

ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2022

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Thank You!

MARCH 27, 2022

A very special thank you to Carol Cornwell, Jane Macdonald, and Ken Oliphant for playing at our senior's services. Reverend Barbara and all of St. Andrew's are very thankful to each of you for being so willing to volunteer your time and musical talent!

St. Andrew's AGM

MARCH 27, 2022

Please mark your calendars! St. Andrew's AGM is scheduled for March 27, the time is yet to be determined, stay tuned!

Giving Up "Normal" For Lent 2022!



REFLECTION

Lent is the penitential season that runs from Ash Wednesday (this year, March 2) until Easter (this year, April 17. Mardi Gras, or Shrove Tuesday, is the celebration that traditionally happens to clear out the cupboards in preparation for the season of fasting! And the spiritual practice of fasting is what gives rise to the idea of “giving up” something for Lent.

This year, as we hopefully move into the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, we long for a return to “normal” – meaning, a return to gathering together, going for coffee and meals, travel maybe, being indoors without a mask... But as we speak about normal, we are also aware that what we have called “normal” is very problematic. It’s environmentally unsustainable, it’s full of conflict and racism and sexism and economic disparity. While many of us are relatively privileged, normal is also often stressful, over busy, and frankly unhappy.

We long for normal but we know we really can’t go back to normal. So this Lent, we’re going to try to give up “normal” for Lent. We’ll try to let go of some of the aspects of normal that are dragging us down, and to find (and practice) a new normal. We’ll try to do that in a number of ways, but in particular we’re inviting you to look at stories and practices.

We understand the world through stories. An exhausted emergency room nurse sees public health rules in the context of larger and deeper story, of which they are a part. A participant in the trucker protests sees those same public health rules in the context of a very different story. In worship, we’re going to try to look at our own deep stories and beliefs, to see how they undergird “normal.” We’ll look at how those stories are in conflict with Jesus, and we’ll try to find better, more faithful stories. Perhaps by changing our core stories, we’ll change normal.

We’ll also look at practices, on the understanding that how we practice determines who we become. We’ll invite you to try out one or more spiritual practices this Lent that might lead us towards a healthier, more faithful normal – and to support each other along the way! Check it out in our Party Practice Party email newsletter!

Dave
dave.st.andrewslacombe@gmail.com
[403-782-3148](tel:403-782-3148)

Board Chair Greeting

LAWRENCE

So far in 2022 the board met on January 11, January 24, and February 8. These meetings have been by Zoom. The next meeting will be in-person and held on March 8.

The board will decide at the March 8 meeting what next steps will be taken towards the continued opening of St. Andrew's.

The general feeling of most of our congregation still seems to be one of caution. At this time, we have 30 to 35 attending in-person, and social distancing still being followed. Many are following the worship services through YouTube or Facebook. I get the feeling that even when masks are no longer required, many who attend church will feel more comfortable wearing them. It will be up to all of us to respect the wishes of those who wish to wear masks or not, and to respect those who still would like to continue to social distance.

Live streaming continues to be popular. St. Andrew's is averaging over 150 views (some days over 200) for our Sunday morning worship services. People from across Canada and the U.S.A. tune into St. Andrew's. We are able to live-stream funerals and weddings and have several weddings scheduled that have requested to be live-streamed.

St. Andrew's is looking for individuals willing to learn a bit about the sound system and computer in the sanctuary. Training is available and you can work alongside junior and senior high school students who are easy to spend time with. If interested, let Jana in the office know.

The Annual General Meeting is scheduled to be held in-person on Sunday, March 27, 2022. Reports and financial information will be available at least one week before the meeting.

If you feel called to do some church service, such as taking part on one of the ad hoc teams that spring up, sit on one of the teams: Worship, Christian Development, Outreach, Congregational Life, Affirm, Finance, Ministry and Personnel, Property, or UCW or, wish to take a role as a voting member on the Board, please talk to someone on the Board, or let Jana in the office know. We will be voting new members in at the Annual General Meeting.

The Chair of the Board is elected on a yearly basis for a one-year term. I have enjoyed communicating with everyone the past 2 years in this position. If your inclination is such that you would like to take a turn, I would certainly encourage that!

As usual, if you have something you wish to talk to me about, feel free to pick up the phone or you can email me.

Lawrence Hrycan

Phone: [403-782-4076](tel:403-782-4076) Email: lhrycan@shaw.ca

In Remembrance



Joseph James Samuel Willis
July 17, 1934 - January 25, 2022

Joe was born in the Haynes district on July 17, 1934 and resided there until his family moved to Lacombe in 1944. In 1957 he moved with his young family to Drumheller where he started his career as a Power Lineman with Canadian Utilities, which then became Alberta Power and now ATCO. He worked in Drumheller, Hanna and Castor where he retired in 1991 after 34 years of service. Joe was a farmer at heart and after retirement he took great pleasure in helping two of his many farmer friends with their spring and fall work.

