



CONNXIONS

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2021 ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL NEWSLETTER

Hello
SUMMER
OF Joy





CONNXIONS AUGUST / SEPTEMBER ISSUE

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Dear Friends,

Welcome to this summer edition of ConnXions in our Summer of Joy at St. Andrew's. For our annual Summer Worship Series this year we are exploring JOY. Joy is second only to love in Paul's list of the Fruit of the Spirit. Anglican mystic, Evelyn Underhill asserts that "Joy is the very colour of holiness." Christian thinker, Lewis Smedes wrote, "You and I were created for joy and if we miss it we miss the very reason for our existence." Joy is that important. We must find Joy.

We've all had our share of disappointments to work through over the last 17 months. The pandemic has presented us with many restrictions and challenges—including the inability to meet in-person as a community of faith. Even when Stampede signaled a return to normal—and ushered in a new freedom from health restrictions—still we find ourselves burdened with heaviness: wondering if there may be another COVID wave; mourning the discovery of unmarked indigenous graves at government-sponsored, church-run residential schools; saddened by vandalism against churches in our own city; and smelling the smoke that is bringing the crisis of wildfires to our continent this summer. But do such heavy concerns mean that we cannot find joy?

Christianity, as a religion of unique joy, shows us that the cross—a symbol of sin, pain, suffering and cruel death—belongs together with the joy of the resurrection. The two are not the contradictions that we think, but belong together. Jesus' victory over sin, suffering and death reminds us that "the worst thing is never the last thing" (Frederick Buechner). Jesus' new life triumphs. What if intentionally cultivating a renewed sense of joy, could actually energize us to be greater instruments of justice and change in a world that deeply needs it?

So what helps you to renew your joy? Two things that renew my joy are spending time with my family around the dinner table, and getting to enjoy the beauty of God's creation. In the laughter of sharing stories and time together, God renews my joy; in a walk in the woods or simply basking in the beauty of a mountain vista, my joy is renewed. I am reminded afresh of the giver of such good gifts—the Sovereign Lord who holds us and our world in love and always offers new possibility. This summer I'm promising to make more time for these two simple things that renew my joy. How about you? What renews your joy, and how could you make more room for those things.

**Joy is not just some frivolous extra. Joy is important.
We must find Joy—and spread Joy!**

Peace to you and yours,

Dr. Tim
Lead Minister / Life & Vision
St. Andrew's, Calgary





07.04	Make a Joyful Noise : Growing in Gladness Joy: Grounded in Well-being	Psalm 16	Dr. Tim / Dr. Geoffrey
07.11	Make a Joyful Noise : Growing in Gladness Consider Life's Trials as Joy? Really?	James 1:1-8	Rev. Peter Coutts
07.18	Make a Joyful Noise : Growing in Gladness What I Learned About Christianity from a Buddhist Monk	Ecclesiastes 9:7-10; Ecclesiastes 2:24-26	Rev. Peter Coutts
07.25	Make a Joyful Noise : Growing in Gladness Joy: A Work of Resistance	Psalm 126; John 15:11; Matthew 5:3-12	Dr. Tim
08.01	Make a Joyful Noise : Growing in Gladness Enemies of Joy: Fear, Stress and Anxiety	Philippians 4:4-7	Dr. Geoffrey
08.08	Make a Joyful Noise : Growing in Gladness Enemies of Joy: Suffering and Adversity	John 15:11; 16:20-24; 17:13	Dr. Tim
08.15	Make a Joyful Noise : Growing in Gladness Keys to Joy: Compassion	Luke 14:3-10; 22-24; 2 Corinthians 8:1-4	Dr. Tim
08.22	Make a Joyful Noise : Growing in Gladness Keys to Joy: Attending to God's Goodness	Psalm 65:9-13; Joel 2:23-26	Dr. Tim
08.29	Make a Joyful Noise : Growing in Gladness Joy: Best Experienced in Community	Isaiah 55:10-12; 1 Corinthians 12:26	Rev. Marion Barclay
09.05	Make a Joyful Noise : Growing in Gladness The Church: Cultivators of Joy	Romans 14:17; Galatians 5:22-23a	Dr. Geoffrey

THE BEST DINNER YOU NEVER HAD!

