

April / May 2024

Hello
Spring!!



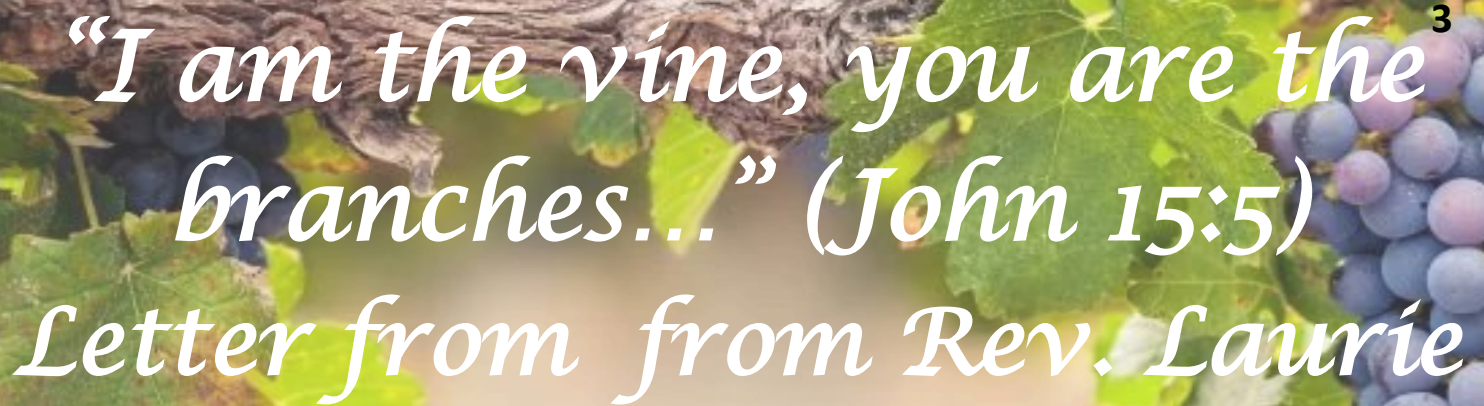
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“I am the vine, you are the branches...” (John 15:5)
Letter from from Rev. Laurie

Planting season? As the sun warms up the air around us and ice melts, we lean into spring! Like a seed newly planted, I too am connecting to the soil of this prairie culture and Calgary community. I have appreciated all the help in getting established as we Grow. Life. Together. With God.

The Ladies Guild made wonderful suggestions of fun things to do in this area, and I have a name associated with each of these suggestions. Here is the list:

1. Quilt Show, Free concerts, shops at Heritage Park – and horse-drawn carriage rides!
2. Annie’s Ice cream, and Fish Creeks trails
3. Inglewood stroll, Crossroads Market, Bird Sanctuary
4. Dome dining by Ranch Restaurant
5. Millarville: Christ (log) Church, rodeo, farmers market and Leighton Art Center
6. Prince’s Island with Shakespeare in the park, Dragonboats, and paddleboats
7. Passion Play in Drumheller, as well as Rosebud Theater (with dinner)
8. Saskatoon Farm – there is a restaurant that looks fun!
9. Devonian Gardens in The Core
10. Candlelight Concerts at Grace Presbyterian and Lantern Community Church
11. McKay’s Ice cream in Cochrane

Are there other activities and events that you would recommend? Let me know at lmckay@standrewscalgary.ca What are you passionate about? How do you engage in the world around you? Where does your life flourish?

I have visited 3 hospitals, local shops, Haysboro Community Center, and Grace Presbyterian Church, met with 9 of 17 St. Andrew’s teams and attended 3 Presbytery gatherings. I see the joy of working together, engaging in ministry together, and connecting with a beautiful and often hurting world. As I become grounded and “planted” in this community, I invite you to look for gaps in the community that need a sprinkle of compassion. Together we can make a difference where it may be overwhelming on our own.

