

ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH

FALL NEWSLETTER

LIFT SOMEONE INTO THE LIGHT!

On Thursday, November 26, we will be celebrating our 'Lift Someone into the Light' event which is being held in conjunction with the City of Lacombe's 'Light Up the Night' celebration. From 5:30 – 7:30, members of the community can stop by to decorate an ornament to honor someone they hold dear and hang it on the special tree outside of the church. There will be hot chocolate, cookies, caroling, and a warm fire for people to enjoy after they have placed their ornament on the tree.

A little history of this Event. This is our 6th Annual 'Lift Someone into the Light'. A small town in the Netherlands has a celebration known as Joris' Christmas Tree. People gather in the town square to decorate and hang ornaments on a huge Christmas tree. There are other events going on at the same time all around the square. Anneke Kassies introduced this idea in 2021 with the hope that we could try something like it here at St. Andrew's. We did, and 'Lift Someone into the Light' was born.

How can you get involved? We are always looking for any help you can offer; whether it be assisting at the ornament table, working in the kitchen preparing the hot chocolate and the cookie trays, serving the hot chocolate outside, being one of our carolers or supplying a few cookies. Get in touch with the Church if you would like to volunteer. We hope to see everyone there!

HIGHLIGHTS

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BACK FROM SABBATICAL!

Well, it feels great to be back after my sabbatical – though I am afraid it will take me a bit of time, yet, to catch up and to really feel like I'm on track. I'm afraid planning and program may be a challenge until the new year!

The first thing I want to say is thank you – and wow! It seems you all have had quite the time here while I have been on sabbatical! Thanks to the team who did the organizing for Sunday mornings and who put together coverage while I was gone. The fact that the church did not hire replacement staff is testament to the depth and range of leadership that is here. It sounds like services went very well – and the paper crane mobile is stunning!

Not only did church life continue, but in a time of "rest" there were some decisions made around accessibility for the sanctuary and renovations in the basement (including refitting Sunday school rooms, that's already done), and the church has some new furnaces. We have a complete staff now, having hired Brenna Trimble for the pastoral care role as well as for ministry with children and youth.

It seems you had some fun, hopefully got some rest, tried out some leadership and new ideas, took some steps forward, and proved again what a strong church this is.

For my part, I guess what I was doing was looking at retirement (not immediate, but not out of sight either). Apart from, and underneath this role of minister that I have been in since 1988 – who am I? What is my calling? What does the Spirit want to bring into the world through me? I spent my time "trying out" creative pursuits in music and writing, and political work (in this case, some writing for the church and door-knocking around the referendum). All of these things felt like fun, and a good fit for me, though I also realized that what feels best for me is what I am doing right now. Being part of a congregation and doing ministry is not just a role I play; it's also who I seem to be. So I'm glad to be back! Continued on next page...

"I LIKE BEST OF ALL AUTUMN, BECAUSE ITS LEAVES ARE A LITTLE YELLOW... TINGED A LITTLE WITH SORROW AND A PREMONITION OF DEATH... ITS GOLDEN RICHNESS SPEAKS... OF THE MELLOWNESS AND KINDLY WISDOM OF APPROACHING AGE." — LIN YUTANG





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BACK FROM SABBATICAL CONT'D...

I got a bit of a chance to do some travelling with Karen. We spent time in the Okanagan, including catching up with a favorite professor from seminary days, and then made it as far as Victoria to see family and some friends and colleagues. It was good to renew friendships and reconnect with family – I am privileged to have many wise people around me and the conversations were GREAT. The last week of sabbatical was spent with cousins who I rarely see but get along with very well – from North Carolina and New Jersey, and with my brother and sister-in-law, we went out to the mountains for a glorious week. Riding e-bikes out to Moraine Lake just after they close the road is AMAZING.

Finally: I did a lot of inner work this sabbatical. More and more, in society, church, and in my own life, I am learning to pay attention to the stories by which we live, the things we tell ourselves (maybe not even consciously) about who we are, and how to interpret the events and relationships in the world. With the help of counselors, I've been trying to become more conscious of these inner voices and stories, and if possible to heal and release some of the more troublesome of these. It's been hard work, but I think it's gone well. I think I may be a bit less judgmental of myself, and a bit more willing to let God's love into the dark corners of who I am.

