity to share our collective and our personal narratives of what St. Andrew's has meant to us historically and what St. Andrew's continues to mean to us. Over 110 of you gathered for worship, lunch and work around our tables and our timeline. We used our time to remember and to celebrate what led us to St. Andrew's and what keeps us engaged and excited within this congregation.

The timeline was our link to recall our remarkable history in each of our 3 church buildings, the missions that we had a role in implementing in Victoria and our shared history in music, worship, service and fellowship throughout the years. We laughed at ourselves in ancient pictures and remembered the lives and contributions of those no longer with us. The group who put together the timeline over a 6 week period provided us with a measurable snapshot which allowed us to gain a better sense of who we are now because of who we have been throughout our history. Thank you to Moira Bernard, Sheelagh Garson, Leona Johns, Sabine Teetzel and Jean Watt for their diligent work in putting together such an amazing visual historical picture. Thank you to the Congregational Life Committee for planning, preparing and serving an incredible meal to begin our work on the 15th. Thanks to the Table Leaders who facilitated the conversations and took careful notes of those conversations to better hear and understand what we needed and wanted to say. Finally, thanks to each of you who attended with an open mind and heart, willing to share your own St. Andrew's story that joined the collective St. Andrew's story – past, present and future.

Around the tables and on our sticky notes, we remembered that most came to St. Andrew's in the 70's, 80's and 90's. Most came because of our Presbyterian heritage, because we felt welcomed and comfortable, for the music or were strengthened by the sermons of a particular pastor and because of the remarkable heritage and history of which we can be proud.

You shared that what keeps people at St. Andrew's are the friendships and the significant conversations shared, the service to the community and beyond, the music and sermons, our resilience and diversity and our ability to serve God through our work and worship here.

Finally, you offered your hopes and prayers for St. Andrew's and those prayers are that we continue to be a faithful presence in the community, that we grow in Spirit and common dreams, to continue to provide a safe place of refuge for all as we continue to deepen our faith.

The day of celebration allowed us to remember what we may have forgotten and to strengthen our ties to God, to one another and to our shared vision of who God continues to call us to be now and in the future that we have yet to totally discover. A more complete report of our table groups will soon be available as we continue to focus on our next steps in our Transitional work.



foto:jeanmarcellus

(Continued on page 3)

Notes from Session - September

At the opening of our meeting, the Reverend Coggin read Colossians 3:12-17; the verses that were studied in the table groups at the Town Hall meeting. He also shared the words of 'Mr. Rogers' from an article from the Globe and Mail: "I am wary of people who insist on trying to make other people feel bad about themselves. The more I look around and within me, the more I notice that those who feel best about themselves have the greatest capacity to feel good about others".

Dave Garson gave an informative presentation to the session about the condition of the exterior of the church building. We hope that urgent remedial work and further assessment of the existing deteriorating areas will be completed before the winter. It is hoped that this can be done at the same time that a lift is on site for the annual gutter cleaning. This assessment will provide information about what needs to be done, and the magnitude of work required. The congregation will be consulted about major work required and the long-term plan.

Reverend Reid Chudley, from the Administration Committee of Presbytery, joined the session for the early part of the session meeting to provide the following updates to session:

- ♦ Presbytery has a new contract ready to use in applying for an extension for Rev. Mitch Coggin's work permit. This would lengthen his contract for two additional years with an end date of no later than July 2022. The reason for this extension is to provide time to continue the transition process and to minimize the period between the ministry of Rev. Mitch Coggin as the Transitional Minister, and the next minister who accepts the call to St. Andrew's Victoria. This extension is indeed good news. Mr. Chudley has agreed to assist with the required documentation for the renewal of the work permit.
- ♦ The Rev. Vincent Tan has been appointed as the Interim Moderator for St. Andrew's for the duration of the ministry of Rev. Mitch Coggin, through until a new minister accepts the call to St. Andrew's. The role of the Interim Moderator is to be the presence of the Presbytery of Vancouver Island in our midst and to relieve the burden of work not directly related to the important work of transition ministry. It was noted that during the ministry of Rev. Coggin, Rev. Tan's responsibilities are minimal. We appreciate the support offered by Rev. Tan.

