

# SAINTS ALIVE - April 2014



February and March were cold outside but there was much warmth inside. Here we see the ladies day speaker enjoyed by her audience.

It is lovely to hear SAYF musicians as the 5th Sunday praise team



Sound management is an important job at St Andrews to ensure all enjoy every service and event

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## Semper Reformanda

Random Ramblings from Pastor Sean

### Life in the "As Is" Aisle

*As I plan for a new series of messages in May and June, I have found myself being drawn to the idea of Biblical hospitality. What does it mean to truly be hospitable? How do we follow the example of Jesus who welcomed one and all into his circle of acceptance? What would it look like to be a church that takes this seriously in all we do? I think John Ortberg's book, *Everybody's Normal Until You Get To Know Them* (2009, Zondervan), does a wonderful job of helping us begin to consider what it might mean to love and accept people the way Jesus does. I have decided to present some of his words here, "as is." With love from your Pastor,*

### **Sean**

In certain stores you will find a section of merchandise available at greatly reduced prices. The tip-off is a particular tag you will see on all the items in that area. Each tag carries the same words: as is.

This is a euphemistic way of saying, "These are damaged goods." Sometimes they're called slightly irregular. The store is issuing you fair warning: "This is the department of Something's-Gone-Wrong. You're going to find a flaw here: a stain that won't come out; a zipper that won't zip; a button that won't butt—there will be a problem. These items are not normal.

"We're not going to tell you where the flaw is. You'll have to look for it.

"But we know it's there. So when you find it—and you will find it—don't come whining and sniveling to us. Because there is a fundamental rule when dealing with merchandise in this corner of the store: No returns. No refunds. No exchanges. If you were looking for perfection, you walked down the wrong aisle. You have received fair warning. If you want this item, there is only one way to obtain it. You must take it as is."

When you deal with human beings, you have come to the "as-is" corner of the universe. Think for a moment about someone in your life. Maybe the person you know best, love most. That person is slightly irregular.

That person comes with a little tag: There's a flaw here. A streak of deception, a cruel tongue, a passive spirit, an out-of-control temper. I'm not going to tell you where it is, but it's there. So when you find it—and you will find it—don't be surprised. If you want to enter a relationship with this model, there is only one way. "As is."

If you were looking for perfection, you've walked down the wrong aisle.

We are tempted to live under the illusion that somewhere out there are people who are normal. In the movie *As Good As It Gets*, Helen Hunt is wracked by ambivalence toward Jack Nicholson. He is kind and generous to her and her sick son, but he is also agoraphobic, obsessive-compulsive, and terminally offensive: If rudeness were measured in square miles, he'd be Texas. In desperation, Helen finally cries to her mother: I just want a normal boyfriend.

Oh, her mother responds in empathy, everybody wants one of those. There's no such thing, dear.

When we enter relationships with the illusion that people are normal, we resist the truth that they are not. We enter an endless attempt to fix them, control them, or pretend that they are what they're not. One of the great marks of maturity is to accept the fact that everybody comes "as is."

## From Bert Douglas—Director Family Ministries

### In His path

I can flip a switch, but I don't provide the electricity. I can turn on a faucet, but I can't make the water flow. There will be no light and no liquid refreshment without someone else providing it.

And so it is, in a limited sense, for the Christian with the ongoing grace of God. His grace is essential for our spiritual lives, but we don't control the supply. We can't make the grace flow, but God has given us pathways to connect to.

Our God is lavish in his grace, often liberally dispensing his favor without even the least bit of cooperation and preparation on our part. But he also has his regular channels. And we can routinely avail ourselves of these revealed paths of blessing, or neglect them to our detriment.

Such practices are not fancy or highfalutin. They are the stuff of everyday, basic Christianity — unimpressively mundane, but spectacularly potent by the Spirit. While there's no final and complete list of such spiritual disciplines, the long tally of helpful habits can be clustered into three big groups: hearing God's voice, having God's ear, and being with God's people. Or simply: word, prayer, and fellowship.

Zacchaeus may have been a wee little man, but he modeled this big reality by positioning himself along the path of grace. He couldn't force Jesus's hand, he couldn't make grace flow, but he could put himself along the path where Grace was coming (Luke 19:1-10). The same was true of blind Bartimaeus (Luke 18:35-43). He couldn't earn the restoration of his sight, but he could position himself along the route of grace where Jesus might give the gift as he passed that way.

