

October 2022

lacombeunitedchurch.ca



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ST. ANDREW'S NEWSLETTER

Greeters

The Worship Team is looking for ushers! There is a signup sheet at the back of the sanctuary, or you can contact the office if you are willing to help out...office@lacombeunitedchurch.ca. Thank you to those of you already serving in this area!

Celebrations & Concerns

If you have a celebration to announce or a concern you might like prayer for, please consider writing it in the Book of Celebrations & Concerns. The book is located on the pedestal just up the stairs from the main sanctuary entrance.



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ST. ANDREW'S NEWSLETTER

Reverend Dave

A deep but private spirituality

I thought I'd do a bit of musing with you, and I'd be very interested in your thoughts on this matter, if you are willing to share them with me! I'm just thinking out loud, here, as it were. Feel free to push back, challenge, or whatever!

In a recent sermon, the question arose: "are we who we say we are?" I was thinking about our integrity as a Christian congregation and wondering if we pass the hypocrite test. Now, on the one hand, of course we don't. The bar Jesus and the gospel set for us is so high that it's pretty much impossible for us to feel like we've arrived, that we're good enough, that we're living the dream. The best we can do is to be on the way somewhere, which is I think where I ended up in the sermon. I know that St. Andrew's is absolutely on the way! In fact, I believe this is a very strong church. But something's been niggling at me.

I remember a conversation with a friend, some years ago. Her kids had become very attached to a particular church's children's program, and she had subsequently joined the church. It was not a mainstream church, and while she had been willing to visit, she was surprised at her decision to make that her church home. I asked her why her kids had become attached to the church's children's program. She thought for a while, and said, "I think it's because they found God there."

I remember being stunned by the answer. It wasn't what I was expecting! But then I found myself wondering, "well, why else would we do Sunday School, or any other children's program? If we're not introducing kids to God, what are we doing?" As I remember this conversation from years ago, I am thinking of all our ministry and worship here at St. Andrew's. Do you think people would say that of their experience in this church? Would you say that of your experience in this congregation? Do we find God here?

(Continued page 3...)

"Integrity is
doing the
right thing.

Even when no
one is
watching."

-C.S. Lewis

ST. ANDREW'S NEWSLETTER

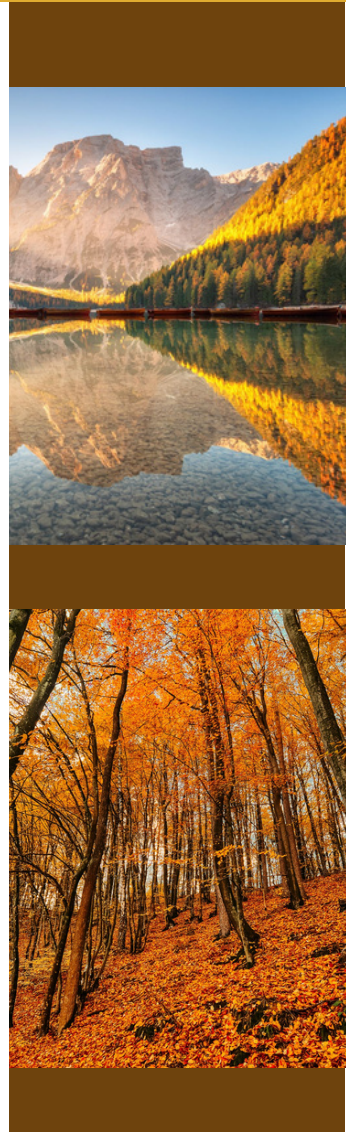
Now I do know that is a pretty complex question, and I don't want to be too depressed here on the one hand, or judgmental, and holier-than-thou on the other. After the conversations I've had in this church, I know that the people of St. Andrew's are people of deep and rich spirituality (even the ones who say they're not spiritual). There's a good deal of God in and among us in this community; I find myself habitually looking up to you all.

No, the problem is not that we are unspiritual people. Not at all. But that niggling continues. Here we are, richly spiritual and faithful people, organized to be a church, and yet the idea that someone would find God in our midst feels somehow foreign.

I wonder if this is it: that though we may have rich spiritual lives, we keep them private, even in church. We may share them with one or two close friends – and I am sometimes privileged, as a minister, to hear your stories – but they are not generally a part of our common life as a church. Our spirituality is not routinely shared as part of our worship, our business, our meetings, our life together.

I realize that this is true of me, as well! In visits, I try to respond if the conversation steers into our experience of God, and I might even try to direct a conversation in that direction by asking “how is it with your soul?” But it's not natural for me to pray with others, to spontaneously share my experience of God. It's only when I'm preaching and leading worship that I try hard to articulate the deeper faith and spiritual experience within me – and that has become as a result a vitally important part of my spiritual practice.

So, what do you think? I know that we're spiritual people. But somehow, in our common life as a church, we seem reluctant to share that part of ourselves, reluctant to put it into words (difficult as that can be), reluctant to tell the stories of our experiences of the Divine. And I'm afraid that means that we're kind of on our own, to struggle through the life of faith in private, when we could have each other's support and help. And I'm pretty sure we're good help.



