

Summer July 2022 ST. ANDREW'S



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Help
Wanted!

St. Andrew's will once again be hosting a Vacation Bible School program this summer. The theme is: **Learning from Bible Stories**. The program will run Aug. 15-18, 9AM-12PM.

The planning team is looking for adult and youth volunteers to assist with this program. In previous programs we have had many adult and youth volunteers. Everyone had a lot of fun!

Volunteers work with the children doing crafts, going for walks, singing, playing games, preparing and serving snacks, and helping with set up and clean up each day. You can also be part of the team by offering ideas or taking stuff home to cut out for crafts.

If you are interested and can help out for one morning or more, please contact Jana in the church office!

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REFLECTION

Well, happy summer, everyone! I am becoming more aware of how precious each summer is, and how much I appreciate the birds, and the green, and the ability to be outside without bundling up... It's been wetter this spring and early summer, and I'm hoping that's been a blessing, but as I write this the sun is out and it's warm and I'm hoping that's a blessing too.

I appreciate and echo Barbara's call, elsewhere in this newsletter, to appreciate this time and the creation of which we are a part. I appreciate the call to both gratitude and community – and I hope that this summer is full of both of those for you!

One of the things I've been working on for myself is something called a "rule of life." This idea comes from the monastic tradition within Christianity. A "rule of life" is a little misleading, because it's not really rules – rather it is a structure, a support, a little like a trellis upon which a tomato plant grows. A rule of life is a plan, a structure, a set of practices that helps support our soul life. It hopefully encourages and enables us to live the life we hope to live, rather than the life that comes by default in this rushed, consumer society. The rule of life I'm working on for myself this summer will include some sabbath time, some prayer and study time, some exercise and some rest, some intentional time in nature. I'll include some intentional time to be with friends, and to offer hospitality, and some intentional limits on the time I spend on social media! I'll also be looking for some practices of service and generosity.

I'm doing this because I sense, sometimes, my own tendency to "drift," and to lose my sense of grounding. I have a tendency to become a "human doing" instead of a human being, and I start to feel detached from God and my best self. I'm also feeling a desire to be whole, and alive, and connected –but I realize that the main stream of this consumer society doesn't lead me there!

So as I try to enjoy the summer, I hope also to gently structure my life so that I have a better chance of becoming the kind of person I hope to be, and that I believe God is calling me to be.

If this resonates with you, come talk to me sometime, after church or at "office hours!"

Grace and peace,
Dave



REFLECTION CONTINUED...

Does this call to you?

Over the past year, I have had a few conversations with a couple of women who are in a difficult place. They are here in Canada as refugees, I believe, and are currently permanent residents. They are developing their English language skills, training for jobs, getting settled.

And they are worried sick about their families – parents, siblings – who are still in Syria, or in refugee camps in places like Egypt. The family of one of these women have been in refugee camps, struggling, for 30 years. Right now, the people of the Ukraine are in the news (and deserve to be) – and as a result, there is considerable support for them. We're a part of that support, through the wider community networks. But these women, and their families and people, are no longer in the news. They are Muslim, have brown skins, and feel little or no support.

These women have asked me for help. They've done the rounds, of churches and organizations, and have been turned away (I don't know the reasons for that). They want help sponsoring their relatives to come to Canada, to a place of safety and health. Sponsoring refugees is certainly something the United Church does – and perhaps St. Andrew's has experience with that! I know we are connected to the Lacombe Community Refugee Effort. Sponsoring refugees is a big job; it takes years of effort, a significant amount of money, time and patience. I don't know if we can help these particular women or not, even if we decide we'd like to.

What I am wondering is if there is a person, or a small group, who feel called to explore this possibility. What would be involved at the beginning is some research, getting to know these women, and asking a lot of questions. Both the board and the outreach committee have given me the go-ahead to ask for interest. I think we all recognize that there are several important questions that need to be answered before we come to the point of deciding if this is, in fact, something we want to do! But I don't want to go anywhere on this without a group of people who have energy and interest.

So over to you: does this call to you? If it does, or if you'd just like to find out more, please contact me (Dave) at the church office or at dave.st.andrewslacombe@gmail.com.