The congregation has good ideas and strong leaders. Each of us do ministry wherever we are planted. We are woven into the neighbourhood already – like a vine connected to the branch of Christ – strengthening community with hope and faith.

Together in Service.

Laurie

Rev. Laurie McKay

Session Highlights March 2024



Two members of the Clergy Care Team of Presbytery joined us (Rev. Christian Persaud and Rep Elder Tom Paasuke) to talk about how Presbytery is restructuring, and how the Clergy Care Team will be interacting with congregations going forward.

We are looking at a potential program for single parents. Stay tuned.

We have disbanded the Mission Team of Session, and have established a new way to organize our mission work. Session has approved a new role called "Coordinator of Ministries of Mission." This role will be filled by Peter Coutts. Details are being finalized, and you will receive more information in the coming months.

We are also working to revitalize a 'Welcome & Connections Team.' More to come as team members are added, and they begin the welcoming and connecting work. Exciting!!

We are moving forward with next steps in welcoming LGBTQI+ within our community of faith.

We will be celebrating Communion on Thursday, March 28th at our Maundy Thursday service. There will not be a Communion service in April ~ we will celebrate Communion again May 5.

The Karl English Lounge is being painted this spring.

Debby Dorcas, Clerk of Session

Faith...

ELDER PROFILE

Judie Coleman

Judie grew up just outside Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Until she was eight, she attended a Lutheran church with her mother and siblings, after which they became members of the Baptist church. As a teenager, Judie regularly attended Youth for Christ meetings, and they had a big influence on her development as a Christian.

Judie and her husband Fred moved to Calgary in 1967 when Fred was transferred by his employer, Chevron Geophysical. They rented an apartment behind the old Holy Cross Hospital along the Elbow River where it was fun to watch the muskrats, kingfishers and ducks from their balcony in the summer and to ice skate on the river in the winter. At that time they attended Grace Presbyterian. They were transferred to Mississippi and Texas for several years, until Fred's company brought them back to Calgary in 1972. St. Andrew's was the closest Presbyterian Church to their new home, so they decided to visit, finding it a warm and welcoming community. Judie worked in the church office for close to 14 years in various roles and with various ministers, and retired as Office Administrator in 2009. She and Fred have two children, Steve and Sarah, and three grandchildren, Caleb, Ashlyn and Riley. When not involved at the church, she enjoys reading, crossword puzzles, playing Wordle and going out for lunch with friends – her favourite hobby.



On April 29, 1990, Judie was elected to the Session, and is one of the longest-serving elders. Over time she served on Mission and Outreach, Invitation and Welcome, and Worship teams. Supporting numerous initiatives by Session and congregation, Judie was part of the group that created many of the banners that are displayed in the sanctuary during the year, and has been involved with the newsletter since the early days when it was called News from the Pews. When she retired, Judie took on the role of Ministries of Care Coordinator, and has been serving in that capacity for the past 15 years. Under the Ministries of Care umbrella are eleven different care ministries, including Judie's hands-on involvement as the co-coordinator of Side by Side, and co-facilitator of GriefShare. She recently served on the Search Team that resulted in the call to the Rev. Laurie.

Judie values her time on Session, and believes that she has grown in faith and in commitment to the church over the years. So many worship services have been meaningful for her, and she is grateful that each minister has brought something special to St. Andrew's. Her long-time Session membership has allowed her a unique inclusion in decades of change and development at St. Andrew's.

Submitted by Barb English

FOLLOWING
JESUS
IN TODAY'S WORLD



News from Faith Formation

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!

Church School: Church School's official closing party for the summer will be on May 26, but a church school program will be extended in a multi-aged class through most of June. We will have additional items/busy activities available at the back of the church for children who attend service throughout July and August.

Youth Group: Planning for the Presbyterian Church in Canada's CY (now called UPLIFT) to be held at Brock University in St. Catharine's, Ont. in early July 2024, is well underway. Any interested families can connect with Lauren and Matt.

