St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth Sunday, May 10th, 2020 Season of Easter Series: Believe "Kindness"

Introductory Song: "O Breathe of Life, Come Sweeping Through Us"

(Click on the link below to play the hymn. The lyrics are on the screen.) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oAjmYffP0us

1.O breath of life, come sweeping through us,	2.0 wind of God, come bend us, break us,
Revive Thy church with life and power;	Till humbly we confess our need;
O Breath of life, come, cleanse, renew us,	Then in Thy tenderness remake us,
And fit Thy church to meet this hour.	Revive, restore, for this we plead.

3.O breath of love, come breathe within us, Renewing thought and will and heart; Come, Love of Christ, afresh to win us, Revive Thy church in every part. 4. Revive us, Lord! Is zeal abating While harvest fields are vast and white? Revive, us Lord, the world is waiting, Equip Thy church to spread the light.

Call to Worship

The love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us;

We dwell in him and he in us.

Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name;

Make known his deeds among the peoples. Sing to him, sing praises to him.

And speak of all his marvelous works.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty,

Who was and is and is to come.

Prayer of Invocation

Almighty God, we pray for your blessing on this church as we meet in our homes during this unusual time. Just as we are scattered and meet in many different places, So Lord we recognize that we are at many different places in our spiritual lives. Today may the faithful find salvation, and the careless be awakened. Today may the doubting find faith, and the anxious be encouraged. In this place may the tempted find help, and the sorrowful find comfort. In our homes may the weary find rest, and the strong be renewed. Here may the aged find consolation and the young be inspired; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn:

"Amazing Grace" (Robyn Mark)

(Click on the link below to play the hymn. The lyrics are on the screen.) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3yLV2M0rlc Amazing grace how sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me I once was lost but now am found Was blind but now I see

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear And grace my fears relieved How precious did that grace appear The hour I first believed

Through many dangers toils and snares We have already come 'Tis grace that taught my heart to fear And grace will lead me home

When we've been there ten thousand years Bright shining as the sun We've no less days to sing God's praise Than when we've first begun

Call to Confession

The psalmist testifies:

Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.
Happy are those to whom the LORD imputes no iniquity,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.
While I kept silence, my body wasted away
through my groaning all day long.
For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.

Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you. (from Psalm 32:1-6)

Prayer of Confession

Eternal and merciful God, you have loved us with a love beyond our understanding, and you have set us on paths of righteousness for your name's sake. Yet we have strayed from your way; we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, through what we have done and what we have left undone. As we remember the lavish gift of your grace symbolized in baptism, O God, we praise you and give you thanks that you forgive us yet again. Grant us now, we pray, the grace to die daily to sin, and to rise daily to new life in Christ, who lives and reigns with you, and in whose strong name we pray. **Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

You are not in the flesh;

you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you.

Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you. (Romans 8:9-11)

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One. For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory,

Forever and ever. Amen

Responsive Reading

- 1 LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory in the heavens.
 - 2 Through the praise of children and infants you have established a stronghold against your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger.

3 When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

4 what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?

5 You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor.

6 You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet:

7 all flocks and herds,

and the animals of the wild,

8 the birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.

9 LORD, our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Ministry of Music"My Tribute" sung by Sissel Kyrkjebo(Click on the link below to listen to the Ministry of Music.https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KcE5IIUL_fo

Scripture Reading:

1 Samuel 20:12-17

12 Then Jonathan said to David, "I swear by the LORD, the God of Israel, that I will surely sound out my father by this time the day after tomorrow! If he is favorably disposed toward you, will I not send you word and let you know? 13 But if my father intends to harm you, may the LORD deal with Jonathan, be it ever so severely, if I do not let you know and send you away in peace. May the LORD be with you as he has been with my father. 14 But show me unfailing kindness like the LORD's kindness as long as I live, so that I may not be killed, 15 and do not ever cut off your kindness from my family — not even when the LORD has cut off every one of David's enemies from the face of the earth."

