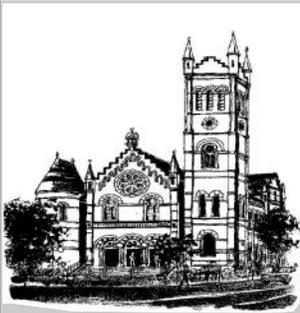


THE LINK

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church



CHRISTMAS OR ADVENT

December 2019

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Soon we will send and share Christmas greetings. But first comes the Advent waiting. This is a story of pregnant and anxious waiting. Most of us are uncomfortable with waiting. It often feels that we are wasting time, productivity, and energy.

Advent waiting affords us a new opportunity to challenge that perspective about waiting. Walter Brueggemann, author, seminary professor and pastor, writes in *Celebrating Abundance; Devotions for Advent...*

In Advent, however, we receive the power of God that lies beyond us. This power is the antidote to our fatigue and cynicism. It is the gospel resolution to our spent self-sufficiency, when we are at the edge of our coping. It is the good news that will overmatch our cynicism that imagines there is no new thing that can enter our world.

Brueggemann, Walter. Celebrating Abundance: Devotions for Advent (p. 7). Presbyterian Publishing. Kindle Edition.

Brueggemann tells us that not only is Advent and our waiting productive, but Christmas speaks directly to our lives, especially to lives that are scarred and hurt. He writes...

Christmas is especially for those of us whose lives are scarred and hurt in debilitating ways. Of course that means all of us. You see, Christmas is not finally about a baby and all of that romantic business. Christmas is about a word from God addressed to the world in its exhaustion. This word from the book of Isaiah is addressed to displaced persons who were mired down, and beaten, and about to give up. They kept playing old songs and going over and over and over the old hurts and old quarrels and old failures and old sins and old defeats.

Brueggemann, Walter. Celebrating Abundance: Devotions for Advent (p. 68). Presbyterian Publishing. Kindle Edition.

And a final prayer for us in the weeks of waiting ahead...

God of love and suffering power, speak again your word of transformation in the midst of our weary world. We so easily capitulate to despair, to numb acceptance of deathly orders. Break the vicious cycles, and kindle in us once again a passion for the possible. Amen.

Rev. Mitch Coggin

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

Notes from Session - November

Reverend Tan opened the meeting with a Scripture reading (Revelation 1: 9-20) and prayer. We were reminded of our responsibility as leaders and our accountability to lead in Christ.

Prior to starting the business of the meeting, Rev. Coggin invited us to take part in an Appreciative Inquiry exercise. This had been a focus of the morning session at the retreat: to take time to appreciate and to celebrate that which is positive and good in our lives and the church.

Jack Reimer, Treasurer, presented the proposed budget to session. Session approved the proposed budget for 2020, which will be presented to the congregation for approval at the **Annual Budget Meeting** on 15 December.

At the session retreat in October, we spent much of the afternoon session considering ways in which we might be more efficient in the way that we conduct session meetings. One approach in which we are trying to be more efficient is to:

- a) have all committee reports written and circulated before the meeting,
- b) address any questions we may have about a report to the writer/committee prior to the meeting, and
- c) streamline the approval process for the reports.

This was the first month that we used this approach; business was certainly completed more efficiently. For future meetings this will leave more time and energy for discussion of more significant matters. This is particularly important as Rev. Coggin leads us in the transition process.

As we do each year, session was pleased to approve Christmas benevolences to ministers retired from our congregation. This is a small token of appreciation for their service to us, over many years.

The **Annual General Meeting** will take place on 23 February to discuss the other business and activities of the life of the church. It was noted that in order to have the Annual Report ready for distribution prior to the meeting, all committee reports need to be submitted to the Church office no later than January 15, 2020.

Session wishes you and your families peace and joy as you anticipate and prepare for the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

Isaiah 9.6

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.

Colina Titus,
Session Clerk



fotobyrichards

Remembrance Day Flowers

The beautiful flowers on the communion table for Remembrance Day Sunday were placed by Stella Higgins.

