



Galatians 5:22 and 23.
 “²² ..., the fruit of the Spirit is love,
 joy, peace, patience,
kindness,
 generosity, faithfulness,
²³ gentleness, and self-control.



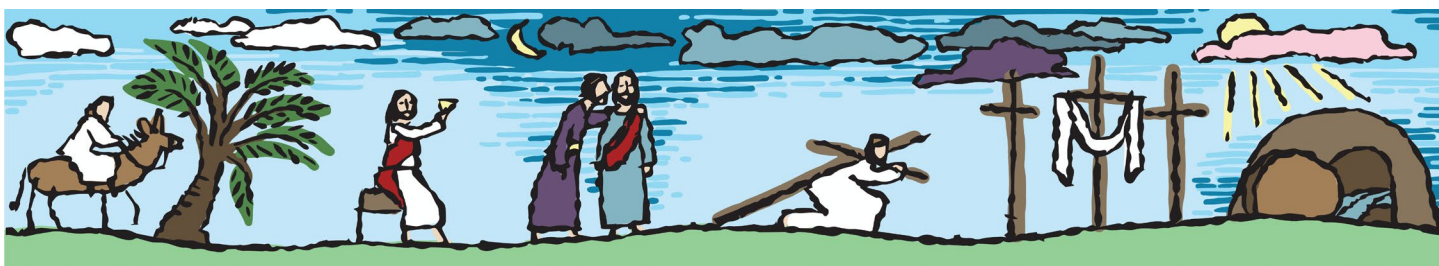
LENT Lent LENT Lent

Welcome to the Lenten Season!

As we continue exploring the fruit of the spirit listed in Galatians, we jump back to *kindness*, which would have been last September's theme had there been a newsletter then. Perhaps it's a coincidence of timing, but this theme feels very appropriate to the issue where we celebrate Leo Dawson and Sharon Adams, both of whom seemed to approach everything in life with kindness, and indeed much of the rest of the list above.

It also seems especially needed these days – as political maneuvering has become increasingly strident and divided in the past few years, approaching both policy and our neighbours with intentional kindness is equally important. May we be inspired by Sharon, Leo, and others in our community to take that kindness with us into the world.

- Scott Maitland, for the Editorial Team



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Please send comments, ideas, or articles for inclusion in the next newsletter to communications@stpaulsuc.ca

Submission deadline is May 9th.
 The theme for the Summer issue is **Faithfulness**

Fruit Flavour of the Month: Kindness

If love is, as I suggested a year ago, the predominant flavour of the Fruit of the Spirit it is good to ask what each undertone adds to that base flavour. What does kindness mean in conjunction with love, with the commandment to love each other as God first loves us?

Or to put it the way I did in my Google search: "why is kindness a fruit of the spirit".

As I was reading some of the articles in response to that search I was pushed to ponder a slightly different question: "what do we mean when we say someone is kind?", which led me to a new starting point (there is a reason writing this has taken all day today...).

In the last couple weeks of my vacation last summer I discovered a couple of YouTube Channels about etymology and found the topic quite interesting, so my eventual starting point for this newsletter piece was to go to the [Online Etymology Dictionary](#) and look up the word kind. Turns out the word has its origin in Old English. As an adjective the word means "friendly, deliberately doing good to others," and also "with the feeling of relatives for each other,". Kindness seems to have appears as a word around 1300 with the meaning "courtesy, noble deeds," with added meanings "*kind* deeds; *kind* feelings; quality or habit of being *kind*" showing up later in the 14th century.

All of which means *what* for the life of faith, for striving to live as Spirit-filled people?

It means putting love into action. Maybe kindness is love with flesh on. Maybe kindness can be as simple as putting the needs of others ahead of our own wants (or even needs). It could mean big grand things, or it can be as simple as holding the door for someone and other basic courtesies. Living as a Spirit-filled person pushes us to care for the common good, to worry about what is good for all of us, not just good for me. Kindness, is a choice to make that more than a theoretical position.