Joe's mannerisms were slow but his humor was quick. The only way to know you'd been "had" was by the twinkle in his eye and his quiet belly laugh. He grew his beard long each winter with the hopes that, along with his white hair and blue eyes, the kids would call him Santa, which made his day. His favorite pastime was visiting over a cup of coffee and telling a few stories to anyone who would listen. Friends and family meant everything to him. We will remember Joe as a quiet, unassuming man with endless patience and a comforting presence - a kind and gentle soul. Memorial service to be announced at a later date.



Verna Doreen Schmidt
November 2, 1931 - February 5, 2022

Verna was born in Saskatchewan and moved to Alberta as a teenager. Verna met the love of her life at the Haynes hall dance. Verna and Eddie were married on Nov. 18, 1950. Together they planted deep roots in our community and made many cherished friends. Together they raised a beautiful family of 6 on the farm in Mirror. She was a big part of making the farm run smoothly.

In 1973, they moved to an acreage in Lacombe. Everyone who visited Verna better be ready for a great meal. She was an amazing cook. She made sure everyone was fed whether it was in her home, the Deli House or the Auction Mart.

One cold fall day, they decided to jump into the RV and travelled to Yuma, Arizona. For 26 years this became their new winter home as they'd fell in love with the festivities and found many great friendships.

Verna's most cherished thing in life was her family. She went to her special book everyday to make sure one's special day was never missed. Verna had a great sense of humour and loved deeply as anyone who knew her felt.

In Remembrance



Cecil Lloyd Woods
January 2, 1948 - February 5, 2022

Cecil was born in Saskatoon, SK on Jan 2, 1948. He lived on his family's farm in Plato, SK and went to school in Eston, SK where he graduated. Cecil's family then moved to Calgary where he attended SAIT for 2 years and he received his business diploma. He then worked in management for Woolworths and Walmarts in Calgary, Penticton and other locations in BC. He later got a calling to try some farming with his brother Rick in Valleyview for a couple of years before settling into a construction career. He worked in gravel crushing until his retirement. He then turned to his passions of full-time golfing, gardening, and camping. He also never missed a Flames or Blue Jays game. Cecil married his wife, Sandra in 1997, and they had 2 boys, Justin and Curtis.

He was a very devoted father, husband, and friend. He will be greatly missed by his family and all his friends.

Tax Receipts



Tax receipts are being emailed out, if you require a tax receipt to be mailed, please contact Shannon at:

shannonepp@shaw.ca or contact the office at [403-782-3148](tel:403-782-3148).

Announcements

Announcements you would like advertised in St. Andrew's March newsletter; milestone birthdays, anniversaries, or special events, please contact the office by email or phone:

office@lacombeunitedchurch.ca
[403-782-3148](tel:403-782-3148)



Central Alberta Foodgrains Growing Project

Seeding is not that far away and we are still looking for land for this year.

The need for emergency food aid in the world is huge, and since 1983 the Canadian Foodgrains Bank has been there to help feed some of that need.

Our local growing project has been well supported by St. Andrew's and we thank the community of faith for that generosity.

We are looking for a parcel of land (does not need to be a quarter section), so we can continue to help less fortunate people in the world.

We will pay cash rent and grow whatever crop is necessary to fulfill crop rotation needs.

Please reach out to Vic Bergen at [403-782-2545](tel:403-782-2545) or Doug Maas at [403-782-1860](tel:403-782-1860) as we need your support.

Lacombe & District Volunteer Link AGM

Our Annual General Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 16 at Bethel Christian Reformed Church at 7:00 PM.

Our guest speaker is Judy Pyra of Lacombe FCSS.

Bring a mask and the hall is large, so we can spread out as necessary.

If you have any questions, please contact Doug Maas via email: dgmaas52@gmail.com



Everyone Gets A Slice!

Learn from our panelists how you can apply the values of PIE in your community!

Friday, March 4

6:30 pm MT

8:30pm ET

**Zoom registration
required**



Everyone Gets A Slice!

This year's National Affirming/PIE Day theme is "Everyone Gets A Slice!"

Looking at the LGBTQIA2S+ acronym, which represents an endless diversity of identities and expressions, we acknowledge that some of the people who are represented by these letters often tend to get left out or underserved.

Our four guest panelists share their stories and expertise to invite us to consider which folks we may not have included and how to take strides to remedy that.

Come meet these amazing leaders and be inspired to apply the principles of being PIE: Public, Intentional, and Explicit, in your journey to being a more Affirming person and community. Register [HERE](#)

ChinookWinds@United-Church.ca

<https://chinookwindsregion.ca/>

Indigenous Lenten Series

Tuesdays: March 8, 15, 22, 29, April 5, 12. 7 pm MT/ 6 pm PT

More details and registration [HERE](#)

This Lenten season is a time for reflection upon the wisdom of our Elders and Ancestors. In Christ's example, he entered into the desert for 40 days of fasting and discernment, contending with his purpose and calling, as well as his mission. It is a reminder that our inner work is important as we orient ourselves to be a force for good in the many challenges we face in the world. Join us for the 2022 Indigenous Lenten Series as we discern our calling and mission during these difficult times.





Worship for Lent 2022!

