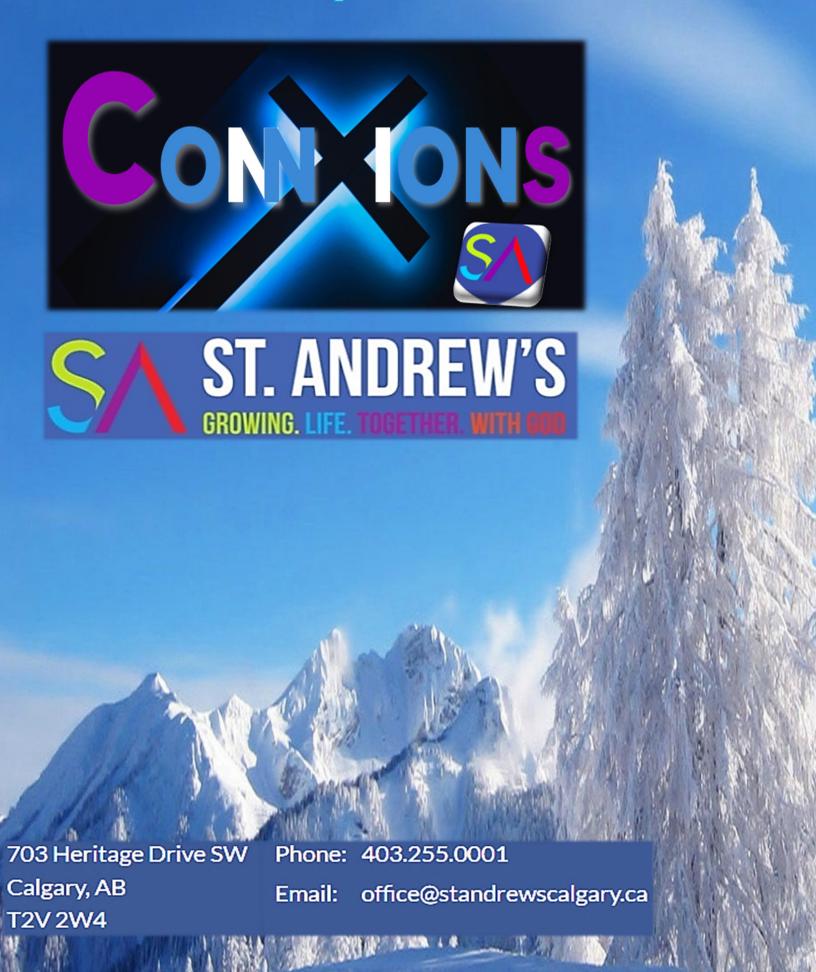
February / March 2024





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Letter to the congregation of St. Andrew's

As I reflect on the timing of my beginning with St. Andrew's, how fitting it is that it I am excited to begin ministry with you all at St. Andrew's! is in Lent – the time of learning, journeying, and sensing the presence of God in

Tuman room.

I am reminded of a story of a monastery whose abbot (head monk) was saddened that only 3 monks were left to operate the monastery, and that no outside visitors stopped by for worship or prayer. The abbot went to visit his Jewish colleague. For a time, they sat in silence and even wept together. Then the rabbi said that he had a message for his friend that, once shared, must never be spoken again. This mad a message for his mend mat, once shared, must never be spoken again. This was the message he was to share with his community: "One of you is the Christ." The abbot gave the message and the instructions to his community and soon after, began to notice a change. Each monk asked himself who might be the Christ, but not knowing, took special care to show more compassion, honour, and attention to others and to themselves. The neighbours and travellers noticed that the quality of care in the community was like none other, and soon many came simply to be in the presence of a loving community, inspired to become more like the compassioned to be a loving community. sionate monks. How this message changed the community!

I have seen Christ among you already, people of St. Andrew's. As we prepare to take the journey to the cross during Lent, and then celebrate the resurrection as a community of Christ followers, I wonder how Christ will show up through each of us – regardless of age, orientation, experience, economic status, or faith. I marvel that we are not alone in our seeking. If you are reading this, it is no accident. will you do with this story? Who will you tell by word, and how will you live the

We are on a journey together. There will be joy and sorrow along the way. Thank God we are not alone. The song (#635 in Book of Praise) best describes my prayer for this new beginning:

"Brother, Sister, let me serve you; let me be as Christ to you: pray that I will have the grace to let you be my servant too."