*Some hae meat and canna eat,
And some wad eat that want it,
But we hae meat and we can eat,
Sae let the Lord be Thankit!*

Plans are underway for another Robbie Burns supper on Saturday January 25th in the Kirk Hall at St. Andrew's. Tickets will be limited to 80 at a cost of \$25 per person with a reduced rate for children under 16.

Invitations have been extended to the Bon Accord Dancers to present a pre-dinner show at 4:30pm. The plan is to have a meet & greet –
doors open at 4:00pm,
entertainment at 4:30pm, and
dinner to be served at 5:00pm.

Post dinner will be a presentation of the traditional Burns supper with the Immortal Memory, some toasts and a sing-along.

Tickets will be on sale in the Kirk Hall starting December 1st during coffee hour. Last year's supper was sold out well in advance of the evening.

If you are not able to attend the Robbie Burns supper at the Kirk Hall for a cost of \$25, tickets are available for the Victoria Police Pipe Band Burns dinner at the Winspear Centre for \$55.

Let us know when you purchase your ticket if you have any special or unique dietary need and we will do our best to take care of it.

Contact **Jim Ferguson** – jpfergus@gmail.com or 250-415-3687 or **Dorothy Reimer** to get your name on the reserved ticket list.

In Loving Memory



Karolyn Pitkethley



*Join Us for Lunch
December 8, 2019*

11:30 am - Kirk Hall

*After the children's pageant we will
be gathering for our Annual
Congregational Advent Lunch.*

See you there!



Happenings at The Friendship Club

Set your calendars for our upcoming events:

Monday, December 9 ~ **Christmas Lunch** at Cordova Bay Golf Course at 12 noon (see p.5 for more information)

Saturday, January 25, 2020 ~ **Robbie Burns Supper** and evening entertainment at 4:30pm - Kirk Hall

Saturday, February 15, 2020 ~ **Valentine's Lunch** guest speaker and live entertainment. More details will come out in the January Link.

Please send your ideas for future Happenings. We welcome your suggestions and your help.

Sincerely,
Dorothy Reimer

Share the Joy of Christmas

At St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, we believe in sharing the joy of Christmas with others in Victoria. We support the annual Christmas dinner at Our Place, which feeds the working poor, the homeless and those far from home, creating a time of warmth and community at this special time of year. ***The order for 25 turkeys (weighing around twenty-five pounds each) has been placed.*** It will be delivered to Our Place in time for all the turkeys to be cooked for the festive meal on December 17th.

Our congregation also provides gift bags for the 45 residents of Our Place, 13 women and 32 men this year. The bags are filled with warm socks, toques, gloves and personal items such as soap, toothpaste and shampoo.

Shopping has begun and the gifts will be ready to be wrapped by the Sunday School children on December 22nd.

On December 8th and 15th, the Mission and Outreach Committee will have a table set up in the Kirk Hall to accept donations for the Share the Joy Fund. There will be examples of the articles going into the gift bags on display. Leona Johns, from the Finance Committee, will be on hand to record the specifics of the donations to ensure prompt and precise accounting for tax receipts.

You can also donate via your church envelope. Write "Share the Joy" on the line where you enter the amount of your donation.

The bags will be delivered to Our Place on December 22nd.

If you have any questions about our Share the Joy of Christmas campaign, please call Debra Verwey at 250-383-1009 or Brian Titus at 250-382-2385.



Church Parking Options

Broughton Square Parkade: St. Andrew's pays the parkade a fixed monthly fee for Sunday parking from 10:00am to 1:00pm. Anyone attending church on Sundays can use this parking for free. The fee is independent of the number of people using this option. The fee is paid even if no one uses this option. Just show your parking permit when you exit.

Sussex Place Parking: St. Andrew's has an agreement with Sussex Place which allows those with a church parking permit to park for free as follows:

Sunday from 10:00am to 1:00pm.

