

Abundantly Blessed



October November
2026



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Message from the Minister ³

Ephesians 3:20-21.

“Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Beloved Church,

I want to say “thank you” for the privilege of serving with you at St. Andrew’s.

While at times it is intimidating to serve as the minister of a large and vibrant congregation, I remember that I do not do this alone. The leadership at St. Andrew’s is wise, compassionate, and balanced. This includes the elders, both those serving currently on Session and those who are leading in other ways, the ministers in association, all those who serve on committees and support programs, the youth and leaders, the children and teachers, those who guide the finance and manage facilities, create and run the sound and video, the staff, choir, and those who pray. Together we are the face of a loving Lord to a hurting world.

I want to thank you for the opportunity in my call to take one Sunday off each month to engage with the wider community as we become “woven into the neighbourhood.” These weeks I visit the wider community like the Mustard Seed, or meet with Indigenous or Sudanese elders. I am able to make pastoral visits, phone calls, and support members from both St. Andrew’s and the wider community. The pulpit supply is not only provided by our ministers in association, but those who are connected to our community. We are richly blessed by a variety of voices that preach the gospel. Thank you for encouraging and welcoming our guest preachers and leaders!

Study leave is encouraged for all ministers. This summer I learned about intercultural ministry as St. Andrew’s engages many different cultures. Currently we are intentionally engaging Indigenous, Sudanese, youth and the Queer community. Our ongoing work with seniors continues to bless and stretch us. How do we continue to create an inclusive community where people may be authentic and share their gifts in a way that reflects the diversity of God’s creation? There will hopefully be an Intercultural Ministry training opportunity through the Presbytery. Stay tuned!

I am reflecting on the strength of St. Andrew’s community. Watching so many serving with joy reflects the best of what a church community should be. People offer their gifts, notice a hurt that gets addressed, appreciate the big and small gifts given and celebrate the God moments that grace our life together. Thank you church for your generosity, your encouragement, and being Christ to a hurting world. I am very blessed to be in ministry with you!

Together in service,

Laurie

We are
abundantly blessed
so we can
FaithFully give!



The Joy of Christian Meditation

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On a lovely August morning, nine meditators congregated in a beautiful backyard of one of our members. Birds were singing, sun shining, flowers blooming, wind calm, no bugs, but there was a huge racket from machinery operating on the street and adjacent yards.

We settled into comfortable chairs in the gazebo and after sharing the reading of Matthew 14:22-23, prepared for our usual practice with music to listen to while we cleared our minds and opened our hearts to the presence of the spirit within us. An opening prayer was read, followed by a short reading and 20 minutes of silent meditation. Gentle music signalled the end of our meditation, and we ended with a closing prayer.



What was most fascinating, was that the “huge racket” from machinery had stopped as we started our practice and a gentle breeze like the moving of the Holy Spirit passed through the gazebo. We all commented on this as we shared reflections from the talk we had listened to and the time in meditation. This time spent in fellowship before, during and after meditation is a bond that grows deeper each week. We followed up with fellowship and good food before heading home, once again refreshed and filled with gratitude.

Several members of the meditation group have recently reflected on what impact meditation and this group have had for them. Here are some of those reflections:

Having had the opportunity to join with the meditation group for the past 18 months or so, I would say I appreciate how this practice has reminded me of the importance of purposefully slowing down, acknowledging God's presence in my life with the hope and prayer that He will help me continue to grow closer to understanding His word and purpose for my life. I am thankful to the other members of the group who have mentored me along this journey.



Another member made these comments:

I have discovered a new way to feel closer/talk to God, practice another form of prayer and found comfort in the company of others at various stages of spiritual journey. The featured speakers provide informative teachings, practical guidance and encouragement to practice, all of which have deepened my knowledge and understanding of historical and biblical stories.

I have learned another tool to release anxieties of the day and let God's plan work, and I have become a better listener by intentionally slowing down personal interactions.

The group exists with a 'No Pressure' attitude which is warm and inviting and a great way to start the week together with God. Here are some closing comments from another participant:



Over the years, the meditation group has been a constant for me in terms of fulfilling all that our closing prayer outlines, a spiritual home for me as a seeker of God, a group of friends with whom to meditate, and a guide for when life is overwhelming and confusing. I find it a place to be strengthened by the Holy Spirit. It is a way in which to open my heart to God and to experience His presence and peace, His love and acceptance. This awareness often carries through to other parts of my day and life, such that I am more open and present to others. I also am more aware of the various ways he makes His presence known throughout the day. Meditation helps me to be more aware and appreciative of the gifts He has provided to me, including the gifts of friends and family, a gentle breeze, the changing seasons, and the natural world around me.

I appreciate the support and consistency that the meditation group provides and have found that it allows for a deeper experience than I sometimes get when meditating just on my own. I find this has been particularly profound in the times when we have gathered together in person at Fish Creek Park, at David's home and most recently in my backyard. For our in-person gathering in August at my home, I was a bit anxious about the weather, the mosquitoes, the hornets, and then the mower! But once we started, all of that drifted away and I felt much peace, accentuated by the warmth of the sun, the gentle breeze and the people of faith around me.

