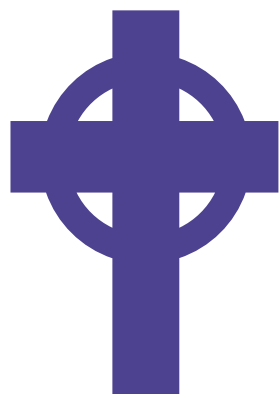




CONNIXIONS

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2022



ST. ANDREW'S

GROWING. LIFE. TOGETHER. WITH GOD

  standrewscalgary.ca

August/September Edition

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From the Minister's Desk

Renovations



I like doing home reno's. A few years ago Sheri and I tackled the main living area, including kitchen...800 square feet of house! It took six months but it's done and we are still married. Thirty years ago changing a light fixture was a challenge for me. But knowledge and confidence has come with time and experience.

Renovations are full of promise. Think about it in your own homes. The inertia of being comfortable with how things are slowly gives way to a desire for something new. We begin to think about what we want to change – the cabinets or the carpet or the wall colour. We can feel anticipation and excitement for the new look and functionality the changes will bring to our lives. We gather the materials and tools, we set aside some time, and then we jump into the project.

Renovations are a challenge. I don't know about you, but my reno projects always take longer than I expect. Every job seems to reveal something I hadn't planned for, which adds to its scope. But renovations are rewarding. I like nothing better than to clean up after a job then step back and appreciate how things are now better because of my effort.

Life challenges us to consider personal reno's occasionally. Perhaps it is losing those extra pounds that the doctor says is not healthy for you. It can be a vague acknowledgment that "I need to get more exercise than I do". It can be that strained family relationship that has festered too long. It can be the shift of financial priorities that will put more emphasis on saving for retirement. It can be a re-evaluation of your work schedule, thinking you need more time to be with family. It can be the question about how important faith is to you. Just as in making changes at home, personal renovations can be full of promise, can be a challenge, but also can be rewarding.

According to the apostle Paul, we are called to a life of renovating. Listen to Eugene Peterson's translation of Romans 12 (taken from "The Message"): "So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life – your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life – and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for God. Fix your attention on God and you will be changed from the inside-out... God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you".

As we see in our homes... as we see in our own lives... aspects of them occasionally need upgrading. So it is with faith. Fortunately we have a carpenter to help us in doing just that.

Rev. Peter Couatts



Spiritual Moments

By Geoffrey Simmins



Which Biblical Text Describes *Your* Faith Walk and Sky-Hopes?

A ministry colleague has Micah 6:8 tattooed on her arm. I won't get a tattoo but I respect her choice and I love what Micah says: "Act justly, love mercy, walk humbly."* My colleague sees this phrase each time she raises her arm. It sums up how she wants to live her life.

Seeing her tattoo makes me wonder which biblical text I might choose to sum up my faith credo. In recent days, I have been living gingerly but closely with "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Proverbs 9:10). Why would a loving God ask us to fear? Is God just waiting to judge us and find us wanting? Recently, the meditation teacher Fr. Laurence Freeman interpreted that text so that I understood it better. Gesturing to our majestic Rocky mountains, he said that our proper response to them is awe. Geologists might describe the physical properties of mountains, but they cannot describe their inherent beauty and pervasive mystery. We seek to know, to love, to respect, and to experience reverential awe of the God the Creator, who is-in-all, beyond all knowing and understanding, yet still calls us to be as fully human as we can possibly be.

One of the advantages of not having a tattoo is that I might change my mind about which text I chose. I might well choose Jesus' Commandment, Matthew 22:36: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." Or John 10:10, which has Jesus describing his purpose. He says: "I came so everyone would have life, and have it fully" (CEV). Other versions use the phrase "abundant life" for this passage. The abundant life that Jesus calls us to is akin to that deep wisdom in the text of Proverbs. We experience reverential awe when we think of God being so close to us as to walk among us, as Jesus did. We are truly called to live fully, well, and bathed in God's love.

What about you? What biblical text describes your faith-walk and sky-hopes? Perhaps it might be worth spending some time to review favourite biblical texts and to imagine which one we love so much that we would either want to have it tattooed on our bodies, or to live with it as a living credo.