On our Alpha, weekend away, teens were encouraged to place themselves in the path of God's grace—to enter into God's regular channels of grace. As they did, I was moved by the number of young people who prayed "Lord, I want to know you more". It was impressed on my heart just how miraculous their prayers were. In a world where it is easier to believe nothing, to ignore God's tug on your heart, or to just simply drift with the current of the prevailing culture, these youth chose

to take a weekend and give it to God. I am sure that their choices for God will pay dividends in their life.

God's immense flood of grace not only sees us as holy in Christ, but also progressively produces holy desires in us. It is grace to be forgiven of sinful acts, and grace to offer grace to others. It is through grace that we are increasingly "conformed to the image of his Son" (Romans 8:29), and by grace that he doesn't leave us in the misery of our sin but pledges to bring to completion the good work he has begun in us (Philippians 1:6). The choice to place oneself in the path of Jesus is transformational and life giving.

I do not know the twists and turns these teens lives will take. But I do know, as they travel, if they are intentional about their faith, about placing themselves within God's grace, they will journey life's path well. All of us need to be intentional about our faith, to choose to plug in, to pray Lord I want to know you more... Let me end with this encouragement to you the reader ....take time to place yourself in the path of Jesus.





# SAINTS ALIVE - April 2014

## Sermon Notes

**March 9, 2014, Ian Marnoch**

**Generosity: The Attitude of Christ  
Philippians 2: 1-13**

*What does it mean for us to be generous?*

If we look at Christ's attitude, we see that he humbled himself and ascribed unspeakable worth to others. He was God yet He took the form of a servant and gave His life to save our lives. Jesus looked to our welfare. He went to the cross so that we might have abundant life. How can we reflect that generosity to those around us?

Philippians was written while Paul was in prison and chained to his Roman guard. Philippians 2:12 & 13 in The Message reads as the following.

*"What I'm getting at, friends, is that you should simply keep on doing what you've done from the beginning. When I was living among you, you lived in responsive obedience. Now that I'm separated from you, keep it up. Better yet, redouble your efforts. Be energetic in your life of salvation, reverent and sensitive before God. That energy is God's energy, an energy deep within you, God himself willing and working at what will give him the most pleasure."*

It tells us to be energetic in our life of salvation living with enthusiasm that salvation entails. Are we doing that? What would life look like if we were? God is working through us. We should consider others better than ourselves and look to their interests.

**March 16, 2014, Ian Marnoch**

**Generosity: Generous Equality  
Psalm 113: 5-8; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15**

The early Christians had an attitude of generosity towards one another. They understood that they were all part of the same community in Christ. So that when the saints in Jerusalem were struggling, other communities, like the one in Corinth, send generous gifts to equal things out. The collection was for the benefit of the Lord's people. One communities' generosity inspired and spurred on generosity in another community. An attitude of gratitude for what has been given and an attitude of generous giving and sharing are outward expressions of God's love. The aim of such things is equality in such a way as to see that all are provided for.

When we place the worth of people above the worth of resources much can be accomplished.

Your plenty can supply their need

Their plenty can supply your need.

So all people can share in the full and complete life that God offers us. Paul tells us that if our attitude is right, our gift will be acceptable.

How can we at St. Andrews share our resources with the community around us?

Personal challenge: over the remaining weeks in Lent (April 20), if you can think of someone who can benefit from a resource that you have, take action. Display an attitude that willingly shares resources with others around us. Ian chose to give up 7 weeks of income from teaching piano to be generous to his students.

**March 23, 2014, Ian Marnoch**

**Generosity: Simple Generosity  
Psalm 96: 1-3; 2 Corinthians 9:1-15**

*Live simply so that you can be generous.*

Paul reminds the Corinthians of the enthusiasm and generosity and how it stirred the Macedonians to action. He is sending an advance warning that the time of collection is near so that they will be organized and ready for the collection when it comes. He reminds them that God loves a cheerful giver and that he who sows sparingly will reap sparingly. We have been blessed so that we can be a blessing to others. Generosity is described as sharing of blessings

Sacrificially giving comes from God when we have an attitude of Christ. It is a visible testimony to God's love of us. God has made us all rich so that our plenty will supply the need of others.

We often think of ourselves and consider what is best for ourselves and how we can shine. Instead we should consider how the team can do well and how each team member can shine. Through our attitude of generosity, our lives become a witness to the generosity of Christ a visible testimony to the work of Christ in our lives. When we embrace living simply, we are free to give resources to others whom we consider infinitely valuable.

