THE LINK

December 2022

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Victoria, BC

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church



What a wonderful beginning of the Advent Season on Sunday, November 27!! The First Sunday of Advent was splendid in every way. Each Sunday hereafter will be led in part by young families with children who will offer our Call to Worship and lead us in lighting the Advent candles. As the Bromleys were lighting the candles during First Advent, I was elated that this family has made inquiry about re-

joining the St. Andrew's family after being away several years. We will soon welcome Ashton and Ashley, Scarlett and Flynt, Faye and Marcel into full membership at a service to be announced soon. Perhaps there are others who have been considering becoming a member of St. Andrew's. What better time than this Advent season to make such an important decision about your spiritual home!

Did you not experience the choir at its best yesterday? They are working hard to prepare the best in music throughout the Advent season.

The messages will continue to lift the Advent themes of expectation and hope from Isaiah and Matthew.

Thursday, December 15 from noon-1:15 (doors open at 11:30am) will be a St. Andrew's favourite tradition. Join us for **The Gift of Christmas Music**, an afternoon of piano, trumpet, violin, flute, organ, and carol singing! Christine Purvis, our Director of Music, is planning and preparing for a special program that you will not want to miss.

The Christmas Eve Service on Saturday, December 24 at 7:00pm will be an opportunity for you to encourage your out-of-town family to join you for Christmas Eve Candlelight worship at St. Andrew's. Let's fill the sanctuary as we worship together.

And for the first time ever, our Session has endorsed Christmas Day worship on Sunday, December 25!!! It is right that we worship on the day that we celebrate the birth of our Lord in the Lord's house. Will your family be in town? Bring them with you for our 10:30am worship!

From Jan Richardson, Methodist minister, author and artist comes this poem about Advent waiting...

This blessing
Wants to sit
Alongside you
And keep vigil
With you.
This blessing wishes to wait
With you.
This blessing
Will simply
Lean toward you
And sing quietly
In your ear

A song to lull you Not into sleep But into waking. This blessing Will do all within Its power To entice you Into awareness.

Advent Blessings, Friends. **Pastor Mitch**

Session Report - November 2022

Session received updates from the Treasurer and noted that next year's budget would not be available until the end of December as an insurance question will not be resolved until one month prior to the expiration of the present policy. Session is discussing the overall increase in the cost of the insurance and what coverage St. Andrew's should have.

The treasurer hopes to have the budget ready for dissemination by the end of December. We are fortunate that the repayment of the government loan of \$40,000 can now be delayed being repaid until the end of 2023 without penalty.

It is noted that the Christmas Eve service will take place at 7 pm. Christmas Day and New Year's Day both fall on a Sunday and our worship service will be at the usual time of 10:30 am.

Session is reviewing the membership roll and will be contacting those who have not been involved with St. Andrew's in some way over the last several years.

The Lower Island collaboration committee will be asked to asset map our pooled resources to come up with a collaborative approach to worship and interaction. It is sad to note that 3 (and soon 4) of our lower island churches will have a ministerial vacancy.

At present we still have no regular clerk of session and all session members are encouraged to prayerfully consider that important role.

Submitted by, **Jerry Verwey**



Presbytery Camps Committee

The camp committee has been able to reserve the following dates for our camps:

- ❖ French Beach Provincial Park weekend July 6th -10th - group site.
- ❖ Rathtrevor Provincial Park weekend July 31st- Aug 7th - group site.

Also scheduled but not yet reserved (individual booking):

 Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park week of June 5th - 9th (individual bookings open in January).

Watch for posters as they become available and posted in the church for updated information and costs.



Jerry Verwey, Camp Representative

Worship Committee

ADVENT TRADITIONS AND WORSHIP

The four weeks before Christmas were formalized as the season of Advent around 380 A.D. by the Council of Saragossa. The word "Advent" was chosen because it means "coming" (or "arrival") in Latin – and in this season we prepare to celebrate the coming of Jesus as God Incarnate. We mark the beginning of Advent with a change in the colour of the pastor's stole and the cloth on the communion table; with an Advent Candle liturgy; and at St. Andrew's we change the doxology and closing "Amen", and put up seasonal decorations.

The colour change to purple symbolizes preparation, penitence, and royalty – and encourages us to prepare inwardly and spiritually for the celebration of the coming of the King of Kings at Christmas.

