

This Week At St. Andrew's

Christmas Greetings from the Interim Moderator

'Tis the season that we learn that the most improbable circumstances in life can become the perfect time to bring to reality the great promises of God.

It is impossible to fathom a more unlikely person to bear the Messiah than Mary – a lowly unmarried teenage girl from a remote village in an obscure, occupied country at a time of global upheaval. The pivotal point in all the history of creation was played out in the desperate circumstance of a forced trip taken without luggage or any tangible assets at all, and with shame and fear volleying for control over all expectations.

Yet it was a God-journey taken that first Christmas. By faith Elizabeth and Mary danced, Joseph embarked, the shepherds came, the angels sang, and the Glory of the Lord was loosed over all the earth.

We are heirs of the salvation God's pursuing love secured that first Christmas. It was not the circumstances that mattered then, or now. It was faith in the promise of God.

Faith in God's promise is the basis of the asset mapping we will begin to formulate tonight. The accompanying angels, shepherds and magi on this faith journey are our brothers and sisters in Christ in the Victoria Presbyterian churches. Let it be our prayer that the Promise of God – accompanied by laughter and a pirouette or two - will inspire everything we do tonight and in the weeks and months immediately ahead.

May God's face shine upon us, directing each step we take together as a blended family of God in Victoria.

Wayne

Rev. Wayne Stretch, Interim Moderator

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

**Christmas
Eve Service
at 7:00 pm**

**Christmas
Day Service
at 10:30 am**



8th Annual?

A Balm In Gilead Band Christmas Concert

Songs and stories to celebrate the birth of Jesus

Wednesday, December 14, 7pm

**Knox Presbyterian Church
2964 Richmond Road**

A Balm In Gilead Band
 Steve Sturgess - guitar and vocal
 Corrine Painter - trumpet and vocal
 Ryan Tandy - bass
 Carolyn Hoekstra - piano
 Miles Fuller - drums
 Jonnie Bridgman - sax
 Elwyn Tomlinson - vocal
 Brian Titus - vocal
 Laura Kavanagh - angel



Proceeds to support Presbyterian World Service and Development Admission by donation

A Balm in Gilead Band takes the more than 800 songs in *The Presbyterian Book of Praise* (1997) and arranges them in contemporary styles. This approach retains the substance of the traditional hymns but gives them a modern flair.



HELP FEED HUNGRY FAMILIES IN VICTORIA

SHARE THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS

A DONATION OF \$170 PROVIDES A CHRISTMAS HAMPER FOR A FAMILY OF FOUR!



DONATE AT:
WWW.STANDREWSVICTORIA.CA

FOR MORE INFO CALL DEB VERWEY AT:
250-383-1009

THE VICTORIA SCOTTISH GAELIC CHOIR & ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRESENTS

THE RABBIE BURNS TEA

Celebrate Scotland's Bard with an afternoon of tea and entertainment!

ENTRANCE BY DONATION
 Limited Seating Available
 Please RSVP with the Church Office at
 778-587-1227

SUNDAY, JANUARY 22, 2023 AT 2:00PM
 ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 KIRK HALL | 680 COURTNEY STREET ENTRANCE

Soup for the Inclusive Christians

As you may know I serve as the Presbyterian Chaplain (Spiritual Care Provider) at the University of Victoria Multifaith Centre on behalf of the Presbytery of Vancouver Island. One of our key programs is Inclusive Christians – Around the Table. This is an ecumenical communion service hosted by Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian and United chaplains on Wednesdays at 5:00pm. The simple service focuses on reading and reflecting on the gospel, prayer, song, silence and sharing bread and wine. While this service is centered on students, all are welcome. After worship everyone is invited to enjoy a meal. We usually have 20-30 participants.