St. Andrew's received these words of invitation from Kairos: "Throughout history, church or community bells have called us to wake, to pray, to work, to arms, to celebrate and, in times of crisis, to come together... Canada, like the city of Victoria and other cities across the nation, has declared a climate emergency. We are all stewards of this beautiful planet and this emergency is unlike any humanity has ever grappled with before. How can communities of faith show Victoria that they are awake and ready to respond to this crisis?"

In response to this invitation from Kairos, session agreed that St Andrew's would join with other churches across Canada to digitally 'toll a bell' for 11 minutes on Friday, September 27 to draw attention to the need for urgent action to mitigate climate change.

Session is planning a retreat on October 26. Items on the agenda for discussion will include:

- ♦ Communication: How can we streamline the process and ensure that the information goes out through all of the communication platforms?
- ♦ Committee Structure: Why does each committee exist? What is working? What could be improved to increase the efficiency and effectiveness? We note that our building is as large and complex to maintain as ever; we now have long term tenants and yet we have fewer people to do the work.
- ♦ Leadership: this is related to the question of committee structure. An important question will be to think who we have in the congregation that God is preparing for leadership.

Please pray for the elders and Rev. Coggin as we work together.

Once again, we thank the group who spent so much time to create the very interesting and informative timeline- a history of our congregation. If you have not already done so, take a look. We are in transition: from what we were, through what we are, to who we will be.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future". ~ Jeremiah 29:11

Colina Titus
Clerk of Session

(Continued from page 1)

Elsewhere in *The Link* (p 10-11) is a letter from Rev. Amanda Currie, Moderator of the 2019 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. While it is lengthy, I hope you will take time to read it. The letter details the 2019 General Assembly discussion and recommendations regarding Human Sexuality. The theme of the 2019 General Assembly was "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Amanda explains in her letter,

"The recommendations passed by the Assembly were to adopt two parallel definitions of marriage (either between a man and a woman only, or between two persons) and to allow for ordination of LGBTQ+ persons, while also allowing for liberty of conscience and action on marriage and participation in ordinations and inductions.

These recommendations represent a desire to make the church fully inclusive – inclusive of both LGBTQ+ members and inclusive of Presbyterians with varying perspectives on same-sex marriage. It is significant that these recommendations were passed by an overwhelming majority of commissioners.

In the letter Amanda describes the process by which the Presbyterian Church in Canada will be asked to decide whether these recommendations will become standard practice. Each of the Presbyteries will be voting on these recommendations in the coming months prior to a final decision made by the 2020 General Assembly.

It is important to understand what is being recommended and what is not. It is important that we provide opportunities to listen to one another and to prayerfully consider the recommendations that the Presbytery of Vancouver Island will vote on in early 2020.

I will recommend the first of several listening sessions over the coming weeks/months to be scheduled on Sunday, October 27th following Coffee Hour in the Sanctuary. Before then, I welcome anyone with questions or concerns to call me at any time.

Prayerfully yours,
Pastor Mitch

Fall Recital Series

Join us at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
for a series of lunchtime concerts

Wednesday October 2nd from 12:15-12:45pm

*Trumpet and organ featuring Ben Parker, trumpet
with Christine Purvis, organ*

Music by Haydn, Boehm, Ketting, Sweelinck and Frescobaldi
and a trumpet arrangement of "Someone to watch over me"

Wednesday, October 16 from 12:15- 12:45pm

Piano recital featuring Jorge Carrizales

Wednesday, November 6th from 12:15-12:45pm

*Flute and organ featuring Antonia Mahon, flute
with Christine Purvis, organ*

Music by Rutter, Alain, Weisgarger, Woodman and Young

Admission by donation with proceeds
supporting the artists and the music
program at St. Andrew's

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
at the Corner of Douglas and Broughton

standrewsvictoria.ca - office@standrewsvictoria.ca - 250.384.5734

"My God, I have never thanked Thee for my 'thorn!' I have thanked Thee a thousand times for my roses, but never once for my 'thorn;' I have been looking forward to a world where I shall get compensation for my cross as itself a present glory. Teach me the glory of my cross; teach me the value of my 'thorn.' Show me that I have climbed to Thee by the path of pain. Show me that my tears have made my rainbow."

