

ST. ANDREW'S

FEBRUARY 2023

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LENT 2023

LENT EVENTS

- Fridays through Lent: Fish suppers at the Catholic Church!
- Wednesday Evenings during March: Online book study with the Being Good Relations Network. We will be reading & discussing Chelsea Vowel's informative & funny book, "Indigenous Writes." Please register by Sun. Feb 26 at: <https://form.jotform.com/230226266033042>
- Thursday Evenings, March 9,16,23,30: Online discussion group to follow up on worship themes. (Zoom link available on Sundays at worship and by calling or emailing the church office: office@lacombeunitedchurch.ca)
- Sunday March 12: PIE day worship
- March 25: St. Andrew's is hosting a Kairos Blanket Exercise
- April 7, 7PM: Good Friday worship

**LENT.
40 DAYS.
MY CHAIN?
ELECTRONICS
MY CHANGE?
UNPLUGGED BY 7 PM
(GOD SPEAKS. I RESPOND.)**



REFLECTION

REVEREND DAVE

The theme this year for Lent is “giving up our misery for Lent.” I hope that sounds neither “flip” nor joyless. The theme arises from that worship brainstorming session in January, where there was considerable interest in both spiritual healing and the 12 Steps of AA. It also resonates with some of my own thoughts, struggles, and growth over the past few years. This also might be the most challenging worship theme I have ever tried to tackle.

The basic idea is this: life sends all kinds of things our way. Certainly, life sends us all our share of painful experiences and circumstances. Pain comes to all of us – but we are the ones who turn that pain into suffering. You’ve probably noticed this! While some people seem to be able to rise above immense problems, and great pain, for others much smaller issues can drive them to depression, despair, suffering and bitterness. In your own life, you have probably noticed that some challenges energize you, and some knock your feet from under you. Why?

12-step wisdom (and generation upon generation of spiritual teachers in many different traditions) note the importance of something AA calls “stinking thinking.” When we are threatened, hurt, betrayed, abandoned, we experience the emotion that trauma brings. But emotions pass through us quite quickly. Our minds, however, lock onto the trauma and create a story around it. And then our minds re-tell the story, build on it, embellish it (he must have meant to hurt me, didn’t I notice something in his behaviour before this?) – and in so doing, we re-experience the trauma and deepen the injury and re-experience the emotions, over and over. We build up resentments that arise from the story in our minds. We suffer.

Looking deeper, there is a part of us (let’s call it the “ego”) that is threatened by pain, and a part of us (let’s call it the “soul”) that is not particularly threatened by pain. As I think about my own life, it is my ego self that is composed of my thoughts, experiences, aspirations and worries. It is my ego self that wants to be in control, that is afraid of pain, that is concerned about my achievements and reputation and comfort. It is my ego self that has an idea of what my life should be, and tries to control myself and all around me to make that life happen. For many and maybe most of us in North America, this ego self is all there is! We don’t pay attention to anything more. It is this ego self that we build as we build our families, careers, reputations, hobbies, circles of friends, and so forth. It’s not a bad thing – far from it! A healthy ego self is certainly helpful and probably necessary. But our ego selves don’t know what to do with pain, or with failure, or with loss, or with death. With these, our ego selves suffer, fight, avoid, and flee.

I know in my own life – and again, this is taught in a variety of forms by spiritual teachers in nearly every tradition – that there is a deeper self than our ego. Where our ego is separate (I am distinct from you and all else) our soul is connected (all my relations). Where our ego is afraid of pain, our soul accepts it, learns from it, grows from it. Where our ego wants control, our soul wants love and connection. Where our ego is attached to what it wants, our soul is free. Where our ego is afraid of change, our soul only knows change, only lives in the present moment. Where our ego looks at God as a possibility, out there, our soul is intimately connected with God, knows God right here. And where our ego is always up front and present, our soul is mysterious. Like an owl, it flies at night, unseen except in glimpses.

REFLECTION CONT'D...

REVEREND DAVE

I think it is the purpose of education, socialization, employment, to develop our ego selves in a healthy way. It is the purpose of religion to draw us into the life of the soul.

