



Sing Praises

June / July 2025

CONNIONS



ST. ANDREW'S

GROWING. LIFE. TOGETHER. WITH GOD

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A vibrant photograph of three kingfishers in flight over a body of water. The birds are captured in mid-flight, with their wings spread, showing a mix of blue, orange, and white feathers. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a natural, outdoor setting. The water below is dark and reflects the light, with some white foam visible near the bottom left.

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Message from the Minister

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God

- what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:2

Friends with Christ,

At Easter, the children released wind-up paper butterflies as a symbol of transformation. The disciple's sadness and grief turned to joy because of the resurrection of Jesus, their beloved friend and Lord. For some, it came in an instant. For others they were skeptical, and it took them time and the gift of Jesus' revelation before they believed resurrection not only **could** happen, but that it **did** happen. For all of them, they didn't know what difference that would make in their way of living. Like a butterfly escaping from the bonds of the cocoon, it requires struggle. Without the struggle, the butterfly's wings are imperfect and not strong enough for flight.

It strikes me that transformation requires wrestling in our minds and struggling in our hearts, with the impact of God's power raising Jesus from the dead. Paul urges the church in Rome to be transformed by the renewing of our minds to know God desire for us. Immediately following this passage is instructions on how we live as a community. We are urged to use our gifts and talents for the common good. We are advised to not think of ourselves more highly than we ought.

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; ¹⁰ love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. ¹¹ Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹² Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. ¹³ Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ... Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

These are good words to guide us in whatever struggles we have to live out the resurrection – as individuals and as a community.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada celebrates its 150th anniversary as a church. As we give thanks for faith and community, who are the people who have reflected grace to you? When has Christ "shown up" in your life? Are you in a time of suffering or celebrating right now? Thank God we are never alone!

Deep peace,

Laurie McKay

Session Highlights April 2025



- For the coming year, Lynn Judd will serve as St. Andrew's Representative Elder to Presbytery, and Audrey Cole will serve as Alternate Elder.
- On May 24th the Aboriginal Friendship Center is presenting their Red Dress Traditional Powwow at the Big Four Roadhouse. St. Andrew's will support this initiative by donating small items for a 'Giveaway'.
- The members of the congregation serving on St. Andrew's FUNdraising Team are: Cathy Millar, David Townsend, Mark Rowe, and Dolly Forcade. If you have any ideas for a FUNdraiser for our *Pave The Way Campaign*, please speak with one of the members on this team.
- Presbytery is having a retreat May 20 & 21 with a theme *Narratives of Hope and Possibility*. Rev. Dr. Jean Morris and Rev. Victor Kim (Principal Clerk) will facilitate the discussion. Rev. Laurie and Lynn Judd will attend.
- There are 11 people registered for the current GriefShare program.
- We will have a church picnic on June 22 following our morning worship service. Stay tuned for details.

Note: There was no Session Meeting in May

THANK YOU!



**for responding to our
Preliminary Conclusions:**



- People prefer to receive their communications primarily from LinX, ConnXions, Announcements from the Pulpit and Pre-Worship Slides.
- We appreciate your responses and will continue to provide these services.
- We are encouraged by the number of people who access our website directly.



Greetings from the Music Ministry

As we transition into the summer months, I'd like to give you a behind-the-scenes look at how we select music for our worship services.

Our process begins with the theme and Scripture readings for the Sunday, typically provided by Rev. Laurie. This foundational information guides our brainstorming and selection of musical pieces. For example, suppose one of the readings is Psalm 23, and the theme centers around: "As Christians, we are called to turn from being sheep to shepherds—moving from receiving to giving compassion and love."

With this in mind, I start by reading the passage and reflecting on the theme. Here's the familiar psalm:

*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside still waters.
He restores my soul; He guides me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil,
for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff - they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

From this passage, themes such as shepherding, guidance, restoration, and mercy stand out. I note these ideas and record them in our shared worship document—an evolving, collaborative resource accessible to our entire team. Collaboration is key; by pooling our diverse musical insights, we enrich our choices.