<u>16</u> So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, "May the LORD call David's enemies to account." <u>17</u> And Jonathan had David reaffirm his oath out of love for him, because he loved him as he loved himself.

This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Hymn:

"Rising Sun" (All Sons and Daughters)

(Click on the link below to play the video. Lyrics are on the screen.) <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ofm_KNAxko8</u> Praise Him all you sinners

Sing oh sing you weary Oh praise Him all you children of God

We lift high His glory Shown throughout our stories We praise Him as the children of God

Our great redeemer Glorious Savior Your name is higher than the rising sun Light of the morning You shine forever Your name is higher than the rising sun Your name is higher than the rising sun

Praise His name forever Speak it loud and clear now Oh praise Him all you children of God

Our great redeemer Glorious Savior Your name is higher than the rising sun Light of the morning You shine forever Your name is higher than the rising sun Your name is higher than the rising sun

Hallelujah, Name above all Simply to speak your Name is praise Hallelujah, bow and always Forever we lift your Name in praise Hallelujah, our God you reign Simply to speak your Name is praise Lord

Our great redeemer Glorious Savior Your name is higher than the rising sun Light of the morning You shine forever Your name is higher than the rising sun Your name is higher than the rising sun Your name is higher than the rising sun

Hallelujah, Name above all Hallelujah, Name above all

"An Unusual Kindness" Believe Chapter 27

It may be just my imagination, but it seems like the word "kindness" has fallen out of favour and is not used as much as it once was. So it surprised me a number of years ago when someone told me that what I had offered to do was kind. It is not a word that I was use to hearing, and so I was surprised by it. Yet, all of us have experienced acts of kindness in our lives.

Over thirty years ago a young woman was driving alone at night in a rough area of downtown Los Angeles. She was driving an old Datsun 1200, the best car she could afford at the time. But it wasn't the best car to be driving in that section of L.A. Its condition mirrored the condition of the area she was in.

Catherine had exited from the freeway. As she braked at the end of the off-ramp the engine died suddenly. All the lights went out — headlights, dash lights — everything. Worse yet, the inside of the car began filling with smoke. She jumped out of the car only to see two men running towards her. One was holding a blanket that he had pulled from the trunk of their car. Catherine panicked, and her first thought was, "I'm dead." But the men pushed passed her. One popped the hood of her car. That's when she realized her engine was on fire. Flames were burning along the throttle line. The men used the blanket to smother the flames until they died out.

At any moment the car could have exploded killing these two men and Catherine. But it didn't. Within minutes the fire department had arrived, but the fire was already out by then. She found out later that another anonymous friend who was passing by had called them. The two men had saved her car, saved her livelihood, and likely saved her life. They had done something kind for her at the same time they were putting their lives at risk. Once it was all over, Catherine looked up to thank them. They were gone. Now she had a dilemma. She had no way to repay the men who had helped her. Since she couldn't do anything to repay them, she decided to return the favor by helping someone else. She started looking for someone who needed help as much as she did that night her car caught on fire.

Her first opportunity came when she helped a woman who was stranded by the side of the road. The woman kept asking Catherine how she could repay her, offering to give her money. Here's what she said about her answer:

"I wanted to hold onto the idea that I could send one more person into the world owing a favor to a stranger. "Don't pay it back to me," I said. "Pay it forward to someone else." Then I spent the next twenty years wondering what kind of world it would be if an idea like that caught fire."

Twenty years of thinking led to Catherine Ryan Hyde writing the book *Pay it Forward* which was released as a major motion picture in 2000. In it a young boy named Trevor explained his idea of how he could help change the world:

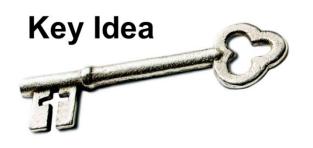
If someone did you a favor—something big, something you couldn't do on your own — and instead of paying it back you paid it forward to three people, and the next day they each paid it forward to three more, and the day after that those 27 each paid it forward to another three, and each day everyone, in turn, paid it forward to three more people, in two weeks that comes to 4,782,969.