~ George Matheson



Heritage Town Hall Meeting

Following the worship service on Sunday, September 15th, a luncheon was held in the Kirk Hall. Hosted by the Congregational Life Committee, sandwiches, fresh vegetables, cheese, and goodies were served along with tea and coffee. After we had all enjoyed a delicious lunch, Rev. Mitch convened the town hall meeting.



Sitting in groups of six including a team leader we first discussed Colossians 3:12-17.

We were to ask ourselves:

- 1) What we thought God was saying to **us individually** in the scripture; and then
- 2) What we thought God was saying to **St. Andrew's** in the scripture.





The leaders made sure everyone had a turn to say what they thought and an atmosphere of trust and inclusion developed.

Next Rev. Mitch put questions on the overhead projector to stimulate discussion. We were to talk about the first time we attended St. Andrew's and then tell what it was about our church that made us want to continue attending. By now everyone was comfortable with one another and discussion flowed freely. There was a genuine desire to

hear each other. It was really great to see the entire Kirk Hall in quiet conversation. Everyone was getting an opportunity to share their thoughts and give suggestions.



As I have reflected on the town hall meeting this past week, I realize that only in an atmosphere of trust can we really move forward as a church in a positive and relevant way. Discussing things together in open and honest communication and praying for God's will to guide us will help build that trust.

Mission & Outreach

The Cutting Edge of Mission Award Recipient for 2019 - Sheila Watt-Cloutier



Many people live in ways that are faithful to what God is calling them to do. The Cutting Edge of Mission Award seeks to lift up people and organisations that think and act outside the box. The award was established in

1981 to recognise a person or group for their work on the cutting edge of mission. This year the recipient of this award, presented at the General Assembly in Waterloo, was Sheila Watt-Cloutier, internationally-recognised environmental, cultural and human rights advocate for almost 25 years. Drawing attention to the impacts of climate change that people in the Arctic have been experiencing first-hand, she has identified Inuit people as “sentinels” to the rest of the world on this issue.

Born in 1953 in an Inuit community in Nunavik, Quebec, Watt-Cloutier was raised in a traditional way, travelling on the land by dog sled before being sent away to school in Nova Scotia at the age of ten. Later she studied counselling, education and human development through McGill University. Watt-Cloutier was President of the Inuit Circumpolar Council for several years. She has worked on a range of social and environmental issues affecting Inuit, most recently, persistent organic pollutants and global warming. She has received numerous national and international awards and honours for her work and has been featured in a number of documentaries. She sits as an adviser to Canada’s Ecofiscal Commission. She is also a senior fellow at the Centre for International Governance Innovation.

After being presented with the award, Dr. Watt-Cloutier gave a powerful speech, detailing the impact that climate change is having on northern environments and those who live in the Arctic. She spoke of how connected and inter-connected our world is and how all of humanity has a responsibility for what is happening in the north. “Our culture has much to offer,” she said. “Inuit culture needs to be protected”. She explained that while those who live in the north are adaptable and resilient, the next wave of tumultuous

change is upon them. “We all have struggles, there are always going to be obstacles, but there are ways we can overcome them.”

“I remind the world that the Arctic is not a barren land devoid of life but a rich and majestic land that has supported our resilient culture for millennia. Even though we are small in number and living far from the corridors of power, it appears that the wisdom of the land strikes a universal chord on a planet where many are searching for sustainability”.

‘The Right to be Cold’ by Sheila Watt-Cloutier is published by Allen-Lane Penguin Random House, 2015.

Patricia Schuckburgh

Thanksgiving Food Drive for Cedar Tree Ministries Sunday, October 13

As in past years, St. Andrew’s will be collecting food on Thanksgiving Sunday for people in need, as part of our grateful response to God’s provision for us.



In the recent past our donations have gone to Our Place. We will be supporting them through our usual programs at Christmas, and so this year we are re-directing our Thanksgiving donations to Cedar Tree Ministries, which is supported by the Presbyterian Church in Canada in its service to First Nation people in the Cowichan Valley.

