

THE LINK

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church



Sunday, July 30, the St. Andrew's Session met at the Coggins. We conducted an exercise called Appreciative Inquiry in which the purpose was to name as many of the best and most valuable narratives and qualities of St. Andrews and by doing so, name the most important links to the past and the most hopeful images of the future. Session articulated events that created good memories which reminded Session what is going well and what qualities continue to thrive.

Appreciative inquiry operates under the premise that in every organization or congregation, something works! When we were perusing the upcoming calendar, we mentioned the upcoming pulpit swap of the three Victoria Presbyterian congregations at the end of August. Session erupted with energy and ideas. "Why aren't we worshipping together, in the park, before the picnic? Session was behind the idea and that joint picnic was held August 27 at the Esquimalt Gorge Park.

That day, 70 persons worshiped together representing the congregations of Knox Sooke, Knox Victoria, Trinity, and St. Andrew's. We heard a scripture from Exodus describing the fear of a mother who believed that her son, Moses, would be killed by the Pharaoh. Fear could have dominated her life. Some may have feared gathering in worship at the park and being away from our sanctuary for worship in our normal place.

Rev. Laura Kavanagh's sermon described an antidote to fear, "Psalm 23 says, "I shall fear no evil, for Thou art with me." Fears that are turned over to God are muted or go away. When we stop trying to be in control and remember that God is in control, there is no cause for fear, for the Holy One loves us and seeks the best for us. Trust in God's love casts out fear.

Two weeks from now, I will be undergoing hip replacement surgery. I must admit that I do not look forward to the pain of recovery. I fear the loss of control that only rehabilitation will be able to reverse. I dread being off for several weeks! I have never spent a night in the hospital and do not look forward to that now. But a greater fear is continuing in the pain I have lived with for the better part of a year. And I believe that "trust in God's love casts out fear."

During the weeks ahead, I am confident that your Interim Moderator, Rev. Wayne Stretch will wisely lead you. He will moderate Session and continue to challenge Session to look ahead at where God is leading. In every organization or congregation, something works! Do you believe that? Does that remain true in your own faith story?

With love and blessings,
Mitch

September 2023

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thelink@shaw.ca

Victoria, BC

Worshipping Together August 27, 2023

Knox Sooke**Knox Victoria****Trinity****St. Andrew's**

Sunday, August 27th saw St. Andrew's join with Knox Sooke, Knox Victoria and Trinity churches for a worship service at the usual 10:30 a.m. time but not in the usual church buildings. Instead the service was held outside in the fresh air at beautiful Esquimalt Gorge Park. We gathered under a big tree where Steve (Knox Victoria) along with Jorge and Amanda (St. Andrew's) provided the music. There were many participants in the service including Mitch Coggin, Reid Chudley, Cathy Victor and Wayne Stretch. Laura Kavanagh preached the sermon focusing on faith being the opposite of fear. We all have some fear or anxiety from time to time, but faith overcomes fear when we trust in God's all-sufficiency.

Following the service we all spread out to the picnic tables and enjoyed the goodies we had brought. Then the fun really began. Cathy MacKenzie had gone to a lot of work creating "mixer games" for us to play and they did indeed mix us up! In the process, we grew to know our friends at the other Presbyterian churches a little better. Hopefully, we can continue to enjoy worship together on a regular basis in the months to come.



Conformed by Fear – Transformed by Faith - Women at the Riverside – telling the story of Moses.





Jorge and Amanda playing a duet

Mission and Outreach Committee

INVITATION TO IMPORTANT ZOOM MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 7 AT 3 PM

In the past editions of TWASA (This Week at St. Andrew's), you may have noticed the invitation to a zoom meeting taking place on Thursday, September 7 between 3 and 4 o'clock in the afternoon. This session is an opportunity to learn information that was presented to Vancouver Island Presbytery on April 25 about the recent discovery of unmarked graves at an Aboriginal residential school on Vancouver Island.