The origins of Advent wreaths with candles appear to be lost in the mists of time. The evergreen foliage symbolises everlasting life, and holly berries remind us of Jesus' death for us on the cross. The circle of the wreath represents God's unending love and the offer of eternal life. The candles remind us that Jesus is "the light of all mankind" that "shines in the darkness", which "has not overcome it" (John 1:4-5). The wreath has four candles signifying hope, peace, joy and love. The first two are purple, and the third is pink to mark a transition from purple (repentance) to joy (resulting from forgiveness)). The fourth is purple again (but for royalty this time, anticipating the coming of Jesus, the King of Kings, and the personification of love). The large white "Christ Candle" is lit on Christmas Eve and again on Christmas Day – celebrating the climax of our Advent and Christmas season with worship of the infant Jesus and the mystery of the Incarnation.

Changing both the doxology and the closing sung "Amen" acknowledges the change in season and adds a touch of freshness to our worship. The word "doxology" comes from the Greek for "glory saying" and describes any text used to specifically "give God glory". Presbyterians have traditionally sung "Praise God from whom all blessings flow" (a verse from a 1674 hymn) as a "glory saying" when our offerings are presented, in acknowledgement that all that we have ultimately comes from God. (Other denominations use doxologies after more than just the offertory, including a variety of statements such as "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit" as part of responsive prayers, or after scripture readings or singing or reciting psalms together, and so on.)

Finally, the decorations add a festive "feel" to the sanctuary, reminding us of Christmas, the Nativity, the Incarnation, and our salvation.



All these seasonal changes require extra effort by the many volunteers who make our worship over the Advent and Christmas seasons possible. These include ushers, readers, Advent Candle lighters, worship leaders, instrumentalists, singers, AV folk, decorators, cleaners, and those that prepare bulletins, prepare communion on the first Sunday in December, tend the plants at the front, open and close the sanctuary and keep it tidy, deliver printed liturgies weekly to the homebound, and find and organize volunteers to help during this busy time. Undoubtedly there are other tasks that have been overlooked in this long list! To all who help make Advent and Christmas worship meaningful, a heartfelt "thank

you" on behalf of all who worship at St. Andrew's, whether in-person, on-line, or at home using a printed liturgy. Your tireless service is not taken for granted!

Report on recent Presbytery meeting November 22, 2022

Presbytery meetings can seem rather formal at times and – necessarily! – often focus on processes and procedures. As with sessions, there are committee reports to receive, and resultant motions to debate and resolve. Formal discussions are essential, but refreshment breaks are valuable times for building relationships and sharing news of congregations. Below are highlights from the latest meeting, in the order in which they arose during the latest meeting.

Presbytery appoints **General Assembly Commissioners** by rotation amongst presbytery members. The four for 2023 (June, in Hamilton, ON) will be the moderators from Knox-Victoria and St. Andrew's-Nanaimo (alternate: St. Columba-Parksville), and representative elders from St. Columba-Parksville and St. Andrew's-Victoria (alternate: St. Andrew's-Duncan). There is also a process for including "Young Adult Representatives" so that younger voices are heard at the General Assembly.

The application for retirement of the Rev. Amy Campbell was received and granted.

Presbytery meetings for 2023 will be held on January 17-18 (two-day retreat at St. Andrew's, Nanaimo), April 25 (Zoom), June 20 (Cedar Tree Ministries, Duncan), Sept. 26 (Trinity, Campbell River) and Nov. 14 (Zoom). A key part of the retreat will be a workshop with the Rev. Andrea Perrett, who is a leader in missional work within Canada. She is based out of Vancouver and is an associate in New Witnessing Communities at the Centre for Missional Leadership (CML) at St. Andrew's Hall, and director of two church-planting networks (Cyclical Vancouver, Cyclical Calgary-Macleod). This promises to be a most informative retreat. (I have personally found the books and web pages developed by St. Andrew's Hall on the modern context for outreach to be most informative.) The Synod of BC is closing a church-planting fund and the Presbytery of Vancouver Island's proportion of \$460 K will be transferred in 2023. (\$100 K of this is an interest-free loan to Trinity-Campbell River.) A presbytery committee will develop recommended terms of reference for use of these funds.