So where does addiction come into this? Addiction, for anyone who has knowingly experienced it, is a horrible thing. We become controlled by a powerful desire that has become attached to one thing, or one action, or one attitude. Our desire is actually not for whatever it is we're addicted to – we actually desire comfort, or connection, love, belonging – ultimately, it is probably God we desire. But instead of our true, ultimate desire, our thoughts and wants have become nailed to something lesser, an intermediary, a counterfeit. The counterfeit can never really satisfy, but we keep going back, time and again, repeating what does not satisfy, hoping somehow that the next one will finally be enough. All the while, our minds go crazy with the “stinking thinking” that produces suffering.

Addiction is the ultimate failure of the ego self. Out of control, in pain, sabotaging the very life that the ego feels it needs, unable by our own will or power to escape, locked in denial that makes our thinking false, addiction tears down every precious construction of the ego, and leaves us nowhere to go but to God and deep into our souls.

Reliable teachers (among them, Gerald May, M.D. and Richard Rohr) suggest that we all are addicted, in one way or another. That's hard to hear, but I am coming to believe they may be right. Gerald May, in *Addiction and Grace* writes: “addiction exists whenever persons are internally compelled to give energy to things that are not their true desires.” Think about that, and then think of how our society gives energy to getting richer, instead of getting happier. Think of how we want to build a sustainable society, but instead give our energy to the continuation of our exploitive, consumer, destructive economy. Think of how we want peace, but constantly wage, support, and foster war and division. How about you? I know that it often feels, at the end of the day, that I have frittered my energy into many things that have nothing to do with my deepest desires. Things that, in fact, take me away from my deepest desires.

So: this Lent, hopefully with some humour (because humour helps us see), we'll look at what's true about our lives, at what is making us suffer. And we will try to find our souls, our connection with God, and in so doing, I think we will find healing. For as Jesus said, “my burden is light, and you will find rest for your soul.”

Dave

FINANCIALS FOR JANUARY 2023

Income: \$22702.00

Expenses: \$23394.61

Deficit: \$692.61

FAITH & FAMILY

REVEREND BARBARA

It is a privilege to nurture with the Christian Development team, the Messy Church leaders, parents, grandparents and all who care deeply for children and families the spiritual formation of children right here at St. Andrew's. In this work I learn from the children and their families and also from the wise voices of our faith. In the next little while I want to share some of what I have learned via our newsletters.

Rev. Susan Lukey from High River in her book, *Adventures in Faith and Families*, offers the following: "Within every faith tradition, and beyond any faith tradition, there are four treasures: wonder, gratitude, service, and reflection. A family faith practice can reflect these four treasures, like points on a star, shining in blessing for the world."

Let's start with wonder. Invite your children to simply notice the sky. Is it ever the same? Look how snow covers a tree branch. What sounds do the winds make? Not only the amazing natural world gives us moments of wonder, but also the inside spaces of our own homes. Can you smell our delicious dinner? How come our beds are so comfy? What makes a hug feel so good? Let's wonder together in this incredible world of ours.

Blessings

Barbara

Come, come, whoever you are,
Wanderer, worshipper, lover of leaving-
it doesn't matter
Ours is not a caravan of despair.
Come, even if you have broken your vows a
hundred times
Come, come again, come.
Rumi

TECH TIP!

REOPEN A CLOSED BROWSER TAB

This happens all the time! You have a dozen tabs open in your browser and accidentally close the wrong one. You could open up your browser's history and reopen the tab from there, or you can do it easily with a couple of keystrokes.

Hit **Ctrl+Shift+T** on your PC or **Command+Shift+T** on your Mac to automatically reopen the tab you just closed.

MEN'S BREAKFAST CLUB!

FEBRUARY 11, 2023

The men's breakfast club got together on Saturday, February 11, at St. Andrew's. Volunteers take turns preparing the breakfast. Usually, about once a month the group gets together for some social time and a great breakfast. Five dollars is collected to offset the costs of the provisions. Although, whoever is making the breakfast would like to know approximate numbers ahead of time, you can just show up and be welcomed. Come out and join the group for the next breakfast.



LENT BROCHURE

LENT BROCHURES ARE AVAILABLE NOW, PLEASE PICK ONE UP FROM THE CHURCH OR CONTACT THE OFFICE FOR A COPY.

**LENT 2023 AT ST. ANDREW'S:
GIVING UP OUR MISERY FOR LENT**



LACOMBE & DISTRICT VOLUNTEER LINK

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our annual general meeting is scheduled for March 14, 2023 at SDA College Heights Church in the large basement room. It starts at 7:00 PM, please use the doors on the south side of the church by the parking lot or the north side doors. We will have a guest speaker - Karen Leung of A Better World. Refreshments will be served. All are welcome to attend.