ST. ANDREW'S NEWSLETTER

I had a brief conversation with a member of our Healing Pathways group, following a session on a Monday evening (wow, what a wonderful experience THAT was!). It was a natural-feeling, relaxed conversation, about what the healing group does, and how it feels on their side. The person I was talking with seemed comfortable talking about God, and about the very spiritual process I had just experienced. And it felt good for my soul, encouraging. What if we did more of that? Would God start to feel nearer to hand? Or am I barking up the wrong tree?

Dare to celebrate: you and St. Andrew's

October has been an invitation – a “dare” – to lean in to the mission and ministry of St. Andrew's as we step out into the second hundred years of this church's life. I encourage all of us to think about our mission:

**St. Andrew's United Church
Strives to be a caring community
Which nurtures love of God and neighbour
Through worship, teaching, fellowship, and service.**

If you've been a part of this church for a while, think about what it's meant to you, and how your involvement in this church has changed and shaped you. Think about your hopes, for the world, your life, and this church, and what it might take to realize those hopes. And consider what involvement might make your soul sing...

As with any institution, some of our work in the church is kind of like housework. Very few of us love it, but if we all pitch in, many hands make light work. If we all pitch in, the various tasks that maintain a healthy church won't feel onerous, and they might even provide a way to grow our leadership skills and make a few new friends! Please keep an eye out for some of the ways you can pitch in most easily and congenially...

But also keep an eye out (and an eye to your inner soul) for those bigger things, those involvements that are deep joy to you and touch the world's need deeply as well. We don't simply want to be a religious institution here – we want to be a people who are doing what matters, who are participating in God's work to love and to mend the world. And that sometimes means rest, too, and learning, or reflecting and praying...

What might heal you, right now? What might make your soul sing? What might start, or continue, your sense of belonging in this community?

**"DARE TO
CELEBRATE:
YOU AND ST.
ANDREW'S"**



ST. ANDREW'S NEWSLETTER

Reverend Barbara

In this month of Thanksgiving, this month of giving thanks, graces for mealtimes have front row seats. You may have your own favorite way to begin your meal, not necessarily with a spoken prayer but with a moment of silence.

I have always loved mealtime graces; the sheer variety makes my heart sing. And did you notice how often they rhyme? So, here a few of my favorites.

I would love for you to share yours with us all.

Thank you for the food we eat.

Thank you for the friends we meet.

Thank you for the birds that sing.

Thank you, God, for everything.

Traditional

**God bless to us our bread, and give bread to all those who are hungry,
and hunger for justice to those who are fed. God bless to us our bread.**

Frederico Pagura

Loving God, for this dinner, which is a winner, we give you thanks.

Susan Lukey

Us and this, bless.

Quaker Grace

Just to be is a blessing. Just to live is holy.

Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel

A, B, C, D, E, F, G. Thank you God for feeding me.

Christina Burnison

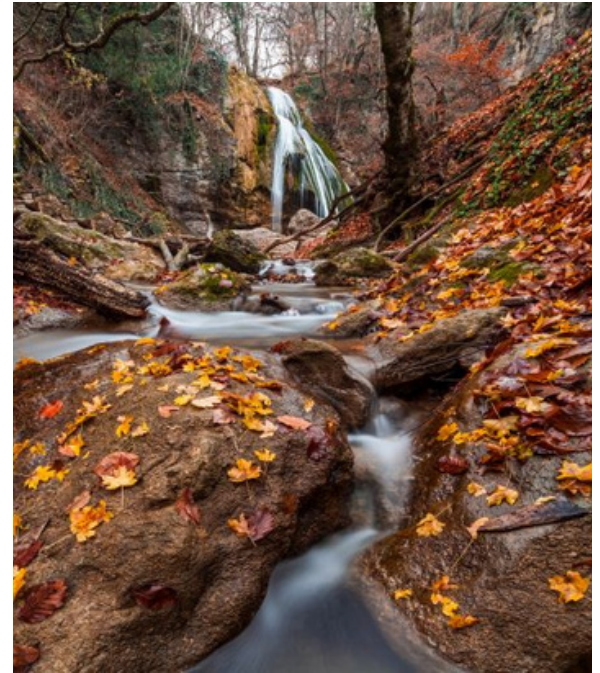
For every cup and plate full, God make us truly grateful.

Anonymous

**We receive this food in gratitude to all beings who have helped to bring it to our table,
and vow to respond in turn to those in need with wisdom and compassion.**

Buddhist Meal Gatha

With gratitude for all our many blessings,
Barbara



ST. ANDREW'S NEWSLETTER

Central Alberta Foodgrains Project

So far, we have raised \$86,000 this year.

Our 58 acre canola crop was harvested on October 1 as nine combines arrived and the harvest was done in less than two hours. Vision Truck Lines hauled the canola to P&H at Joffre and we received \$56,000 for the crop.

Another farmer hauled his own load of canola to a local elevator and it sold for \$26,000 and he dedicated it to our project.

On the day of the harvest, \$4,000 was provided in cash donations.