TABLE 1



10 PLATES
\$100 / PLATE

10 PLATES = \$1000

**The Best Dinner You Never Had
(SEASON 2) . . . otherwise known as
An Even Better Dinner You Never Had!
by Cathy Millar,
Stewards by Design**

As many of you know, in recent years it has become our custom at St. Andrew's to hold a major fundraising event in the early fall. Although we are beginning to see the light at the end of the long COVID tunnel, we have not yet reached a level of comfort that allows people to come together to experience warm hospitality and fellowship in person. We are hoping all of that will change in 2022. In the meantime, for all of you who would like to support "An Even Better Dinner You Never Had" in 2021, please read on.

We invite you to reserve your place at the table for "An Even Better Dinner You Never Had" with a \$100 charitable donation to help us raise funds for the ongoing ministry and mission of St. Andrew's. Now more than ever we need your help as we try to make up for lost revenue due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We recognize many in our communities have suffered financial hardship during this time, and the church too has experienced its own share of financial challenges.

We are looking for 100 donations of \$100 each (full tax receipt provided) to help us raise \$10,000 towards the 2021 annual budget for ministry and mission as approved by the congregation in March of this year. Knowing the generosity of our faith community, we are confident we can raise this amount and much more.

If you would like to support this effort, but are unable to donate \$100, then we invite you to donate what you can. Just think of all the savings we have managed to accumulate since the beginning of COVID-19 because we can no longer indulge in international travel. We are not spending as much time in our cars, so we are saving on gas, our dining out experiences have been limited, and we are making fewer visits to the shopping malls and coffee shops! So, we invite you to use some of your extra savings to reserve your place at the table. While we won't be able to actually "see" you at the fundraiser, your participation guarantees you will be present in spirit. And one thing we do know; this is sure to be AN EVEN BETTER DINNER YOU NEVER HAD!!!!

You may send your cheque to the church office marked BETTER DINNER; or donate online and select the BETTER DINNER donation category. We will provide regular updates as the reservation numbers grow.

As a special thank you, we are planning a short program of entertainment for your viewing pleasure. Called St. Andrew's Alive! it will be available on YouTube Saturday, September 25, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. Please stay tuned for more information. The evening program will be available to all who wish to tune in, and it will be an opportunity to celebrate the wonderful generosity of the people of St. Andrew's as we continue GROWING. LIFE. TOGETHER. WITH GOD

THANK YOU for reserving your place at the table! We guarantee it will be...

AN EVEN BETTER DINNER YOU NEVER HAD!!!



History of the Banners

(This is the third in a series of short articles describing the story and the history of the Liturgical Banners, which have been an integral part of Worship at St. Andrew's since 1982. Ed)

Part 3: Summer Banners by Sheila Kirkland

This summer the theme being expressed is Joy. Our banners reflect the wonderful vitality of our spirituality.

The Praise and Rejoice Banner was made in celebration of the new organ in 1994. It represents the joy of music which we experience every Sunday in our worship service. It was made by Ruth Grant and Pat Pollard.



THE PRAISE AND REJOICE BANNER

The Burst of Flowers Banner bursts forth with a myriad of brightly coloured flowers which provide us with such pleasure and joy during the summer months. It was made by Grace Geren, Oromocto, New Brunswick.



THE BURST OF FLOWERS BANNER

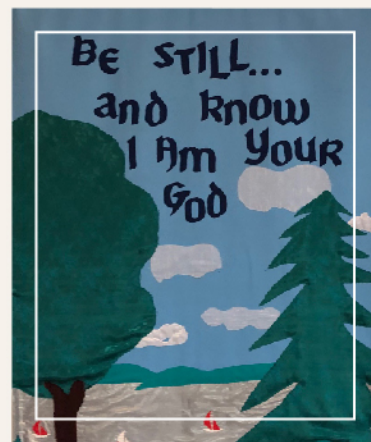
The Tree of Life and Fountain and River of Life Banner is a pictorial representation of the Tree of Life and The Fountain and River of Life. References to the tree can be found in Genesis 2:9, Psalm 56:9 and Revelation 22:2. The river and fountain of life are found in Genesis 2:10 and Revelation 21:6 and 22:1. The design of the tree is stylized with the green leaves and the deep roots. The fountain springs from the flowing river. The descending dove of the Holy Spirit is in the upper right corner.

The banner was made by Monica Kelz, a professional textile artist, who used sheer materials and embroidery to achieve the beauty of her interpretation.