Tseshah First Nation released findings on Tuesday, February 21, 2023 from their search of the former site of Alberni Residential School in British Columbia, one of the schools operated by The Presbyterian Church in Canada until 1925 and thereafter by the United Church of Canada.

Tseshah First Nation announced that they were able to verify 67 deaths of students at the school and that ground penetrating radar and other geophysical research identified 17 possible unmarked graves.

To help all members and adherents of The Presbyterian Church in Canada on Vancouver Island understand the context and importance of this situation, the Justice Ministries of our national church is holding this zoom meeting to provide information about this disturbing situation. You can register to take part at the following hyperlink:

<https://presbyterian.ca/justice/social-action/human-rights/workshop-registration-trauma-and-intergenerational-trauma-in-the-context-of-truth-healing-and-reconciliation/>

Debra Verwey

MUSTARD SEED STREET CHURCH



In Greater Victoria, 45,000 folks benefit from the different programs of The Mustard Seed, including using the largest food bank on Vancouver Island. The Mustard Seed provides over 1,250 hampers per month, 3,200 meals per month and works with local retailers to redistribute fresh, nutrition meals through the Food Share Network.

They provide fresh vegetables, dairy, non-perishable food items and hygiene products.

As summer wraps up, we'll soon be in September and looking ahead to Thanksgiving.

Please consider donating to the invaluable work of The Mustard Seed.

Patti Jackson

In Loving Memory

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



Don Barwise - June 23

Margaret England - August 5

The Journey – part two...

In the May *Link* I shared our experience of one of our family members moving to a long-term care facility. At the end of the piece I mentioned my experience of sharing our journey with my volunteer friends who had similar experiences over the years. I have also shared the story with friends who have worked in long-term care facilities.

It is important to remember one person's journey is not someone else's journey. Each is unique in its own way although there may be similarities.

In many cases the caregiver is travelling alone, on a journey with very little in the way of a road map. In this case it is important the caregiver feels comfortable sharing and/or exchanging stories with people on the same or similar path.

I shared stories with a number of people about "getting on the bus", only to find out they too had similar experiences. They shared these with a sense of humour and positive reflection. One was from a lady who was walking past the long-term care residence and started to

ask me questions about the facility. I was able to share with her our story and referred her to the May issue of *The Link*. One never knows when the opportunity may come up to share, inform, and in some cases educate.

I was recently socializing with friends who asked how things were going. They in turn shared their stories:

- Story #1 – A friend would visit his mother in long-term care. His mother addressed him as the eldest of the brothers in the family (although he was number four). Over time he was able to acknowledge this mix-up and continue to visit his mother.
- Story #2 – Another friend would visit his father and sometimes his father made sense in his conversation and storytelling. On occasion his father would get off track and talk about stuff that didn't make sense. Rather than 'getting on the bus' and engaging with his father, my friend spent time trying to correct his father. Needless to say it was a frustrating exchange. It took time for my friend to not engage in the usual fashion, but to 'get on the bus'.

Sometimes it can be difficult to keep focused on what might be happening the following day. One way I found to deal with this is to have a simple to-do list of the next day's events. Review the list the night before and at the beginning of the following day, "this is what is planned for the day". It helps to bring some focus rather than getting sidetracked.

By sharing our story, it begins to help us understand what we have in front of us, it helps to clarify our thinking and it offers the opportunity for other people to share their experience. In one of my interactions I mentioned the difficulty with clothing, to which the other person suggested, rather than slacks which requires belts, buttons and clips, find some jogging clothing with elastic waist bands. A simple solution to what appeared to be a complex problem.

As we enjoy the good weather and being outside it gives us an opportunity to experience life in a different way and to enjoy the world God has created.

Today is today, tomorrow is a new day. Live it the best way you can.

In gratitude,
Jim Ferguson

Session Report

Session met once during the summer at the home of Rev. Mitch Coggin who provided us with a nutritious repast in the open garden. It was wonderful to see all session members attend, some of whom we haven't met in person for a long time.