ASH WEDNESDAY MARCH 2, 7:30 PM

Scripture: John 12:20-28. “Gardeners don’t fear death” – reflection on the changeability of everything, and the cycle of death and resurrection into which Jesus invites us.

As we think about “giving up normal for Lent,” we recognize the potential pain in leaving what may have been comfortable or beneficial to us individually. However, we also recognize the “glorification” in this process – that this is an invitation into abundance of life.

LENT 1 MARCH 6, 10:30 AM

Acts 11: 1-18 and Acts 10: 28. There is in “normal” an assumption of a hierarchy of cultures and religions. We tend to assume that white Western European consumer industrial culture is the pinnacle of “civilization” and that Christianity is the pinnacle of religion.

But in this story the Jew, Peter, actually breaks Jewish law to go to Cornelius’ house, and break bread with the Gentiles there. And he finds that God is already present there, in a different culture/religion. “Giving up normal” might involve giving up our sense of cultural and religious superiority, and looking upon others with curiosity and respect.

Pie Day Worship

Public, Intentional, Explicit
Led by Affirm

LENT 2 MARCH 13, 10:30 AM

We’ll be giving up normal, as we do a somewhat different worship service this week to be public, intentional, and explicit about our Affirming status as a church!

Plans are still being made, but we also hope to share ACTUAL PIE to celebrate this day. Our decision to become an affirming church is one that took us away from normal in more than one way – but which has proven crucial to our faithfulness to the gospel.

LENT 3 MARCH 20, 10:30 AM

Mark 10: 35-45. A HUGE part of “normal” is what we sometimes call the American Dream – the idea of upward mobility. It is expected that through our lives, we will become more and more prosperous, acquire more and more stuff, rise in our careers to have more and more responsibility and an ever-higher salary.

The pervasive advertising that is part of our consumer society encourages us to be always dissatisfied with who we are, where we are, what we have – and to upgrade. But this is driving us to environmental disaster, leaving us unhappy, and forcing us into competition with one another for ever-fewer “high places” in the human hierarchy.

Jesus refused human hierarchies over and over, and constantly challenged the idea of “more” as “better.” Far from upward mobility, he encouraged downward. Giving up normal might mean giving up our desire for more privilege, and exchanging it for a desire for deeper service. That just might make us a whole lot happier and healthier!



Worship for Lent 2022!

LENT 4

MARCH 27, 10:30 AM

Genesis 2:4-9 and 15-25. In our technological and colonial society, we have an interesting view of nature, land, and the Creation around us. To white society, what matters is humanity (and historically, not even all of humanity). All else are simply “resources” for us to use as we see fit. Alas, in our own Scripture is the command to “fill the earth and subdue it,” which we seem to have done with a vengeance.

The result is an economic system that regards the undeveloped earth as of no value, and sees the earth as an unlimited source of resources, and an unlimited repository for waste.

But Scripture (and, particularly, indigenous spiritualities) also see us as creatures of the earth, one part of a creation God loves and regards as good, and our original task on earth was to be gardeners of Creation.

Giving up normal might involve giving up seeing ourselves as separate from the earth, and learning to see all of Creation as sacred, beloved, and of value in itself.

Worship for Lent 2022!

LENT 5

APRIL 3, 10:30 AM

Matthew 6: 9-15. Way back when Constantine legalized Christianity, he also institutionalized it. He made Christianity what it never was – an imperial religion. In Jesus’ day, the Empire saw him as an enemy – he challenged the Empire’s systems and actions, their justice and compassion. To silence this criticism, the Empire encouraged Christianity to be concerned not with this world but the next world.

The popular idea of “the separation of Church and State” (which is usually quite misunderstood) is that the church shouldn’t be involved in politics – it should stick to getting people into heaven, to religion.

But Jesus’ prayer is that God’s will be done on earth. His preaching centered around what he called the Kingdom of God, that not-completely-realizable but still near-at-hand vision of society as God would have it be. The language is political: the kingdom of God, and Jesus as Lord are set directly against the normal language of the kingdom and lordship of Caesar.

Jesus’ teaching (and that of the prophets and priests) is very much this-worldly, and includes concern for politics – how society is structured and ordered.

Giving up normal might well involve giving up our sense that the purpose of religion is to prop up the status quo, and taking up the idea that we are a counter-culture, a people who live and proclaim a different, more compassionate social order.



Worship for Lent 2022!

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY **APRIL 10, 10:30 AM**

Scripture: Luke 19:29-40 Jesus tells the Pharisees that if his own followers were silent, the very stones would shout aloud. Is that still true today? Can we hear the very stones, the Creation itself, groaning and crying out for us to build a new normal?

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Possible evening service, stay tuned!

GOOD FRIDAY

Possible evening service, stay tuned!

EASTER SUNDAY **APRIL 17, 10:30 AM**

Luke 24: 1-12. We've been looking all Lent long at giving up normal. This Sunday we look to see if we can discern a new normal rising up among us. Has all the struggle and "giving up" of these past two years opened up a gap for new life? Do we have a sense of resurrection among us?