Together in Service,

Laurie

Rev. Laurie McKay



Session Highlights

At the Presbytery of Calgary-Macleod's meeting on Tuesday, January 9, Rev. Peter, Lorna Andronikou, Bill Judd, and Debby Dorcas spoke about why St. Andrew's feels Rev. Laurie is the right person for us at this time. Our Presbytery approved that this is a gospel call.

Tuesday night January 16, St. Andrew's Session met with the Presbytery of Westminster (Vancouver area) by zoom, where they affirmed the call to Rev. Laurie McKay to come to St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church Calgary to be our Lead Minister. This concludes the Presbyterian call process!! We can officially say Rev. Laurie has accepted the call and will be coming to be our Minister. Thanks be to God!! We anticipate this will happen mid-February, but exact dates have yet to be finalized. Stay tuned!

Thank you to everyone who provided feedback to the Presbytery reps who conducted the 'St. Andrew's Presbytery visitation'. The reps had meetings with Session, the Finance Team and the Facilities Team, and provided the following recommendations with the report they submitted to Presbytery:

That the Rev. Dr. Peter Coutts be commended for his leadership and dedication in revitalizing the leadership and missional focus at St. Andrew's.

That the Ruling Elders and lay leadership of St. Andrew's be commended for their hard work in addressing issues previously highlighted by the Presbytery.

That Session be encouraged in their intention to mitigate the possible risk of burnout with a single minister.

This report from Presbytery was very positive, commending St. Andrew's for all the hard work that has been accomplished in the last two years. Well done, one and all!!

A motion was carried that the Search Team be dismissed with the GREAT THANKS of the Session and congregation.

A motion was carried that the 2023 Annual Congregational Meeting be held on Sunday, March 10, 2024.

Debby Dorcas, Clerk of Session – January 2024



ELDER PROFILE Christine Pepper

Christine was born in London, England, and moved to Canada in 1990. Her family did not attend church while she was growing up, but she attended a Roman Catholic primary school, which had a profound effect upon her spiritually.

She feels grateful that she felt called to come to St. Andrew's in 2006. She has a deep affection for our church family, and for the many ways that she sees St. Andrew's modelling the love of Jesus.

Christine has worked at Mount Royal University since January 2010, where she is the Operations Administrator for the Mount Royal Staff Association, which represents approximately 860 members. She appreciates working at MRU in a collegial and friendly community.

A proud mother, Christine is happy that daughter, Holly graduated from the university this spring with a Bachelor of Communications – Public Relations. Daughter, Megan, who has earned a BA and a BFA, lives and works in London, England.

Elected to Session in 2010, Christine serves on the Minister Resource and Accountability team. She also helps with Communion and team-teaches with Mary Jane Curran in the church school. Previously, she has facilitated Alpha and bible study sessions, which she thoroughly enjoyed.

Particularly meaningful highlights during her time in the congregation and on Session are many since she feels blessed to be part of this faith community.

When Christine and her husband Sean first began attending St. Andrew's, they signed up to take Alpha classes. The warmth of hospitality, and the generosity of spirit of those who shared time, gifts and faith are still treasured with gratitude.





Search Team Report

January 15, 2024

The Search Team is so excited that the congregation will be welcoming Rev. Laurie into our midst very soon! The past several months have felt energetic, hopeful, and a bit nostalgic (the team is sad not to have a reason to convene, as we had a wonderful time together).

We want to welcome Rev. Laurie to St. Andrew's by providing her with photos of as many people in the congregation as possible via a digital photo frame. We will be presenting the digital photo frame to her as a welcome gift. The Search Team would like to encourage anyone who is interested to take a photo of themselves along with their families, children, pets, etc. holding up a sign with a word of welcome or blessing along with the names of everyone who is in the picture. The photo will be sent directly on your behalf to the digital frame to help Laurie get acquainted with everyone in the congregation.