Thank you, for the privilege of having this sabbatical. I hope and believe it brings me back a bit more whole and together! I look forward to the next steps with you, though... it still feels like I'm running to catch up! Perhaps by next newsletter I'll be there with you, able to look at what's coming up ahead.

With gratitude,
Dave

"OF ALL THE SEASONS, AUTUMN OFFERS THE MOST TO MAN AND REQUIRES THE LEAST OF HIM." —HAL BORLAND



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GROWING TOGETHER IN FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP!

It has been wonderful welcoming the children back into the rhythm of Sunday School! Our mornings have been filled with thoughtful conversations, meaningful stories, and lots of joyful singing. It is so lovely to see the children learning, sharing their ideas, and growing together in faith.

Our youth group also had a special evening together, making the most of the theatre room one last time before the upcoming basement renovations. The kids enjoyed watching Evan Almighty, sharing movie snacks, and spending some great time together!

And now, the excitement is building as we begin preparing for our Christmas Pageant this week! We are looking forward to bringing the Christmas story to life and sharing in all the fun, creativity, and fellowship that comes with this special tradition.

There is lots to look forward to in the weeks ahead, and we are so grateful for all the energy, laughter, and enthusiasm our children and youth bring to our church community!
Brenna







ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH

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CIRCLES OF CARE - BUILDING CONNECTIONS, ONE VISIT AT A TIME

We are looking for 12 new volunteers to join our Circles of Care team!

One of the greatest gifts we can offer one another is the gift of connection. For many years, a small group of dedicated volunteers has faithfully helped care for members of our aging congregation through friendly visits, house calls, and regular check-ins. We are so grateful for their commitment, but as our church family grows and our needs change, it is time to grow our circle!

In my new Pastoral Care role, I see an opportunity to build a larger team of caring individuals who can help ensure that no one in our church family feels forgotten or disconnected. Our goal is simple: to create more meaningful connections and remind our older and homebound members that they are valued, remembered, and loved.

What does volunteering involve?

- Attend quarterly Circles of Care meetings (as you are able).
- Make one visit per month to an assigned older or homebound congregant.
- Deliver their monthly church newsletter and, most importantly, spend a little time visiting and connecting!

We hope these visits will grow into friendly, familiar relationships that both the volunteer and the person receiving the visit look forward to each month.

And here's something important: You do NOT have to be retired to be the perfect volunteer! Visits can happen after work, in the evenings, or on weekends. Have children? Bring them along! This is a wonderful opportunity to teach them the value of kindness, compassion, and intergenerational relationships. Take the kids' artwork to share, visit together as a family, and show them how something as simple as giving someone your time can make a real difference. You don't need special training or a particular skill set. You just need a little time, a caring heart, and a willingness to connect.

Our hope is to welcome 12 new members into Circles of Care so that we can strengthen the connections within our church family and make sure everyone feels they belong.

Could you spare an hour a month to make someone's day? Sometimes the smallest gestures make the biggest difference.

If you are interested in joining Circles of Care, please reach out to me. I would love to welcome you to the team!

Brenna



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PROPERTY REPORT OCTOBER 2026

St. Andrew's is a busy place these days with the church being used 7 days a week; between our own teams and rental groups. I have gone numerous times in the evening and weekends to visit the rental groups to see how things are going.

I reported before that UCW #2 is donating $10,000 towards the replacement of the windows in the kitchen and parlour. Since then, a member of the congregation has donated the remainder of the money, and a cheque for $5000 has been turned into the office. Thank you!

Greg and I have not heard back from Bullseye as to when they can start our renovations downstairs. They indicated earlier that they thought they might be able to start as early as February. We will keep you informed as we move along.

All five new furnaces are operating. The only one that will need some tweaking is the furnace that heats the Narthex. There seems to be some blockage in the vents that lead to the Narthex, so that the flow of air is not as strong as it should be. McMullen's is looking into this. Our congregation in the sanctuary seems to be happier with the more uniform heating since we placed vents at the front of the church. Bob King will set the thermostats to winter settings this week.

Bob King emptied the water barrels, hooked up the drainpipes, and shut off the water line to the outside in preparation for the cold weather to come. Thanks, Bob.

Thank you to Hans and the Gardening Club for preparing the grounds for winter. Don't they look good!

The live streaming for Sunday morning has been much better since we switched our internet to Rogers. We did have some issues and had to record the service on October 11. This was after the high winds seemed to cause havoc with phones and YouTube. We are livestreaming and recording every Sunday now, just in case. If need be, any recording will be uploaded early during the week.