The purpose of this gathering was to focus on what and where our mission and vision is. We had come to various views and still need to clarify our vision and mission for our church going forward. If anyone has a view or comment on what our mission and vision should be, please contact either Rev. Mitch or the session clerk with your comments and suggestions. Until we have a clear vision and mission we are unable to complete the necessary steps needed to call a new minister.

Yours in His service,
Jerry Verwey
Session Clerk

Over the Summer ...

Farewell to Helen

During our Service of Worship on June 25, 2023, Pastor Mitch offered a blessing and prayer for Helen Gans, who moved to Qualicum Beach in early July. Helen first came to St. Andrew's Victoria, in September 2004, and was a faithful member until her departure.



We had the pleasure of visiting Helen in her new home in Qualicum Beach in early August, where she is happily settled with her daughter, Janet, and her grandson, Tommy, who moved to Qualicum Beach at the same time.

We wish Helen, Janet and Tommy God's Blessings.



Submitted by
Jean Marcellus

'The Gathering' at Trinity

Thursday, August 10, the four congregations of Knox Victoria, Trinity, Knox Sooke, and St. Andrew's gathered at Trinity Presbyterian Church on Tillicum Road for pizza, salad and conversation to help us renew old acquaintances and form new ones.



38 people from the 4 congregations came together to eat, tell stories and envision new opportunities for community life together in the coming months. The expressions on these faces tell the story that a good evening was experienced by all...



Good News about Sam Preston

On June 18, 2023, at an awards ceremony at Lambrick High School, Sam Preston won a School District 61 scholarship of \$1000. Sam, the son of Saul Preston and Paula McHerron, graduated this year from Grade 12 and will be attending the University of Victoria in September. He is also a graduate of St. Andrew's Sunday School and was a member of our Stained Glass Children's Choir.

Sam aspires to become a physiotherapist. St. Andrew's wishes him all the best in his future studies!



Happy 101st Birthday to Agnes Loosmore, a former long-time member of St. Andrew's. Agnes and her late husband, Bill, moved to Alberta to be closer to family. Many of us will remember her, as she has not changed a bit!! Happy Birthday, Agnes, from your friends at St. Andrew's.



Arthur and I had the honour of attending Rev. David Stewart's 80th Birthday Celebration on June 3rd, 2023.

David wanted to have a "celebration that he would remember" and it was a fine celebration indeed.

We enjoyed catching up with many members of David and Carol's

extended family, as well as people he worked with helping the Victoria Street Community.

Also attending were two couples from Kelowna, who have known David and Carol from the time David officiated at their weddings 50 years ago!

I first met David and Carol shortly after they arrived in Kelowna at a Presbyterian Young People's Society (PYPS) Thanksgiving Convention and I remember it as "the best and most memorable Convention ever!!!"

Submitted by
Jean Marcellus



Dan Syroid caught a Tyee salmon in the Tyee Pool at the mouth of the Campbell River on August 22, 2023.

Tyee salmon are 30 pounds or more and officially registered with the Tyee Club of British Columbia. Regulation equipment and a boat rowed by a guide (no motor boats) are used by anglers.

Congratulations to Dan whose Tyee weighed in at 30 pounds. He was rowed by his friend, Floyd.

Submitted by
Dawn McLean

Over the Summer continued...



Quartet Fest West – July 2, 2023

Quartet Fest West was held in the sanctuary of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, on Sunday, July 2, 2023. Twenty-one strings students from across Canada, Washington State and overseas performed in quartets, duets and solos while accompanied on the grand piano.

The Lafayette Quartet, members who are also instructors at the UVIC School of Music, initiated an annual two-week string quartet intensive in 1993 called Quartet Fest West. For the past two years the students have performed their downtown concert in the sanctuary at St. Andrew's. Many Quartet Fest West alumni are now esteemed professional musicians.

The concert was sponsored in partnership with the Victoria Foundation, UVIC School of Music and St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church Victoria.