Photos can be emailed to Bart Stolee at bartstolee@gmail.com. Please send them by February 11th with the Subject line: "Welcome Laurie from: <insert name>". See the photos below for reference as examples. From there, we will setup and load the frame with all the submissions that are provided so that it is ready to be presented to Laurie. Particularly meaningful highlights during her time in the congregation and on Session are many since she feels blessed to be part of this faith community.



Since this will be the last official task of the Search Team since the Session has released us from our work, I want to take this opportunity to thank the team over the past three and a half years for the dedication and commitment all members have shown towards the search process. Current members include Peter Coutts as our Interim Moderator, Judie Coleman, Bill Judd, Inge Murray, Bart Stolee, and Thelma Wagner. Thank you dedicated team for helping us get to the finish line! I also want to thank our past members who provided guidance and support along the way. Past members include our previous interim moderators: the late Dianne Ollerenshaw, Fiona Swanson, and Jean Morris; our previous co-conveners: Ken Burrill and Cathy Millar; and former members: Kevin MacFarlane, Clem McLaughlin, David Kurtz, and Tim Archibald.

Thank you to all current and past members for your willingness to assist in the search process. Each one of you brought skills, knowledge, experience, and mentorship to the discernment process. We are so grateful to step into this new ministry and serve God together.

Lorna Andronikou.

Convener, Search Team



Youth Group Report

LIFT - Audacious Hope

Audacious Hope is the theme this year for LIFT, our National Church youth conference, which was previously named Canada Youth. LIFT stands for Living In Faith Together. It will be running in conjunction with the United Church in Canada's youth conference as well.

I have had the privilege of attending this youth conference several times, thanks to the many incredible donations from our congregation. Each time I've attended, I've grown to understand my faith better, I've made friends from all over the country, and grown a deeper appreciation for being a part of something bigger than just my small circle. Getting to sleep in a college dorm room for the first time, enjoying the food court with the ice cream machine that is always a major hit were a couple of fun experiences; others were early morning energizer dances with the whole conference, something that I hated at first, but even after all this time, I reluctantly roll my eyes at and still participate in. Powerful worship services, an abundance of activities to choose from, the friends I am still in contact with 10 years later, were all part of this amazing event and something that I am so passionate about having our youth attend.

My favourite part of being a youth at St. Andrew's was the community around me, whether they were 2 or 102. Everyone supported me and my faith and encouraged every opportunity to grow together with God.

I am excited to be on the other side of the events this time around. Instead of seeing all that LIFT has to offer from the eyes of the nervous but fun and faith-seeking youth, I get to watch it from a leadership standpoint, and see just how important this type of event is and watch our youth blossom.

With this theme of Audacious Hope, I look forward to what this year will bring for our youth group. Matt and I have really enjoyed what each week has brought for our group. We have some incredible young people in this congregation. They are kind, thoughtful individuals who give me so much hope for the future.

Lauren Nolette, Youth Leader

Audacious - adjective - showing a willingness to take surprisingly bold risks. **Hope** - noun - a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen.







Nursery: We continue to be blessed with the gift of Lauren Cantlon and Lilwen Henrichsen who share the staff responsibilities in our Nursery. All babies and toddlers up to the age of 3 (when they can attend church school) are most welcome! We are grateful for the Facilities Team and Ladies Guild for seeing to the installation of new windows and window coverings, respectively, in the Nursery.

Church School: Attendance is regular and enthusiastic in both our weekly multi-aged class (children aged 3-11) and the once-per-month teen class. We are blessed with dedicated leaders for both these classes.

Youth Group: A committed small group of teens attend on alternate Friday nights under the capable leadership of Lauren and Matt Nolette. New teens are welcome to join at any time! Planning for The Presbyterian Church in Canada's CY (now called LIFT) is to be held at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont. in early July 2024. Our youth will commence monthly cookie sales (post church service) on Feb. 4, 2024 as a fundraiser for those teens and young adults hoping to attend.