Presbytery is **waiving congregational assessments** for another year, as some congregations are struggling post-COVID to rebuild and to balance budgets for 2023. (Our assessments for 2023 is \$3,060.) The current **balance** in Presbytery accounts is **\$736,764**.

The Camp Committee submitted a report recommending a name-change to "Children, Youth and Camp Committee", with new terms-of-reference to reflect this and the hiring of a CYC Ministry Communications Director (\$25/hr or \$3000/year for 120 hrs/year). Congregations are being surveyed on the number and needs of their children and youth.

Trinity-Victoria: The Rev. Joan Scandrett continues to lead most services, along with the Rev. Cathy Victor and Trinity elders Ruth McCowan and Whitney Hanna; supply preaching is in place well into 2023. Congregational leadership remains strong and committed. Pastoral care is being tended to between elders and Pastoral Care visitor Leslie Flynn. Participation in Collaborative Conversations amongst congregations in Victoria continues, and "we continue to move on, trusting that God continues to go before us and is leading us in new directions".

Knox-Sooke ordained four **new elders** on Sunday Nov. 6th, and accepted with regret the resignation of two long-standing elders, giving a rejuvenated session of six elders. Now that its session has been strengthened, Presbytery will be approached in the New Year with a recommendation that the "assessor elders" from other congregations for the past 18 months be released from their responsibilities. The Rev. **Reid Chudley** continues as interim **moderator**. Finances are stable, attendance at in-person worship is growing, and options for moving forward will be considered early in the New Year. Opportunities for re-focusing and supplementing current ministries to neighbours in the Knox Centre will be considered for creating further "gospel connections".

Work with the **Multifaith Centre at UVic** by the Rev. **Laura Kavanagh** continues, supported by Presbytery. She offers a "listening ear", helps lead a weekly communion service followed by a meal, mentors VST students doing practicums at the Multifaith Centre, and gives an opening meditation at a regular on-line meeting of students with ADHD. This valuable work amongst young people in tertiary education is the only one of its kind by presbytery, and members were challenged at the November meeting to seek opportunities for parallel work in other colleges and universities.

Below are web pages related to items mentioned above. Unlike sessions, presbyteries are "open courts" - please contact Pastor Mitch, the Rev. Wayne Stretch, or me if you have any questions.

Brian Titus,Representative Elder

Web pages related to Presbytery report

Distribution of PCC congregations on Vancouver Island: Presbyterian Church Finder map

South to north: Knox-Sooke, St. Andrew's-Victoria, Chinese Presbyterian-Victoria, Knox-Victoria, Trinity-Victoria, Saanich Peninsula, Cedar Tree Ministries, St. Andrew's-Duncan, St. Andrew's-Nanaimo, St. Columba-Parksville, Comox Valley, and Trinity-Campbell River.

The General Assembly
The Rev. Andrea Perrett
Centre for Missional Leadership
Payert healt with CML contributors

Recent book with CML contributors Cyclical Vancouver

UVic Multifaith Centre

General Assembly Office - PCC

CML Team - St. Andrew's Hall UBC

Centre for Missional Leadership (CML) - St. Andrew's Hall UBC

Christian Witness in Cascadian Soil

<u>Cyclical Vancouver</u> Multifaith Centre - UVic

January 2023 Link Deadline



The usual deadline for *The Link* falls on the last Sunday of the month—this month that would be December 25. We don't think that would work well.

The January Link deadline will be on January 1, and The Link will be published for January 8.

The Link staff wish you a joyous Christmas season filled with wonder, love and health and God's richest blessings for the coming year.

Debra Verwey Fiona Ryneveld Leona Johns

Do you recognize this place?

The folks who attend coffee hour now after the church service at St. Andrew's know that the Kirk Hall looks different. If you have not been in the gymnasium lately, things have changed. And the public washrooms are worth a visit on their own just to have a look!

St. Andrew's Kirk Hall has undergone a transformation during the time when everything was shut down during the recent Covid pandemic. Our long term (12 years!) tenant, Ballet Victoria, could not present its annual concert performances at the Royal Theatre and McPherson Playhouse because of government-mandated closures. The ballet company got permission from the Property Committee and Session to use the Kirk Hall as a production studio for videos which showcased the work of the dancers during the Covid closure.

Theatre lighting, high-tech cameras and a sound booth were installed. There is a floor-level area where the dancers perform on special rubber matting which protects their feet. A ceiling-high screen provides changing scenery during the performances. This "stage" is surrounded by panels of curtains.