One of my Google results was from [GotQuestions.org](#). Normally this is not a website I find helpful as it tends to be much more traditional/conservative than I am but in this case there was a piece I found very helpful as we explore kindness as a flavour of the fruit of the Spirit:

When we exhibit the kindness of God, we are tender, benevolent, and useful to others. Every action, every word will have the flavor of grace in it. To maintain this attitude toward those we love is hard enough. To express kindness toward those who are against us requires the work of God ([2 Corinthians 6:4-6](#)). That is why kindness is a fruit of the Spirit.

We live in a world where kindness and kind people are sometimes most notable for their absence. In a world where more and more people are worried about getting what they want/need/deserve or a world where seeming strong and self-sufficient is highly prized being kind, worrying about what others need, can seem a little out of step with 'how the world works'. Or maybe we are just too busy to take that extra second or hour to do the kind thing. It is easy to forget.

However the way the Reign of God works is different than the way the world works. I fully believe that to follow The Way of Christ means we have different priorities. We are called to remain humble, realistic about our own importance; to act lovingly toward ourselves, family, neighbours, and enemies; to do the big and small things that benefit each other; to be kind, to deliberately do good for others.

Kindness adds sweetness to the fruit of the Spirit. Kindness makes the world a better place. Kindness keeps us humble (I believe it is harder to be kind when you are too full of yourself). I think kindness also helps keep us from worrying too much (or maybe worrying too much makes it harder to be kind – or maybe both).

Who was kind to you today? How have you chosen to be kind to someone today?

--Gord

CREATING HARMONY KEEPING CONNECTED

EVANGELISM, UNITED CHURCH STYLE! LIVING EVERY DAY TO ITS FULLEST

PASSION FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE BRINGING VISIONING TO REALITY

I'm missing Sharon today. We connected, first in choir where she sang alto, even though her vocal range was higher than mine. I'm thinking she enjoyed the challenge offered in learning the alto part... or maybe she just enjoyed creating harmony.

Later we worked together on Council, as she was already serving as secretary when I took on the role of chair of St Paul's Council. I certainly asked her if she'd be willing to Chair, but she was firm in her response that she had no interest in that role. Sharon was more than capable, but she preferred to lead from within, and make sure our documentation was in order too!.

When Presbyteries were disbanded, Sharon gave up her St. Paul's council secretary role, to help with Northern Spirit Region's formation. Of course she stayed on St. Paul's council reporting for UCW and communications ministry team. Sharon was all about communicating, and as newsletter editor, she kept us connected.

She supported St. Paul's becoming the first officially affirming church, north of Edmonton, and joined the Social justice and affirming ministry team (SJAM) officially after being our silent partner all along because she had a passion for making a difference.

Even last year, while walking her path with cancer, she stepped up when the Building transition task group was formed, because she wanted to see St. Paul's move forward in re-visioning our space and our role in this community, and she was committed to being part of bringing that visioning to reality.

Friday night line-dancing morphed into Friday pizza and games evenings. Both came to be because of Sharon's determination to reach out to our downtown community and invite people in.

Sharon and others made big bulletin boards for the reverse July 1 parade in 2020, passed out freezies, and created the St. Paul's "we are all treaty people" banner for the Indigenous peoples day parade... evangelism, United Church style!

Sharon helped broaden St. Paul's ministry. She did so many chores, big and small... counted offering, led services at St Paul's and in Senior's lodges, added graphics to PowerPoint slides, organized events and fundraisers... she said "yes".

Sharon reached out freely to connect with people and help where she could. It was only in these past couple months that she reluctantly, but with her characteristic determination and organization, handed off responsibilities, which she had "owned" with such grace. She wasn't happy needing/receiving help, even though she had spent much of her life helping others. She was determined to live every day to its fullest.

Her faith in a loving God was at her core, prayer was a practice she honoured and she lived her life creating a world that was safe and accepting of everyone. She loved her family so much and was so grateful for her time with each one. I'm so grateful that Andrew and Tristan were the "magnet" that brought Sharon to Grande Prairie and to St. Paul's United church.

I miss Sharon and I'll honour our time together, by being passionate about bringing my vision of how the world can be, to fruition.

- Karen Scott

REACHING OUT, INVITING PEOPLE IN SAYING...YES..