There are food hampers in the Narthex for receipt of non-perishable food items. Cash donations can be made through regular envelope givings to St. Andrew’s and marked for “Cedar Tree Ministries” so that they can be accounted for, along with regular givings, for income tax receipts. The food items and cash donations will go to the food bank run by Rev. Joey Cho for local First Nation people at his church in Duncan. This is a tangible way in which we can support First Nations through the ministry of our wider church.

Brian Titus



ST. ANDREW'S ANNUAL Christmas Bazaar

November 16th, 2019

at the **Kirk Hall** at 680 Courtney St.

★Crafts ★Home Baking ★Jewelry ★Thrift Shop
★Book Sale ★Silent Auction ★Art ★Preserves

11:30 am to 3:00 pm

Admission is free

Tea Garden with sweets and savouries \$7

standrewsvictoria.ca ★ 250-384-5734



ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
at the Corner of Douglas and Broughton

Service in the heart of the Victoria since 1866

Happenings with THE FRIENDSHIP CLUB

Our first activity for The Friendship Club this year will be:

A Travelogue to Russia and the Baltics via Train

by David and Dawn McLean

Thursday, October 24 - 11:30-2:45 pm

Travelogue slide show and talk

Light sandwich lunch

This will take place in The Kirk Hall

The cost is \$10.00 per person

A few people from the Friendship Club will be setting up for our lunch this day, from 9:00-11:30. Please let me know if you are able to help with either set up, serving or clean up. We would really appreciate some help because we are short of helpers. We have a tight schedule this day because the Gym will be in use until 9:00am. Thank you!

Tickets for this event will be on sale on **Sunday, October 6 & 13**, at Coffee Hour in the Kirk Hall. It is helpful to know ahead of time how many people will be attending so we can order the correct amount of food for our light sandwich lunch. Please see Dorothy, Jack, or Laura at Coffee Hour on Sunday, October 6 or 13.

Also, please mark your calendars for a few more events which are in the planning stage:

- ♦ **Monday, December 9. Christmas Lunch at the Cordova Bay Golf Course**
- ♦ **Saturday, February 15, 2020 - A Valentine Party.**

More information will be coming out about these events in the next few months.

Other social events are being planned for the year and if you have ideas and suggestions for future events, please let me know. The Friendship Group is a social group for adults in our church and outside community. Our purpose is to have fun, food and fellowship with educational events. Your friends are most welcome to attend. We hope you will come and enjoy the company and friendship of others.

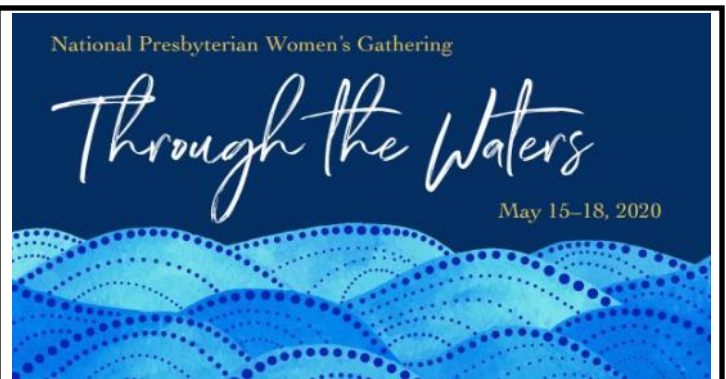
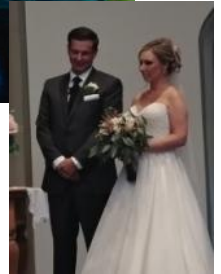
Sincerely,
Dorothy Reimer

Where are They Now?



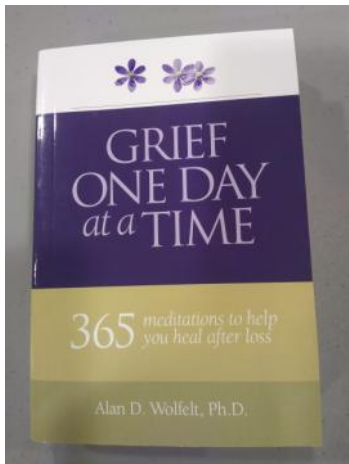
My son, **Paul Shand**, and Katherine Aukema exchanged marriage vows on September 21, 2019 at Talbot Street Church in London, Ontario. It was a blessed time for close family and friends on a beautiful sunny day. On his wedding day, Paul wore his late father, Kellie's grey wool socks, so I felt like his dad was walking with him. Katherine and Paul met while working at the same law firm and Katherine is delighted to take on the Shand name! She is presently taking a post-degree Human Resources Administration course, while Paul continues to practice law. They reside in London, Ontario, with their beloved Golden Retriever, Jake.