The videos that Ballet Victoria produced during the shutdown were streamed online and raised the revenue needed to keep the company going until the community was opened again to live performances. That revenue also paid the rent which helped the coffers of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church.

After things opened up in 2021, Ballet Victoria installed (again with Session's permission) tiered risers so the company could stage more intimate performances in the Kirk Hall throughout the year. This has been a successful venture. The area is also used when the ballet company hosts its Tea for Tutu (opportunities for seniors from care homes to get out to see short ballet performances while enjoying a cup of tea and some goodies.)

The Building Community Event was the first time that Ballet Victoria and St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church worked together to provide an event open to the community. St. Andrew's members served a delicious luncheon and tea, reminiscent of past Christmas bazaars. Tables for two and four persons were located on the risers and the wood floor. The tiered levels made every seat in the hall a perfect one to see the half-hour performance provided by Ballet Victoria's professional dancers during each of the two sittings. It was truly magical to see episodes from the second act of Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker, including those with the Sugar Plum Fairy and an apple-eating dragon!

Our new public washrooms in Kirk Hall may be the most beautiful ones in Victoria! Ballet Victoria got funding to renovate the bathrooms. There are now four gender neutral stalls with new fixtures. A real change from what was there before! There are two lovely murals of ballerinas on the walls...a well-deserved nod to our tenants who have provided the new washrooms!

This is what Dave Garson wrote, on behalf of St. Andrew's Property Committee:

"Property wishes to recognize the efforts of Paul Destrooper with Ballet Victoria for the recent renovations to the main washrooms in the Kirk Hall. Through various channels, Paul spent over a year trying to raise funding to accomplish these improvements. His efforts were finally successful and the project was funded by a \$40,000 Cultural Infrastructure Grant from the City of Victoria and an additional \$12,000 grant from the Victoria Foundation. This funding supported a major renovation of these washrooms resulting in the creation of four, individual, unisex washrooms that are more accessible by all, including those with walkers or in wheelchairs."

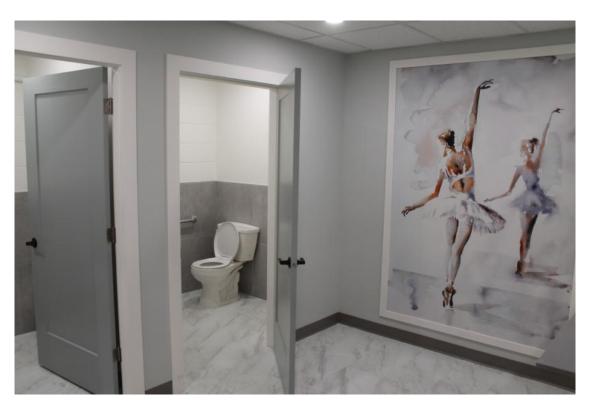
Recently, Paul Destrooper, Director of Ballet Victoria, wrote in a note to Dave that the main reason that he sought funding for the bathroom upgrade was to support the elderly patrons who come to the Tea for Tutu. However, it was also obvious that this was a

definite improvement for everyone else who needs to use the washrooms in Kirk Hall...all BV patrons who attend regular performances, BV performers and staff and everyone connected to St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church.

Since the addition of the use of Kirk Hall to its rental lease, Ballet Victoria has invested over \$70,000 in improvements to the building: cleaning and painting the walls of the gymnasium, new LED lighting, and the recent bathroom renovations. Ballet Victoria further invested \$50,000 in the development of the space as a performance venue with the special ballet dance floor, tiered risers, stage drapery and stage lights as well as stage lighting and sound equipment that everyone got to enjoy at the Building Community Event held in Kirk Hall on Saturday, November 19th.

Thank you, Ballet Victoria, for investing in the Kirk Hall...your time, money, effort, enthusiasm and confidence in a bright future. Together, as we build community, we are building a better place for everyone to use and enjoy, as a church, as a ballet company and as a community gathering place in downtown Victorial





Building Community Together

During this past year members of the congregation were wondering if we would once again have a fall bazaar. This question was often discussed at the 'laneway coffee/tea get togethers' during the summer. **Sheelagh Garson** had some ideas about how a smaller version could happen and she was encouraged to put her ideas into action. **David McLean** was asked to approach session to see if they would support her idea and the 'Building Community Together' started to take form. Plans were made about how the tea/luncheon would work in the new space with the Ballet Victoria risers in the gym. Space was limited, so a reservation system was put in place keeping the number of tea tickets to 60 per sitting, with two sittings. At a certain point in the planning, Sheelagh had to bow out because of back surgery and the arrangements were handed over to the Planning Committee.