THE TREE OF LIFE AND FOUNTAIN AND RIVER BANNER

The Be Still and Know that I am God Banner portrays a lovely lakeside scene which speaks to us of the beauty of nature and the restful, refreshing days of summer. This familiar verse is found in Psalm 46:10. The banner was designed and made by Ruth Grant.



THE BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD BANNER



Sexuality And Faith Explored
Together with God
by Lynn Judd

Last year, before Covid, the Human Sexuality Task Force was planning a series of workshops in May. The purpose of which was to explore together, with God, the intersections of sexuality and faith and how they fit into life here at St. Andrew's.

In June, the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) passed two resolutions: one, to ordain LGBTQ+ ministers and ruling elders; and the other, to affirm both the traditional definition of marriage as "a covenant between a man and a woman" as well as marriage being a "covenant relationship between two adult persons".

Our denomination offers a generous space at a time like this. There will be no immediate changes for us; since each session is required to work through these decisions and discern for itself. We too would like to provide generous space at St. Andrew's to engage as both individuals and as a community of faith in discussion and prayerful discernment in the coming months. Stay tuned for more information.

HERITAGE SENIORS



HELLO, REMEMBER US?
We are the Heritage Seniors,
and we will be back!
by Jan Kozbial, President

Just a note to let you know that the Heritage Seniors are ready, willing, and able to resume our programs and activities, hopefully in the fall! We just need the church to give us the green light!

Beside the physical activities, we all need the social and mental stimulation to keep us well and happy. We will let you know as soon as we know when we can start again; so, hang in there.

Looking forward to getting together soon.



**Faith, Wellness, and Mental Health:
Three Legs of a Stool**
by Rev. Geoffrey Simmins & Judie Coleman

At the time of writing, Calgary is preparing for the Stampede. Some folks welcome this sudden exit out of the pandemic; others are concerned that this has come quickly and risks us running off the road. By the time you read this, we will probably know whether we are safely on a new path or not.

Here in the church, we are also thinking about how we are going to re-enter our worship practice as well as our regular meetings at the church.

How are you feeling about all this? Chances are, you have experienced mixed feelings about whether we are going to be OK this fall. That's scarcely surprising. After all, many of us spent the better part of sixteen months in relative isolation. We missed our communal life together. Many of us haven't seen those we love until quite recently. We have learned to be cautious and it's hard to look forward with confidence.

How does this connect with our life of faith? It does so when we consider that faith, wellness, and mental health are like three legs of a stool. Without any one of those being solidly grounded, we risk falling over.

The first leg of the stool: Faith

Faith helps us by reminding us that God is with us, during good times and bad times. Jesus, after all, tells us not to be afraid. Some commentators say that we find this phrase 365 times in the Bible, which would be handy for each day of the year, but as Fr. Felix Just, S.J., Ph.D. reminds us, "The phrase 'Fear not!' (or equivalent translations) appears only Slightly over 100 times in the Old Testament,

and about 44 times in the New Testament." (<https://catholic-resources.org/Bible/HaveNoFear.htm>). Still, it's good to be reminded that faith calls us to look forward with hope. Hebrews 11:1 says, "Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see." (New Living Translation)



WELLNESS

The Second leg: Wellness

Presbyterians value education and accept the logic of science and reason. We recognize that faith needs to be complemented by right action. We need to do something for ourselves as well. The phrase, "practicing wellness" has become more common in recent years. We learn to recognize what is good for us and we practice doing more of this more often. What wellness means varies: for some people, it might mean learning to say no more often; but for others, it will mean learning to say yes. We invite you to take time to practice your own wellness and do what is right and good for you. In our experience, people of faith rarely give too little; they need to remember to give to themselves as well.

Third leg: Mental health

Mental health issues affect us all. Most of us have experienced doubt, anxiety and perhaps anger during the pandemic. If you are teetering on your stool, remember to reach out. Reach out to friends, to family, to your church family. We also recommend considering the many resources available through AHS, as described on this gateway portal: <https://www.albertahealth-services.ca/services/page11443.aspx>

When we think consciously about grounding ourselves on a three-legged stool, we can look forward with confidence, saying, as Julian of Norwich famously did, that “All shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.”



Let us help you as we grow together in faith and learn to practice wellness while thinking of our own mental health. Give us a call and we can chat in confidence about whatever may be on your mind.