His teacher said that it was an overly utopian idea. What do you think?



The idea sounds familiar, doesn't it? A young man has a mission to change the world. But he goes about it in a surprising way: *through kindness*.

Our Key Question this week helps us to focus on this concept. **"What does it mean to do the right thing? How do I know?"** Here is the Key Idea: **"I choose to be**

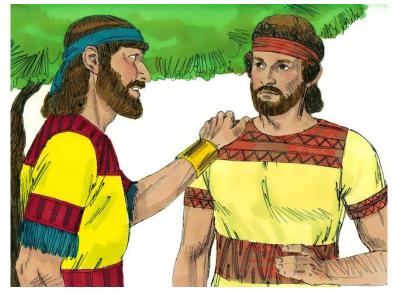


kind and good in my relationships with others." In order to flesh out this Key Idea we are going to turn to an Old Testament story. It starts with the story of David and Jonathan, but it doesn't end there as we will see. You will find that it starts in the book of 1 Samuel 20 (or page 441 of Believe). Jonathan was a prince – the son of King Saul and heir to the throne of

Israel. But his father Saul had not been faithful to God. He had acted unwisely and God had told him through the Prophet Samuel that his kingdom would be torn from him and given to another. That man was actually only a teenage shepherd boy when he was anointed by Samuel to be the next king of Israel. However, it would be years

before he would be crowned king.

In the meantime, David earned the hatred of King Saul, but the friendship of Jonathan. There is a specific biblical word that describes the relationship between David and Jonathan. It is the word "covenant". If you do not understand the meaning of covenant, then you will never understand the message of the Bible, nor will you be able to understand this relationship. In modern society, the proverb "**blood is thicker than water**"



is used to imply that family relationships are always more important than friendships. But in biblical times, blood covenants were not established between family members but friends. And when a man entered into a blood covenant with another, that bond was unbreakable and far stronger than any family relationships. After David killed Goliath, we read: <u>1</u> ... Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. ... <u>3</u> And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. <u>4</u> Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt. These were all well established symbols of the creating of a covenant. In the case of Jonathan and David, Jonathan was prepared to defy his father and give up any claim to the throne. He recognized that God's hand was upon David in a special way. You may remember that Jesus said, " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' " (Matthew 22:37) The last part of this saying is a quote from Leviticus 19:18. Some have suggested that there was a sexual relationship between David and Jonathan. Such a suggestion shows a complete lack of understanding of the biblical teaching on covenant and of the language that is used here.

There is one particular passage that I would like to draw your attention to. When Jonathan and David part, Jonathan makes a request of David. Actually, if we understand covenant, we will realize that this is no request. What Jonathan asks for is a solemn vow and promise on the part of David that is more binding than any legal document. The background to this passage is Saul's hatred of David and his desire to kill him. **May the LORD be with you as he has been with my father. 14 But**



show me unfailing <u>kindness</u> like the LORD's <u>kindness</u> as long as I live, so that I may not be killed, <u>15</u> and do not ever cut off your <u>kindness</u> from my family — not even when the LORD has cut off every one of David's enemies from the face of the earth." (1 Samuel 20:13-16; Believe p. 441-442) Jonathan asks David, on the basis of the covenant made between them, to show him unfailing <u>kindness</u>. He asks him to show, not just any old form of kindness, but that which is **like** the LORD's <u>kindness</u>.