"O LORD, HOW MANIFOLD ARE YOUR WORKS! IN WISDOM YOU HAVE MADE THEM ALL; THE EARTH IS FULL OF YOUR CREATURES." PSALM 104:24

Not only this one verse, but the whole of Psalm 104 praises God's creation. In the middle of summer, praising God's creation, the beauty of our natural world comes easy to us.

The wide sky we see right through our windows, the rich earth we feel underneath our feet and as gardeners under our fingernails and the green trees all around us witness to the marvellous work of God's hands. Summer days with their wondrous beauty delight our heart, mind, and body.

Might be a moment of silent awe a faithful response to the splendour of creation?

I think most of us agree beauty lightens the heart and strengthens the soul. Beauty is not just an extra to real living, to the seriousness of our days, but in the words of John O'Donohue beauty is a true source of compassion, serenity, and hope.

I invite you to go on a "beauty hunt" today AND THEN SHARE with someone else your particular discovery.

Thank you, powerful, yet gentle God. "All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small, all things wise and wonderful, in love, you made them all." (Voices United 291, adapted). And we are blessed!

I wrote this before Madeline Hendrickson's death who was a beloved member of St. Andrew's. Now I wonder about this ode to summer, for even in the midst of beauty our hearts can hurt.

I turn to John O'Donohue's words again, realizing that beauty as a true source of compassion, serenity, and hope is also balm for our aching hearts.

May our Creator who holds Madeline in love bless us with peace.
Barbara



HAPPY JULY ST. ANDREW'S!

I thought I'd share with you some news from the board.

We have been meeting regularly and in person which is very welcome after many months of restrictions. Our next meeting will be August 30 at 7:00 pm in the parlor and, as always, anyone from our community of faith is welcome to join us. We are currently learning about new leadership strategies as we explore a program titled "Moving from Decision Making to Discernment."

As part of our connection to the community of Lacombe, we have again offered our church building as an alternative site for "Music in the Park" for those Wednesdays when the weather is not cooperating. Also, we had donated our facility for a "Unite for Ukraine" fundraiser which took place earlier this spring. Rev. Dave Holmes will be delivering the message at the Community Worship Service. We will be closed that Sunday as a way to encourage participation in the Lacombe Days worship service.

In other exciting news, the board has approved an increase in employment hours for Rev. Barbara Lieurance. We are excited to see more of her starting in July.

If you are eager and enthusiastic to be a part of St. Andrews and are looking for ways to share your passion, we are currently looking for new members for our Worship committee. Shelley-May and Pat will be stepping down from their post soon and this is your opportunity to get involved. Contact the office if you are interested.

Have a great summer everyone!
Monique Vermegen, Chairperson



CIRCLES OF CARE

Jim Helm, a longtime and active member of our church has been transferred from Red Deer to a facility in Lethbridge to be closer to his son and family. We held a small gathering to wish him well in his new home.

Sincere and grateful thanks to all who cared and visited Jim in his Lacombe home and also in Red Deer in the past couple of years. It is a pleasure to work with such willing and caring volunteers.

Blessing to all of you!

On behalf of Circles of Care
Doris T.



IN REMEMBRANCE:

We mourn the passing of Madeline Hendrickson. We will be celebrating her life at our regular Sunday morning service here at St. Andrew's on July 24th.

CAMP DRAGONFLY:

Edmonton's Trans+ and Gender Creative Camp for Kids is back! Camp Dragonfly is a partnership with Southminster-Steinhauer United Church. This secular day camp is for trans, non-binary, Two-Spirit, and gender creative campers age 6-13, and their siblings and friends. August 12 - 14th, all outdoors. Volunteers needed for a variety of roles.

Register on our website:
camp-dragonfly.com

VOLUNTEERS:

USHERS

Please sign up to be greeters/ushers on the back table of the sanctuary!

COFFEE

Volunteers are needed to serve coffee after Sunday services. Please fill in the sign-up sheet which is posted on the wall in the kitchen/hall.

*Help
Wanted!*