Rev. Geoffrey Simmins
Interim Pastoral Care Minister
403-708-3286

Judie Coleman
Pastoral Care Coordinator
403-281-4605



SPIRITUAL MOMENTS

by Jean Sadler

I have had many moments during my life when I have experienced God's presence. About fifty years ago, my husband, Bob, and I were seeking a new church home. We were in Salt Lake City on our way south for a winter break, when we attended the dress rehearsal of a Mormon Tabernacle Choir concert, and during their performance, I experienced this revelation that I absolutely needed to get back to find us a church home.

Back home in Calgary we visited quite a few churches and ended up at St. Andrew's, where I have been ever since. I am sure that God led us here. When we learned that my husband had six months to live because of his brain tumour, I remember the Good Friday when he underwent brain surgery. I sat in a lawn chair in the back yard and chatted with God about being thankful for our lives and family. I was hoping he would not suffer too much. Shortly thereafter his surgeon told us the worst thing that was going to happen to him would be bad headaches. Again, I thanked God, as I knew that He had heard me. There have been so many other times when I have known His presence my life, and these are just a couple of them.



**The Clean Pew Cushions
by Mark Rowe**

The pew cushions in the St. Andrew's sanctuary were a gift to the congregation from the late Ineke Stewart. They were installed in 2014.

Covid cleaning protocols required churches to disinfect their sanctuaries after each service. The corduroy-covered seat cushions cannot be easily and safely sanitized. This meant that they had to be removed before we could hold an in-person service. Every church in Alberta that has pew cushions had to remove them if they were planning on having in-person services.

Originally anticipating a fall 2020 opening, the cushions were removed from the sanctuary and stored in the cloak room so it would be easier to sanitize the pews. Unfortunately, the Alberta Covid cases started to rise dramatically in October 2020, and in-person worship was not possible.

With St. Andrews now moving toward a Phase 3 reopening in September 2021, the pew cushions needed to be re-installed. The 34 pew cushion covers were removed and washed, five at a time, in a commercial washing machine. They were then dried outside.

Tammy Riemer, an upholsterer, was hired to re-install the cushions on the benches. This involved re-inserting the buttons and attaching the buttons to the bottom of the pews. This requires skill and special tools.

St. Andrew's now has clean, comfortable, pew cushions. Let's take care of them so we can continue sitting comfortably in the pews during our worship services.

Mark Rowe is a member of the Facilities Team.

MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE!

Make a Joyful Noise:
Growing In Gladness!

Our St. Andrew's Summer Joy Garden is recruiting your creative talents!

Our Handpainted "Joy" Stones will need to be replenished throughout the Summer.

Will You Help Our Rock Garden to Grow?
Paint some stones & Create Joy!
Drop them off in the rock garden anytime!

For More Info:
Communications@standrewscalgary.ca



Communion with God Through the Lives and Wisdom of Women.
by Thelma Wagner

The concept of a Wisdom Circle was generated by Thelma Wagner, Kathleen Templeton- Bandola and Fiona Swanson out of their desire to bring women of all ages together to share their wisdom in areas of faith, marriage, aging, child rearing, relationships and much more. We believe there is both a desire and a yearning to be open, honest, and even vulnerable, trusting God and each other as we share, learn, and help one another. The circle depicts that everyone is of equal value.

Thirty-six women gathered on Zoom for the first meeting, May 7, 2021. The topic was "Decluttering Your Spiritual Practice" the presenter was Rev. Maren McLean Persaud. Maren's presentation stimulated those who attended to consider which items in your house, commitments on your schedule, or habits may be keeping you from living life abundantly. We were asked to consider what tips, experience, or wisdom we could share to simplify our lives and to make space for what is most important. Some of the suggestions that were generated in our break-out groups to help with decluttering included: Bible app, Divine Hours app, Laudate, Pray As you Go, Minimalism web site.

Our next event, held on July 7, 2021, was a history walk around the community of Haysboro lead by Rev. Fiona Swanson. We were pleased 12 women joined us as we learned so many interesting facts about this community in which

St. Andrew's resides. One interesting story was that of the Hays family. At the front door of their house, the string for the latch was on the outside, thus allowing visitors to let themselves in. This is a wonderful reminder of what it's meant to be a welcoming neighbour.