Amen.

**Linda Humphreys,
Christian Meditation
Group Member**



Do you know Terry Zimmer? 6



Many of us remember Terry being recognized when she celebrated her ninetieth birthday last June. I recently spent some time with Terry to find out more about her personal history and her time at St. Andrew's.

Terry was born in Ponca City, Oklahoma and has good memories of happy times camping and fishing with her dad. Her father was an engineer and although he was too old to go overseas in WWII, he spent long periods away in Arizona testing war equipment. Terry attended Oklahoma University and then Trinity University in Texas where she majored in English while also studying journalism and history.

After graduating, Terry joined an oil and gas company. A few years later, she gladly accepted a transfer to Calgary. In the mid-1960s, Terry and a friend drove from Oklahoma to Calgary, not knowing the city nor anyone there. She remembers arriving and being guided to the Holiday Inn by a friendly truck driver. Soon after, she answered an advertisement for a fourth roommate in an apartment on the 14th Street hill and moved in. After all these years, she remains in touch with one of those former roommates.

Terry vividly remembers a young man appearing at her apartment door soon after she moved in. He was bringing a gift of eggs to one of her roommates and as Terry remembers it, kept hanging around for several weeks before asking her out. In Terry's words, "God knew what He was doing when He put Alf and I together." They were married at St. Andrew's in 1969.

Terry has been part of St. Andrew's since she arrived in Calgary, and she looks back fondly on the years she served as office secretary while Karl English was minister. She also remembers Frank Breisch and Bible study gatherings by the fireplace in the lounge. Terry later took the Stephen Ministry course and recalls working with Carole Morris in that role. She was an elder and remembers making many visits to members' homes.

Although Terry does not consider herself a farm girl, she spent 55 years on a farm in Shepard on the eastern outskirts of Calgary. Alf did the farming, and Terry handled the books and whatever else had to be done. She has wonderful memories of her farm days, such as being pregnant when one day a fire suddenly broke out threatening their buildings. The school bus driver happened by and stopped the bus so the students could help put it out.

After Alf passed away in 2024, Terry moved to an apartment on Shawnee Hill. She and Alf raised two children, both of whom live in Calgary and remain closely connected with her. Terry's daughter, Jennie, also helped her compile a fascinating family history tracing their roots back to the 1800s.

Terry keeps active with weekly attendance at two Bible studies and a book club. In her words,

***"I trust in the Lord, and He has given me a rich full life.
I am thankful for all the blessings bestowed on me
and my family."***

It was a pleasure to spend some time with this lovely fascinating lady. And she always pours a very generous glass of sherry.

Submitted by David Townsend





Memory Loss

WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR ABOUT MEMORY LOSS :

It is wise to know the signs that something more serious may be going on because the sooner you seek treatment the better.

1. If memory problems bother you, it warrants a conversation with your physician if only to make you feel better about normal aging.
2. If you are forgetting routine things such as medications you take or things you would like to be doing. It happens every so often but if it happens frequently, it is something to look into.
3. If you tell the same story over and over in a short span of time.
4. If memory loss comes on suddenly or after a medical procedure. It could be that when a person's system is stressed it may unmask something that was already developing.
5. If those around you notice some slips.

In addition, some warning signs are:

- misplacing things frequently with inability to retrace your steps
- not remembering some newly shared information such as a significant life event
- confusion about where you are or what year it is
- inability to carry out your usual daily tasks
- new difficulty in remembering certain words or familiar things
- a repeated decrease in decision making or judgement
- a strong and unusual change in mood or behavior
- a new withdrawal from social interaction or activities once enjoyed

Dementia is an umbrella term for a loss of mental function severe enough to get in the way of daily life.

The most common types are:

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

The most frequent cause, marked by sticky protein plaques and tangles that damage brain cells, leading first to memory loss.

VASCULAR DEMENTIA

Caused by strokes or blocked blood flow in the brain, affecting planning, focus and problem solving.

DEMENTIA WITH LEWY BODIES

Involves abnormal protein deposits that cause visual hallucinations, sleep issues, stiffness or balance problems.

FRONTO TEMPORAL DEMENTIA

Affects the front and side brain areas, often changing personality, behavior, and language skills in younger adults.

MIXED DEMENTIA

A mix of two or more types, most commonly Alzheimer's combined with vascular dementia. Doctors diagnose the different types of dementia using a mix of physical exams, memory tests, brain scans, and lab work.

Because no single test can pinpoint the exact cause, specialists look at specific symptom patterns and brain changes to tell conditions like Alzheimer's apart from vascular or Lewy Body dementia.

Submitted by the WellnessTeam

Memory loss prevention and ways to improve memory to be submitted in a later issue.

Side by Side



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Side by Side is a pastoral care and community outreach program for families living with dementia. It's for families who travel the very difficult journey of brain change.

We offer a day program where people living with dementia take part in encouraging fellowship in an informal and relaxed atmosphere. Enthusiastic and caring volunteers walk alongside participants as friends and neighbours.