Year 27 for us is coming to an end and we are looking for land for 2023. We are one of the oldest growing projects in Canada. What great support we have received over the years!

828 million people on our planet go hungry every day. The Canadian Foodgrains Bank since 1983 has been helping people internationally with emergency food aid and also coming up with ideas for long term solutions to chronic hunger, such as conservation agriculture in Ethiopia.

We are still accepting cash donations that will garner a charitable tax receipt. We would like to grow that \$86,000 to \$100,000 by year end. Contact Doug Maas at [403-318-5733](tel:403-318-5733) to tell us how you can make a difference in the lives of hungry people. For those that have already helped us, a huge Thank You.

Submitted by: Doug Maas



ST. ANDREW'S NEWSLETTER

Volunteer Link

Volunteer Link is in need of more drivers to sustain its service.

Last month, we had 109 hours of volunteering, mostly driving seniors to medical appointments.

Eight local churches including St. Andrew's comprise Volunteer Link. Doug Maas is your representative to the Volunteer Link Board.

Most of our driving is local. We do some trips to Edmonton and Calgary, but if you do not want to do these longer trips, that is okay.

Please contact Doug to volunteer or if you want more information on what we do.

Thank you,
Doug [403-318-5733](tel:403-318-5733)



2022 30-Sep	Current Month	Year To Date	Pro Rata Budget
Contributions & Other	\$17,982	\$162,119.15	\$220,000.00
Expenses	\$19,708	\$201,201.59	\$266,474.00
Net Income (Loss)	(\$-1,726)	(\$-28,226.00)	(\$-46,474.00)

St. Andrew's Calendar Of Events:

www.lacombeunitedchurch.ca/events

Announcements and Updates:

www.lacombeunitedchurch.ca/announcements

Order of Service:

www.lacombeunitedchurch.ca/bulletin

Coming Up...

Choir:
Wednesdays 7 PM
For more info. and
to receive
notifications
please contact the
office.

Messy Church:
"Peace"
November 2, 5 PM

Tea & Fruitcake
Bazaar:
November 20

ST. ANDREW'S NEWSLETTER

Blind Hockey – Team Canada

Dustin Butterfield is a member of the Central Alberta Bullseyes, who are part of Canadian Blind Hockey.

Dustin was chosen to play for Team Canada and headed to Fort Wayne, Indiana where they looked to defend their title against Team USA. This team was made up of players from Alberta, B.C., New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Quebec.

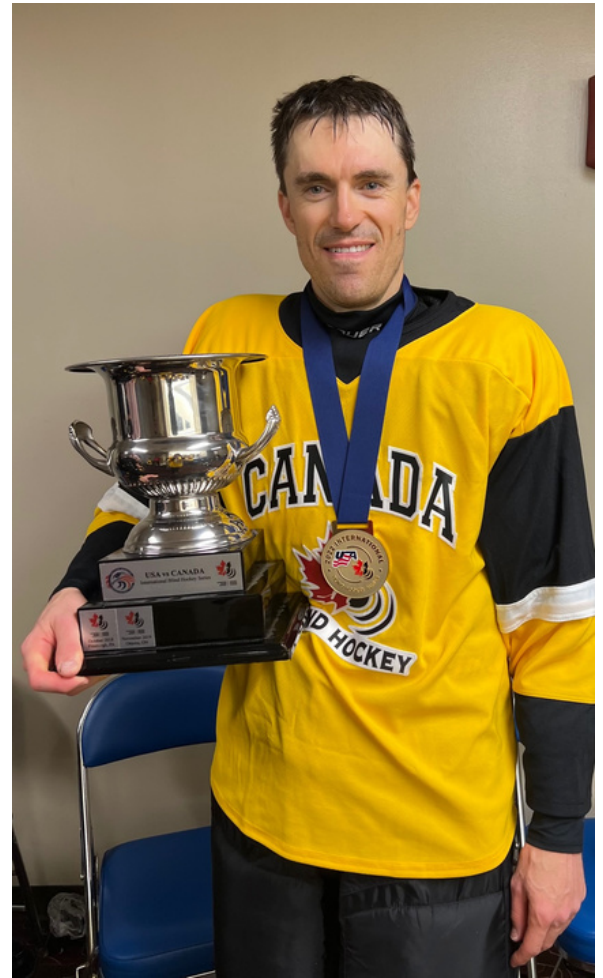
This was a 3-game series; the games were on October 21, 22, and 23. Many of the game periods were a close contest, but they managed to win all 3 games with scores of 7-1, 5-1, and 7-1.

Dustin said that the team had great coaching, a solid strategy, and good team chemistry that helped them reach their goal of winning all 3 games.

The games were very competitive, intense, and passionate. There was a lot of excitement and emotion.

Dustin says that he is very grateful for the opportunity to represent Canada. He thanks the USA Blind Hockey for hosting a great event, his mom for travelling with him to Indiana, his wife Margo and their kids for all their support, the Team Canada coaches for their commitment, and his teammates for their courage, passion, and positivity.

Congratulations, Dustin!



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