I need help providing these meals. If you, or a group from your congregation, would like to help prepare a meal in the coming term, please be in touch with me as soon as possible. The dates I am responsible for are February 1, March 1, March 22 and April 5. The meal is simple – vegetarian/vegan soup or chili, bread & butter, and salad, fruit or veggies. I can give you all the details to help you in participating. Thank you for considering supporting students and Inclusive Christians on campus in this way.

Laura Kavanagh
ltknox@telus.net

Share the Joy of Christmas

Donations continue to flow in to our Share the Joy of Christmas 2022 campaign. With the new donations received up to Monday, December 12th we can provide 21 Christmas hampers to needy persons in Victoria.

All money that is collected goes to fund food hampers, put together by the Mustard Seed Street Church. Mustard Seed runs a food bank and has contacts that enables them to stretch each dollar to its fullest to provide good nutritious items for financially struggling families in the Greater Victoria area. Each basket feeds 4 persons and costs \$170. Small Christmas gifts are also included with each hamper.

Next Sunday at coffee hour, all donations collected for your coffee or tea will go to Share the Joy.

If you are still looking for a gift for someone special on your list, consider buying a handcrafted wooden pen made by Reverend Mitch. Taking up to 15 hours, each pen is shaped from hardwood, turned on a lathe, sanded and polished and then fitted with purchased hardware, creating a beautiful one-of-a-kind piece. Mitch donated 6 items and 2 of them are still available. All money for the pieces goes to Share the Joy of Christmas.

You can make a donation to Share the Joy via your church envelopes or by using the Donate tab on St. Andrew's website at standrewsvictoria.ca. Please indicate that the donation is for *Share the Joy*.

For more information, contact Debra Verwey at 2250-383-1009.

What Are We Waiting For?

The Rev. Dr. Bob Faris, Moderator of the 2022 General Assembly, has teamed up with Anglican, Evangelical Lutheran and United Church leaders to prepare What Are We Waiting For?—an ecumenical Advent program.

Every Monday during Advent, the national church leaders will release an ecumenical Advent meditation that reflects on the Advent themes of hope, peace, joy and love, and addresses the challenges that Canadian churches face today. In addition, a live discussion with one of the participating church leaders will take place every Thursday during Advent via Zoom. All are invited to join.

For more information go to:

<https://presbyterian.ca/2022/11/08/ecumenical-advent/>



Bulletin Board

Open Church Christmas Week: Open Church is from 12 - 1 pm every day during December 18th - 25th. Meditation hour is still Wednesdays from 4:30 - 5:30 pm in the Sanctuary.

Jam for Sale: Get some of Anne Lambie's homemade preserves for stocking stuffers! All proceeds go to St. Andrew's. \$5 for one jar, \$20 for 5 jars. Variety of flavours available. Contact the office to place your order!

Coffee Hour: Coffee hour donations this week will go to **Share the Joy of Christmas 2022**. Please consider adding to the basket on the coffee table in the Kirk Hall to help others have a joyful Christmas Season.

Share the Joy of Christmas: Please help us bring joy and comfort this holiday season. Our goal for 2022 is 15 hampers...each one costs \$170, enough for a family of 4. Donate what you can afford through your church envelopes or follow the instructions under the Donate tab on St. Andrew's website, standrewsvictoria.ca.

The Gift of Christmas Music: December 15th, Douglas street doors open at 11:30am, concert from 12 - 1:15 pm. Join us for an afternoon listening to piano, trumpet, violin, flute, organ, and carol singing! Entrance by donation - everyone is welcome! For more information call 778-587-1227.

In the Salon of Mme Brillon Concert: The Early Music Society presents In the Salon of Mme Brillon at St. Andrew's Church on January 7th at 8:00 pm. For tickets go to earlymusicsocietyoftheislands.ca

The Rabbie Burns Tea: Join us for an afternoon celebrating the Great Bard with tea and Scottish entertainment. St. Andrew's Kirk Hall, January 22 2023, door at 2:00, entrance by donation. Limited seating - please RSVP with the church office!