UVIC Strings Students will be performing concerts on Sunday afternoons:

October 29, November 5, November 19 and December 3.
All the concerts start at 2:00 pm.

Come and enjoy the chamber music; everyone is welcome.



Lafayette Quartet, members

Submitted by
Dawn McLean

Open Church

This summer, the church welcomed visitors on seven Wednesdays, three Thursdays and one Monday to coincide with cruise ship stays. Most of our visiting cruise ships only remain in port long enough (5 hours or less in the afternoon/evening) to satisfy the US regulations. Fewer stay for the 6 – 10 hour timeframe for visitors to wander around town in daylight hours. Even so, I welcomed visitors from France, Ukraine, Romania, Israel, China, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Chile, Brazil, Germany, USA, Canada, as well as many locals who have passed our 'closed doors' many times and seeing them open, availed themselves of the opportunity to see what is behind the doors. Oftentimes guests totalled more than 30 each open day.

The conversations I have had with some visitors have been insightful and comforting to them. The evening arrival of some cruise ships has seen passengers coming to our doors too late for a formal tour, as our envelope secretary, Leona, can attest to when she showed guests through our sanctuary as she was about to return home after completing that week's duties.

This worthwhile witness to our church in the middle of town and our mission where we are placed, will continue throughout the year every Wednesday as well as other times, where possible.

Submitted by
Jerry Verwey

Camp VIP Report

This past summer, our Presbytery operated 3 camps for all the folk in the Presbytery. Those that attended had a fulfilling time meeting old friends and making new ones as well as having communal faith studies at each.

Our first camp, at Little Qualicum River Provincial Park, was designed to cater to those of us that could get away midweek early in June, before schools let out. Unfortunately, it coincided with the bluff fire that shut down the road to Port Alberni. Though the camp ground was still open and the winds were mostly away from us, it did present some interesting situations as we were inside the road closure. This curtailed our speakers access but did not diminish our enthusiasm for games and discussions, both faith based, and our church situations around the island. About 8 couples attended.

Our 2nd camp was held at French Beach Provincial Park group site with 7 couples attending. As usual, we were invited to Knox Church, Sooke to participate in their Sunday service and were served a nutritious lunch afterwards.

Our final camp was held at Rath Trevor Provincial Park, group site 2, over the August holiday weekend. Due to past difficulties getting the site, the camp length has been extended to 8 nights. About 10 RVs/ trailers attended with 6 tents as well. The site has both forested area, good for tenting, and an open area, deemed by BC parks, to be suitable for 4 trailers. We squeezed them in with room to spare. Our speaker for the week was Jan McIntyre, with the Bellsmiths providing our musical accompaniment. We had people from St. Andrew's, Chinese Presbyterian, Trinity, St. Andrew's, Nanaimo, St. Andrew's, Duncan and visitors from Prince George. Some stayed a few days and others the whole camp length.

We have the dates for next year's camps, so mark your calendars:

June 11-14 – Little Qualicum River Falls - individual;

July 4-8 - Goldstream Provincial Park - group site; (chosen to encourage greater participation from local and up-island congregations)

Aug 5 -12 – Rath Trevor Provincial Park; (we were unable to secure the site for the long weekend but booked it directly after that weekend). More info will follow later in the year.

Jerry Verwey
St. Andrew's Camp Rep.

Summer Travels



We were blessed to be able to RV in many locations on Vancouver Island this season, plus a trip to the Cariboo and Vancouver.

We also thoroughly enjoyed our tandem cycling. This photo was taken after we cycled over the Lions Gate Bridge which you can see in the background, between the trees.

Back on Vancouver Island, we did have one encounter we will never forget. It involved *a bear, vultures, dead fish heads and an angel*. We took a wrong turn on our way to Loveland Bay Provincial Campground (NW of Campbell River) and ended up on an abandoned logging road no longer fit for logging trucks. After 1.9 km, we saw a bear on the road, then many turkey vultures in the trees above; then we saw why – someone had dumped many fish heads just off the road.