Ardath Shand



National Presbyterian Women's Gathering, May 15-18, 2020

This year's event, "Through the Waters", will be held in Richmond Hill, Ontario, in mid-May. The early registration fee is due by Nov. 30, 2019. For more information, see womensgathering.ca on the web, or contact **Brian Titus** for a brochure.



Most of us know someone who is grieving the loss of a loved one. Whether it is someone in our own family, a friend, or someone in our church family, we are often at a loss for words as to what to say when people are grieving and hurting.

Marilyn Bullock is recommending the book **GRIEF ONE DAY AT A TIME** by Dr. Alan D. Wolfelt. She feels it would be a helpful resource in coping with grief. Grief is a daily challenge for those who have lost a loved one, says Dr. Wolfelt. "But if we actively mourn, each day in grief can also bring a small measure of healing. Encountering and engaging with our thoughts and feelings softens them. Mourning one day at a time brings healing one day at a time."

The book contains short stories, 365 of them, one for each day of the year. Dr. Alan D. Wolfelt is the Founder and Director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition. He is also a faculty member of the University of Colorado's Medical School's Department of Family Medicine.

Marilyn Bullock has a copy of this book for anyone who is interested.

Songhees Wellness Centre Tuesday, October 22

Please mark this date on your calendars!

Following up on the success of the Friendship Club's visit several years ago, the **Mission and Outreach Committee** is organising another visit to the Songhees Wellness Centre in October.

The visit will include a guided tour and a lunch.

More details will be announced in an up-coming Sunday bulletin.

Please speak to **Brian Titus**, **Patricia Shuckburgh** or **Debra Verwey** if you have any questions, or are interested in attending.

BOOKS WANTED FOR BAZAAR STALL

**Are you down-sizing, de-cluttering,
clearing out?**

**If the books have to go, we want
them for the book
stall!**

**Bring them to the
Kirk Hall in
November or call
Debra Verwey for
pickup...
250-383-1009.
Thank-you.**



The Presbyterian Church
in Canada



L'Église presbytérienne
au Canada

MODERATOR OF THE 2019 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Rev. Amanda Currie, B.A.Sc., M.Div.

September 3, 2019

To the Presbyterian Church in Canada from the Rev. Amanda Currie, Moderator of the 2019 General Assembly: Grace to you and peace from God and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to God for all of you because of the grace of God that has been given to you in Christ Jesus, because of the spiritual gifts which you have received in abundance, and because of the ministries and missions that we share as one Body in Christ.

The 2019 General Assembly was both difficult and important in the ongoing life of our church. It illustrated our church's current struggle with different theological perspectives, while also demonstrating our desire for unity and peace. We are united in one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, and we are bound together through our commitment to the Reformed Tradition and our belonging to The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

At the same time, there is a diversity of practice and belief among us in many areas, including our understanding of human sexuality. While some within our church hold to a traditional definition of marriage as being between a man and a woman only, others believe that covenanted monogamous relationships between two adults, regardless of gender, can be faithful to God's design for human families.

We have prayed, studied, discussed, and debated these questions for many years, and although individuals have shifted in their perspectives, our denomination continues to include a broad spectrum of belief and it is likely that this will always be the case.

During the 2019 General Assembly, it was apparent that the majority moved towards full inclusion of LGBTQ+ people (married or single) in the ministries of the church, while others were firmly committed to a traditional definition of marriage. As commissioners engaged in debate, discussion, and listened to one another, it was also evident that embracing the shared beliefs and traditions of The Presbyterian Church in Canada was of great importance.

The recommendations passed by the Assembly were to adopt two parallel definitions of marriage (either between a man and a woman only, or between two persons) and to allow for ordination of LGBTQ+ persons, while also allowing for liberty of conscience and action on marriage and participation in ordinations and inductions.