Take 150: This popular bi-annual event for children in Grades 1-6 was held on Saturday, March 16, 2024, with a St. Patrick's Day theme. We hosted a noisy and fun-filled evening meal and games and activities for the children. Inge Murray is our faithful key organizer of this popular event with assistance from Craig Murray, Shona and Carl Vandrascio, Rhonda Wishart and junior assistants Annika Thornborough, Braeden and Kaitlyn Werle and Josh Barrett. Debbie and Paul Draper kindly volunteered to provide a delicious meal.





Book Study for Raising Teens: A book study on Lisa Damour's *The Emotional Lives of Teenagers: Raising Connected, Capable, and Compassionate Adolescents*, is underway with the participants enjoying lively discussion and receiving valuable insights on a major issue in the lives of young families. The study is being led by Deanne Barrett who kindly volunteered her time and expertise in the area.



Adult and Children's Libraries: The adult library, in general decline in usage, was largely dismantled at the end of 2023, with most books given away. The FF Team did save some of the more current books which are now on the shelves and available to be borrowed at any time on the honour system.

The Children's Library has been reorganized and moved inside the main children's classroom on the lower level. This location will make for easier access by both the leaders and children. Thank you to Stephanie and Kaitlyn Werle for taking on this project.



Submitted by Your Faith Formation Team
Rhonda Wishart, Inge Murray, Debby Dorcas and Lorna Andronikou



Finance Team Report

Sustainability Fund

Financial viability is a continuous process at St. Andrew's. This article further discusses the Sustainability Fund, which was introduced and outlined more fully at the Annual Congregational Meeting on March 10, 2024. We would encourage you to take a moment and read the terms [\[CLICK HERE\]](#) which describe what it is, how it is funded, the decision-making process for any expenditures from this fund, and the accounting housekeeping to ensure transparency and accountability. (If you are reading this article in paper format the Terms of Reference can be found via this address: <https://www.standrewscalgary.ca/pages/annual-reports-financials-and-budgets>).



Why do we need this fund?

- It is an important financial resource which allows us to sustain St. Andrew's over the long term so that it can carry out its mission.
- It provides the financial agility to react to unexpected financial setbacks and avoid incurring debt -- a status we currently enjoy and guard. A recent example was the stress caused by the Covid situation.
- This agility may also be beneficial in allowing us to respond to any new (and as yet, unknown) opportunities.
- Partners want to know that their counterparts are viable over the long haul. As we continue to seek out and develop initiatives in furtherance of St. Andrews' mission, that demonstrated financial stability could be a key factor to qualify for grants, matching funds or third party gifts where we need to demonstrate our financial wherewithal as a condition of such funding.
- Finally, it is not intended that the Sustainability Fund replace or reduce the need for all of us to support St. Andrew's through annual stewardship.

We have the Legacy Fund. Why do we need this one?

The Legacy Fund is an endowed fund which means that only the earnings can be spent and only in the three permitted categories -- our Mission, our Worship and Ministry, and our Facility. Absent a donor designation, these are treated equally; i.e., about 1/3 of the available earnings are spent in each category.

The Sustainability Fund is not endowed (but will be invested) which means any of those funds can be utilized in appropriate circumstances. The fund is intentionally designed to have maximum flexibility, and the Session is charged with ensuring any expenditures from this fund are prudent.

The Sustainability Fund is funded mainly from surplus unrestricted operating funds. However, the Legacy Fund and Sustainability Fund offer two wonderful choices for potential donors to consider in their own gifting decisions.

If you have questions about the Sustainability Fund, any member of the Finance Team would welcome your contact.

Submitted by John Cuthbertson, Finance Team



GROW

Gratitude & Generosity

The following pages contain some tables and resulting graphs to help us draw conclusions about the trends in donations to the General Fund over a 5 year period from 2019 to 2023.