Resources we can give include (but are not limited to):

- Money
- Time
- Compassion
- Hospitality
- Food

When others see what we do, they can praise God.

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## KIDS KORNER - #90

Read the passage below from Proverbs ch 2 vs 12-22. The words in **bold** type can then be found in the puzzle below. Words may be diagonal, forwards or backwards, up or down. There should be no unused letters left in the puzzle.

S	T	I	R	I	P	S	A	V	E	L
A	Y	R	I	G	H	T	E	O	U	S
H	O	U	S	E	T	U	B	F	P	D
E	U	E	R	A	S	U	H	T	R	E
C	T	W	I	T	H	T	E	F	I	L
I	H	N	L	L	I	W	D	O	G	I
O	S	T	R	A	I	G	H	T	H	G
J	W	I	F	E	E	D	A	M	T	H
E	T	N	A	N	E	V	O	C	U	T
R	U	D	O	O	G	R	I	E	H	T
H	T	A	E	D	A	R	K	L	A	W

<sup>12</sup> Wisdom **will save you** from **the** ways of wicked men, from men whose words **are** perverse, <sup>13</sup> who leave the **straight** paths to **walk** in **dark** ways, <sup>14</sup> who **delight** in doing wrong and **rejoice** in the perverseness of **evil**, <sup>15</sup> whose paths are crooked and **who** are devious in **their** ways. <sup>16</sup> It will **save** you also from the adulteress, from the wayward **wife with** her seductive words, <sup>17</sup> who **has** left the partner of her **youth** and ignored the **covenant** she **made** before **God**. <sup>18</sup> For her **house** leads down to **death** and her paths to the **spirits** of the dead. <sup>19</sup> None who go to her return or **attain** the paths of **life**. <sup>20</sup> **Thus** you will walk in the ways of **good** men and keep to the paths of the **righteous**. <sup>21</sup> For the **upright** will **live** in the land, and the blameless will remain in it; <sup>22</sup> **but** the wicked will be **cut** off from the land, and the **unfaithful** will be torn from it. © NIV

## SAINTS ALIVE - April 2014

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

The time has come when my school year draws to a close. With this comes a close to my internship here at St. Andrew's Islington and so I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to you for your support, prayers, and encouragement.

The Call to ordained, congregational ministry is not an event that happens once and then you are set for life (at least not in my case), it is a process. It is a process that began for me while in worship at the small church at my family's cottage. As the preacher delivered his sermon I became aware of a growing conviction that some day I would be the one standing in front of a congregation. That was (at least) twelve years ago. Over the past twelvish years I have tried to modify this Call, I have tried to run away from this Call, I have tried to ignore this Call ... however; God never ignores us. At the beginning of this year I had almost convinced myself that God had other plans for me, I would finish my studies and then see where God would lead me; (after all, he was surely not leading me into pastoral ministry!) But then I began my student placement here at St. Andrew's ...

At St. Andrew's I have encountered a community that earnestly desires to see its members live into the life in which God has called them. Through the encouragement, support, and prayers of everyone here I now have an affirmed sense of God's Call on my life into pastoral ministry. Once again, even though I have tried to fight it, God has found a way to penetrate my stubborn will and, through you, has let me see His will for my life.

The ordination process (i.e. the process by which the Presbyterian Church discerns its pastors) involves two aspects of Call. The first, as I described above, is an inner Call. In my case that inner Call is best described as a feeling of conviction and/or restlessness or unease. The second aspect is an outer Call. This is the affirmation from the community of that inner Call. This communal affirmation comes from the entire church family: from my home congregation, from my home presbytery, from the faculty at Knox College, from you here at St. Andrew's, and finally from the congregation that

eventually calls me to be their pastor. God has been using you in an integral (and monumentally formational) role in the ordination process.