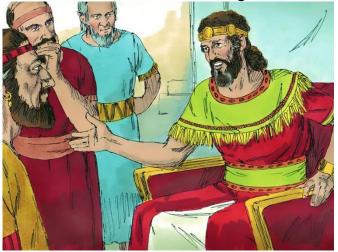
Jonathan could only say this because kindness is an attribute of God and as a result, kindness is to be an attribute of God's people. That is why Ephesians 4 says: <u>32</u> Be <u>kind</u> and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. The Greek word that we translate kindness carries with it, not just a sentiment but an action. When you are kind to someone, you do something for them. Kindness results in someone risking their life to put out a car fire; a letter being written to encourage someone who is facing tough times; a pre-cooked meal being placed on the doorstep of someone who is grieving a loss. Kindness acts in kind ways.

The Hebrew word for "kind" in the 1 Samuel 20 passage literally means "to bow" or to "incline oneself". The idea is that God, who creates and places the world in its

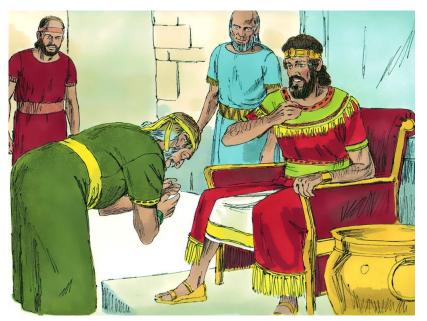
orbit, bows or inclines himself – and involves himself – in our world. He is kind to us. He is not occasionally kind or seasonally kind, but he is eternally kind. Kindness is an attribute of God and of God's people. We are going to turn now to see how it plays out in our story.

Fast forward 15 to 20 years. King Saul is dead, killed by falling on his own sword in battle. Jonathan is dead, killed by the Philistines along with his two brothers on Mount Gilboa. In 2 Samuel 1 you can read the lament that David wrote for Saul and Jonathan. Next David is made King of Judah and in time he becomes King of all

Israel. He defeats the Philistines and the Jebusites and captures the city of Jerusalem. Life is going well. In fact, it has never been better. David has every right to sit back and enjoy his victory. But David is bothered by the covenant promise that he had made to his friend Jonathan. He had covenanted to show kindness to the household of Saul. In 2 Samuel 9 (Believe p. 442) we read: <u>1</u> One day David asked, "Is anyone in Saul's family still alive—anyone to whom I can show kindness



for Jonathan's sake?" David remembered the kindness of Jonathan and he wants to honour that kindness. None of his officials seemed to have any answers. Saul has been dead for 15 years or more and his family seems to have scattered to the winds and nobody knows where to find anybody. So David $2 \dots$ summoned a man



named Ziba, who had been one of Saul's servants. I don't expect that Ziba was really excited about this. In those days it was the practice of new kings to slay everyone even remotely associated with the previous regime. Ziba probably figured this was the end of the road for him. But David was not interested in settling scores. "Are you Ziba?" the king asked. "Yes sir, I am," Ziba replied. <u>3</u> The king then asked him, "Is anyone still alive from Saul's family? If so, I want to show God's <u>kindness</u> to them." Ziba replied, "Yes, one of Jonathan's sons is still alive. He is crippled in both feet." <u>4</u> "Where is he?" the king asked. "In Lo-debar," Ziba told him, "at the home of Makir son of Ammiel." <u>5</u> So David sent for him and brought him from Makir's home. <u>6</u> His name was Mephibosheth; he was Jonathan's son and Saul's grandson.

You'll notice that Ziba does not even mention Jonathan's son by name. He refers to him by his handicap – or as we would refer to it today – by his challenge. If history had played out as it should have, Jonathan would have become king after the death of Saul and later Mephibosheth would have become king. But life had not treated

this young man kindly and he was living out his life as a cripple in the home of a sympathizer of Saul in a forsaken, out of the way place named Lo-debar. Lodebar is a Hebrew phrase that means "without pasture". You'll notice from this map that it is a long way from Jerusalem. It is out in the middle of nowhere. It was a place characterized by barrenness, waste lands and devastation. Mephibosheth had gone there seeking anonymity. Quite frankly, this man who was once third in line to



the throne of Israel didn't want anyone to know where he was. He felt safe in the desolation of Lo-debar. It felt safe to live an impoverished life in a place where no one noticed you. And he was probably more terrified than Ziba when David's men showed up and took him to the king's court.