Our Gratitude and Generosity Team offers the congregation of St. Andrew's the following thoughts:

1. Although the numbers of donors have declined over 4 years from 275 to 187, those remaining and the new donors have largely offset the decline of 32% in donor numbers to minimize the decline in general fund donation dollars by only 8% (\$447K to \$412K)
2. We are grateful for the congregation responding to our challenges, both in response to the general fund and in special donations to other funds that have been established. In particular we note the 62% increase in the number of donors exceeding \$400 per month in General Fund donations. (from 16 to 26 donors)
3. The challenge ahead is to continue to share the message of Gratitude and Generosity, grow our congregation with the assistance of a new "Welcome and Connections Team" and become even more effective in our mission of being "woven into the neighbourhood, growing disciples who love like Jesus".

Please prayerfully review the tables and graphs, discuss them in any manner you think appropriate and take any action your heart feels necessary.

Expressing our gratitude is a gift to the giver.

-Sue Bender (Author)



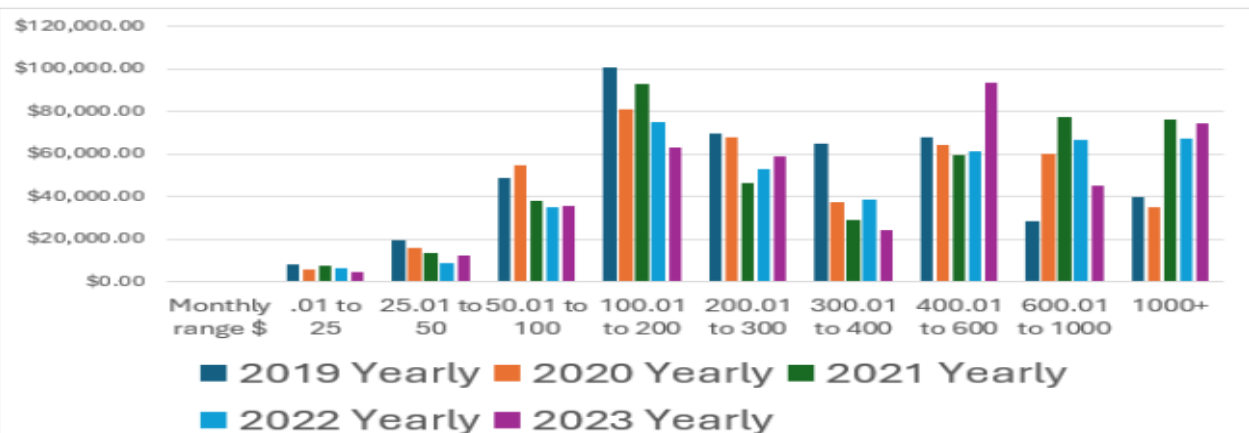


	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Monthly range \$	# of contributors	# of contributors	# of contributors	# of contributors	# of contributors
.01 to 25	64	54	43	43	36
25.01 to 50	44	34	29	19	26
50.01 to 100	54	61	41	38	38
100.01 to 200	58	45	52	41	35
200.01 to 300	24	23	16	18	20
300.01 to 400	15	9	7	9	6
400.01 to 600	11	11	10	11	16
600.01 to 1000	3	7	9	8	5
1000+	2	2	4	3	5
Total	275	246	211	190	187