Tuesday to Thursday from 7:00pm to 10:30pm.

Just place your parking permit on your dash to avoid being ticketed.

GVPL City Parkade: Parking under the library is free all day on Sundays, no permit required. During the week, including Saturday, the first hour is free. The hourly rate in the library is less than the metered rate on the street.

St. Andrew's off-street Parking: The church has a limited amount of parking available. The lane off Douglas will hold three or four vehicles if the gate is opened. The parking area beside the Broughton door can hold three vehicles. If you park on the right side (closest to the parkade) please pull in fully so that another vehicle can park behind you. If you park in these areas, please place your church permit on your dash. Your permit should show your name or cell number in case your vehicle needs to be moved. It is important to remember that this parking is for the use of the minister, custodian or other staff at times. Please make sure that you are not interfering with staff parking. It is best to check with the church office if you are unsure.

Parking permits are available in the Narthex. Check with the ushers if you would like one.

Property Committee

Christmas Bazaar - 2019

Some people worked for months. Others worked for weeks. But EVERYONE worked at a fever pitch on the days leading up to the Bazaar. It cannot be overstated how much work is involved in staging the Bazaar. And the results were unbelievable. As you can see from the photos on the next two pages (pp 6-7) taken by Arthur Marcellus, Patricia Shuckburgh, and Margaret Blair, everyone was in fine form. Although some of the workers are shown in the photographs, many more were busy behind the scenes.

The children of the Sunday School had been wrapping and gluing and sewing their projects to sell to raise money to make a difference in the lives of a community in poverty. The children had chosen a bicycle ambulance as the gift they wished to purchase so that those living far from a hospital or clinic could be transported easier and quicker. If they met their fundraising target, they wanted to purchase Mosquito nets. Mosquito transferred diseases are a very real threat to the well-being of children in poverty. Malaria, the Zika virus and Dengue fever are life threatening diseases.

The sandwich makers made very professional looking sandwiches to serve for the tea. I think it takes years of practice because these ladies have been preparing for church bazaar teas for a long time. And they definitely got it right. At the tea garden, everyone received a perfect plate of sandwiches and goodies to go along with their cup of tea. Fresh flowers and colourful napkins added to the tables. And we certainly didn't wait any time for a refill of tea when needed. The servers were on the job! As you can see they had the tables full of satisfied customers.

We all know the jewellery table takes a 'ton' of work beforehand. Gathering, sorting, untangling, pricing and presenting takes hours and hours of work from dedicated volunteers. And as well, sales people are needed on the day of the bazaar.

Another time consuming booth that takes months of gathering is the book table. Muscles are also needed! Many people contributed books and there was a high level of choice for all book lovers. Booths of jams and jellies, baking goods and homemade articles could also be found.

Old attic treasures was another table that garnered a lot of attention. Those of us that are older are often intrigued with items that we remember from our childhoods. And sometimes we find something that we have been trying to find for ages at the attic treasures. And a big draw was the Silent Auction particularly towards the end of the afternoon. We are all frantically getting in our bids before the auction closes in the hopes that our bid will be the last.

The annual bazaar is a wonderful opportunity to work alongside those we sit beside every Sunday and know that we are contributing to a worthwhile effort. We were told that an unofficial count showed the bazaar raised approximately \$8,000. A huge thank you goes out to everyone that was involved in the bazaar in any way – large and small. We couldn't have done it without you!



The Friendship Club

will hold a

Christmas Buffet Luncheon

at the Cordova Bay Golf Club
on Monday, December 9th, at 12pm.

