



TREE PLANTING: WOODLAND SANCTUARY!

We have a Woodland Sanctuary! It is planted with 100 trees and shrubs and 720 flowers and grasses! Wow! What a huge project! And what a fitting way to mark the 100th anniversary of the United Church of Canada! We did it! You did it!



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REVEREND DAVE

With the arrival of summer, I feel a deep desire to sit in the sun and put my feet up! Do you?

No wonder, maybe -- we have been busy over the past few months. Our annual meeting was late and LONG, this year, but we adopted some new identity statements (mission, vision, values) and a new governance structure. This is significant stuff, and both of these were the end result of a lot of good hard work by the board and a couple of small groups. We hosted the AGM for Chinook Winds Region. We have been celebrating the 100th anniversary of the United Church of Canada, notably by planting not just 100 trees, but creating a whole Woodland Sanctuary in partnership with the City and many groups and people in the wider community. We have begun a discernment/search process to respond to Barbara's retirement, coming at the end of this summer. All this on top of an already active program of worship and ministry.

I am so happy that I get to keep saying this, over and over and over again here in this church: there has been some really spectacular work done this past year. The Green Team keeps leading us (and people from the wider community) in some very significant work (building renovations, Woodland Sanctuary) in ways that are providing a model for how good work ought to be done.



We've built the congregation's morale, strengthened community partnerships, and accomplished good and important things. The Board and the team working on governance policy and mission/vision statements have done very difficult work very well. And all along the way, we've done "normal things" -- cared for each other, eaten together, managed difficult conversations, discerned our ministry in the midst of change, sung our faith, served our neighbours... St. Andrew's is such a strong congregation, with so many fine and faithful leaders, and you keep demonstrating that in fresh ways. I am even grateful when people say "no" to various involvements -- respecting health and limits and rest is a very important part of life and ministry and I'm glad you are aware of that. Thanks for being who you are!

There's an active fall already in the planning stage, as we continue to get used to our new governance system, and likely embark on some new projects! And it will be different, too, since we're also saying goodbye this summer to some very, very significant and beloved people and since Barbara will no longer be on staff as minister. But until then... it's summer. Church doesn't stop, but I hope we can be a bit more restful, and enjoy this season. I hope your summer is both joyful and restorative, and I hope the green and growing world around us draws you into a sense of connection, with Creation and with God who has created, and is creating. Blessed season, wonderful church!

Dave

11 members of St. Andrew's United Church attended a 6 hour retreat on Saturday, June 28, 2025.

The retreat was led by Karen Medland from Chinook Winds Regional. The retreat is a starting point for the key issues brought forth and presented to the congregation at the April 2025 AGM.

Picture: Karen Medland, Chinook Winds Regional;
Bryand Burnard, Chair of St. Andrew's Board.





WOODLAND SANCTUARY

175 volunteers came out on June 6 and 7 for trees and shrubs, and on June 20 and 21 for grasses and flowers. What excitement! What hard work!

On June 6 at noon there was a Groundbreaking Ceremony and the ceremonial planting of the Elder Tree in the large gathering circle. The mayor, Grant Creasey attended and spoke of the cooperation between the City and St. Andrew's. He held one of the golden shovels. Our minister, Dave Holmes, the past chair of the Green Team, Doris Thesenvitz, City Parks representative, Rod Guilbault, Cynthia Pohl of Living Lands Landscape and Design, Joan Fredeen to represent the past 100 years and Kaiden Bruning to represent the future: all held a golden shovel for the media photo and to dig the hole for the Elder Tree.





WOODLAND SANCTUARY CONTINUED...

Friends, neighbours, parents and children, Moms and sons, seniors, church family, community members, supporters from Sylvan Lake and Blackfalds: all came with their garden gloves and shovels. What a wonderful atmosphere! Many uplifting stories came out of those four days.

At 4 pm on June 21 a Dedication Ceremony was held with a lovely tribute to the indigenous people who lived in harmony with this land, and a reminder that our goal here was to create a biodiverse ecosystem with native trees and plants. Barbara Lieurance, Cecile Fausak and Dianna MacLeod spoke, and Brooklyn Figursky played beautiful violin music to add to the sacred mood. A fitting closing ceremony.

Still to come: signage, habitat structures, benches....





MESSY CHURCH BBQ

Thank you to all who helped out with Messy Church this year. We had a great year end BBQ - missed the rain too!

FAREWELL TO MONIQUE

There are always comings and goings in the life of any church, and we want to recognize someone who is going. It's good news, I think - Monique is moving to Calgary to be with her beloved! Which is wonderful, but sad for us.

We celebrated with cake at coffee time, thanks to the UCW 1, but I really wanted to say a few words of thanks to you, Monique. You have filled many roles here at St. Andrew's - from youth group leader to chair of the board to serving on, I think, nearly every single one of our committees. You have taken leadership at some difficult times and in difficult places. You've pushed us and pulled us to grow deeper and wider. More than that, you have been at the heart of the sense of community here - as one of our party planners, the one most likely to seek out new folks at coffee time, and as one of those who is constantly connecting.