As an added bonus, when David McLean was speaking to BV about the need for the gym space the week of November 19, BV offered to entertain the guests with a 20 minute ballet performance for each sitting.

The event sold out quickly and was a huge success. This was a trial run—similar but different. Next year there may be more exciting changes.

St. Andrew's Planning Committee











"The Snow Queen calls upon her white dragon and sends Clara on a journey around the world. Clara is both nervous and excited by the unknown but gratefully dances with all the fabulous characters she meets. Eventually, the Dewdrop Fairy appears, bringing Clara a magical tiara that turns her into the Sugarplum Fairy. The Nutcracker Prince and Clara dance the grand pas de deux together for everyone to enjoy."

Paul Destrooper











Special Pens and Pencils Can Spread Christmas Joy!

As many of you are aware, we are mid-way in St. Andrew's annual Share the Joy of Christmas campaign for 2022. To help make Christmas a brighter and more hopeful time for those who may be struggling financially in the Greater Victoria area, folks from St. Andrew's donate to Share the Joy to provide Christmas food hampers to needy families.

Reverend Mitch Coggin, our transitional minister for the past four years, has just donated four pens and two pencils to our campaign. These are not ordinary, run-of-the-mill pens and pencils (see photo), but unique handmade pieces of art.

From a rough large piece of hardwood, like mahogany, oak or maple, Mitch shapes the pen shaft to size and drills the required bore. For finer shaping, he turns the piece on a lathe to near completion. Then much sanding and polishing is necessary before he can fit the shaft with pre-purchased hardware to complete a one-of-a-kind pen or pencil! The whole process takes approximately fifteen or more hours of fine, detailed work! This is what Mitch does as a hobby in his rare, spare time.

You can use this great opportunity to donate to a good cause (Share the Joy of Christmas) and get a unique



Christmas gift for a special person at the same time. Please remember how much work and time went into making these beautiful writing pieces when you offer to buy one of them. All the money paid for the pens and pencils goes to the Share the Joy of Christmas 2022 campaign.

You can make donations to Share the Joy (whether or not you want one of Mitch's pens or pencils) with your church envelopes or by following the directions under the *Donate* tab on the church's website: standrewsyictoria.ca.

standrewsvictoria.ca.

For more information, please call **Debra Verwey** at 250-383-1009.

Lighting the First Candle of Advent The Candle of Hope Sunday, November 27, 2022

Ashton, Ashley and Scarlett Bromley



Property Update Report

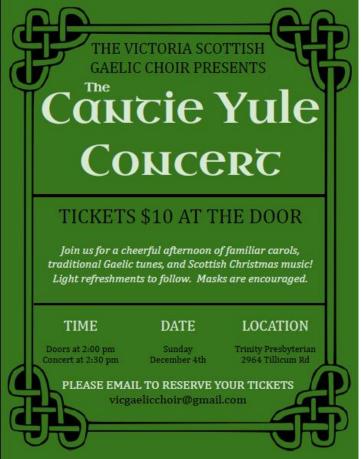
The Property committee is pleased to announce to the congregation that the fire department's requirement to have an outside connection on our hall fire main, as well as the upgrading of our main floor bathrooms undertaken by Ballet Victoria with funding secured from the Victoria Foundation have been completed. This has resulted in loss of some storage space ameliorated somewhat by the disposal of old chairs as well as boiler room clean-out. A replacement water line isolation valve was needed for the Kirk hall supply during this upgrading. The committee is still waiting for contractor availability for the roofing repairs to our Kirk hall roof.

The sound system hanging mics, installed in May and found to act as radio receivers, have been corrected by the purchase and installation of RF filters and will be in use for Advent.

Property is continuing repairs to the windows over the winter and will keep the congregation informed as to our progress. We have also removed some pews for the 'storage' of the baby grand piano belonging to one of the UVic recently arrived music professors. He is in the process of building a new house and has graciously allowed us, through our connection with UVic music student program, to use the piano during its 'storage' at St. Andrew's.