5333 Cordova Bay Road - ample parking available

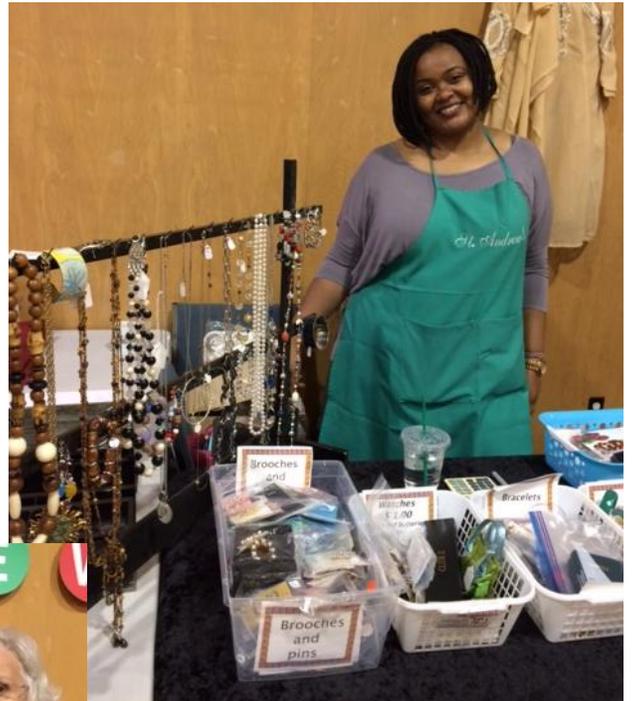
If you need a ride, please contact Dorothy. The cost is \$25 per person and may be paid ahead of time to Dorothy, or Bill and Nancy Duke.

This is also a time that we can share friendship with others. If you would like to bring a few items for the Food Bank, there will be a basket for a collection of food items. We will take it to the Food Bank in mid-December, saying that it is from the Friendship Club at St. Andrew's.





Bazaar 2019



Photos by Margaret Blair, Arthur Marcellus, and Patricia Shuckburgh

Summary from Town Hall Meeting 15 September 2019

Note:

Some people made more than one comment and some will not have answered every question. These percentages are an indication of the focus of most of the comments. Although everyone's comments are valued, given the diversity of the thoughts and experiences of everyone present, there are some comments counted in an "Other" category because they are 'one off' comments or do not fit into any of the general themes for that question. A few of these "other" comments are included.

What did you learn from the scripture passage - Colossians 3:12-17?

- 37% - To be kind, friendly, compassionate
- 19% - To be thankful
- 16% - To love one another
- 14% - To forgive one another
- 14% - Other: "Look to what people do rather than what they say". "Be respectful of all people" etc.

What brought you to St. Andrew's?

- 23% - Came with family or friends
- 15% - Looking for a Presbyterian church
- 15% - Friendliness of the congregation
- 15% - Other "Sought place to worship". "Church picnics". "Felt heritage and constancy of faith" etc.
- 11% - Music
- 9% - Inclusion of kids
- 6% - The building.

Why do you stay at St. Andrew's?

- 30% - Friendly, feels like family, welcoming
- 14% - Choir and music
- 12% - My faith
- 12% - The worship service
- 9% - I volunteer at the church
- 9% - The ministers
- 8% - Relationship with the community through service
- 6% - Other: "Where else would you go?" "Issues but lots of good things". "In spite of our troubles we are good people" etc.

What are you proud about at St. Andrew's?

- 41% - Warmth of fellowship, inclusivity
- 32% - Commitment to social action
- 19% - Resilience of the congregation
- 8% - Other: "I can walk to church". "I am proud of our congregation" etc.

What are your hopes and prayers for St. Andrew's?

- 50% - That God will provide for a long future for the congregation
- 36% - That the congregation will continue to serve the community
- 14% - Other: "Let's get the roof done." "We need an archivist." etc.

What is the most surprising thing that you learned about the church?

- 43% - Other: "This is a beautiful church. I love the architecture and windows." "How different our personal paths to here were, but the things we value in the church are the same: love, community, connection, sharing, contributing", etc.
- 27% - The importance of our history
- 21% - The enthusiasm & joy at the meeting
- 9% - The people who attended and contributed to the meeting.

What is the most surprising thing that you learned about yourself?