Some pieces that come to mind are: "The Lord is my shepherd", "Will You Come and Follow Me", "Lead Me, Lord", and "Let Us Build a House". When reading the psalm, I ask myself: What hymns or songs evoke these themes? For me, the ideas of leading, dwelling in God's house, restoration, comfort, and mercy resonate deeply. The piece "Let Us Build a House" is a contemporary hymn that beautifully embodies these themes:



*Let us build a house
Where love can dwell
And all can safely live.
A place where
Saints and children tell
How hearts learn to forgive.*

I love to open the service with such an inviting, uplifting hymn, setting a tone of warmth and inclusivity. It's a gentle reminder that our worship space is a safe, forgiving, welcoming community.

For the second hymn, I often choose a more contemporary piece or praise song—this adds variety and caters to different musical tastes. In this example, Rev. Laurie suggested “Draw the Circle Wide”, which complements the theme of inclusion and love beautifully. (Laurie has many great ideas!)

After the sermon, I select a reflective piece, in this instance one reinforcing the theme of being led or guided. “Lead Me, Lord” serves well here—a meditative song with harmonic richness, especially for our altos.

For the closing hymn, I favour something uplifting that the congregation can sing heartily. A classic hymn like “All the Way My Saviour Leads Me” leaves everyone with a sense of hope and joy, especially when played on the organ to send us forth.

Beyond these main selections, I consider other musical elements such as the offertory response—often a short refrain fitting the season; for Easter, “Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks to the Risen Lord” works beautifully. Our choral anthem, like “Family of Faith” on Christian Family Sunday, adds a special communal touch, especially with extra voices joining in. I feel blessed to work with our wonderful choir, which truly is at the heart of our musical life at St. Andrew's. Sharing Thursday rehearsals and Sunday mornings with them is a true joy.

This overview provides a glimpse into our thoughtful process of music selection. There are many considerations, and I'm always open to new ideas or hymn suggestions—if you have a favourite or something you think would resonate at St. Andrew's, please let me know! I love discovering new music to enrich our worship.

**Yours in music,
- Evan Mounce**



In February 2025, Deanne Barrett extended an invitation to the St. Andrew's Faith Formation Team to attend a lecture on Children's Imagination and Spirituality at St. Mary's University by Professor Kate Adams (from Leeds Trinity University). Deanne and I attended the evening listening to Professor Kate Adams talk about her research and experiences with children.

Kate's research specialisms are in children's spirituality and the implications for schools, with a focus on understanding spiritual and/or religious experiences from their perspectives. She works with children of all faiths and none, with a particular interest in those from no faith background. Areas of interest include young people's spiritual dreams, encounters with angels, imaginary friends/invisible companions and children's spiritual voice(s) which are often unheard.

When reflecting on the evening, Deanne and I contemplated what kind of conversations about God can be possible with our children at St. Andrew's. How can we create space to invite children to express their ideas and questions, and how can we value their voice and encourage confidence in their experiences.

During Lent, as I was preparing my lessons for church school, I felt the Spirit nudge me to create space for some kind of spiritual experience for the children during their church school classes. Having personally experienced a deep sense of God's presence when sitting in nature, I wondered if this could be a way I could have the children imagine Jesus with them.

The children and I talked about how God is present with us all the time, but sometimes it is hard to know He is there. I asked the children to imagine a place that they have been to, a place that is a happy, wonderful place where they feel calm and relaxed and safe. The children spread out in our room. One crawled under the table, one behind a couch, another lay on the carpet until everyone was settled in their spots. With our lovely lamps and computer that we purchased through use of the Legacy Fund, we created a calm space with soft lighting, battery candles and instrumental worship music playing in the background. The children closed their eyes, visualized themselves in their favourite spot. They then imagined Jesus walking up to them and sitting next to them, just like a friend. They were encouraged to talk to Jesus, to tell Him about their week, to ask Him for help with something that was difficult for them.

The Spirit was moving in our space, and I noticed there were some eyes welled with tears. Afterwards some of the children wanted to share their experience "I climbed up my favourite tree, I was at home in my living room, I was running through the trees with the squirrels and Jesus, I was sitting on the beach." It was inspiring to look through the lens of a child. I wonder how you as an adult experience the quiet awareness of God's presence and where your favourite place is to "Be still and know that I am God"?