What did David say to him? I want you to notice three very important things.

- 1. "Don't be afraid!" David said. "I intend to show <u>kindness</u> to you because of my promise to your father, Jonathan."
- 2. "I will give you all the property that once belonged to your grandfather Saul."
- 3. "You will eat here with me at the king's table!"

David didn't need to do all this. He could have sent money. He could have sent a messenger to tell Mephibosheth, "I'm thinking about you. I'll put you on my prayer list." But David did more because Jonathan did more, and Jonathan did more because kindness does more. Someone ought to write a book: "From Lo-debar to Jerusalem: An Act of Great Kindness".

Max Lucado puts it this way and I don't know that anyone can say it any better so I will just quote him.

"You and I are Mephibosheth. We are not sons of Jonathan or Saul, but we are sons of wrath and sin. We are not victims of a fall in Israel, but we are victims of the fall of humanity. We may not be crippled in our feet, but we sure have a hard time keeping our balance and walking straight. And we often find ourselves like Mephibosheth ostracized, stigmatized and even prone to describe ourselves as "the dead dog" in the Lo-debar of this world, the barren pastures of life. But then



something happened. Our King, the Son of David, King Jesus, remembered us. He remembered a covenant that he had made with all of his children, that he would not treat us according to our sins but according to his mercy. He did more than King David. David did not go to Lo-debar, but King Jesus entered the Lo-debar – the desolation – of our lives. He became a human being; he walked on our earth; and he got the word out that for all who would come - for all who would trust in his kindness – that he was saving us a place at the King's table. He made provision, not through a servant named Ziba, but through heavenly beings called angels, to provide, and protect and to watch over us. When we fall they would lift us up and when we stumble they would call us back. He covered us, not with the roof of a castle but with the roof of his grace and his forgiveness. He wrapped us in love and he announced to all who would listen that this person – this Mephibosheth – would have a permanent place at his table. He did it because he is kind. Not because we deserve it, but because he is kind. This is the heart of God. God has been so kind to us. Would it not be hopeful, that we in turn would be kind to other people?

Every one of us has been a victim of unkindness. Let's focus today on the fact that every one of us has also been the victim of a kindness as well. We have been victims of an unusual kindness from God and from other people. Surely the unnatural environment we find ourselves in this spring of 2020 gives us many opportunities to pay forward the unparalleled act of kindness that we have received at the hands of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Hymn: "O Master, Let me Walk With Thee" (Lyrics) (Click on the link below to play the hymn.) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXwXQnsaL3A O Master let me walk with Thee In lowly paths of service free Tell me Thy secret Help me bear the strain of toil The fret of care

Teach me Thy patience; still with Thee In closer, clearer company In work that keeps faith sweet and strong In trust that triumphs over wrong

In hope that sends a shining ray Far down the future's broad'ning way In peace that only Thou canst give With Thee, O Master, let me live

Offering

Presenting our tithes and offerings is an act of worship. I want to encourage you to write a cheque and drop it in the mail to the church using your envelope, if you have one. (St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, PO Box 161, 1 Drummond St W, Perth, ON K7H 3E3) We also have another option for you for giving and that is you can make an e-Transfer. This note from our treasurer.

E-transfers are now accepted. Please note the new email address for this purpose only. <u>standrewsperthoffering@gmail.com</u> Please include your Offering Envelope # in the message section of the INTERAC transfer page you fill in. If you wish any part of your donation to go to a specific fund (eg Presbyterian Sharing) please mention this in your message.

Offertory Prayer

God of extravagant mercy, with hands outstretched you have poured out wonder and pleasure and delight, goodness and beauty and bounty. So take these offerings, we pray, as our protest against all that is evil and ugly and impoverished, trivial and wretched and tyrannical, in our world and in ourselves and thus may we and others know ourselves to be blessed. **Amen.**

Prayers for the People by the People – please continue to pray for members of our congregation and others that you personally know of.