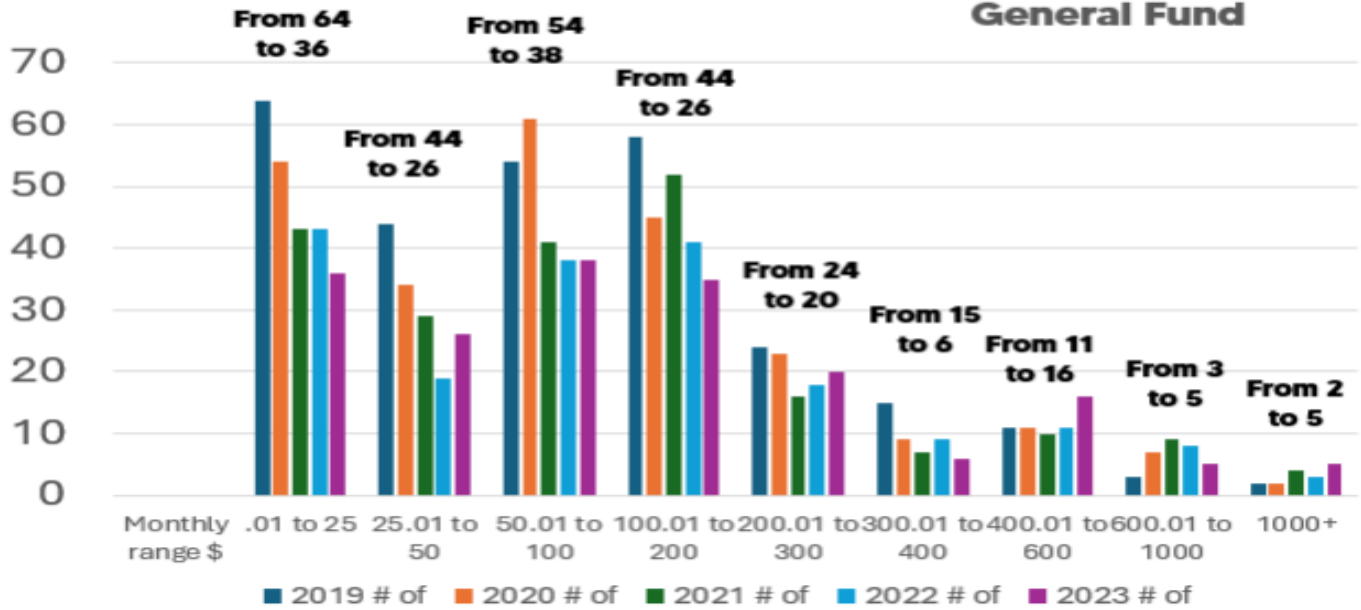
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Monthly range \$	Yearly Total Given	Yearly Total Given	Yearly Total Given	Yearly Total Given	Yearly Total Given
.01 to 25	\$ 8,008.60	\$ 5,851.48	\$ 7,293.78	\$ 6,382.01	\$ 4,309.99
25.01 to 50	\$ 19,614.50	\$ 15,946.19	\$ 13,641.29	\$ 8,706.52	\$ 12,063.05
50.01 to 100	\$ 49,025.00	\$ 54,877.38	\$ 37,868.00	\$ 35,264.84	\$ 35,600.05
100.01 to 200	\$ 100,391.93	\$ 80,982.21	\$ 93,064.07	\$ 74,827.47	\$ 63,227.42
200.01 to 300	\$ 69,646.01	\$ 67,997.36	\$ 46,130.77	\$ 52,756.61	\$ 59,149.52
300.01 to 400	\$ 64,675.00	\$ 37,681.46	\$ 29,091.43	\$ 38,859.36	\$ 24,355.00
400.01 to 600	\$ 67,631.70	\$ 64,190.42	\$ 59,678.62	\$ 61,453.34	\$ 93,687.11
600.01 to 1000	\$ 28,200.00	\$ 60,056.80	\$ 77,135.58	\$ 66,370.00	\$ 45,100.00
1000+	\$ 39,600.00	\$ 34,803.30	\$ 76,268.40	\$ 67,348.09	\$ 74,200.00
Total	\$ 446,792.74	\$ 422,386.60	\$ 440,171.94	\$ 411,968.24	\$ 411,692.14