Submitted by Inge Murray



In order for the City to evaluate increased parking, it is necessary to demonstrate that collection of all surface storm water is contained on the church property and does not run off into neighbouring areas. This requires a formal drainage submission involving the services of a consultant and considered a major consideration in obtaining the necessary permit approvals.

Unfortunately, the low grade level at the south end of the lot cannot be economically connected to a City drainage system and requires natural sub-surface dispersal. The existing catch basin in the parking lot is based on a self-contained rock pit containment reservoir, but during heavy rainfall evidence of surface wet spots occur at the lower end of the property and is unfortunately likely to continue.

On April 11th, application for a Development Permit was submitted with an expectation of a 120-day review period, with hopeful determination that would allow construction to start in mid-September ahead of any adjacent development of neighbouring properties. The proposal is based on the following:

- Creation of 13 new parking spots:
 - ◊ Nine paved spots near the Heritage Drive entrance.
 - ◊ Three gravel spots near the garbage enclosure.
 - ◊ One gravel spot adjacent to existing spots near the raised south planter bed.
- Reduced width of the present east paved parking lot to offset the lost landscaping area and new pavement added for the nine new paved spots.
- New extended landscaped area east of sanctuary.
- New fencing and reduced access width of present full-width exit to the south lane.
- Creation of a physical drainage containment curb at the southeast corner.
- Realignment of southwest gravel parking spots to conform with parking dimensions.
- Relocation of the large shed to restore the vehicle turnaround area.



The drawing on the right is in the main foyer showing the extent of the proposed parking development. New parking spots and new landscaped areas are in yellow. Existing landscaping is in green.

Let's all get behind the **"Pave the Way for St. Andrew's"** campaign! No amount is too small — or too big!!! You may donate online to **Pave the Way**, by cheque to St Andrew's (marked Pave the Way), or by e-transfer to:

treasurer@standrewscalgary.ca

Submitted by Tom McIntyre





Gather, Connect, & Celebrate Church Picnic Style!

Date: Sunday, June 22

Time: Immediately following the church service

Location: Trinity Hall (downstairs)

You're invited! Join the Welcome and Connection team for a time to gather, reconnect, and welcome one another into the joy of fellowship! Whether you are a longtime member or a newer face, we invite you to feel embraced, encouraged, and included. We will provide light refreshments, but each person is asked to bring their own lunch so we can enjoy a meal together in a relaxed atmosphere filled with conversation, laughter, and meaningful connections.

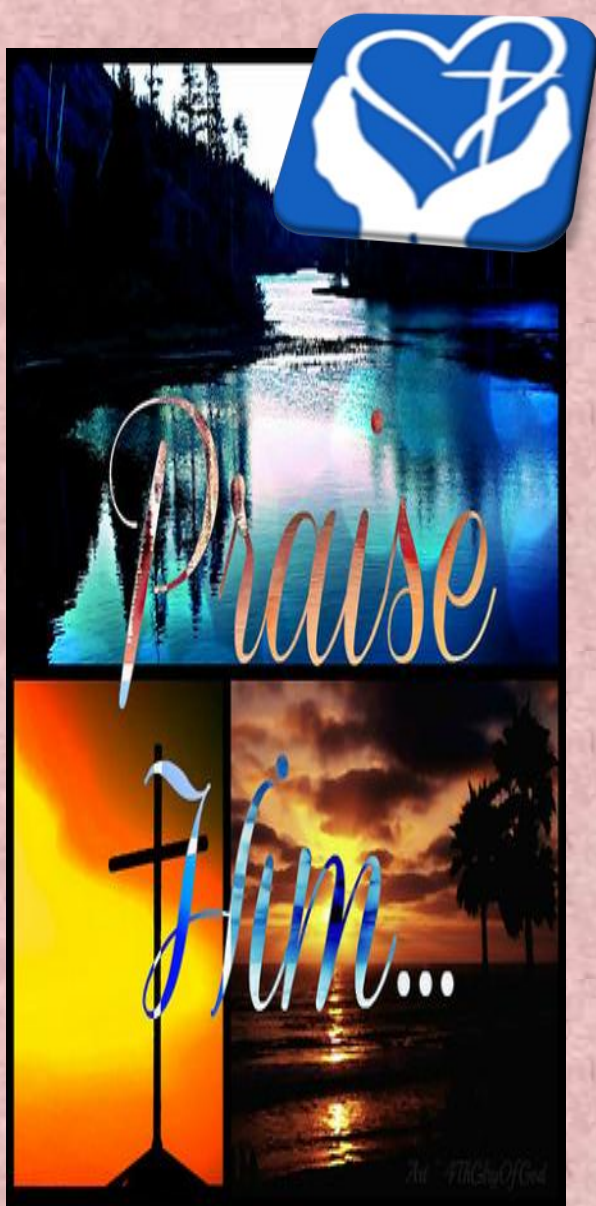
This picnic is more than just an event—it is a reflection of the early church's tradition of gathering in fellowship, as described in Acts 2:42-47:

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer... Every day they continued to meet together... They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people."

Like the early believers, we have the opportunity to share meals, deepen friendships and celebrate the joy of growing life together with God. This picnic is a chance to pause from our busy lives, enjoy one another's company, and experience the love of Christ through fellowship.

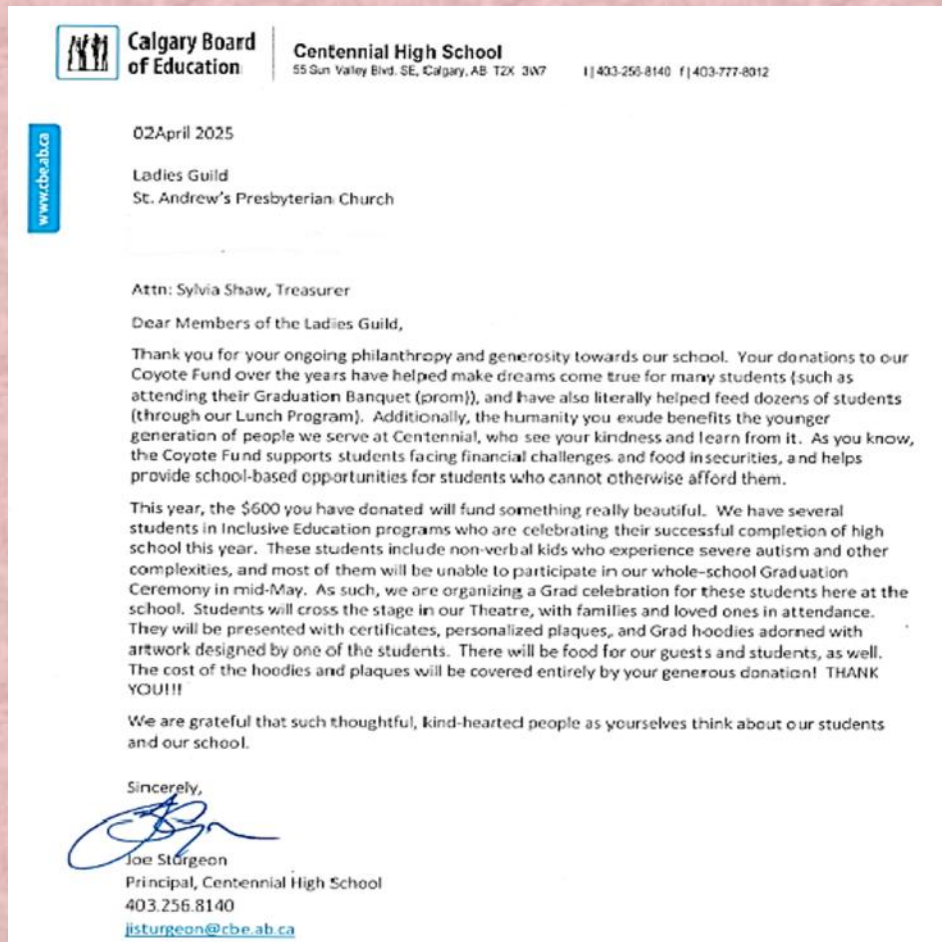
There will be activities for all ages, giving everyone the opportunity to engage, have fun, and build relationships that extend beyond Sunday mornings. Whether you're joining in friendly games, catching up with old friends, or meeting someone new, this gathering will refresh your spirit and strengthen our sense of community.