**This is a shortened version of Micah 6:8, which reads in the NRSVUE, "He has told you, O mortal, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?"*



ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH GRIEF SHARE PROGRAM - ALICE WILLIAMS - LIFE AFTER LOSS TEAM

What is it?

A 13-week Christ-centered support group offering help and encouragement to people who have lost a spouse, child, family member or friend through death, and for others who are struggling with long term grief. GriefShare (griefshare.org) is a friendly, caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life's most difficult experiences. You do not have to go through the grieving process alone.

The program will also equip people with tools for grieving the loss of animal companions. The 13 week program will be divided into an 8-week session and a 5-week session with a break in between. There are three key parts to each session. A video presentation designed to address a specific aspect of grieving, a short group discussion about the weekly video content, and a workbook for journaling and for personal study exercises that reinforce the weekly session topic. A workbook will be available for a suggested \$20.00 donation.

Where: Lower Fireside Lounge 1:30–3:00 p.m.

When:

Tuesday October 4 – November 22, 2022 (8 weeks)
Tuesday January 31 – February 28, 2023 (5 weeks)

Facilitators: Kathleen Tomie and Alice Williams

To register please contact:

- Alice Williams at aliceswilliams@shaw.ca or
- Judie Coleman at judieco@yahoo.ca

For further information about this program please visit the website at griefshare.org.



THE ROAD TO RECONCILIATION AT ST. ANDREW'S - BRIAN HAWCO, MISSION TEAM

Our process of beginning a relationship with our Indigenous friends really got started in the spring of 2017 as a Lenten reflection project. We started with three small events: a talk on residential schools, a historical perspective, and a blanket exercise.

In Sept of 2018 we began planning for the May 25, 2019 event, a day of Indigenous sharing and breaking down of barriers. The planning involved a committee of twelve with six from St. Andrew's and six from the Aboriginal Friendship Center of Calgary. The event included Grand Entry, Round Dance, tepee teachings from elders, a traditional buffalo meal, art displays and art lessons. When the event started, the church people were on one side of Trinity Hall, and the

Indigenous people were on the other side. By the end of the meal it was a totally mixed crowd.

COVID-19 limited what we could do in 2020, but we were able to hold one event in 2021 which dealt with residential schools. We had three elders, who were survivors, share their experience. Just recently we held an event dealing with Murdered and Missing Indigenous women. This included a presentation from three women who were involved in the making of a film about the subject for the Stardale group. (<https://www.stardale.org/>)

Have you ever thought about what it would be like to live with dementia? We often think about the loss of short-term memory when we hear the word “dementia.” In reality, dementia is an umbrella term for a whole set of symptoms resulting from changes in the brain that make daily living more difficult. Not only memory, but planning, putting things in order, making decisions, and physical coordination may all be impacted by the diseases that cause the symptoms of dementia. Each person is affected differently depending on the area of the brain that is impacted, but some experiences are common.

People living with dementia are in a bewildering place. They may be losing their sense of self and could be losing skills that they have always relied upon and have given them their sense of purpose. If you are living with dementia, you are facing a lot of social uncertainty as well, because so many people do not understand what you are going through. The natural response is to avoid social situations that may be awkward and uncomfortable. Withdrawal results in isolation, on top of confusion, on top of loss of purpose and identity. Withdrawal prematurely exacerbates the loss of quality of life during a most precious time.

Even after a diagnosis, there is so much life left to live and live well!! People living with dementia are still LIVING!!! They continue to have gifts to share in so many ways, and with loving support can continue to live purposeful, impactful lives for quite some time. Most of all, they continue to be loved children of God, even as they go through a very difficult journey.

Now imagine yourself as the person caring for a person living with dementia. If it's your spouse that is affected, you suddenly find yourself taking on more and more of the responsibilities that you once shared, taking on roles that you don't feel equipped for. The person you would normally turn to for support is the person that you are caring for. You are navigating parts of the health care system that you never knew existed, and filling out paperwork you never imagined you would need. You adjust and carry on, and as things progress, you are called upon to adjust again. All while mourning the slow progressive losses that your dearest friend and partner in life is experiencing. Side by Side is a program of St. Andrew's that responds to the needs of families living with dementia. Led by Rev. Jan Hazlett, the bi-weekly pilot program began in the fall of 2012 and it developed into a weekly program that has run year-round since Jan 2013. In May of 2020, Side by Side shifted to an online format due to the pandemic, meeting for an hour twice weekly.