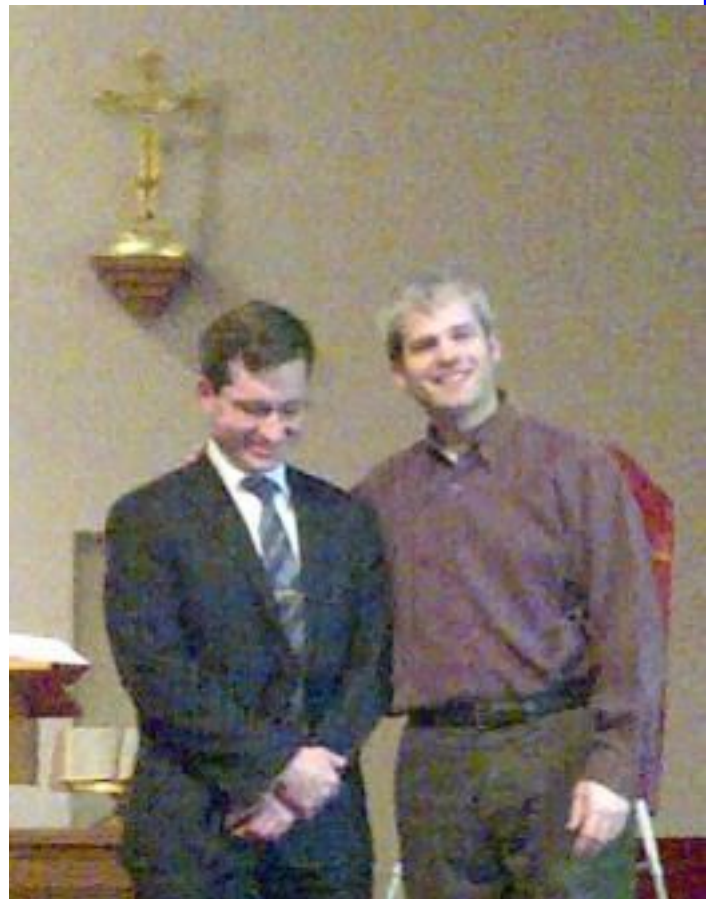
The past seven months have been very busy, very formational, and very exciting. Thank you all for welcoming me into your part of God's Community-in-Christ and for the role you have played in my discernment. I will not say Good-Bye because I am sure that I will be back to worship in the future, so I will simply say: God be with you.

Your brother in Christ,

Ian Marnoch

March 30, 2014 was Ian's last official day so we celebrated with cake and speeches.

Words of blessing were spoken in the service and afterwards.



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Words of appreciation and thanks were spoken by representatives of groups Ian was involved. Cake was enjoyed by all

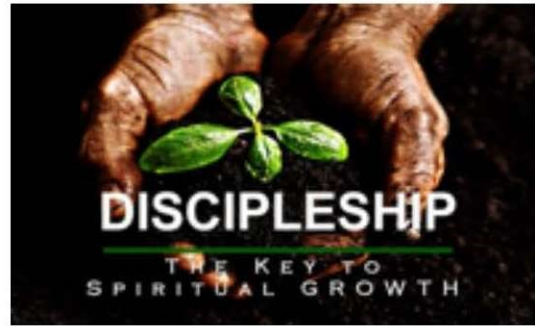


Kate, Glen & Caroline picked a good day to visit

Joanna & Aunt Angela Chen enjoyed the spectacle



# SAINTS ALIVE - April 2014



## DISCIPLESHIP—what it is and why it matters

“Discipleship” is a word we don’t use very much in conversation today, especially outside of church circles! So what does it really mean?

In Jesus’ day, ‘discipleship’ meant purposefully spending time with master teachers in order to become like them, and to participate with them in their work. Perhaps “apprenticeship” is the closest idea we have today. ***Jesus called people to be his disciples, so they could become like him, living in close relationship with our Heavenly Father, learning from the best teacher of all how to live in healthy relationships with each other, and taking our place in his Kingdom work.*** Jesus still calls us to be his disciples today. When we say we are “following Jesus” that’s what we mean! We’re committing ourselves to specific activities (sometimes called “spiritual disciplines”) that position us to learn and practice what he wants to teach us.

Another way of describing this is to say we are purposefully seeking ways of nourishing our spiritual growth and health.

The starting point for this journey is to recognize our need of him. We are hopelessly unable to live in relationship with God on our own, and so Jesus made the way for us. He dealt with our failure and our guilt by dying on the cross for us. When we trust in him to cover all our past, present, and future failures (or sin) he opens the door to us for a whole new kind of life! He called it “being born from above”. And when we trust him, he gives us the Holy Spirit to empower us to actually live in new healthy and joyful ways, as he would. This is what used to be called “holiness”. We have been set apart for God to live with him and to be transformed to be like Jesus in character.