We can't wait to celebrate, connect, and grow together—see you there!



From the Ladies Guild¹⁰

Following is a re-print of a letter sent to the Ladies Guild from the Principal of Centennial High School in SW Calgary:



With your support of our fund-raising ventures, each year for the past many years, the Ladies Guild has been able to provide financial assistance to the Student Emergency Funds of some of Calgary's Public High Schools south of Glenmore Trail, namely Centennial (Sundance SE); Dr. E.P. Scarlett (Canyon Meadows SW); Henry Wise Wood (Kelvingrove SW); Lord Beaverbrook (Fairview SE), and more recently Joane Cardinal Schubert (Seton SE).

When the Guild disburses funds each year it is with the hope that those funds will be used in a way that brings honour to God through helping others. The message communicated in this letter of thanks certainly does that. What a wonderful celebration and recognition of these young people and their families!

So thank you people of St. Andrew's for your commitment in supporting the work done by the Guild and may we all continue to bring glory to God through helping others with our efforts.

Reminder about the Bazaar

As we finish up our spring cleaning and start planning for long relaxing summer days, we would ask you all to save those second time treasures that could use a new home, any fabulous summer books you would like to share, or any knitting or craft projects you may be working on in those lovely summer evenings. The annual bazaar has a way of creeping up quickly when summer ends. We pray you have a blessed summer whatever you do.

Submitted by The Ladies Guild



Men's Group - Visit to Nanton Museum

On April 12, 2025, a group from St. Andrew's Presbyterian church visited the Bomber Command Museum of Canada in Nanton. This event was organized by the Men's Group and brought together members for a day of learning and fellowship.

We gathered at the church's parking lot, where we shared some coffee and doughnuts before carpooling to Nanton. Upon arrival we were warmly met by two very experienced and passionate tour guides who took us around the facilities and shared with us some very interesting history and war experiences from WWII. We were deeply moved to learn about the sacrifices made by the men and women in the Canadian Armed Forces during WWII, with over 40,000 of them losing their lives in the pursuit of freedom.



Snowbirds have a strong connection to the history of No 431 Squadron RCAF, which was a WWII bomber squadron. The name inscribed on this snowbird is Captain & Pilot Dan Robinson. Dan grew up in Nanton prior to joining the Canadian Armed Forces. He flew Snowbird #4 during the 1996 and 1997 seasons.



The day was rich with Canada's aviation heritage showcasing our contribution in the fight against Germany in WWII. The combination of personal stories, preserved artifacts, and interactive displays transported us back in time. We were able to reflect on the engineering and the community which was responsible for designing, maintaining and operating these aircrafts, as well as the many sacrifices which men and women of Canada to bring about peace and freedom. Members expressed great appreciation for the experience, noting the powerful way the museum connects the past sacrifices to present freedoms. It was fascinating to see the progress fighter aircraft and equipment have evolved since.

Special thanks to Stephen Henrichsen for organizing the trip and to Judy Bridgemohan for this article.

Submitted by the Men's Group



One of the highlights of the tour was seeing the Torpex D1 bomb (torpedo explosive), which was used on the Avro Lancaster FM-159 bomber planes in WWII. These bombs were used as underwater munitions because the aluminium component made the explosive pulse last longer, increasing its destructive power.

The Harvard was a training aircraft during WWII. As part of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP) during the war, it helped to train more than 130,000 Canadian and Allied Forces air crew to become pilots, gunners and navigators.





The Willys MB and Ford GPW jeeps were prominent light military utility vehicles used extensively during WWII.

We saw a demonstration of the nose turret of the Avro Lancaster bomber. These turrets, each with two 0.303 caliber machine guns were designed for defense against enemy aircraft. The cramped conditions in the turrets, especially the rear and mid-upper, could be challenging for the air gunners, who often had to climb in through small hatches and work in cold temperatures.