We realized right away, we needed to turn around and thought this area with fish heads was our only chance. As I was outside the truck guiding Arthur as he reversed our travel trailer, I was looking over my shoulder constantly to see if the bear or the vultures were prepping for dinner!!!

Soon, we realized we just couldn't make the turn ... and along comes *an angel*, Greg, in a big 4 x 4. At first, he thought we were dumping garbage and was ready to report us, then quickly realized we were lost and in trouble. He confirmed that we should not be on this road, especially hauling a travel trailer; he offered us his back-up Garmin to aid in finding where we were supposed to be (we graciously declined his Garmin) and then he said, *"Follow me, I will lead you out!"* And so he did – he got us slowly back to Highway 28 (the Gold River Highway) and we got ourselves heading in the right direction and on our way to Loveland Bay, which turned out to be a truly beautiful campground. And looking back, we thought this experience was crazy/amazing, almost Biblical. So we were a bit startled when we were referred to Psalm 32:8 *"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you."*

Jean & Arthur Marcellus

Camp VIP Summer 2023

Little Qualicum Falls – June 5 to July 9, 2023

Our first Camp VIP of the season was only 6 km from the Cameron Bluff Wildfire (along Highway 4 leading to Port Alberni, Ucluelet and Tofino). Between the helicopters carrying water buckets, planes hauling retardant, and rescue planes flying into Tofino, we were forever looking skyward. Our Theme Speaker was Portia Rese from St. Andrew's Nanaimo. We were able to actively



participate with her as she

presented Meditative Art to us. Unfortunately, on the third day of camp, the wind changed direction and blew a lot of smoke towards us. The road blocks went up and Portia was not allowed past them to get to Little Qualicum Falls! For the first time ever, we were all happy to see the end of a Camp VIP!



French Beach – July 6 to July 10, 2023

Though the sun was shining brightly, we had cold winds that kept everyone warmly dressed. We were blessed to



have Chessa Dykstra from St. Andrew's Nanaimo, as our Theme Speaker. Chessa taught us about Meditative Psalm Readings – focusing on Psalm 23, 63, 8 and 46. Knox Presbyterian Church, Sooke, welcomed us to their Sunday Service and provided a delicious, hearty lunch to warm up us. Our camp craft was a 'Thank You' Poster, which we created and presented to Knox Church at the end of the Service. One of our favourite games is Camp VIP No Run Baseball. Our youngest player was 5 and our eldest player was our beloved Elizabeth Forester, former Minister at the Campbell River Presbyterian Church.



Rathrevor, Parksville – Family Camp – July 31 to August 7, 2023

We had a wonderful representation from many of our churches on Vancouver Island, as well as veteran Camp VIPers from Prince George. Our Theme Speaker was Jan McIntyre, from St. Andrew's Nanaimo, who spoke to us about the following 4 words, and what they mean to her and to us: God, Bible, Church and Christian. Many of us at Camp travelled to St. Andrew's Nanaimo on Saturday, August 5th, for the Celebration of Life for a beloved wife,



mother, sister, aunt and friend to so many – Wendy Groundwater – who absolutely loved Camp VIP, so it was fitting for her service to be during our Family Camp weekend. Numerous members of Wendy's family, including her husband John, attended Camp VIP in her honour. Some of you may recall we signed a card for her at Coffee Hour in April, and sent it up to Nanaimo. Her response to me at that time was: *"Thank you for all the great bugs this morning!! That was great!!!! I am sending bugs back your way!!"* Wendy passed away after a lengthy and brave fight with cancer on July 12, 2023.

Submitted by
Jean Marcellus

Another story...

When a person (minister, elder, speaker) delivers a message at a Sunday service that strikes a chord or has a special meaning, it is important to let the person know how it resonated with us.

Such was the case when Dirk delivered his message on Sunday, July 16th. The message I received was, "The Lord knows what we need, before we realize it."