Christmas Eve Service: The FF Team planned and executed the 4 p.m. Christmas Eve service which was well attended by families. The children were delighted to start the service with their mission project of packing approximately 50 bags of personal care and other items for children in need. The congregation was generous in donating items for the gift bags which were delivered to WINS and received with much gratitude.

Take 150: The next version of this event will be held on Saturday, March 16, 2024 with a St. Patrick's Day theme. Parents can leave their children at the church for 150 minutes where the children will be treated to a light meal and many engaging games and activities. Watch for further information in LinX.

Book Study for Raising Teens: We will be offering an upcoming Book Study for parents and grandparents on the topic of raising successful teenagers. The Study will likely be held on Zoom during the month of February and will be led by Deanne Barrett. Watch for further information including registration details in LinX.

Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study: An ambitious new study, led by Bill Judd, has just started, and will run for approximately one year with breaks as decided by the attendees. The study is entitled The Bible Year by Magrey deVega. If you are interested, it is not too late to join the group!

Your Faith Formation Team

Rhonda Wishart, Inge Murray, Debby Dorcas and Lorna Andronikou

Faith Formation Photos from Christmas Eve

























SPIRITUAL MOMENT REQUEST FROM THE EDITORS

Are You Receptive to the "God Moments" in Your Life?

Christian theologian, Paul Tillich defined the spiritual moment as one "which is based on God and only on God, who is experienced in a unique and personal way." The Jewish theologian, Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote, "Each of us has at least once in their life experienced the momentous reality of God." The spiritual moment in religion is more about the sensation that we are not alone in the universe, and that we as individuals have a divinely-inspired purpose and meaning to our lives.

Have you been sensitive and receptive to a spiritual moment, or as Rev. Laurie McKay would say, a God moment? Many Christians define a God moment as an intimate, unique, or uncommon experience that helps them see that something or someone bigger than themselves (i.e., God) is at work in their lives. It might be an answered prayer, a sudden revelation, or a chance encounter. We need to make every effort daily to discover and appreciate the God moments in our lives. The accompanying sense of serenity and peace often gives assurance that God is working for our good.

It is almost certain that more people have had God moments than they will admit to others. Perhaps they feel disconcerted or surprised that the divine would reach out to them. God does, indeed, work in mysterious ways, and our creator is present, always, even when we are not aware of it. We need to reach out to God as God reaches out to us.

Many of us believe that we can only find God in extraordinary moments of deep prayer or a miraculous event. God is, of course, in those moments, but is also present in the mundane, every-day routine as well. Sometimes we need to look back over our lives to realize that God has been active in our choices, led us at various crossroad decisions, and strengthened us unexpectedly when we faltered. Being intentionally aware of God's presence in the world, and watchful for God's inspiration in our decisions and interactions can make us rejoice in many more God moments. . - Judie Coleman, ConnXions Editorial Team Member

If you would like to share your God moment with the congregation in ConnXions, we would love to hear from you. Please contact Lorna Andronikou at ConnXions@standrewscalgary.ca.

Ash Wednesday Service February 14th, 2024



A Primer for Seniors Care in Alberta

Submitted by Lynn Judd on behalf of the Wellness Ministry Home Care

Home care is for seniors who live fairly independently but need some assistance with their daily routine. The Home Care Program provides personal and health care services for clients of all ages living in their home or other private residential settings, such as suites in a seniors' lodge or supportive living facility.

Individuals are responsible for arranging and managing any home care and support services they require. Home care is paid for by AHS only if the senior is assessed by an AHS case manager, who determines what the client needs. The case manager is a Registered Nurse (RN). In-home services can include nursing and rehabilitation, and personal support services like housekeeping, bathing, or grooming assistance. If the senior wants additional services that AHS doesn't cover, they can hire extra help from a private home care provider, but they must pay for it themselves. Otherwise, their family and friends are expected to help out.