Around St Paul's



Sharing Communion



December's Outreach cheque for the Elders Caring Centre



Karen and Kayla lighting Advent candles



Congratulations Oseyi on winning Outstanding Citizen of the Year



Liam & Madison's birthday party



Kindness in action...and other fruits of the holy spirit filled the room as we celebrated the life of our beloved husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, and friend, Leo. There was gentleness in the hugs and words of condolence, peace in the prayers and benediction, goodness in the helpful support, faithfulness in the service of celebration, even joy as Martha and Leo took their last waltz together.

Memories and gratitude remain for the love shown for Leo and to his family as Leo passed into the "great mystery". Thank you so very much to our St. Paul's family for your spirit filled presence in our lives.

Sincerely, Martha Dawson

From the Internet – Submitted by Eileen McCollum

All About Kindness: Quotations, Reflections, and Photos

"We are made kind by being kind," and other quotes and reflections on kindness.



"Kindness is a language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see."
—Anonymous (often attributed to Mark Twain)

In other words, kindness is a universal form of communication. I hope this piece makes it come alive for you.

"My religion is very simple. My religion is kindness."
—The 14th Dalai Lama

There's a difference between kindness and compassion. Compassion arises when we reach out to help a person who is suffering and unhappy. By contrast, kindness is the simple act of being friendly to everyone we meet, whether they're suffering or not. In my book, *How to Wake Up*, I describe a kindness practice that I call *friendliness practice*:



As I turn the front doorknob to leave my house, I consciously resolve to maintain an attitude of friendliness toward all the strangers I see...If I'm waiting in line, I look at each person around me (unobtrusively, of course) and silently say to each one: "May you enjoy this day"; or "I hope you have fun today." I say whatever feels natural to me at the moment. Sometimes a negative judgment starts to arise when I first look at someone (isn't it amazing how easily we can judge people we don't even know?). When this happens, I silently say something friendly to that person anyway,

and the judgment usually vanishes.

I devised this practice so that I could turn being kind into a habit—as the Dalai Lama put it...into my religion.

"Kindness is within our power even when fondness is not." —Samuel Johnson

There's a quotation that's attributed to the Buddha that is often misstated this way: "Hatred does not cease by hatred, but only by love." The written record of his teaching, however, indicates that he put it this way: "Hatred does not cease by hatred, but only by non-hatred." To me, this second version is more realistic. There are some people in the world that I find it hard to love. But I've come to realize that when I direct hatred at them, I'm the one who suffers. So I cultivate non-hatred for them. In other words, I cultivate kindness.

"I've always depended on the kindness of strangers."

—Blanche in Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*

I've read this play several times and, in the context of the play, this is a tragic statement. But when I suddenly found myself surrounded by strangers during the traumatic years when I was seeking a diagnosis for my illness, I came to depend on their kindness to help get me through emotionally—a fellow patient in the waiting room who gave me a friendly smile, a lab technician who cared about my comfort. In turn, their behavior helped teach me to be kind to strangers.

"Kindness can become its own motive. We are made kind by being kind." —Eric Hoffer

This quotation echoes another of the Buddha's teachings—that what we do becomes the inclination of our minds. Both the Buddha and Hoffer are saying that whenever we're kind, we're strengthening our inclination to be kind again. We're planting a behavioral seed that can grow into a habit.

"Be kind to people whether they deserve your kindness or not. If your kindness reaches the deserving, good for you; if your kindness reaches the undeserving, take joy in your compassion."

—James Fadiman and Robert Frager, *Essential Sufism*

As kindness becomes a habit, we no longer need to figure out whether someone deserves our kindness before we offer it to them. Wouldn't it be wonderfully freeing if kindness and friendliness became our natural response to others as we make our way in the world?

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." —Aesop

Another saying attributed to the Buddha expresses a similar theme: "Drop by drop is the water pot filled. Likewise, the wise man, gathering it little by little, fills himself with good." In other words, *every drop counts*.

Here's another quotation that sounds this same theme:

"There is no small act of kindness. Every compassionate act makes large the world."

—Mary Anne Radmacher, American writer and artist

Finally, I'll leave it to Henry James to sum up this piece:

"Three things in human life are important: the first is to be kind; the second is to be kind; and the third is to be kind."

—Henry James

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Coming Events

Explore upcoming events at St. Paul's United Church and in the Grande Prairie community.