Side by Side runs from 9:45 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. on Wednesdays in the K.E. Lounge from September to June with a break over Christmas. Each week includes spiritual nurture through a brief devotional time, conversational times over refreshments, and stimulation through music, puzzles, games, creative activities, Brain Gym® and gentle exercise. As a child of God, each participant is valued and cared for with dignity and respect.



Volunteers are the heart of our program and we have been blessed over the last 14 years with some of the best. This year has started with a few challenges for us as some of our faithful friends have had to take a break, or have moved away.

If you have 15, 30, 60 minutes or even a full day 9:45-2:00 on a weekly, bi-weekly or perhaps even a one-time visit, we would love to speak to you.

We have spots for friends to lead segments for Brain Gym®, devotions, exercise, sing-along (both song leaders and piano or another accompaniment). Baking 2 dozen muffins or cookies, providing a lunch for 20ish.

And of course, we have spots to be a one-on-one companion to our participants, to walk by their side each Wednesday. We can guarantee you will find a caring, welcoming group that will fill your heart as you help us reach out to others in our community. If this is something that you have been thinking of, this might just be the perfect time to respond to that "nudge from above." Come visit us on a Wednesday and see where you fit.

Volunteers are a big part of the program; we can't do it without you.



**Submitted by,
Audrey Mann and Judie Coleman**

Surviving the Holidays

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A GRIEFSHARE PRESENTATION

The holidays can be stressful and exhausting even on the best of times. There are many expectations placed on us to be busy, joyful, excited and happy.

Grief can make the holiday season more challenging, by amplifying feelings of loss whether that loss is recent or years ago. A loved one's absence can serve as a painful reminder and inevitable reality check.

We hope that this video presentation followed by a short discussion time will help those dealing with grief and loss to find some comfort, support and helpful suggestions on how to navigate through the holiday season.

Your hosts will be your GriefShare facilitators – Judie Coleman, Alice Williams, and Allie Turnbull. Come join us on SATURDAY DECEMBER 5, 2026 FROM 10-11:45AM IN THE KARL ENGLISH LOUNGE.

We ask that you register on the GriefShare website: www.griefshare.org / find a group or sign up in the foyer.

*Experience the
Abundant Flow of God's
Blessings*

September Session Highlights

Elder Retreat: Our Elder Retreat will take place on November 6 & 7. Please keep our Elders in your prayers as they gather to reflect, discern, and consider the upcoming work and ministry at St. Andrew's.

New Elders: We will begin the process of prayerfully considering and identifying six new Elders to serve in the coming year.

Retiring Elders: This year, we will be saying farewell to Audrey Mann, Judie Coleman, Debby Dorcas, Craig Murray, Lynn Judd, and Mark Rowe. We give thanks for their faithful service, leadership, and dedication to St. Andrew's, and pray God's blessings upon them as they complete their terms.

Neechi-Mart: Neechi-Mart is taking a break as they navigate a time of transition. We are grateful for their ministry and the ways they have blessed our community. Please continue to hold them in prayer as they discern the path forward.



Dec 2026 / Jan 2027

**Our deadline for
articles is Nov 15th**

By the time the October/November ConnXions is published there will only be 6 weeks to go until our annual Christmas Bazaar! This annual congregational event is scheduled for Saturday, November 14 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Things are well underway and as you can see from the photos our delicious Christmas puddings, and pastry for the tarts and pies have already been prepared!

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Ladies Guild





Once again, we're looking to welcome a variety of vendors and we need your support. Do you know someone with an interest in selling their unique product? We are hoping to attract bath and body products, wooden crafts, candles, etc. A poster and vendor registration information are attached and are posted in the Karl English Lounge. Please contact Wendy at wendy.mcnaughton@shaw.ca for more information.

St. Andrew's will have our own craft table and we're hoping that a number of you are already busy crafting, knitting, crocheting and creating items to add to this table. All manner of handmade items will be welcomed! For information contact Shelby at shelbyc@live.ca.

Posters are also available for you to take and distribute to others inviting them to the Bazaar, as well as post in your apartment building, local store etc. They are available at the Welcome Desk.

Details regarding dates and times for drop-off of the following items will be published soon in LinX:

- Baking, Jams, Jellies & Preserves
- Gently used books & jigsaw puzzles (NO ENCYCLOPEDIAS, TEXTBOOKS, MAGAZINES please!)
- Gently used household items & jewelry (NO ELECTRONICS or FURNITURE please!)
- Gently used children's books, games & toys.

We're all looking forward to another exciting and successful day. Thank you in advance for your continued support of the Ladies Guild.

Mark your calendars for upcoming meetings – to which everyone is invited!

Tuesday, October 13 at 1:30 pm in the Karl English Lounge

No meeting in November due to the Bazaar

Christmas Lunch scheduled for Tuesday, December 8 – venue to be announced

Sylvia Shaw
Ladies Guild Communications



is published every 2 months.
We welcome articles for the next issue
to be submitted by November 15th to:
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