



St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

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From your Elders...

Your elders met on March 6. We prayed for our church people, and the ministries taking place before diving into the business before us. Here are some of the issues we discussed:

Holy Week Services

In addition to the meaningful events being planned for Lent, we're pleased to announce the roster of special services for Easter:

- Hand Washing on Maundy Thursday, 7pm, Mar 28
- Good Friday communion, 10am, Mar 29
- Easter Sunrise communion, 7am, Mar 31
- Easter Egg Hunt, 9:15am, Mar 31
- Hot Cross Buns fellowship, 9:15am, Mar 31
- Easter Celebration, 10am, Mar 31

Community Chaplain

As we've been waiting on God's direction for our youth ministry, and looking for where the needs are in our community, Kailen Olson brought forward a proposal for a Community Chaplain role. In this role, he would connect with Wellington High School, and build on his connections with Tillicum Lelum Aboriginal Friendship Centre. He has many great ideas on what can happen. As we experiment with this model of youth ministry and first nations reconciliation, pray with us for God to lead us in the best way.

Property Upgrades

Our volunteer property team continues to address needs around our aging buildings with diligence and care. Repairs have taken place the furnace in the sanctuary, and the hall. They're getting a quote on upgrades to the hall's system. The metal roof has been leaking due to the aged screws and washers, a problem that's being addressed.

We are applying to The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Chisolm Fund to assist with the costs of these projects.

Congregational Camping, Labor Day weekend 2024

As new family joins us, we are adopting one of their great rhythms: an annual camping trip. This year's trip will be at Camp Saleh in Courtenay. It is an absolutely beautiful setting on the Puntledge River. For more information, contact Charlene Briese.

Hiring underway

The staff relations team continues with hiring for the office position. If you know of people who might be a good fit, kindly connect them through office@standrewsnanaimo.ca

Building Project Update

We've heard there may be some need for clarity on how we got to where we are on the building project:

When the congregation moved to this site in the 1960's, national church guidelines required they purchase two acres. As early as then, we were discussing what housing could look like.

In 2022, God led us to hold a needs assessment on our 2 acre property. We asked "what might God be calling us to do with our property." The survey was filled out by congregation members, neighbors, participants in programs run from our site like the food bank and community lunch. We spoke with businesses around us, and politicians from the City of Nanaimo.

The overwhelming majority indicated housing for low-income families and seniors was the primary need.

God hadn't called us to be landlords, or building managers. Our mission is to carry Christ's light into Nanaimo and the world. So, in October of '23, we signed a memorandum of understanding with Island Crisis Care Society (ICCS) to investigate building housing. They brought decades of experience in operating housing for the most vulnerable, experience in building housing, and were well known to BC Housing who we hoped would fund the project.

Next, we needed a builder. We interviewed Kindredworks, the United Church in Canada's property development agency. And, we met with Walter Hoogland. Walter brought decades of experience in BC, had worked with multiple projects and ICCS, and was familiar with navigating BC Housing. He was the clear choice to lead the build.

We would provide the land, Hoogland would build, BC Housing would fund it, and ICCS would operate the building.

We formed a Housing Liaison team (HLT) that would be the bridge between the congregation, Walter and ICCS. They led a Town Hall meeting where the hopes of the congregation were gathered. They also used a survey to get feedback.

With this in hand, the HLT met with Walter, Violet & Corrie from ICCS, and architect Maris MacDonald. A very tentative plan is being developed.

Next steps will be a meeting with the city of Nanaimo planning office to see what's possible, and BC Housing to see what they'll fund.

Once we know these, a firmer plan will be brought to the congregation for feedback.

Please continue to pray with us for God to lead in the way that brings the most good to the most people.

New Clerk

After nearly a decade as the session clerk, Bob Munnik is stepping down. He will continue to serve as an elder.

We are pleased to announce that Trudy Jager will be taking on the clerk's role. Trudy is a former teacher, having taught in international schools through much of her career. She brings a lifetime of experience with Christ, and years of church-work.

Upgrade to audio/visual system

We have approved purchases for some upgrades to the audio visual system, including replacing 30-year old sanctuary mics, and making it easier for at-home worshippers to hear the music.

Summer Camps

We are exploring whether to hold Summer Camps. There are still some variables that need to be settled. For more information, speak with Melanie, our Children's and Seniors' Outreach coordinator.

Discerning ways to nurture small groups

We are exploring how to better nurture small group life. Small groups connect people with each other, creating community and space for participants to grow in faith. For more information, connect with Melanie, the interim-discipleship coordinator.

Stolen Cheques and Actions Taken

It came to our attention that one individual had stolen some cheques from the offering plates in the foyer. We know this action arose out of desperate circumstances and are trying to help the individual to live their best life. Please pray with us for this person.

In the meantime, the situation has identified an area we need to improve our security, so financial gifts can be given confidently. We are working on a secure giving box that will be placed by the sanctuary doors to receive in-person donations. It is also a reminder that tools like Pre-Authorized remittance and e-transfers are safe, secure ways to make financial gifts.

Please pray for your elders

And would you pray for us as we answer God's call to lead St. Andrews? Bob Munnik (past clerk), Burnie Smith, Carol Klapstein, Fred Klapstein, John Fisher, Kailen Olson, Kate McIntyre, Meredith Reems, Peter Sinclair, Ron Membro, Trudy Jager (new clerk) and Rev. Jeremy Bellsmith (teaching elder).