The electronic sign is on its way! As you may know, a new electronic sign is being purchased by St. Andrew's thanks to the financing help of our Memorial Fund. Our latest information is that the parts have arrived in Vancouver port and National Neon is waiting for them to be shipped to Calgary. Once they arrive in Calgary, we will have a better idea of timeline for installation. Once installed, the new sign will make the dangerous task you see in the picture to the left **"obsolete"**!

Indigenous Relations Team

Our work to date:

St. Andrew's members have been lending helping hands and open hearts to projects with our Indigenous neighbours. In the April/May edition of ConnXions we reported on the winter clothing drive, the monthly soup making for the Aboriginal Friendship Centre and the weekly Neechi Mart held at St. Andrew's church. Since then, the Indigenous Relations Team (IRT) has been working with the Senior Indigenous Engagement Advisor at Heritage Park on ways we can volunteer to support the festivities there for the National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21. We are also planning an Indigenous focus for our June 15th Sunday service at St. Andrew's church.



In addition to the above initiatives, a few of the IRT members are participating in Hearts Exchanged (<https://www.crcna.org/hearts-exchanged>). This is a learning and action program designed to further equip churches to build relationships with Indigenous communities based on mutual respect and trust. It provides an opportunity for sincere and honest dialogue about the harms of colonialism and how to join on the path toward reconciliation. It aligns with "The Apology of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for its complicity in colonization and the residential school system" and in particular the Church's commitment to continue the work of reconciliation, responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action and the work of reparation that we have begun.

The Land We Stand On – writing our own personal land acknowledgment




As part of the Hearts Exchanged Program, participants are to write their own personal Land Acknowledgement. We are provided with excellent material that explains why we do land acknowledgements, why it is important, and a guideline on how to create our own. The foundation is Bible based including Matthew 5:23-24 and 2 Corinthians 5:18.

We have had several people provide land acknowledgements prior in our services. Increasingly they speak of their personal connection to Indigenous people and their journey along the Truth and Reconciliation path. A few months ago, Lorna Andronikou told us of her three identities - Canadian, social worker, and member of St. Andrew's – before making the following statement:

Whenever our land acknowledgement is given each week, I am reminded of the Indigenous people I have been privileged to know and how they have been impacted by both the former and current policies of our Canadian government and the systems they interact with daily which is different from my own. The land acknowledgement is a small step in my journey towards reconciliation, and I am honored to continue to be reminded that I need to take part.

On June 15th I will be giving my personal land acknowledgement which I am developing through the Hearts Exchanged Program. If you would like to know more about this program, please follow the link above or contact me at lh380871@gmail.com.

Submitted by Linda Humphreys



Our next ConnXions will be a September "Faith Full Fall" Issue. We invite you to submit your Summer Photos for a "2025 Summer Reflections" by August 15th.

Book Review



The Anxious Generation

ConnXions introduces a new column where any member of the congregation is welcome to provide a short summary of a book recently read that might interest some other members of the congregation.

Rhonda Wishart has offered the first summary of a book she recently read for her Book Club.

The Anxious Generation, How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness by Jonathan Haidt.

In this book, which frightened me for my grandchildren's generation, Jonathan Haidt describes what happens as a society moves from a play-based childhood to a phone-based one. He argues that the spread of smartphones, social media and over-protective parenting have led to a rise in mental illness among children and teens. Many readers see the logic in Haidt's arguments. Those of us in middle age feel adolescence was hard enough without the constant threat of online humiliation, the chase for "likes", the obsession with followers and the shallowness and speed of online communication.

Critics suggest Haidt has overstated the case but certainly the book provides good food for thought in letting children learn more from play and in shielding children from the addiction to phones for as long as possible. And certainly, if we are honest, it is not only teens who spend far too much time on their smartphones, mindlessly scrolling. In addition to Haidt's theories on the actual harm suffered by children and teens from a phone-based childhood, the book is a definite wake-up call as to how we might all better spend our time.

Submitted by Rhonda Wishart

Sing Praises to the Lord



is published every 2 months.
We welcome articles for the next issue
to be submitted by August 15, 2025 to:
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