We are currently looking at upgrading the Wi-Fi in the church. Advanced Systems has been contacted and is evaluating our current system. Stay tuned!







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AUDIO VISUAL UPDATE

Audio visual and live streaming has become very much a part of St. Andrew's. Congregation members take courses online, use Zoom to attend and join various meetings, and services are live-streamed.

Here are some statistics for Sunday morning.

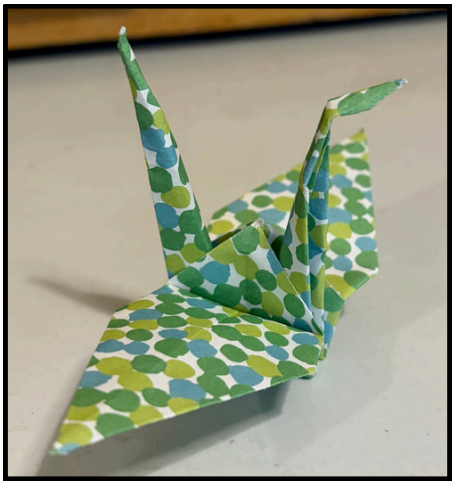
Attendance:

	In Church	Live On-Line	Long-Term Views
OCTOBER 4	78	51	155
OCTOBER 11	54	28	86
OCTOBER 18	95	Technical Issues No Livestream	87
OCTOBER 25	93	38	94

We are fortunate to have the young people we have running the AV on Sunday mornings.

Submitted By: Lawrence Hrycan









CRANE PROJECT

Oh my goodness! It's amazing what can happen when people get together for a common goal!

On August 2nd, commemorating the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, and commemorating the 40th anniversary of the twinning of the towns of Lacombe and Rikubetsu in Japan, we talked about the journey with Japanese people from "enemy alien to friend".

Cecile had noticed that Dennis Ethier folded a paper crane almost every Sunday here in church and presented it to someone. She learned he was inspired by the story of Sadako and The Thousand Paper Cranes.

when Sadako was 10, she became sick from the radiation from the bomb. Her friend told her of the legend that if a person folded 1000 paper cranes, they would be healed. So they began folding. Sadly, Sadako died on this day, October 25, in 1955.

Paper cranes have become a symbol of peace in Japan, and yes, worldwide. Leanne Osland demonstrated how to fold one paper crane, and she donated over 200 cranes she had made to decorate the Rikubetsu Friendship Society's Christmas tree.

Then Cecile wondered aloud, "Could WE make a thousand paper cranes, offering a prayer for peace and healing with each fold?"

I, and several others, heard this as a challenge!

I wanted to say, "Easy enough" - but it did look complicated..... Then something amazing happened!!



Some of us had experience folding paper cranes and we each taught one person, then another, then another... at coffee time, at home, in a restaurant....we even taught people who didn't want to learn!! And then....people became addicted to folding. Grandparents taught grandchildren. Friends taught friends. Husbands taught wives. Paper cranes were pouring in!

Maybe we CAN fold 1000! (Continued next page...)





CRANE PROJECT CONT'D...

New colors of paper were found. New friends were made. New ideas were brought forth. New questions were asked.

Then we realized that yes, we will have 1000 paper cranes. What will we do with them? Ideas abounded. And people who saw an example of a chandelier shaped mobile agreed that we should make one. We didn't know how, but we forged onward.....

The first step was to make strings of cranes of different lengths. This meant scheduling "Stringing Bees" and getting out the word to the congregation and the wider community to come and be part of this! And they came! Some days lots of people. Some days few. The last string was completed on Thursday October 15 to acapella fanfare! What an accomplishment!

BUT. We were not done yet. All of the strings had to be attached to the hoola hoop frame and then the whole thing had to be raised in a place where it would be seen.

Wow! Many steps. Many people. Some friends. Some new friends. Some enthusiastic from the start. Some enthusiastic later on.

No one knew HOW to do this. But with commitment and hope , cooperation and ideas, hard work and talent, the project is complete.

Look at it there. Think of peace and hope, healing and love - and inspiration!

Thank you to the many, many people who folded cranes, donated beads, strung the cranes on fishing line, hung the strings on the framework, chose a place to hang the finished mobile, climbed high on a ladder to secure it! See your crane in the 1000!