Monique, you will be here at St. Andrew's long after you have gone, in the best way possible. Thank you for making this church what it is, and for making it fun and human and real. We will miss you profoundly; and we bless you and Michael going forward. May you be blessed as you have blessed us - and that is a lot!

Dave





OUTREACH UPDATE

FRIENDS OF GUATEMALA:

FRoG is planning another 2025 fundraiser concert, tentatively set for November 29. Performer lineup and ticket cost will be advised in the fall. Next FRoG meeting is scheduled for September 11 at 7 pm at the church, all are welcome.

CENTRAL ALBERTA FOODGRAINS GROWING PROJECT:

Our 72 acres of canola was seeded May 29. Seeding was delayed due to wet field conditions after the heavy rain in mid May. Field is located along Highway 20 on the way to Rimbey from Bentley. Look for the Foodgrains sign on the east side of Highway 20, approximately one mile south of the Centreview Road.

VOLUNTEER LINK:

Up to May 31, for 2025 there have been 462 hours of volunteering by the organization. Mostly driving seniors to medical/dental appointments. More volunteers are always welcome to assist with driving. Talk to Bob Settle or Doug Maas for more information.

MEALS ON WHEELS:

July is the month for St. Andrew's. Thank you to all the volunteers that have signed up to deliver meals for the month.

LIVING INTO RIGHT RELATIONS:

LIRR is now planning fall activities. Firstly, a date tentatively set for September 15 in the evening at the church to view a piece on the Doctrine of Discovery. Will assist in understanding why we do a Land Acknowledgment. What difference does it make? Discussion to follow. Secondly, a fundraising concert at the church set for November 8 featuring Indigenous folk singer, Phyllis Sinclair. More details to follow on this concert.

MISSION & SERVICE FUND:

Looking for an individual in our Community of Faith to take this on and promote it. If you are interested please speak to Doug Maas. Doug will assist in the promotion as well. Submitted by Doug Maas - Outreach Chair (403-318-5733)



FUNERAL PLANNING

Something that might be on a longer-term “to-do” list, that I know we all ought to do, is plan for our own end of life. One of the things that might be part of that is planning for our funeral.

I'd just like to put a little bit of a bug in your ear about that! Many – perhaps most – in our society these days leave a lot of the details around cremation, burial, caskets, funerals, and so forth to a funeral home. We have a great one here in Lacombe, Wilson's, and they're certainly very good at what they do. They are a valued partner in ministry! But we are a church, and one of the things we do as a community is care for our own around times like this – funerals, weddings, births. As a minister, I'm always a little bit disappointed when funerals and celebrations of life are held outside of our church building. There are often good reasons for that, but when these important events happen here, in our own building, they kind of soak into the place and make it sacred, more deeply ours, a place where we have encountered God in all sorts of life circumstances.

It's possible for us as a church to partner with the funeral home in caring for you and your family when someone dies. Of course we can host the service, but we can also provide pastoral care, we can do some pre-planning, we can be your primary contact in terms of the service, rather than going through the funeral home. And we also, thanks to the generosity of Madeline Hendrickson and her sister Deb O'Connell, have two urns here at the church. If cremains are scattered or interred, an urn is only needed for a short time (after cremation, the ashes are sealed and placed in the urn. When the ashes are interred or scattered, the sealed bag containing the ashes is removed from the urn and usually it is only the ashes that are scattered or placed in the ground). We can save you that cost, and also give the symbolic sense that you or your loved one is held, however briefly, in the loving care of the church as our earthly remains return to the earth.

Feel free to discuss funeral plans with me, and we can keep notes on file for you. And if you are planning cremation (with interment or scattering of ashes), consider using one of the church's urns. It can save you some cost, and allow the church to “hold” you one last time.

Dave

FINANCIALS

Shannon has been on medical leave so there will not be a finance report at this time. We wish her on the best in her recovery.

Regarding the KEC Crowdfunding Campaign – all donations received through St. Andrews will be submitted to the Crowdfunding Campaign so that the 50% government matching can be realized. Your donation will be added to your yearly charitable tax receipt.

ST. ANDREW'S SUMMER CAMP JULY 9 - JULY 11, 2025

PLUS participate in the July 12, 2025 Lacombe Day **PARADE**

AGES 4 TO 11 / 6 PM TO 8 PM STARTING WITH A LIGHT SUPPER



Lacombe Days **SERVICE**

Sunday, July 13
MEGlobal Athletic Park
Time TBA



The Government of Alberta provides the platform for this campaign and we have been approved to receive 50% matching to all contributions. Our goal is to raise \$10,000 so we will receive the max. \$5000 matching that is available to us.



KEC Crowdfunding
Campaign 2025