- 28% - I feel part of the church family
- 22% - I feel comfortable at St. Andrew's
- 17% - I understand why I am at St. Andrew's
- 17% - Other: "That it is possible to 'adjust my sails'." "I come to church to listen to the minister; it gives me a sense of peace." "How I enjoy worshipping here" etc.
- 16% - We have much to be thankful for.

(Continued on page 9)

Mission & Outreach

Presbyterian World Service and Development Event: Sat. Jan. 11, 2:30pm

Have you ever wondered what the Presbyterian Church in Canada is doing to minister to people in need around the world? When you read or hear in the news of health and education needs, poverty, disaster relief and other pressing problems in different parts of the world, are you concerned and ponder how we as a church can respond? If so, come along to a presentation and discussion on the work of Presbyterian World Service and Development by the Rev. Andrea Perrett, a member of the national executive committee of Presbyterian World Service and Development. This is being organized by St. Andrew's and Knox, and all the local south-island congregations are invited, so it is also a time to meet people from our sister congregations over refreshments as part of the event, as well as Andrea. The event will be held on Jan. 11th, 2020, at Knox at 2964 Richmond Rd., with doors opening at 2 pm, a presentation and discussion at 2:30, and refreshments to follow. If you can donate baking for this, or would like more information, please contact any member of the Mission and Outreach Committee: Brian Titus, Deb Vervey or Patricia Shuckburg.

Additional reading:

Presbyterian World Service and Development: <https://presbyterian.ca/pwsd/>

The Rev. Andrea Perrett

Presbyterian World Service and Development: <https://presbyterian.ca/pwsd/committee/>

St. Andrew's Hall, Vancouver: <https://www.standrews.edu/cml/leadership/>

Director of Cyclical Calgary and Cyclical Vancouver: <https://presbyterian.ca/cyclicalpcc/>

Patricia Shuckburgh & Debra Vervey

(Continued from page 8)

Summary:

These are the most common thoughts expressed at the meeting:

- ◆ We understand that scripture tells us to be kind, friendly and compassionate.
- ◆ A common theme:
 - ❖ People came to St. Andrew's because it is friendly and welcoming.
 - ❖ People stayed at St. Andrew's because it is friendly and welcoming.
 - ❖ We are proud of the warmth of the fellowship.
- ◆ Prayers that we will continue as a congregation.
- ◆ Prayers that we will be a congregation that serves the community.
- ◆ Learned the importance of the history of church.
- ◆ Many were surprised to learn/realize how much they feel part of and value the church community.

Please note: The full report, complete with coloured pie charts, is available on our website as well as in the Kirk Hall.

Colina Titus

Annual Reports to the Congregation

At the Session meeting on November 19th the following important dates were established:

Sunday December 15th - Congregational Budget Meeting. In previous years the Budget meeting has been held in the Sanctuary following worship. This is an opportunity to hear what is planned for the upcoming year.

Wednesday January 15th – last day for Committees to submit their reports to the Church Office by email in Word format to office@standrewsvictoria.ca.

Sunday February 9th and 16th – Annual reports will be available in hard copy or by email for distribution to the Congregation.

Sunday February 23rd - Annual General Meeting - following worship on Sunday, February 23rd.

Jim Ferguson
Convener - Administration

Home for Christmas

However we experienced Christmas growing up, Christmas happens when we allow Christ to make his home in us.

Introducing and featuring Christmas Carols and their country of origin.

First Sunday in Advent - Home for Christmas - Hope

December 1, 2019 ~ 10:30 am.

(North American carols, traditions and Communion)
Isaiah 2:1-5 ~ Matthew 24:36-44. Communion will be served. All are welcome at the Lord's Table.

Christmas Music from Peru

Wednesday, December 4, 2019 ~ 12:15 - 1:00 Voice, percussion and guitar. Admission by donation.

Second Sunday in Advent - Home for Christmas - Peace

December 8, 2019 ~ 10:30 am.

The children will present their *Christmas Pageant*. The service will be followed by a congregational lunch. All are most welcome.