Property Committee November 2022





The Marcellus Fall 2022 Road Trip

We have just returned from a six and a half week road trip to the USA. It was the first time we had left the Island since 2019 and the first time we had been in the USA since 2017.

The trip was originally planned to help our son, Doug, move his possessions from Whistler to Truckee, CA (elevation 6,500 ft.) where he has been working for Northstar Ski Resort for three years. Northstar is owned by Vail Resorts, as is Whistler Ski Resort. The trip morphed into a much longer adventure. After 10 days in the historic Truckee and beautiful Lake Tahoe area (we wished we could have stayed there longer), we moved on to Las Vegas where we celebrated our 20th Wedding Anniversary with tickets to Cirque du Soleil Beatles: Love.



From there, we headed to Cathedral City (next door to Palm Springs) where we spent two weeks. Joshua Tree National Park, a Friday night high school football game, live performances, a huge golf cart parade and a side-trip to Idyllwild were lots of fun. We *almost* met up with *Pastor Mitch and Linda* for coffee and were actually at Pioneertown and Joshua Tree National Park the same day; however, we were going in opposite directions.

From Cathedral City, we went to Yosemite National Park. It was magical with rain, sleet, fog and snow – and El Capitan. This is the only place we had precipitation!!

We then travelled to San Francisco. While we enjoyed live theatre, a city Big-Bus tour, a cable car ride and driving the very crooked Lombard Street, the biggest highlight was cycling across the Golden Gate Bridge on a tandem bike. It was definitely a thrill!

Our trip home was Highway 1 along the coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington, with countless stops to take in the stunning scenery and beautiful sunsets. The trip was truly an amazing adventure, with so many wonderful memories. We drove 8,028 km (5,024 miles). That's more than one-way across Canada which is 5,514 km. We also had temperatures varying between -4 C to 32 C.

Jean Marcellus



Ready for the Christ of Christmas

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." Matthew 3:1-2 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 3:1-12



W	L	U	Z	M	Н	V	J	0	J	Q	V	Q	S	U
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K	C	Т	X	Т	N	M	R	H	K	Y	Т	E	X	X
C	I	X	J	Т	E	Z	Y	J	T	A	E	S	L	E
P	Ν	N	Y	Y	Υ	A	S	L	P	P	T	R	Z	Т
R	В	M	G	J	W	I	L	D	G	S	U	E	S	Q
E	D	A	Н	D	Н	Α	I	R	U	X	G	P	Т	C
P	Z	0	Р	Y	0	U	S	C	E	N	U	E	R	F
Α	Т	0	Q	Т	W	М	0	H	I	N	J	N	Α	F
R	Z	s	G	N	I	L	0	Н	L	R	L	Т	I	М
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LORD	PREPARE	KINGDOM	JOHN	HAIR
BAPTIZE	STRAIGHT	PATHS	PREACHING	WILD
REPENT	LOCUSTS	HONEY	CAMEL	BELT

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church - December 2022

		Choir 7:15				New Year's Day Worship 10:30
7	6	σ	4	3	2	January 1
New Year's Eve					Boxing Day	Christmas Day Worship 10:30
31	30	29	28	27	26	25
Christmas Eve Service - 7pm		Choir 7:15		Session 7pm		4th Sunday of Advent Worship 10:30 Choir 9:30
24	23	22	21	20	19	18
		Gift of Christmas Music 12 - 1:15pm Choir 7:15	Balm in Gilead Band Christmas Concert 7pm			3rd Sunday of Advent Worship 10:30 Choir 9:30 Seasonal Classics 2pm
17	16	15	14	13	12	11
Human Rights Day	from 2 - 4pm lletvictoria.ca	Tea for Tutu - December 7, 8, & 9 from 2 - 4pm Reservations required. tea4tutu@balletvictoria.ca Choir 7:15	Tea for Tutu Reservations			2nd Sunday of Advent Communion Worship 10:30 Choir 9:30 Cantic Yule Concert 2:30
10	9	8	7	6	տ	4
Saturday	Friday	Thursday	Wednesday	Tuesday	Monday	Sunday

If you would like additions, updates or changes to this calendar, please submit that information to the link@shaw.ca