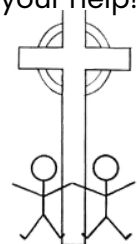
From the beginning, the name of the program has reflected the philosophy of caring for multiple needs simultaneously. St. Andrew's has provided respite and understanding support to care partners by providing affirming fellowship to the person living with dementia. We have also balanced the needs of the congregation (pastoral care) with the needs of the community (outreach).

Side by Side Online changed the dynamic a bit, allowing us to get to know care partners better as we cared for both family members more directly.

The Side by Side program has always embraced the idea of “both/and” rather than “either/or.” We continue this philosophy in a new dimension as we begin to map out a way forward for offering the in-person respite program again, while also offering Side by Side Online. To do that, we need your help!!

If you have a heart for families living with dementia, if you have ever had a question about dementia or the Side by Side program, if you ever thought about volunteering, or know anyone who is living with dementia, now is the time to get in touch!!

Please email Alice Post at sidebyside@standrewscalgary.ca or call the church office at 403-255-0001 to request a call back.



Side by Side

THE BENEFITS OF LAUGHTER

- ALICE WILLIAMS ON BEHALF OF THE WELLNESS TEAM

Research has shown the numerous benefits from simply laughing. I am sure most of you have heard the saying; laughter is the best medicine; which it turns out is substantiated by ongoing clinical data. A good sense of humour and laughter cannot cure all that is wrong with our world, but it can certainly make us feel a whole lot more positive about life. Laughter makes us feel good and when shared it strengthens our relationships and encourages emotional connections.

From a health perspective, what are the benefits of a good laugh?

Laughter is a great cardio workout for the muscles in the face, chest, shoulders, stomach and diaphragm. It gets the heart pumping, lowers blood pressure and enhances intake of oxygen rich air which stimulates the heart, lungs and muscles. This in turn increases the release of endorphins – the happy hormones – to the brain. These endorphins act as a natural pain medication. Some hospitals now have a "laughter room" as part of their pain management therapy. The magical connection of spontaneous laughter results in a measurable decrease in the need for pain medication.



How do we add more laughter to our lives?

Play a game of charades. Watch a funny movie or TV program. Read the comic section in the paper. Attend a comedy show. Share something silly about yourself with your friends. Organize a funny joke evening with family and friends. Make up a progressive silly story with your children / grand children. Sign up for the newest craze- laughing yoga. Spend time with positive people. Laugh at yourself, life gets way too serious. Go ahead and stick googly eyes on the food in fridge or in a lunch box. Finally the best prescription for a healthy life- thirty minutes of exercise at least 3 times a week coupled with 15 minutes of laughter on a daily basis. In keeping with this medical and informative theme, the following are offered for your laughing enjoyment.

"If you boil a funny bone, it becomes a laughing stock. That's humerus."

"What does a thesaurus eat for breakfast? A synonym!"

Laughter may just be the best medicine on the market today !



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CALL 403-255-0001 FOR MORE
INFORMATION

ELDER PROFILE - CATHY MILLAR

Cathy Millar was born in Montreal, and was baptized in Montreal West Presbyterian Church. Her father was an officer in the Air Force, and the family lived in various locations while she was growing up. Cathy lived first in New Brunswick, then in Redding, England for a year while her father was at the RAF Staff College. They returned to live in Ottawa.

Cathy's father was a founding member of St. Martin's Presbyterian Church in Manor Park in Ottawa and was an elder there. He was her mentor for all things church. Cathy lived in Ottawa from Kindergarten to Grade five, then at the Air Force base at St. Hubert, Que. She joined the church at thirteen, and helped with Sunday School until Grade eleven, when the family moved back to Ottawa and returned to St. Martin's church. Cathy's ability to understand, adapt, and contribute to a variety of situations could be a valuable inheritance from her years of living in different cities and circumstances.