Christmas Carol Sing

Thursday, December 12, 2019

Doors open at 11:30am ~

Carol Sing - 12 noon-1:15 pm

Carol singing, vocal, violin presentations.

Refreshments, FREE event.

Third Sunday in Advent - Home for Christmas - Joy

December 15, 2019 ~ 10:30 am

Great Britain and Ireland: carols and traditions.

Isaiah 35:1-10 - Matthew 11:2-11

Blue Christmas Service

Thursday, December 19, 2019 ~ 5:00 pm

A contemplative service for the Advent season. Blue Christmas services offer special recognition of the struggles many face during the Christmas season.

Fourth Sunday in Advent - Home for Christmas - Love

December 22, 2019 ~ 10:30 am

Germany and France: carols and traditions.

Isaiah 7:10-16 - Matthew 1:18-25

Christmas Eve - Christ Candle

Tuesday, December 24, 2019 ~ 7:30 pm

Jesus: Home in Our Hearts and Lives. A candle-light family Christmas Eve Service.

Bells to Ring at St. Andrew's on December 8

On Sunday, December 8th, come early to worship to hear the newly formed Vancouver Island Bell Ensemble playing a special seasonal selection of music. The ringing will begin at 10:15 and more music will be incorporated into the church service and Sunday School pageant.

The Vancouver Island Bell Ensemble (VIBE is its appropriate acronym!) has been rehearsing as a group since fall 2019. The members are ringers with advanced skills and techniques in handbell and hand chime ringing. Their focus is to perform at a high level of musicianship in a small ensemble setting.

VIBE's members come from Victoria, Nanaimo, Comox, Qualicum Beach and Parksville to rehearse every 2 to 3 weeks in the central location of Nanaimo.

Anne Hill is the conductor/director of VIBE. She has been playing, teaching and conducting handbells for 34 years, beginning as an elementary school music teacher in Saskatoon, SK. As a workshop clinician and massed -ringing conductor at provincial conferences in Western Canada and many Canadian National Handbell "Ringing Link" conferences, she has been chosen as the Canadian conductor/representative at many international handbell symposia and events.

Christine Purvis, our organist and choir conductor at St. Andrew's, whose good friend, Antonia Mahon, is one of the ringers and is our connection to VIBE. Antonia who also plays the flute, has performed with Christine in several of our Wednesday noon concerts. VIBE's musical selections will include *Patapan*, a traditional Burgundian carol, *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* by Felix Mendelssohn, an old French melody *Masters in the Hall* and another traditional Irish song, *The Wexford Carol*.

So on December 8th, come early and hear the VIBE of Christmas!





St. Andrew's Sunday School - Kids' Project

St. Andrew's Sunday School was busy during the fall preparing for the bazaar. The children decided that they would like to raise money for Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWSD) projects. They chose to raise \$150 for a bicycle ambulance and \$65 to provide health education on malaria, tuberculosis and HIV for a total of \$215. These projects received matching funding at the rate of 4:1.

The children worked hard for several weeks to make snowmen decorations, bookmarks and reindeer goodie pots. They learned how a craft created in Victoria and sold for \$2 could make a profound difference in the lives of people that they will never meet. They not only made the crafts, they sold the crafts at the bazaar and were also able to answer all the questions about bicycle ambulances and health education put to them by bazaar attendees.

A big thank you from the St. Andrew's Sunday School for helping the children more than reach their goal of \$215 for Presbyterian World Service and Development. They raised approximately \$265 and after much deliberation they decided to send the additional funds to PWSD for life-saving therapeutic food for malnourished children.

If you want to know more about PWSD Gifts of Change, please go to presbyterian.ca/pwspd/donate/gifts-of-change/

Sabine Teetzel

St. Andrew's Children's Page

Bible Verse of the Month:

So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him. Matthew 24:44

Be Prepared



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

KNOW
ANGELS
OWNER

SON
HOUSE
READY

EXPECT
WATCH
COME

HEAVEN
TIME
NIGHT

HOOR
THIEF
DAY