

Please visit our website <https://wesleyunitedchurchstandrewsbytheseanb.ca/>
for any updates and information

The Gift and Curse of Uncertainty

“My scientist friends have come up with things like ‘principles of uncertainty’ and dark holes. They’re willing to live inside imagined hypotheses and theories. But many religious folks insist on answers that are always true. We love closure, resolution, and clarity, while thinking that we are people of ‘faith’! How strange that the very word ‘faith’ has come to mean its exact opposite.”

(Richard Rohr)

Ponderings

In the church, faith is about believing in something bigger than ourselves, that we cannot know with certainty, be scientifically proven or completely understood. Faith involves accepting the mystery that is the Divine in our lives. For many of us, this incorporates a surrendering of control and a learning to trust.

The pandemic tests our faith because it fills us with uncomfortable uncertainties and doubts. Many people respond to these stresses by seeking answers where there are only questions. During times like these our sense of desperation can lead us to become more deeply entrenched in fundamental ideologies. Some may even find themselves attracted to extremist perspectives that over-simplify issues and push specific agendas that offer false hope that we can change our circumstances if we only....

I empathize with protestors across our country and their very real feelings of pandemic fatigue. We are all tired of restricting our gatherings, touching, visiting, etc. We are tired of being afraid, worried, anxious about getting sick or making someone else sick. I miss date night, getting together with friends to play games, seeing family more readily. Like everyone, I am exhausted by having to constantly discern whether an activity or interaction is worth the risk.

Is it the government’s job to protect us from our own foolishness? Do vaccine mandates and passports infringe upon our rights? How does our faith lead us to best care for our neighbors?

Even though I have these feelings and questions, I know that camping out on parliament hill in Ottawa isn’t going to end this seemingly apocalyptic time we are living in. There is no going back now and nothing can return us to the time before Covid-19. Our world is forever changed and this is the reality and uncertainty we need to get comfortable with, in order to move forward in a meaningful way. We need to sit with our fear of what tomorrow might bring and trust that the Holy will give us the strength to face whatever may come next.

Though I know the vast majority of protestors are not racists or white supremacists, we do need to check our privilege and ask *why are we now motivated* to open our wallets and march in the streets. Why has this “injustice” inspired us to action more than unmarked graves of Indigenous children, more than black people being killed by police, more than our country’s drug overdose epidemic? Why this issue? Is it because it affects us personally and not just a marginalized group of racialized, economically disadvantaged people?

My faith teaches me that anything that hurts another is worthy of lending my voice and acting in love. Little in life is simple or certain.... except death and taxes. So, let’s avoid extreme ideas on either side of the spectrum and remember that we are one body, trying to do our best to survive this crazy world while spreading as much love and compassion as possible.

In the scriptures, hear the fear of Isaiah, his renewed faith and his call to be the voice of God for the people of Israel in his time. May it help us let go of our fear and take up our call for our time.

Rev. Natasha Pearen

Wisdom Teaching: Isaiah's Cleansing and Call

It was in the year King Uzziah died that I saw the Lord. He was sitting on a lofty throne, and the train of his robe filled the Temple. Attending him were mighty seraphim, each having six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. They were calling out to each other, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Heaven's Armies! The whole earth is filled with his glory!"

Their voices shook the Temple to its foundations, and the entire building was filled with smoke. Then I said, "It's all over! I am doomed, for I am a sinful man. I have filthy lips, and I live among a people with filthy lips. Yet I have seen the King, the LORD of Heaven's Armies."

Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. He touched my lips with it and said, "See, this coal has touched your lips. Now your guilt is removed, and your sins are forgiven." Then I heard the Lord asking, "Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?" I said, "Here I am. Send me."

Prayer

Great Mystery, thank you for the stories of prophets, who did not hesitate to answer the call to faith in you, the Lord of Love. Help us to take up the mission of love and mercy in our lives, as we refuse to let fear dictate our actions. Give us the strength of faith to examine our motivations, acknowledge our imperfection and strive to live in peace with one another. Amen.

Reflective Music

Peace by We the Kingdom (Bethel Music)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uW6xcmqfiY4>

Events and Announcements

Tax Receipts for donations will be available for collection at Wesley United from this weekend.

Black History Month February is Black History Month, and we will recognize the contributions of Black Canadians during our worship services this month.

In-Person Worship

We will be worshipping in-person this week (February 6th). 50% capacity with no singing

Wesley Board Meeting

Wed. February 9th at 7pm on Zoom

M&P Meeting

Tues. February 8th at 7pm on Zoom

Passamaquoddy Lodge Service

Thurs. February 10th at 10am

Book Study: *"The Gifts of Imperfection"*

Tuesday at 10:30am on Zoom, extended to March 15th

Oak Hill Annual Meetings

Feb. 6th 1:00pm at Oak Hill Hall.

In Person Worship

Sun February 13th - Wesley 9:30 & St James at Scotch Ridge 11:30

St. James Annual Meeting

Sunday February 20th

Reports are to be submitted to Karen Dempsey by February 13th. Thank you!

Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission Hearings

NB Power is applying for 25 year licence renewal. A webinar workshop on intervening at Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission hearings will be held on **February 7th** from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Learn more and register at <https://cela.ca/webinar-intervening-at-canadian-nuclear-safety-commission-hearings/>

ZOOM Worship

Sun February 20th 10am

. Please check our calendar on our website for any upcoming events or changes to events

<https://wesleyunitedchurchstandrewsbytheseanb.ca/events/>

Dedications are most welcome remembering, honouring, celebrating a special person, event or season! Please email wesleyunitedstandrews@gmail.com with your request. Thanks!

Photos or any other requests to go with dedications – favourite flower or season etc.....

Please send all announcements to: WesleyUnitedStAndrews@gmail.com State if you wish them to go on the Bulletin, the COOP, Facebook page, Website, or all four! (photos can be placed on all but the bulletin) Thank you!

PRAYER REQUESTS: may be given to our Prayer Circle by

1. contacting Barb King davebarbking@gmail.com
2. contacting Sharon Hannan retired@xplornet.ca or phone 466-1435
3. by asking any of us from Wesley/St James community to pass on a request

Sent to you by

Wesley United Church, 77 William St, St Andrews NB E5B1W8 and
St James Pastoral Charge, 731 Route 745, Oak Hill, NB E5A3C7

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