One evening as I was leaving the care home, I came across a beautiful collie out for a walk with his owner. I asked the man walking the dog if I could pet the collie. The collie was very friendly and anxious for my tickle behind the ears and general chatter.

After a couple of minutes, it became apparent the dog-walker was Peter, a former neighbor from 40 years ago when we lived in Gordon Head. We chatted and agreed to meet in the pub later that week.

In the meantime, when I was out for a walk one morning, I noticed a beautiful collie coming out of Beacon Hill Park. I recognized the dog and asked the lady walking the dog if her name was Linda, and it soon became apparent the lady was the wife of my former neighbour, Peter.

Eventually I was able to meet up with Peter at the pub and we started to get caught up on what had been happening in our lives. During the conversation Peter mentioned his wife (Linda) was a licensed care worker, who had her own business and was looking for new clients.

This was the beginning of a more formal relationship, in that Linda is able to take Heli, who needs care, out for daytime adventures – Beacon Hill Park, lunch, shopping and other activities. As a

professional, Linda, is able to observe and comment and let me know if there are things I or the care home staff should be paying attention to. Something as simple as purchasing personal care items.

Our family has been blessed with the many surprises along the way in the last six months; whether it be a long afternoon walk which caused Heli's placement to be expedited, a vacancy in a care residence a short walk from where I live, or bumping into a beautiful collie whose family is able to help with the care of a loved one.

The moral of the story...?

As mentioned in the introduction and lesson of July 16th "...the Lord knows what we need before we know we need it..."

In appreciation & faith,
Jim Ferguson

TRUTH HEALING & RECONCILIATION WORKSHOP

07 SEPTEMBER

3:00 PM PACIFIC TIME



Presbyterian Church in Canada is inviting Presbyters, elders and church members to attend a Zoom workshop about trauma, intergenerational trauma and becoming Trauma informed in the context of Truth, Healing and Reconciliation.

REGISTER ONLINE AT WWW.PRESBYTERIAN.CA

Moses and the Burning Bush

"Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." Exodus 3:5 (NIV)


Complete the sentences by filling in the blanks with the correct words from the word bank at the bottom of the page.



1. _____ was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law.
2. Moses saw a _____ that was on fire, but it did not burn up.
3. God told Moses to take off his _____ because he was standing on holy ground.
4. God said, "I am the God of your _____, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."
4. Moses hid his _____ because he was afraid to look at God.
5. God was concerned about his people suffering in _____.
6. God wanted his people to go to a land flowing with _____ and _____.
7. God told Moses to tell _____ to let his people go out of Egypt.
8. God _____ Moses that he would be with him

MILK	FACE	HONEY	PROMISED	PHARAOH
BUSH	EGYPT	SANDALS	FATHER	MOSES

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church - September 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Confidential prayer requests can be sent to ryneveld@telus.net If you need us, the prayer chain is here, ready and willing to pray with you or for you.		August 30 Open Church 12 –1 Meditation 4:30-5:30	August 31	1	2
	Back to School		Reno Meeting 10-12 Lecture Room Open Church 12 –1 Meditation 4:30-5:30	Truth, Healing & Reconciliation Workshop 3pm (p. 11) Choir 7:15	8	9
3 Choir 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour	4 Labour Day	5	6	7	8	9
10 Choir 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour	11	12	13 Open Church 12 –1 Meditation 4:30-5:30	14	15	16
17	18	19	20 Open Church 12 –1 Meditation 4:30-5:30	21 Choir 7:15	22	23
Choir 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour	Session 7pm	24	27 Open Church 12 –1 Reconciliation Zoom Workshop 3-4pm (p.4) Meditation 4:30-5:30	28 Choir 7:15	29 Early Music Society Duo Corvi & Friends 7:30 - 9pm	30 Journey for Hope Together in Motion Fundraiser
24 Choir 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour Link Deadline	25	26	27	28	29	30

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