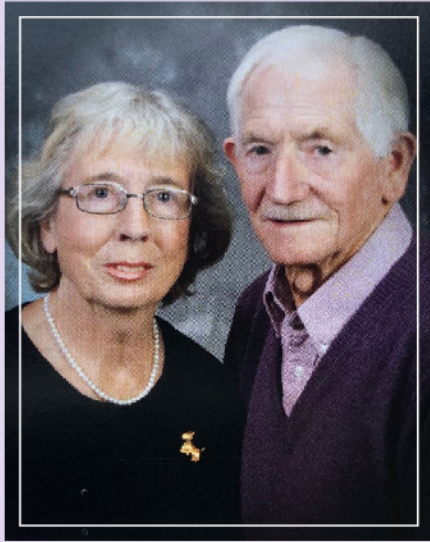


With Covid restrictions lessening, we look forward to future gatherings and hope to continue meeting in person. While we haven't established a date, we have several ideas for future gatherings.

We are interested in adding more people to our committee, so, if you are interested in joining Thelma, Kathleen, and Fiona, please don't hesitate to contact us. In the same breath, if you have a particular specialty, idea, spiritual practice, or experience you would like to bring to the Wisdom Circle, please don't hesitate to share them with us.

At the closing of our first gathering, Fiona shared a lovely prayer, which we leave with you until we meet again.

**We leave here this night
In each other's hearts
Each going out to do our part.
May you feel the spirit with you
Deep in your soul
Let it spill forth-
Like water from a bowl
Flooding the earth with
Kindness and grace
And when it is time to gather again
Know at this circle
You will always find a safe place
Go in peace, in hope and in love**



Adams Family Farewell
by Barb English

Jim and Sheila Adams have moved to Qualicum Beach, BC to be closer to their daughter and son, and their familiar presence at St. Andrew's will be greatly missed. They have been faithful and involved members of the congregation for decades. Jim, a retired teacher, was an active elder for many years.

When St. Andrew's held the yearly Burns' dinner, and the haggis was piped in with ceremony, Jim regularly recited Burns' Address to a Haggis. Most of us had no idea what the old Scottish words meant, but the reception was enthusiastic!

Jim has had interest and involvement in Calgary's military museum, and he and Sheila enjoyed Scottish country dancing. Sheila was involved in the early days of Sunday School at St. Andrew's, playing the piano and teaching classes. She has shared her musical talent at the church on many occasions. Sheila is also a talented artist, and her paintings have been on display at church functions. Lately, she has encouraged and coached the seniors' art group.

We send our gratitude to both of them for their contribution to the work and community spirit of the congregation, and our blessings as they begin this new chapter in their lives.



This Fall at St. Andrew's Regathering: The Art of Neighbouring

How many full names do you know of the people who live on your street?

We may have hundreds of "friends" through online social networking, but we often don't even know the full name of the person who lives right next door, or across the aisle.

How do we create genuine friendships with the people who live next door, across the aisle at church, in our city, or around the globe?

After a season of isolation, it's time to break out of our bubbles—and brush up on our skills of neighbouring! After all, Jesus says that the most important commandment is to love God and to love our neighbour as ourselves.

Plan to join us as we regather this fall for a whole series focused on growing in love of neighbour.

St. Andrew's History

(This is the fifth in a series of short articles highlighting significant events in the life and growth of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Calgary. Ed.)

The Boys' Brigade by Flemming Nielsen



The Boys' Brigade (BB) is an international interdenominational Christian youth organisation conceived by Scottish businessman, Sir William Alexander Smith. He apparently had trouble keeping order among the rambunctious boys in his Sunday School class, so he decided to try instilling discipline in them by combining drills and fun activities with Christian values. Following its inception in Glasgow on October 4, 1883, the Boys' Brigades quickly spread across the United Kingdom, and by the early 1890s it had become a worldwide organisation. In 2018 there were an estimated 750,000 members in 60 countries.

Robert Baden-Powell is recognized as the founder of the world-wide scouting movement, and when he was looking to develop a Boy Scouts program, he asked William Smith if he would object if parts of his program took inspiration from the Boys' Brigade program. He then asked Smith to help him get the Scout manuals and other materials printed. In May of 1903, Baden-Powell became a Vice-President of the Brigade and actively promoted scouting ideals and outdoor pursuits.

The Boy Scout uniforms, badges and awards drew inspiration from the Boys' Brigade materials, and the concept of summer camping was introduced by William Smith to allow boys and officers to stay in contact when other activities ceased for the summer break.