LACOMBE & DISTRICT
VOLUNTEER LINK

LEARNING FOR LENT EVENT

PLEASE REGISTER BY SUN. FEB. 26TH, 2023 AT

[HTTPS://FORM.JOTFORM.COM/230226266033042](https://form.jotform.com/230226266033042) OR SCAN THE QR CODE.

The Being Good Relations Network Presents:


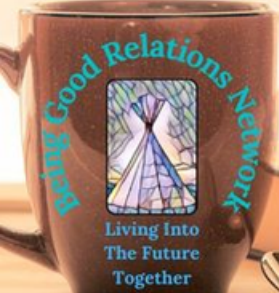

A Learning for Lent Event

Instead of Giving Up Chocolate This Lent, Why Not Give Up Myths & Misconceptions About Canadian Indigenous Issues?

Join Grace Hussey, BSW, RSW & Student Minister, to learn the facts about Canadian Indigenous Issues in a safe online space. We will be reading & discussing Chelsea Vowel's informative & funny book, "Indigenous Writes". Come to 1 or all 5 sessions & bring a friend! We hope to see you there!

Wednesdays, March 1st-29th, 2023
7-8:30 PM MST

Please Complete Registration by Sun. Feb. 26, 2023 at <https://form.jotform.com/230226266033042> or by scanning the QR code.



LEGACY FUND

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

At the Annual General Meeting held in January, the following disbursements were approved:

Community of Faith: A disbursement of \$2,086.00 was approved with the funds to be utilized to assist with the cost of an energy audit for St. Andrew's.

Lacombe & District Community: A disbursement of \$1,565.00 was approved to be provided to **The Broom Tree Foundation** in Lacombe.

World Community: A disbursement of \$1,565.00 was approved to be provided to **A Better World** based in Lacombe for its world projects.

There are many ways to give to St. Andrew's Legacy Fund, through regular givings, special cash donations, and through a bequest.

For more details, please contact Doug Maas at 403-782-1860.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

PLEASE JOIN US IN WELCOMING GARY MACDONALD (REPRESENTING PROPERTY) AND JANE WILKINSON (REPRESENTING UCW) TO THE ST. ANDREW'S BOARD! A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS FOR THEIR SERVICE.

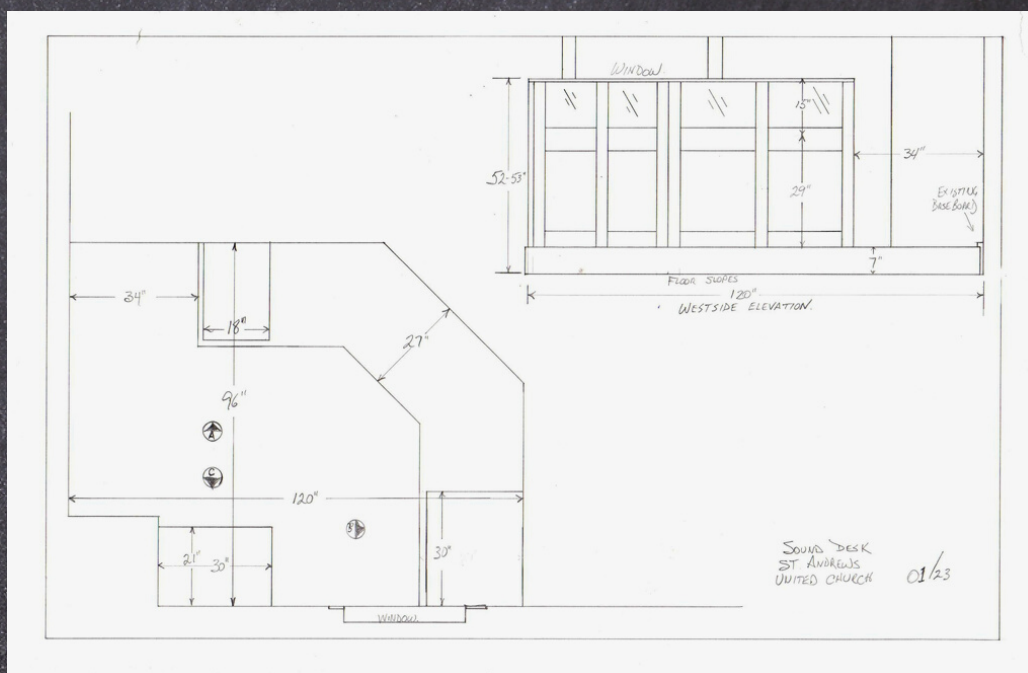
If you were unable to attend this year's annual general meeting, please contact the office if you would like a copy of the AGM report or the financial report.
office@lacombeunitedchurch.ca



AV HIGHLIGHTS!