Weekly Events:

Sunday, 10 am – Worship in the Sanctuary
Tuesday, 7:00 – 8:30 – CGIT And Explorers
Tuesday, 7:00 – ZOOM Bible Study
Thursday, 10:30 – 11:30 – Music Mornings
Thursday, 6 pm – Tai Chi – East Basement
Thursday, 6:30 – 8 pm – Embers – Friendship Room
Thursday, 7:30 – 9:30 pm – Choir Practice



Wednesday – Saturday, 5 – 11 pm –
Card's Board Game Café is open – West Basement

Clairmont United Church

9915 100 Ave., Clairmont

Invites you to attend

SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER



Tuesday, March 4, 2025 at 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.
Pancakes, Eggs, Sausage, Fruit and Toppings
Tea & Coffee

Cost by donation

Everyone welcome

World Day of Prayer | March 7

Forbes Presbyterian, 7 PM

COOK ISLANDS 2025

"I made you wonderful" Psalm 139:14

Friday, March 7th, Forbes Presbyterian Church will be hosting the World Day of Prayer service at 7:00 PM.

Join us for an evening of worship, with participation from various churches in our city. Snacks and fellowship will follow the service.

This year's theme, "I Made You Wonderful," was prepared by the World Day of Prayer Committee of the Cook Islands and is based on Psalm 139:14:

*"I praise you,
for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."*

All are welcome to attend!



You are invited

Friday

03 14



Celebrate PIE Day!

Public, Intentional, and Explicit inclusion of the LGBTQ2SIA community and their Allies

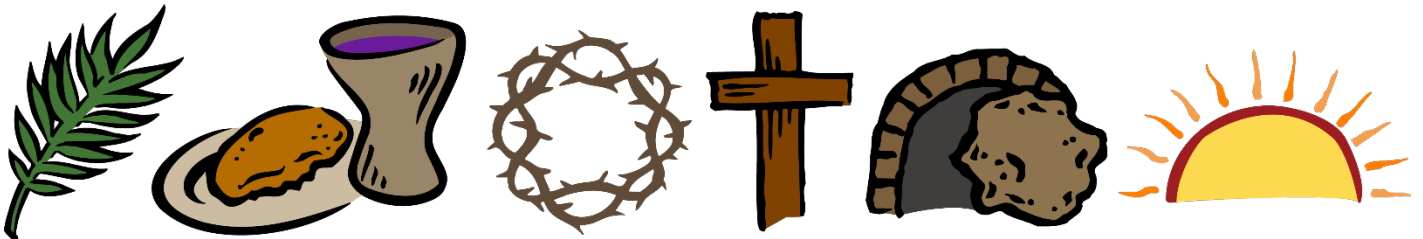
Join us for pizza pie and board games

5:30 PM in the Friendship Room

Holy Week Services at St. Paul's

As we prepare for Easter, join us in telling the story of Jesus' last days in Jerusalem, from his unusual entry, to Passover with his friends, to the sorrow and joy-filled days beyond.

- Sunday, April 13 – 10:00 AM
Palm Sunday, Palm Parade
- Thursday, April 17 – 7:00 PM
Maundy Thursday, Communion
- Friday, April 18 – 7:00 PM
Good Friday
- Sunday, April 20 – 10:00 AM
Easter Sunday Celebration



Coming Events



U of A Mixed Chorus and Handbell Choir

St. Paul's is once again privileged to host the U of A Mixed Chorus and Handbell Choir on **Tuesday, April 29th**. We have hosted these choirs several times and their concerts are always inspirational and very enjoyable.

We will be responsible for hosting approximately 50 students, providing supper Tuesday night, billeting, and a bag lunch for Wednesday.

Please mark it on your calendar to help out with billeting or food if you can, and come to the concert - spread the word and bring a friend!



Head to Saskatoon Island Park **June 5th to 8th** for a camping weekend, or come out for the Tri-Church Picnic on Saturday the 7th. Join in the fun and fellowship!



A "Save the Date" graphic with a black background and a multi-colored rainbow border. The text "SAVE THE DATE" is in large, white, bold letters. Below it, several colored circles contain event details: a yellow circle for "Party In White June 7", a purple circle for "Rainbow Bright Teen Dance June 6", a blue circle for "Crosswalk Painting Week of June 2 Weather permitting", and a green circle for "Family Carnival June 14". A small logo for "GRANDE PRAIRIE PRIDE SOCIETY" is in the bottom left. The website "www.grandeprairiepridesociety.com" is at the bottom.