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Monthly range \$	Mnth Avg /	Mnth Avg /	Mnth Avg /	Mnth Avg /	Mnth Avg /
.01 to 25	\$ 10.43	\$ 9.03	\$ 14.14	\$ 12.37	\$ 9.98
25.01 to 50	\$ 37.15	\$ 39.08	\$ 39.20	\$ 38.19	\$ 38.66
50.01 to 100	\$ 75.66	\$ 74.97	\$ 76.97	\$ 77.34	\$ 78.07
100.01 to 200	\$ 144.24	\$ 149.97	\$ 149.14	\$ 152.09	\$ 150.54
200.01 to 300	\$ 241.83	\$ 246.37	\$ 240.26	\$ 244.24	\$ 246.46
300.01 to 400	\$ 359.31	\$ 348.90	\$ 346.33	\$ 359.81	\$ 338.26
400.01 to 600	\$ 512.36	\$ 486.29	\$ 497.32	\$ 465.56	\$ 487.95
600.01 to 1000	\$ 783.33	\$ 714.96	\$ 714.22	\$ 691.35	\$ 751.67
1000+	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 1,450.14	\$ 1,588.93	\$ 1,870.78	\$ 1,236.67

Total Annual Donations from each category of Monthly General Fund Donations



Number of Donors per Monthly Range of Donations to General Fund



Below you can see one of the inspirational slides from the Presbyterian Church in Canada that the Gratitude and Generosity Team arranges to include each week in the “Loop Slides” prior to our worship service.

Stewardship Moment

The power of the future lies not in the hands of those who believe in scarcity but of those who trust God's abundance.

-Walter Brueggemann (Old Testament Scholar and Minister in the United Church of Christ)





Ronald McDonald House Blessings

In January of 2019 my family was living in Niverville, Manitoba. Niverville is roughly 15-20 minutes south on the highway from Winnipeg. It was at this time Andreas underwent surgery at the Winnipeg Children's Hospital to correct a premature fusion of his lambdoid suture due to a condition called craniosynostosis. He was in the hospital for four nights. As we were residing out of town at the time, we had the opportunity to access supports from Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) in Manitoba. I'm not sure what we would have done without them! RMHC provides families with a place to stay, where they can sleep, enjoy home cooked meals, do laundry, be supported by other families, and receive the care that can help make their journey a little easier.



(Andreas, January 2019)



(St. Andrew's RMHC volunteers from left to right: Margaret Bates, Rob Pollard, Pat Pollard, Sally Caldwell, Pam Livingstone, Audrey Cole)

Did you know St. Andrew's Calgary has been supporting RMHC dinner program here in Calgary through funding from the Ladies Guild since 1999? That's 25 years! According to volunteers from St. Andrew's, Margaret Bates and Pam Livingstone, "It is the highlight of our month to hear residents come into the house and remark on the welcoming aroma coming from the kitchen. Nothing soothes a soul better than a home cooked meal prepared with love." My family knows that better than anyone. Remaining well-nourished over those long four days was such a blessing.

Every year, RMHC produces a cookbook for anyone to easily access online. The cookbook is a wealth of recipes from RMHC sites across Canada. You can find the famous "Granny Cake" from our St. Andrew's volunteers on page 4. The link to download the cookbook can be found here: [RMHC Family Cookbook | RMHC \(rmhccanada.ca\)](https://www.rmhc.ca/family-cookbook). If you are reading this article in paper format, simply search "Ronald McDonald House Cookbook" into your search bar and you will locate it online.

While we enjoyed the safety and security of our space at RMHC in Manitoba, we would have so appreciated a well-known friendly face walking through the door of RMHC during our time spent there. Those friendly faces from St. Andrew's are highlighted in the photo above on the left. These folks inspire true missional work through their dedication and commitment bringing comfort and a sense of community to families in need. Thank you St. Andrew's RMHC volunteers!!