***One of the most helpful disciplines for spiritual growth is to commit ourselves to a small group of fellow “followers” to encourage and stimulate each other on in this quest.*** You seek Jesus together, you listen to him, you ask questions, you test him out as you learn to trust him in the day-to-day activities of your life, and you challenge each other to keep yourselves on this path. Are you part of such a group? Would you like to be?

***Another way we can do this is to partner with a more mature Christian*** who can help us discern how God is working, right in and through our day-to-day circumstances; and who will challenge us to trust him enough to do what he shows us in those very circumstances.

***Discipleship Committee is charged with encouraging each and every one of you to pursue an ever-deepening and exciting relationship with Jesus. Please talk to any of us about how we can help you or your group in this quest.***

Blessings,  
Valerie Rennalls, Helen Coombs, Jim Watson, Marva Chung, and Shirley Herron



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## Ladies Day Apart Pictures from Jim Doherty



**Sharon and Joyce were on hand to register the guests**



**Beautiful flowers greeted everyone in the lobby**



**Jean performed the formal welcome and introduction of our guest speaker**

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The speaker -  
**Sheila Wray Gregoire**  
- had interesting things to say



**Gina Marie performed a wonderful dance**



**Helen and Regina led the music**  
**Norma played the piano**



**Maurice made the soup**



**Yvonne created beautiful floral arrangements**



# SAINTS ALIVE - April 2014



The men did the cooking and everyone enjoyed the lovely lunch.



# SAINTS ALIVE - April 2014

## Session News from Maurice Mawhinney, Session clerk

**Greetings to you, from your Session, at this Lenten Season, in the Name of Jesus Christ!**

Having gone through one of our colder winter seasons, with, at least, three polar vortexes passing over the GTA, the weather is sure to improve now with milder temperatures. The daylight hours are really now starting to extend well into the evenings, having just past the spring equinox. I noticed that the spring flowering bulbs are starting to shoot through the surface in the garden at the front and side of St. Andrew's – a sure sign of spring. God has it all planned as He displays His wonders of creation to us.

Over the past winter season, we seemed to have had an unusually large number of individuals who were sick, either hospitalized for a period, or shut-in at home. We trust that you are well on the way to full recovery – we have missed you, and we hope to see you back in attendance at St. Andrew's very soon!

Thanks are extended to those who participated in the recent 24 hours of prayer and fasting over March 21 and 22, 2014. While the sanctuary was open for prayer from Friday noon to midnight, and from Saturday 8 am to noon, we didn't quite manage to have complete prayer coverage over this period. However, we do thank all those who participated in the prayer time in the sanctuary, and for those members and adherents who took the time to pray at home during this 24 hour period.

We hosted another community banquet in early February. Our thanks are extended to all who participated in this event – from those who set the tables, to those who cooked and served the food, the table hosts, the musical team and those who cleared up - a BIG "thank you". Another community banquet is planned for April 26, 2014 so if you are interested in helping – please sign up on the bulletin board in the foyer.

For those of you who have not heard, or received a letter, Elaine Foo, a member of this congregation, and a missionary in Asia, has resigned from Operation Mobilization Canada, effective February 28, 2014. She is continuing to minister in Asia, but with a different mission organization. We pray God's blessing on Elaine, as she continues her ministry overseas. (Please see the article elsewhere in this edition of Saints Alive.)

At the March Session meeting, concerns were expressed about the continuing decline in our overall offerings, and where we were heading if this trend continued i.e. a possible deficit as at June 30, 2014 in the General Fund. Our special Easter appeal offering will thus be directed towards the General Fund rather than to the Mission Fund this year. All of our funds - General, Presbyterians Sharing and Mission - are experiencing shortfalls in offerings. Committee convenors are being encouraged to closely monitor future spending, and exercise prudence when preparing their 2014/15 budget requests. To keep the congregation informed of the latest financial position as we head into the last quarter of the "church" year, it was agreed that the latest financial position be integrated into the service on a regular basis (minimum monthly) through, for example, minute people and on the pre-service "loop".