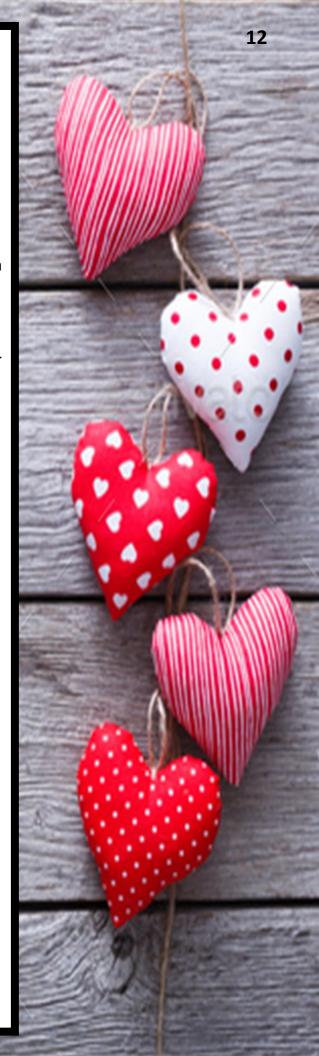
Supportive Living (including various seniors' facilities, retirement centers and lodges).

Supportive living is a type of continuing care accommodation, where people can remain as independent as possible in a home-like setting while they have access to services that meet their changing needs. Supportive living accommodations vary by size, appearance and the types of services offered and can include seniors' lodges, group homes for individuals with developmental disabilities and designated supportive living accommodations.

Supportive living combines housing and "hospitality services" (meals, housekeeping, laundry etc.). The facility operators are responsible for coordinating and managing services and may also coordinate or provide personal care and other support services.

Home Care can be provided in any supportive living site if a resident requires health and personal care services. Home Care services are determined by AHS or by care operators who are contracted by AHS to provide care with oversight from AHS.

Each supportive living accommodation is different. Operators set their own rent prices and determine what services they will offer, and some may not offer the services wanted.



Designated Supportive Living 3 (DSL3)

DSL3 provides on-site health and personal care by health care aides (HCAs).

Seniors with health needs that, in the case manager's assessment, require 24-hour personal care and support are eligible for placement in a Designated Supportive Living 3 (DSL3) facility.

Seniors will have to provide their own furniture and household items, medications and medical supplies, and equipment. Residents pay an accommodation fee to cover the costs of providing accommodations and services like meals, housekeeping and building maintenance.

DSL3 spaces are contracted by AHS within lodges and other supportive living facilities, or within higher-care facilities (SL4). SL3 residents must not need complete meal assistance, two-person transfers (in and out of bed, the bath etc.) or toileting assistance.

Designated Supportive Living 4 (DSL4)

DSL4 provides on-site health and personal care for more complex needs by health care aides (HCAs) and licensed practical (LPNs).

Designated Supportive Living 4 Dementia (DSL4D)

DSL4D provides on-site health and personal care with specialized dementia care in a secure environment.

Seniors with complex medical needs that require 24-hour on-site professional nursing and high levels of personal care and support (in the case manager's assessment) are eligible for placement in a Designated Supportive Living 4 or 4 Dementia facility. These spaces may be stand-alone or be separate areas within other seniors' facilities.

Care is managed on-site by a licensed practical nurse (LPN) under the direction of a home care registered nurse (RN) and delivered by health care aides. Residents may require complete meal assistance (including tube feeding), mechanical lift transfers, medication administration, total assistance to move from place to place, and total assistance to manage toileting. Residents in the secure dementia units may suffer from moderate to severe dementia.

Residents pay an accommodation fee to cover their room rental and services like meals, housekeeping and building maintenance.

Long Term Care (LTC) Nursing home and auxiliary hospitals

LTC provides on-site health and personal care for the most complex needs by health care aides (HCAs), licensed practical nurses (LPNs), and registered nurses (RNs).

To be placed in a nursing home or auxiliary hospital, seniors are assessed by AHS as having serious, chronic and/or unpredictable medical conditions that require access to registered nurses able to respond immediately on a 24-hour basis. They may have unpredictable behaviours that put themselves or others at risk.

Residents in long term care pay an accommodation fee to cover the costs of providing accommodations and services like meals, housekeeping and building maintenance. Health services in long-term care are publicly funded and provided through Alberta Health Services.