June is Pride Month, and the Grande Prairie Pride Society has several events planned.

The month will kick off with repainting the **Rainbow Crosswalk** sometime in the first week, dependent on the weather. Stop by for a barbecue lunch and help with the painting! **June 6th** is the **Rainbow Bright Teen Dance** for ages 13-17, with free admission.

June 7th is their 18+ event, **Party in White**.

Finally, the **Family Carnival** will be **June 14th**, with free admission. As usual, St Paul's will have a booth at the Carnival – if you'd like to volunteer, speak to someone from the Social Justice and Affirming Ministry team.



St Paul's **Community Garage Sale** is planned for August. If you've given up something for Lent that it turns out you don't need back, or spring cleaning turns up items you're not in love with anymore, consider setting them aside for donation to the sale this summer. They could be just the thing someone's looking for!

Save your items
for our
Garage Sale



Friends,
There is a relatively common scam going around targeting people who are active in their churches. The scam is that you might get a text message claiming to be from the minister asking for a favour (usually to buy a bunch of gift cards). The text will usually claim that they can't talk right now because they are in a meeting. This will not happen. Gord (or pretty much any clergy person) will not suddenly make this sort of request, so ignore and delete the text. A similar scam has been known to happen with an e-mail request. A good way to check, other than your gut instinct, is to look at things like the sending info. Does the number or email address look familiar? Is the text written in a way that sounds like the person who is supposedly sending it would normally communicate?

To repeat, this is a scam. Just ignore and delete and go on about your day.



Here from the beginning / Ici depuis le début

*Celebrating the history of The United Church of Canada through the lens of Black people
/*
Célébrer l'histoire de l'Église Unie du Canada à travers l'objectif de la population noir



Get ready to be part of something extraordinary! We're shining a light on the untold stories of Black people in The United Church of Canada.

As we gear up for the 100th anniversary in 2025, we're announcing "Here from the Beginning" – an amazing exhibition celebrating Black individuals' remarkable contributions and experiences within the church. It's time to amplify these voices and showcase their incredible impact on our faith, history, and community.

We need your support to make this project a reality.

Join us in making history together! Donate now using this link

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/121450>

or use QR code.

***Let's tell history
together!***

All donations will be received by The United Church of Canada Foundation on behalf of this project.



SPONSORED BY



Lenten Calendar - 40 Opportunities to Spread Kindness

1 Draw your circles of support, who are they, deepen those connections

2 Create a generosity kit of things to hand out, take it everywhere

3 Make a local connection today. Deepen your roots in your home.

4 Find a need and meet it today.

5 Share food to deepen a relationship.

6 Write a letter of thanks for someone

7 Listen to those around you. Truly hear the person.

8 Text a positive affirmation to someone

9 Pay for someone's meal

10 Use your words to change something today.

11 Write a note to someone you think is a queer hero.

12 Give chocolate to someone who may need it.

13 Allow others to lead today.

14 Pick up litter from a public place today

15 Commit an outlandish act of kindness today.

16 Show your chosen family how much you love them.

17 Choose kindness today, go the extra mile today.

18 Buy Local

19 Offer gratitude to the barista, mail deliverer, sanitation worker

20 Champion local causes that support 2SLGBTQA+

21 Reflect on how you can lower your carbon footprint.

22 Notice everyday moments of grace

23 Let go of baggage love is all that you can't leave behind.

24 Stand up against Injustice.

25 Serve someone who serves you.

26 Send an encouraging email to someone who needs it.

27 Treat people who serve you with dignity and kindness

28 Reflect on the positives in your life

29 Send a gift of hope to an activist today.

30 Support a charity that works with the homeless.

31 Make someone laugh

32 Pay for a stranger's meal

33 Do an ethical inventory of your clothing. What is ethically made, what is not.

34 Pay it forward in the drive-thru queue

35 Connect with someone who may seem lonely.

36 Bake a treat for someone else

37 Connect with someone outside your friend circle

38 Let someone in line at the grocery store

39 Offer compliments today.

40 Reach out to someone who may be struggling.