• For all the families and those impacted by the terrible tragedy that took place in Nova Scotia.

- Those on the front line in the fight against COVID-19, especially the nurses and PSW's in our congregations. (Destiny Bowes, Glenda Gould, Connie Young, Tracey Laffine)
- Those who are out of work and struggling financially to pay their bills.
- Praise the Lord for the safe arrival of Nora Jean Echlin on Tuesday, April 21st at 1:13 AM. Nora Jean weighted 8 lbs 7 oz and was 22inches long. Congratulations to Holden and Peri-Ann Echlin on their first child and to David and Tressa Oliver on their first grandchild.
- Stuart McKim & Louise Burke
- Ann Savage
- Dave Crawley & Paul Thompson
- University and College Students (Holly, Caitlin, Colleen, Jonathan, Liam, Caleb and Issac)
- **Angus Funston** Angus was late getting his IV meds due to Covid-19.Now his liver enzymes are very high. They think his autoimmune hepatitis is breaking down his liver cells causing an infection. He is on antibiotics for 3 weeks after 2 weeks he is having blood work done to see if meds are working. Depending on blood work he may be on antibiotics for another 6 weeks. He is working hard on his school work but he is very tried.
- **Shut-ins and Nursing Homes (**Elva Fair, Audrey Ferrier, Germaine Vanderklok, June O'Hara, Gwen Travis, Lyn Harrington, Bing Jeun, Jo Mott, Ruth McTavish)
- Pray especially for Carolina Suites (at least 35 cases & 4 deaths). Pray for Lyn Harrington (Shelagh Stephen's mother) and Nellie Larabie (Marlene Larabie's mother-in-law) are in Carolina Suites. Thankfully there have been no new cases since April 17th.
- St. Andrew's as we carry on without benefit of regular services and seek to minister in a virtual, yet broken world. How we will carry on as this pandemic draws to an end.
- Rick & Colleen Richardson
- Richard Hendry
- Joanna Savage: (A note from Marilyn) "A date of May 14 has finally been set for an embolization procedure to take place. This will be done at the Kingston General as day surgery to block the blood supply of the inoperable tumour in her liver in the hopes that it will shrink. I am grateful that in this new era of COVID limitations I will nonetheless be allowed to stay with her without restriction. We have embarked on another journey with a lot of uncertainties, but of this we are certain: Christ has died! Christ has risen! Christ is coming again!"
- Larry Palmer and his family as he grieves the loss of his wife Joan, who passed away the evening of April 22nd. A Celebration of Life has been postponed to a later date. Larry and Joan were regular participants in Alpha this past fall.
- Adam Dowdall Sharon Dowdall's grandson has diabetes which has been hard to control of late.

Closing Hymn:

"Go Now In Peace"

(Click on the link below to play the hymn. Lyrics will be displayed on the screen.) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5T_KSLqIAcM

Go now in peace, never be afraid God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true Know God will guide you in all you do.

Go now in love, and show you believe. Reach out to others so all the world can see. God will there watching from above. Go now in peace, in faith and in love.

Benediction

Go now, listening for the voice of Christ, and follow the example he left us. Devote yourself to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers of God's people.

And may God lead you to places of rest and renewal; May Christ Jesus give you life in abundance; And may the Holy Spirit fill your hearts with gladness and generosity.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.



On Palm Sunday and on Easter Sunday the Churches of Perth Rang Their Bells (Click on the link below to play)

St. Andrew's Perth- Bell
Ringing (short version)St. John's Perth-Bell
Ringing (short version)St. James Perth -
Bell Ringing (short
version)

St. Andrew's and St. John's are continuing the Sunday 12-12:10 pm ringing of the bells as a reminder of the Easter Season as well as a call to pray for all aspects of the current crisis and everyone affected. You are encouraged to do the same!