St. Andrew's Connection with Claire House

This past Christmas time was a perfect example of the simple ways we can help our neighbours feel a little better about their circumstances. St. Andrew's congregation donated a total of \$4650 that was used to provide gift cards at Christmas for each of 39 households at Claire House, plus an extra amount for each of 29 children.

Claire House is one of four community development, subsidized rent buildings owned and operated by Home Space/Calgary Homeless Foundation. It is located just a few blocks from our church in the Kingsland neighbourhood. People come as newcomers (immigrants and refugees), as well as Canadian citizens at risk of homelessness (may actually be homeless, referred from Women Shelters, Drop-In Centre, Inn From the Cold, Mustard Seed, etc). They stay as long as they need to.

Home Space has partnered with CUPS to have a community development worker on-site to help with administration and social services. St. Andrew's has an on-going friendship connection through various activities, especially weekly coffee/breakfast visits. One of the biggest challenges for the people who find themselves living in any of these four buildings is being able to find a sense of community. Our on-going presence at Claire, in whatever capacity, is an invitation and support toward connection and community.

Our presence at Claire House dates back to 2014, when the building was added to the Calgary Homeless Foundation (CHF) network, but our involvement with the affordable housing concern goes back to 2012, when we joined with other churches under the Kairos banner. This was to start fund-raising in support of mortgages for the CHF projects, and to begin thinking about how to come alongside the residents in each building in hopes of providing a starting point for community building. Through the Kairos Affordable Housing group, we continue to work on larger needs for the group of community development buildings that now numbers four – Acadia Place, Claire House, Bankview and Longbow. While we have a hand in the bigger picture of affordable housing, our efforts at St. Andrew's focus mostly on Claire House, as it is located closest to us.

Over the years, volunteers from St. Andrew's have rebuilt fences (Acadia Place and Claire House), shared in yard clean-ups, and led garden development (veggie garden in the back at Claire and flower gardens to beautify the entrance at Claire). We have participated in community suppers / BBQs / Christmas dinners, supported residents with household items, and extended friendship by showing up regularly to visit over coffee, breakfast, cards, playtime with kids, gardening, sharing each others' news, etc. A particularly difficult and expensive need for many new residents, who often arrive with almost nothing, is a clean, comfortable mattress. Through funding from St. Andrew's Legacy Fund, we have helped dozens of residents throughout the four buildings with this important foundation for their daily living.

If you remember our participation in Coldest Night of the Year walks, you would be interested to know that at least a portion of the funds raised at those events went to paying down mortgages at the four community development buildings. This is one of the activities that St. Andrew's has been involved with through the Kairos connection. Through these efforts, and other generous donations, the mortgages at Acadia Place and Claire House have been fully paid, allowing for sustainable rent subsidies for the foreseeable future.

We often gather with our friends at Claire in their Resource Centre, which is simply a dedicated apartment set aside for an office for the CUPS worker, and a community activity and gathering space. It's where we have breakfast and coffee together on Thursdays, where COBS Bread donations get distributed, and where programs are run. A little over a year ago, we noticed how run-down the old fridge was, and St. Andrew's stepped up with the purchase of a new fridge. A few months ago, the CUPS worker identified a desire to have a nicer serving counter for shared meals in the Resource Center. Thanks to the skills of Rene Prevost, we got the job done.

There is a band of faithful friendship volunteers from St. Andrews that helps to carry this work forward. Thanks to Pat & Duane Tritter, Sheri Coutts, Margaret & Darryl Brujhell-Holmes, Terry Basaraba, and Lynn & Bill Judd, who have caught the vision of how meaningful it can be for us to show up and be a friend. If you would like to know more about this outreach in our neighbourhood, then feel free to contact Bill Judd at ph: 403-278-5904 or email: juddb@shaw.ca

Submitted by Bill Judd on behalf of the Mission Team







HEALTH MATTERS Dementia Basics

What is dementia?

<u>Dementia</u> is an umbrella term for a set of symptoms relating to brain health changes that affect our ability to do the things we need to do every day. There are different underlying conditions that result in dementia symptoms.