Queen's University in Kingston was Cathy's next stop. She earned a B.A and a B.Ed. and went back to Ottawa for two years to be a Guidance Counsellor, and to teach Phys. Ed. and Health. When Cathy married Bob Millar, who was a Captain in the Army Armoured Corps, they moved to Lahr, Germany for two years. Returning to Kingston, Bob earned an MBA, and Cathy went back to teaching until Grant and Kristie were born.

The family moved to Calgary, and in 1980 while Bob was doing peace-keeping in Cyprus, Cathy was looking for a church. St. Andrew's was closest, and Cathy soon felt right at home. She was teaching Sunday School within a year, and became Superintendent within three. St. Andrew's was growing rapidly during those years, and when two services were introduced, two Sunday Schools became necessary. Recruitment of teachers and finding space to deal with 175 children in Sunday School during two services became a huge responsibility, which Cathy carried for seven years.

Ordained as an elder in 1988, when the commitment was to serve for a lifetime, Cathy is one of the longest-serving elders at St. Andrew's, and her insights, talents and efficiency have been a blessing to the Session and congregation. She has been involved in most aspects of Session work and leadership. Over the years she has convened Session teams of Worship, Mission, Christian Education, Gratitude and Generosity, Resource and Accountability, Revision and Renewal as well as being involved in Search Teams during vacancies.

A few chosen highlights from her years on the Session:

Hands-on involvement with Inn from the Cold; The planning and beginnings of Side by Side; Co-operative Vacation Bible Schools with St. Andrew's United, St. Peter's Anglican and St. Gerard's Roman Catholic churches; Initiating the inter-generational ADVENT-ure program which was a joyful start to the Advent season; Engaging so many people in crafting St. Andrew's new Vision Statement.

Cathy believes that elders are part of something important. The worshipful work of Session over the years in trying to discern God's will, and not the will of individuals has sometimes been challenging, but vital. At this particular time, the importance of connecting with people in the congregation is a priority for Cathy, especially in the aftermath of the pandemic. People still need support in adapting to live streaming, in-person worship and struggles with life changes. She is excited about elder elections this fall, anticipating new members, new energy and new ideas as St. Andrew's moves forward.



Warm greetings to you! Here is brief update on theCreek.

Presbytery Recommendations

In February and March, a proposal was adopted by the St. Andrew's Session and by the Presbytery of Calgary-Macleod. The proposal was a strategy to address the outstanding recommendations that had been approved by Presbytery. A consultant, Rob Douglas from Cyclical Full Circle, was hired to complete the actions in the proposal and provide a report. Rob's report was submitted at the end of May, and has been received by the Session of St. Andrew's. The Presbytery will receive the report at its next meeting in September 2022.

AfterWords

Two back-yard campfire gatherings were held recently. On May 28th, Desiree and Stephen Henrichsen hosted, and on June 25th, Audrey and Roger Cole hosted.

Worship and Work

At the Worship and Work event on Sunday May 29th, there was a group of people who identified themselves as having a heart for communities south of Fish Creek, and who took part in a breakout group discussion with members of theCreek team.

Contact Us

Members of theCreek team are excited to continue to be part of the mission of God in south Calgary as the process of moving forward is worked out at St. Andrew's. If you have questions about theCreek or ideas you would like to share, theCreek team would love to hear from you! Email:

thecreeklifeyyc@gmail.com



Annual Family Camping Weekend

We hope you will Save the Date for our Annual Family Camping weekend August 26 - 28. This year we will be camping at River Cove Group Campground. The campsite is located close to Bragg Creek and is very convenient for those wishing to join us just for the day! Day trippers are invited to bring a picnic lunch and/or dinner and stay for games and a hike. Campers are responsible for their own food and drink. Cost for each family is \$75.00. Firewood is provided. All ages and camping experience is welcome! Please contact Craig Murray at murraycraigjohn@gmail.com to book your spot!



Annual Family Camping Weekend - August 2021



JESUS
LOVES
ME

Family Fun & Discipleship Event

St. Andrew's Family Fun & Discipleship event on Monday, July 25th was a success! School children and their families joined us as we enjoyed Rice Krispie treats, played some favourite games, and shared our abundance with neighbors in need. We filled some boxes of toys and books with Claire House families, and we stuffed socks with needed items for The Mustard Seed. A huge thank you to the Ladies Guild for making the Rice Krispie treats as well as special cookies for the kids to take home!