Submitted by Lorna AndroniKou

God be with you and
bless you
today

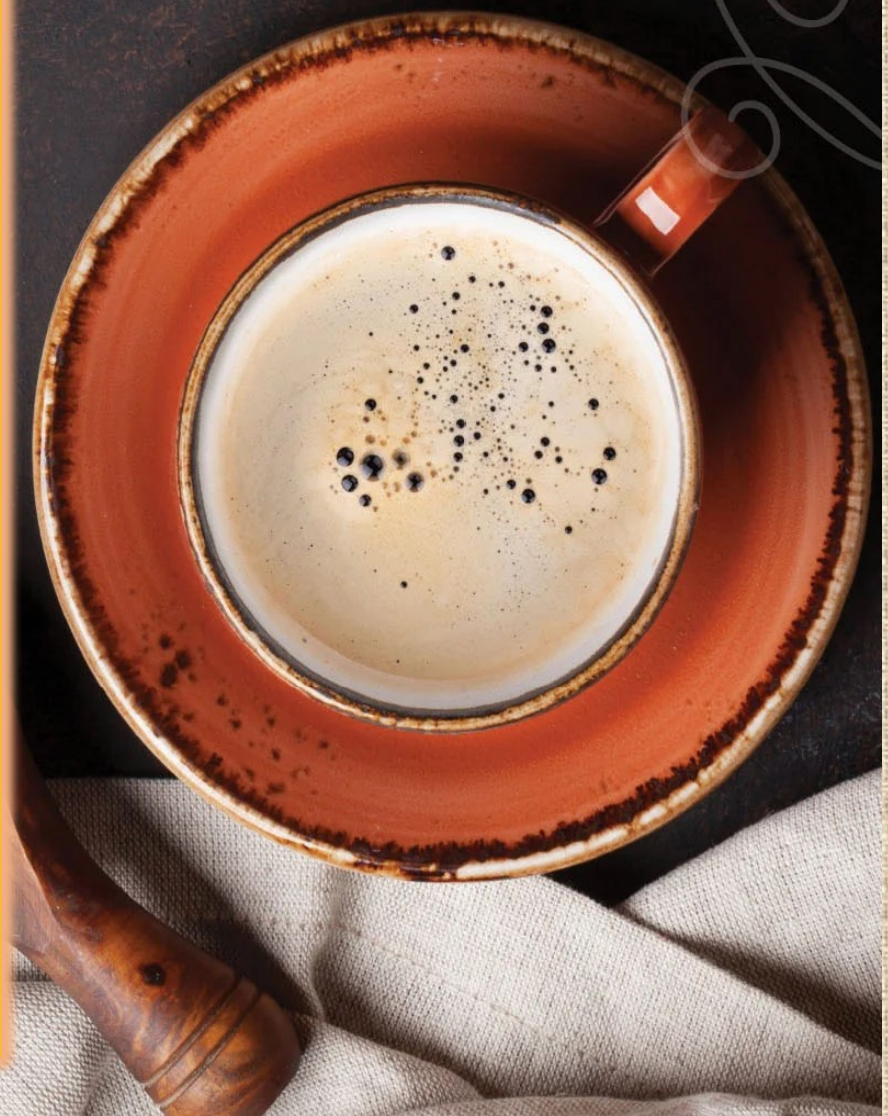
A Cup of God's Comfort

Someone who is grieving might think, "GriefShare – what an odd name for a group. Why would anyone want to share their grief? Grief is personal, private. People don't need to know how much pain I'm going through. No one else seems to have problems when they lose someone."

With permission of the author Becky Holland, I'd like to share the PresbyCan Daily Devotional from the PCC:

The first line of the email read: "Have you ever felt the weight of the world pressing in, drowning out the gentle whispers of God's love?" It was an email from a Christian clothing company, so I figured that it was some kind of pitch for a new brand of apparel that they were selling. I was wrong. It was a short devotional of encouragement for the reader. There was no sales ad embedded in the email, but there were two Scriptures that were unexpectedly applicable to my life.