Choose a crane in the 1000 to wing your prayer for peace into the world!

Submitted by: Dianna MacLeod



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OUTREACH REPORT

Canadian Foodgrains Bank – Central Alberta Foodgrains Project
We have secured land northeast of Haynes to grow canola in 2027 – Year 32. First time we have been in this particular area of Lacombe County.We will be able to engage new farmers and supporters in this area.

Friends of Guatemala (FRoG)
Our pie fundraiser on October 18 raised $415.00. Thank you St. Andrew's for supporting us.
Living Into Right Relations
The final Lunch and Learn session for 2026 will be Tuesday, November 3rd. In recognition of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.At the Kinsmen Room of the LMC starting at 12 PM to 1.30 PM (Please bring your own lunch)

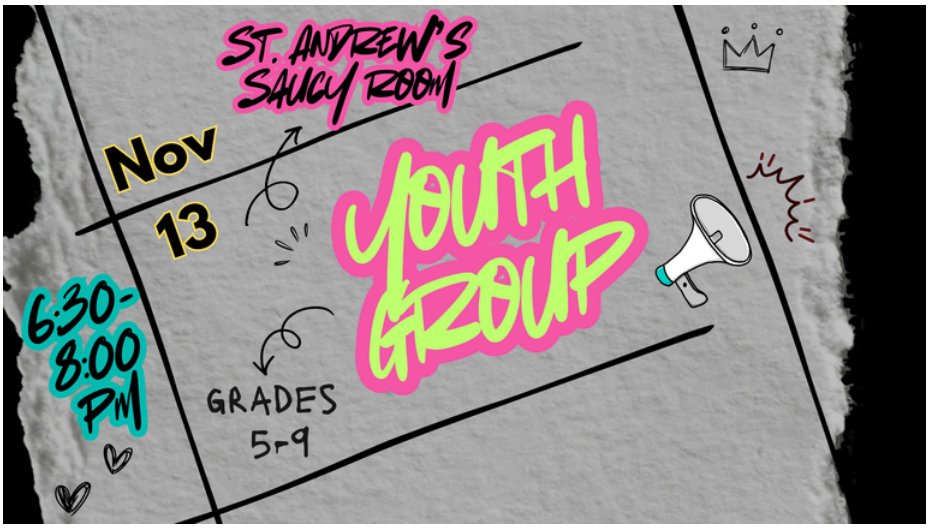
Volunteer Link
Started over 20 years ago by Dr. James Helm of our congregation, we require more drivers to take clients to medical/dental appointments in central Alberta. Our clients are mostly seniors, and this is a valuable service for them. If you could spare several hours a week, or a month, this would be much appreciated and you will find it to be a fulfilling experience. So far in 2026, the organization has completed 655 hours of assistance to seniors in the Lacombe area. Please talk to our St. Andrew's representative, Bob Settle for more details and to sign up.

Meals on Wheels
St. Andrew's each July provides volunteers to deliver meals to individuals in Lacombe. Talk to Doug Maas or Ko Bruning if you wish to assist next year. Meals on Wheels is administered through FCSS in Lacombe.

Submitted by: Doug Maas




Messy
CHURCH
JOIN US
FRIDAY
NOV. 6
5 PM!


ST. ANDREW'S SAUCY ROOM
Nov
13
YOUTH GROUP
6:30-
8:00
PM
GRADES
5-9


Men's Breakfast!
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 9AM


HEALING
PATHWAY
HEALING PATHWAY SESSIONS 1ST AND 3RD MONDAYS OF
EACH MONTH BEGINNING IN OCTOBER.
PLEASE CONTACT MARLENE: 825-706-4327

LACOMBE MEN'S SHED



Thursdays 6:30 PM Legion Basement. All men welcome.



WALKING GROUP

We welcome everyone to walk with us on Monday mornings for about an hour. For more info contact Anneke Kassies by email askb60@gmail.com

ReconciliAction Coalition & Mary C. Moore Public Library Presents

Truth and Reconciliation Lunch and Learn Webinars

Lacombe Memorial Centre - Kinsmen Room (Upstairs)

November 3

Indigenous Youth Perspectives on Health and Wellbeing

We are looking for a volunteer to help one of our congregants to and from medical appointments. The volunteer is required to ride the Connex bus and help our congregant by pushing their wheelchair. Please let Dave or the office know if you may be willing to help!