<u>Alzheimer's disease</u> is the most common cause of dementia, accounting for 50 - 75 % of cases, according to Alzheimer's disease International. In Alzheimer's disease changes to the brain are caused by the build-up of a particular protein in the brain and the development of "tangles" that destroy nerve cells. Changes happen over a long period of time, usually starting years before symptoms become evident, and causing a long-term progressive decline in brain health.

<u>Vascular dementia</u> is the next most common cause of dementia, accounting for 17 – 30 % of cases. Brain changes in vascular dementia are caused by small blood clots preventing oxygen from reaching brain cells and causing a mini-stroke. Vascular dementia does not have the slow, steady progression that Alzheimer's has. Onset can be sudden and progression happens in steps as mini-stroke events occur.

<u>Dementia with Lewy Bodies</u> accounts for 10 - 15 % of all dementias. Similar to Alzheimer's, damage to brain cells is caused by the build-up of protein. In this case, the proteins are called "Lewy Bodies." Memory is less affected with this form of dementia. Movement can be affected. Hallucinations and sleep disturbances may occur. When someone with Parkinson's develops dementia, it's considered a sub-type of Dementia with Lewy Bodies.

<u>Fronto-temporal dementia</u> is less common. Like Alzheimer's, this form of dementia has a long progression, but it affects specific areas of the brain, starting in the frontal lobe, which governs mood and behaviour, as well as a variety of cognitive functions like planning, organizing, initiative, and impulse control. Memory is less affected.

All of the above conditions result in <u>late-onset dementia</u> (symptoms start at age 65 or older). When someone has dementia starting prior to age 65, it's called Young-Onset dementia (or early-onset dementia). People living with Young-Onset dementia need additional supports and often have different social and financial needs due to the life stage they are in.

When there is more than one underlying condition that contributes to dementia symptoms, it's called <u>Mixed dementia</u>. For example, someone with Alzheimer's could also have vascular dementia.



How do I reduce my risk?

While the most significant risk factors for dementia are ones that we cannot control (age, gender, genetics etc.), there are other risk factors that we can modify. If we can take steps to protect our general health, and particularly cardiovascular health, we also reduce our risk of developing dementia.

Regular exercise for 30 minutes a day, five days a week can help with both physical and mental health. The Mediterranean diet is recommended...a healthy diet high in fruits, veggies, legumes, whole grain, nuts, olive oil and fish, and that limits red meat, sweets, and dairy.



Finding ways to <u>challenge your brain</u> will help with brain health and also add enjoyment to your life. Learn a new skill, take up a new hobby, learn a new language, play games or do puzzles.

<u>Social activity</u> is very important. It can reduce the risk of dementia and also slow the progression of the disease. It also contributes to better mental health as it helps us establish a sense of purpose. At St. Andrew's there are many groups to join and take part in. Heritage Seniors is a great place to start, or you could volunteer with the Side by Side day program!

<u>Get your hearing checked regularly</u>, as hearing loss increases the risk of cognitive decline and also contributes to isolation and other difficulties.

<u>Seek treatment promptly for depression</u> to improve your quality of life and enable you to return to hobbies and social activities you enjoy.

Smoking and alcohol consumption are also risk factors for developing dementia, so it's recommended to <u>quit smoking</u>, and to <u>limit alcohol</u>.

I know someone living with dementia. How can I help?

- Visit. Keep up the relationship. Even when the person does not remember who you are, your presence in their life matters and makes a difference.
- Learn about dementia. You can find education opportunities at the Alzheimer's Society of Calgary, either by calling them at (403) 290-0110 or going to their website at https://www.alzheimercalgary.ca/
- Offer support to family members. You could regularly take walks, play games, or listen to music with the person living with dementia, allowing the care partner some personal time. Encourage them to check out available programs in the community:
- o the Side by Side programs at St. Andrew's, in person and online.
- o If the person has Young-Onset dementia, let them know about YouQuest, an organization that provides social supports tailored to families living with Young-Onset dementia.
- o Jewish Family Services Calgary also offers a memory care program that matches volunteers with families living with dementia for regular social visits.

Submitted by Alice Post





Is published every 2 months.
We welcome articles to be submitted on or before March 15, 2024, to:
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Zasteż

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