NEWS FROM THE BACK OF THE SANCTUARY

The Board, at the last meeting, granted permission to have the AV desk and live-streaming equipment moved to the east corner of the sanctuary. This will free up space in the general area in front for walking and for the Children's Prayer Station. Dale Bolze will be moving the cabinets and Parkland Audio will be moving the cables for the computers and live streaming. Over the next couple of months you will see some changes. Stay tuned!



AV WORKER: TRISTAN MALONEY

Our very talented Tristan Maloney began working St. Andrew's AV in 2021.

Tristan is currently attending Ecole Secondaire Lacombe Composite High School where his favorite subject is science. Tristan's future plan is to get through high school and then wing it!

Tristan enjoys learning guitar and playing games. He has three cats named Echo, Pickle, and Sushi. Right now on Tristan's playlist you will hear some Guns N' Roses, Panic! At The Disco, and Michael Jackson.



Stop in some Sunday morning and say hi to Tristan! Thank you Tristan for all you do to keep our sound and online stream up and running!

UNITED CHURCH MISSION & SERVICE FUND

HELPING THE HAIDA PEOPLE

Donations to the Fund are helping Haida elders on Haida Gwaii teach the language, stories and songs to younger members of the Haida nation.

The Haida language is considered highly endangered, and lessons are taught by the elders in person and online.

This revitalization project is being led by nine elders with an average age of over 80. The online lessons reach young Haida all over the world.

Please consider donating to the Mission & Service Fund with your regular givings or special donation.

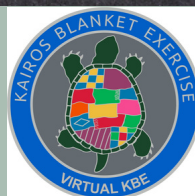
Submitted By Doug Maas
Chair - Outreach Team

BLANKET EXERCISE

KAIROS BLANKET EXERCISE

St. Andrew's will be hosting a blanket exercise on March 25 beginning at noon. Please sign up on the hallway bulletin board, or contact the office.

office@lacombeunitedchurch.ca



GARAGE SALE

FRIDAY/SATURDAY MAY 12/13

St. Andrew's annual garage sale will be held Friday/Saturday May 12/13. If you would like to volunteer please get in touch with Annerie anneriedunnewind@hotmail.com.

The prepping/working will take place from May 8-12. If you could please hold onto your garage sale donations until the week of May 8th, when we can put them directly into the auditorium. This saves our volunteers a TON of time and sweat not having to bring all your wonderful donations from the basement to the auditorium. We of course understand if you are not able to hang onto them that long and will start taking donations in our garage sale room in April.

OFFICE RENOVATIONS

CHANGES AHEAD

Thanks to a generous donation, in April you can expect to see some changes to the office on the third floor. To start with, the entry door will be expanded to a wheelchair accessible one with a feature stain glass in memory of Sue Bergen. To further enhance the work space, the inside will see a transformation with new paint, flooring, and some new cabinetry. All in an effort to make the office more inviting and functional for those working there and those who frequent it.

Our Office Renovation Crew

Jurjan Dunnewind, Jana Figursky, Hans Haefliger, Dave Homes, Linda Hueppelsheuser, Doug Maas, Lynn Miller, Karen Yakimishyn



SPRING CARD MAKING

I am planning a Spring Card Making afternoon at the Church on Monday the 27th of March (I hope the auditorium is free that day!) from 1-5 pm. Anyone is welcome and the supplies will be provided for each person to make a few cards to take home. If possible people can bring their scissors and glue, tape. Please contact me with any questions.

Submitted by: Lynn Millar

[403 782-0513](tel:403782-0513)

Ljmillar@telusplanet.net



TOBOGGANING

FEBRUARY 19, 2023

There was great fun and an awesome turn out for tobogganing on Sunday, February 19. Forty people attended. Thanks to all who came out, everyone had a blast!! Thank you to everyone who helped make it a success. Special thanks to Theo and Claudine Bruning and family for being such gracious hosts.



TOBOGGANING CONT'D...