Church School Returns In-Person!

The Faith Formation Team is excited to announce church school returns IN PERSON this fall! Mark your calendars - classes begin September 11, 2022. More details to follow shortly.



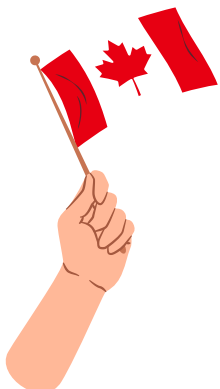
From the Lives of our Congregation...



Congratulations to Loudia Ghars and Timothy Rowe who were married July 16 at Heritage Park. The couple lives in Ottawa.

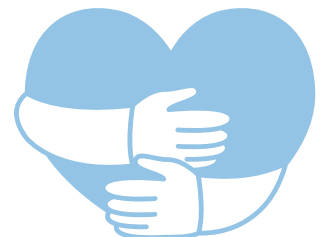
Timothy is the son of Joan and Mark Rowe.

- We wish to offer congratulations to Susana Blaikie for passing her citizenship exam. Well done Susana!!
- Congratulations to Linda and Duncan Ripley on the birth of their first grandchild. Hudson Quinn Lee was born on June 6. Proud parents are Stephanie and Jordon Lee.
- Congratulations to Brent Harding on the birth of his first granddaughter Nora Natalie Ronca, born on July 7, 2022 to parents Devyn and Michael Ronca of Long Island, NY. Devyn was baptized at and attended St. Andrew's many years ago.
- Our faith family sends best wishes with Carol Doyle as she makes her way back to Ontario at the beginning of July. Safe travels Carol, and best wishes in finding just the right home.
- Our faith family offers prayers for God's peace and comfort to Debbie and Paul Draper, on the death of Debbie's mom, Carol Anne Collett, in South Africa on June 11.
- Our faith family offers prayers for God's peace and comfort to Kathleen Tomie and family on the death of Kathleen's mother Betty Burtch, who passed away on June 28.
- Our faith family offers prayers for God's peace and comfort to Mandy Walker and family on the death of Mandy's father Ben Hutchinson, who passed away July 8.
- Congratulations to Lauren Cole and Matthew Nolette who were married at St. Andrew's on July 30.



It's a
BOY!

It's a
GIRL!



Staffing Updates

THANK
YOU

Mikael McEachern's contract as our Communications Coordinator ended as of June 21, 2022. He has served St. Andrew's well over the past 4 years, lifting up the quality of our website and communications generally. One of Mikael's responsibilities was the layout and design for ConnXions. Our thoughts, prayers and best wishes go with Mikael as he finds new ventures in his field.

We welcome Lauren Nolette (Cole) to the ConnXions team as the new layout person!



Rev. Geoffrey has extended his contract with us and will be continuing to share his energy and enthusiasm, his care and concern, his laughter and his light with us at St. Andrew's.

We are grateful. We are thankful. We are blessed.

Highlights from the June 2022 Session Meeting

- We discussed the next steps for going to Term Service for elders
- There will be an opportunity in the fall to nominate new elders
- We have received the Consultant's report on theCreek Ministry, and Rev. Peter will be meeting to discuss this with theCreek Team
- Session has received and approved a Wedding Policy for St. Andrew's

To maintain a COVID-19 safe place for worship, The COVID-19 Task Force requests the following:

- Vaccination is strongly encouraged but not required
- The use of sanitizers for all worshippers for entry into the church strongly encouraged.
- Masking is strongly encouraged but not required during worship and in the building.

We will continue to follow AHS directives and The City of Calgary's guidelines and restrictions as they continue to evolve, so watch for further updates. Thanks for your consideration in these matters, especially the encouragement to mask. It is our desire to create a setting here that is most helpful and encouraging for those who are cautious about returning to gathered activity. In this small way we express Christ's care.



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EDITORIAL TEAM:

Coordinator: Lorna Andronikou
Team Member: Judie Coleman
Team Member: Barb English
Team Member: Lauren Nolette

DEADLINE: Article Submissions for our next October/November Issue:
Thursday, September 15, 2022.