The Session is still continuing to move forward on the committee program which it revealed at the Foundations event last fall. For your updated information, here is a summary of the revised team structure so far:

Team	Convenor(s)	Session liaison elder
Leadership	To be named	Jim Doherty
Family Ministries	Bert Douglas	Jane Cragg
Worship & Prayer	Laing and Yvonne Fleming	Gary Coombs
Community & Outreach	Ingrid Navidad	Karl Holloway & John Whitecross
Discipleship	Valerie Rennalls	Helen Coombs & Marva Chung
Service	Paul Rennalls & Norman Kerr	Paul Rennalls & Ken Kupisz
Stewardship	To be named	Maurice Mawhinney

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The convenors are presently building their team membership – some teams are further along than others, but it is hoped to include those who completed the questionnaires at, or following, the Foundations event in their preferred team or ministry area. The teams are also developing team objective and adding “the meat to the bones” in their ministry responsibilities. It is hoped to have the teams finalized and fully operational by the beginning of September.

In case you have not heard, Franklin Graham is planning a “Festival of Hope” event at the Air Canada Centre on September 12 to 14, 2014. There are a number of planning and training events scheduled over the next five months leading up to the Festival. The efforts of championing this event are being coordinated through the Discipleship and Community & Outreach teams. As a Session, we are encouraging our members’ involvement in the upcoming Christian Life and Witness courses (CLWC), and then to participate in the Festival. Please watch the weekly bulletin or contact the team convenors or session liaison for further details.

On Maundy Thursday, (April 17, 2014), we will be hosting a Seder supper in the fellowship hall at 6:00 pm. Registration is necessary to participate in this supper event, and a sign-up sheet is posted in the foyer. Then, on April 20, 2014, the Session will be hosting the Easter morning breakfast in the fellowship hall at 8:30 am (no registration is required – just show up!).

Sunday, June 22, 2014 has been scheduled for our annual planning meeting – please mark the date in your calendar now. The meeting, which will include a luncheon, will follow the morning service. The detailed plans and budgets will be presented for approval at this meeting. For those who are committee / team convenors, or program coordinators, if you have not already do so, you are encouraged to submit your 2014/15 budget requests to Johnson Paul, the congregational treasurer, as soon as possible, to ensure consideration for inclusion in the budget process. The Board of Managers and Session are in process of scheduling a joint meeting in late spring to consider the budget details and establish priorities with regard to capital expenditures for 2014/15 and beyond.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

Most of you will know Elaine Foo - a member here at St. Andrew's. In the fall of 2010 Elaine joined Operation Mobilization (OM) and since then has been serving the Lord in Asia. We imagine you are aware of the fruitful but challenging ministry she has had there. Elaine now feels called to leave service through OM and serve in a ministry at a Seniors Retirement Village - also in the same country. This decision was arrived at as a result of months of prayerful consideration and with the full knowledge of the Missions Committee. Her active service through OM ended on January 31, 2014 although, for administrative purposes, her 'end of commitment' date with OM is February 28, 2014.

We encourage you to continue supporting Elaine in her new ministry through prayer, on-going personal contact and financially (please contact Elaine for details on how to provide financial support). Be aware however that any financial contributions towards Elaine's support in her new ministry IS NOT eligible for a tax deductible receipt and also that as a church, we are unable to continue financial support to her due to restrictions related to our charitable status.

Thank you for partnering with Elaine.

Yours in Christ,

Jane Cragg  
Chair - Missions Committee

Maurice Mawhinney  
Clerk of Session

# SAINTS ALIVE - April 2014



Here we see Peter the newest grandchild of Ian and Judy Campbell with his two brothers

## Upcoming Events

- April 9, 2014, 1:00 pm** – Trillium meeting
- April 13, 2014, 10:00 am** – Palm Sunday; **7:00 pm** – Study of James
- April 17, 2014, 6:00 pm** – Seder Supper (**registration required**)
- April 18, 2014, 10:00 am** – Good Friday service, with the Sacrament of Communion
- April 20, 2014, 8:30 am** – Easter breakfast, hosted by the Session;  
**10:00 am** - Easter Celebration service (no evening service)
- April 26, 2014, 4:30 pm** – Community banquet
- April 27, 2014, 10:00 am** – Worship service, with healing prayer at conclusion;  
**7:00 pm** - Study of James.

Please check the weekly bulletin for updates of meeting events, times and places.

Or the Website: <http://www.standrewsislington.org/>

Did you know that this newsletter can be viewed in colour on our website ?

## From The Editor

Thanks to all who contributed articles, pictures and information included in this newsletter. This newsletter could not exist without your help. Thank you. Please continue to make your contributions by sending items to [kbond@softtek.ca](mailto:kbond@softtek.ca).

Contribute Hardcopy	E-mail (softcopy)	Publish on
May 18, 2014	May 25, 2014	June 01, 2014