Zephaniah 3:17 – The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing. (ESV)



Psalm 23:1-3 – The Lord is my shepherd; I have what I need. He lets me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside quiet waters. He renews my life; he leads me along the right paths for his name's sake. (CSB)

Life changed for me and my family in August, 2023, when my daddy died. It was sudden and unexpected, as we were unaware that he had the lung disease that took over. Grief wrapped around us, as it does anyone who experiences the loss of a loved one.

In these two passages, particularly the one from Zephaniah — "he will quiet you by his love" — I found the best promises of God. He is not quieting us by making us not speak, but by helping us to be at peace. Other translations speak of how God offers us rest and a spirit of calmness: "He will renew you with His love" (ISV) and "he'll calm you with his love." (MSG)

Be it sadness from the loss of a loved one, or for other reasons, we have hope that all will turn out to be okay, as God's plans are for us to have peace and to prosper. (Jeremiah 29:11)

My dad loved coffee. He found something comforting in sitting down with a cup of coffee at the table or at his desk. The cup of coffee was a cup of comfort for him.

Let us rely on God to be our cup of comfort whenever we need it, no matter where we are.

St. Andrew's will be offering GriefShare in the evening from April 1 to June 24, 7:00 to 8:30 pm in the lower fireside room. If you would like to register for this 13-week session please go to www.griefshare.org/findagroup. Type in your postal code, select or search for 'St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church'. For more information please contact Judie at pastoralcare@standrewscalgary.ca.

Facilitators: Alice Williams & Judie Coleman

Submitted by Judie Coleman, GriefShare co-facilitator

*He will quiet us with
His love.*





“Here I Am Lord”

A God Moment

Submitted by Judy McKearney

Back in the early 80's we lived in the town of Beaumont, Alberta, which is located on the outskirts of Edmonton. Beaumont had a population of approximately 1,200 people, and it was predominantly a French-speaking and Catholic Community. I was a busy young wife in a new home, and a stay-at-home mother with a baby and two toddlers.

One morning I noticed a poster in our Post Office announcing that there was interest in starting a United Church congregation in our town. While reading it, I sensed a deep urge to attend the meeting. As busy and content as my life was, I felt drawn to this initial gathering. There were four other people that showed up to learn more, one being a talented pianist.

We heard a representative from “New Church Development” with the United Church speak about the opportunity of starting a church group. We would have the availability of Sunday Supply ministers, a generous offering of funds, as well as contributions of hymn books, choir gowns etc. from established congregations in the area.

Leaving that meeting, we felt enthused! Strangers quickly became dear friends as we worked and dreamed together. The Beaumont United Church was born! We were offered a meeting space in the town's Elementary School, and each Sunday we transformed the gymnasium into a warm welcoming place of worship. Those days I was out most evenings with Council meetings, fund raising activities, and choir practice.

We left Beaumont in 1988 with a transfer to Calgary. I promised my husband, Blaine that I would just sit in the pew as a parishioner, and a month after attending Southwood United I was approached to sit on their council, which I did for 32 years. That God-directed fulfilling experience was the start of an exciting faith journey that continues to this day!

God taps us on the shoulder when it's least expected, and we answer “Here I Am, Lord!”

April 8th Heritage Seniors Luncheon

Monday, April 8, 2024 @ 12:00 pm - Trinity Hall

Comedy: Acting our Age

For tickets and more information call: Ron at (403) 720-0136

Deadline for ticket purchase: Thursday, April 4

WELLNESS TEAM

Heritage Seniors May 6th Luncheon

Our annual Spring health event will be held in conjunction with the Heritage Seniors luncheon.

Our guest speaker is Rev. Geoffrey Simmins. This year's topic will be "Advanced planning, conversations that matter". The topic is related to what type of information your family should know when you are no longer here to tell them.

Saturday May 11th

Heritage Seniors Strawberry Tea

1pm to 3pm - \$8 per person

Come to our art display, sale of crafts, books, jewelry, puzzles, games & bake table



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