These recommendations represent a desire to make the church fully inclusive – inclusive of both LGBTQ+ members and inclusive of Presbyterians with varying perspectives on same-sex marriage. It is significant that these recommendations were passed by an overwhelming majority of commissioners.

Now the recommendations are being remitted to the presbyteries under the Barrier Act. If they are passed by the majority of presbyteries and then by the 2020 General Assembly, they become the law of the church.

/cont'd

Clerks of Assembly: The Rev. Stephen Kendall and The Rev. Donald Muir

To The Presbyterian Church in Canada
September 3, 2019
Page 2

It is important to note that the liberty of conscience and action included in the remits allow for ministers and sessions not to participate in same-sex marriages or the ordination of married LGBTQ+ individuals. However, liberty of conscience and action do not sanction homophobia or heterosexism in the church.

The 1994 Statement on Human Sexuality called on the church to repent of its homophobia and hypocrisy, but for many years the church failed to act on that call. The 2017 General Assembly asked then Moderator, the Rev. Peter Bush, to write a letter of repentance to the LGBTQ+ Community. It also established a listening committee, the Rainbow Communion, to create safe space for LGBTQ+ persons to tell of their experiences in the church. On recommendations from the Rainbow Communion's interim report, the 2019 General Assembly also adopted several motions that confirm we are united in our affirmation of the dignity of LGBTQ+ persons.

Over the last few years, I have often made the comparison between the unity of the church and the unity of a marriage. For a while now, our denomination has been in conflict over a significant difference of opinion on human sexuality. At times, it has seemed like we had irreconcilable differences and it might be best to get divorced. *Living Faith* says that, "When a marriage is shattered beyond repair, it is sometimes better that it be dissolved than that the family continue to live in bitterness." (8.2.5)

The decisions of the 2019 General Assembly give us new opportunity to choose to live together with differences on this matter, declaring that the question of sexuality need not be a church-dividing issue. They affirm that our love for one another is still strong, and they suggest that staying together and figuring out how to live with our differences is faithful to Christ's prayer for unity.

Holding two definitions of marriage means that we are deciding to love and respect one another with our differences. Since liberty of conscience and action is included, ministers and sessions will be able to follow their consciences and their deeply held beliefs about God's design for human relationships. At the same time, we will be called to respect and honour those with a differing view, and to avoid blocking the ordinations of LGBTQ+ ministers and elders, or the ordinations of others with traditional views.

I would urge those ministers and sessions that choose not to accept same-sex marriage to be compassionate and pastoral in their ministering to those members of the LGBTQ+ community who worship and serve in their churches. Likewise, I would encourage affirming ministers and sessions to be respectful of congregation members who hold to the traditional definition. We must strive to make all our congregations safe and welcoming spaces for everyone.

Like a married couple who have been in conflict for years but still love one another and want to make it work, this General Assembly decided it was not interested in divorce but sought to choose a reasonable accommodation. It will be up to the whole church to pray and discern if we are willing to make space within our churches for difference of opinion and diversity of practice with regard to marriage.

May God give us the gifts of wisdom and love, so that the pathway we follow will lead us to unity and peace with justice for all.

Sincerely,



Rev. Amanda Currie

Clerks of Assembly: The Rev. Stephen Kendall and The Rev. Donald Muir

St. Andrew's Children's Page

Bible Verse of the Month: He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you." Luke 17:6 (NIV)

A Mustard Seed Faith



Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Q	T	S	N	O	Y	G	W	Z	I	C	F	B	J	A	D	P	U	M	H	R	K	E	X	L	V

- 17-25-15-4-2-23-16 _____
- 19-18-25-13-23-21-21-6 _____
- 3-23-23-16 _____
- 10-4-11-21-23-15-3-23 _____
- 3-19-15-25-25 _____
- 5-13-23-6 _____
- 12-15-10-2-20 _____
- 3-23-15 _____
- 19-18-3-2-15-21-16 _____
- 2-21-23-23 _____

OBEY MUSTARD	INCREASE FAITH	SMALL MULBERRY	SEED PLANTED	TREE SEA
-----------------	-------------------	-------------------	-----------------	-------------