As a youngster, John Young grew up in the BB movement in Scotland, and he quickly advanced into its leadership ranks. When he left Scotland and settled in Calgary in 1955, he held the rank of Company Captain. John and his wife, Muriel, found their first church home at Grace Presbyterian Church in Calgary, and it was only natural that he should again become involved in the activities of the Brigade. In the fifties a basketball league was organized among Calgary's Brigade Companies, and one of the coaches from St. Andrew's Church was female. Jess Ogilvie made her mark as both a good athlete and a respected coach.

In late 1959, three families left Grace Church and began holding worship services in Haysboro Elementary School. In time, attendance from the neighbourhood grew, and in July, 1961, the congregation in east Calgary voted to join the congregation already worshipping in Haysboro School. The increase in the membership led to the purchase of land and the beginning of construction on the current Church building on Heritage Drive. The cornerstone was laid on June 18, 1962, and dedication of the new St. Andrew's Church took place on October 14, 1962.

The St. Andrew's Boys' Brigade, under the leadership of John Young, had found a new home. Muriel Young took charge of the Junior Brigade; and the rest, as they say, is history. More about the growth of the St. Andrew's Boys' Brigade in the next issue of ConnXions.



St. Andrew's 1912 Boys' Brigade Company



Growing. Life. Together. with You
by Lynn Judd

Our Commissioned Hymn debuted on May 23rd in conjunction with Pentecost Sunday. It was commissioned to commemorate our new vision statement Growing. Life. Together. with God and was dedicated with warm wishes to the St. Andrew's Choir & Evan Mounce, Director of Music Ministries. The composer is Stuart Beatch and the text writer is James Ostime; both are from Edmonton. The cost of the project (Canadian League of Composers Commissioning fee recommendation) for text, music, and consultation with the Music Teams was \$1,950, which came from the music budget.



Program Notes - excerpts

The text builds on each aspect of the phrase, creating a beautiful message of life, love, and faith. My music (Stuart Beatch) is simple and folk-like, almost like a lullaby, but builds in strength throughout. The repeating refrain can be sung with or without the congregation.

Complete Text by James Ostime (b. 1983)

One breath from a baby, one seed underground
The first rays of sunshine
The dimmest light, the softest sound
In all I behold, Lord, this much do I know
There is little so sacred, as watching life grow

Help me, Lord, use me, to grow in your grace
To have peaceful mind, to hold sacred space
As we gather together, I see life anew
Growing Life Together with You

There isn't a hardship, challenge, or strife
A choice thrust upon me
Or turn of my life
That would rock the foundation upon which I stand
The warmth of your Love is the soft place to land

Help me, Lord, use me, to live out your grace
To have peaceful mind, to hold sacred space
As we gather together, I see life anew
Growing Life Together with You



Tear down the walls, open the doors
As we stand united
An unstoppable force
Your love is a beacon, a light on a hill
Guiding us closer, bonding us still

Help us, Lord, use us, together in grace
To have peaceful mind, to hold sacred space
As we gather together, I see life anew
Growing Life Together with You



A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR



Here we are in the middle of summer.

COVID restrictions have been lifted; a reduced version of the Calgary Stampede is over; airline travel is coming back to life; we can now return to the movie theatres and enjoy a show, and after a four-month pause, CONNXIONS is here, having missed only a single issue during all this time.

After more than a year of Covid constraints, we can finally join together with friends in the sanctuary. Meetings can take place face-to-face, keeping in mind proper distancing and masking, and the need for "bubbling" has become a chapter in the history books. Even a restaurant meal is within our grasp.

So, what did we learn? Family is important! Old friends need to be met face to face and hugged, and the joy of membership in the church family is no less important than our membership in the family of man. We need more than just a fist or an elbow bump to feel connected. Have we become kinder, more considerate, or compassionate? What do you think?

At the time of this writing, many Alberta Government announcements and stats are still to be studied. Important decisions have to be debated and made. More importantly, the health, safety, and security of the congregation need to be ensured before we can expect the church life to return to what we know as "normal." September hopefully is that time.

WELCOME BACK!

Flemming Nielsen

GET SOCIAL WITH CONNXIONS

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| Team Member | Lorie Nielsen |
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Given the uncertainty of Covid variants spreading,
we are being cautious and will continue to require
masks and social distancing while at church.

**There will be one worship service on Sundays at 9:30 am
for live-streaming and in-person attendance.**

Capacity limits have now been lifted,
and advance registration is no longer required.

People attending will be asked to sign in at the back door upon arrival.

Worship participants are permitted to sing with masks on.