St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth Sunday, August 30th, 2020 Worship Leader: Rev. Stephen Dunkin

Introductory Song:

"Ancient Words" by Lyn Deshazo

(Click on the link below to play the hymn. The lyrics are on the screen.) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vmTkXNpwzs

Holy words long preserved For our walk in this world They resound with God's own heart O let the ancient words impart

Words of life words of hope Give us strength help us cope In this world where'er we roam Ancient words will guide us home

Chorus

Ancient words ever true Changing me and changing you We have come with open hearts O let the ancient words impart

Holy words of our faith Handed down to this age Came to us through sacrifice O heed the faithful words of Christ

Holy words long preserved For our walk in this world They resound with God's own heart O let the ancient words impart

Chorus x 4

Ancient words ever true Changing me changing you We have come with open hearts O let the ancient words impart

We have come with open hearts O let the ancient words impart

Call to Worship

LORD, hear my prayer, listen to my cry for mercy;

in your faithfulness and righteousness come to my relief.

Do not bring your servant into judgment,

for no one living is righteous before you.

The Enemy pursues me, he crushes me to the ground; he makes me dwell in the darkness like those long dead.

So my spirit grows faint within me;

my heart within me is dismayed.

I remember the days of long ago;

I meditate on all your works

and consider what your hands have done.

I spread out my hands to you;

I thirst for you like a parched land. (Psalm 143:1-6)

Prayer of Invocation

O gracious and holy God, give us diligence to seek you, wisdom to perceive you, and patience to wait for you. Grant us, O God, a mind to meditate on you, eyes to behold you, ears to listen for your Word, a heart to love you, and a life to proclaim you, through the power of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn:

"Praise My Soul, The King of Heaven" (Lyrics)

(Click on the link below to play the hymn. The lyrics are on the screen.) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GyRIVbdsi4c

- Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven; To His feet thy tribute bring. Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven, Who like thee His praise sing: Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise him! Praise the everlasting King.
- Praise Him for His grace and favor To our fathers in distress; Praise Him still the same as ever, Slow to chide, and swift to bless. Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise him! Praise the everlasting King.
- Father like He tends and spares us, Well our feeble frame He knows; In His hands He gently bears us, Rescues us from all our foes.

Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise him! Praise the everlasting King.

4. Angels, help us to adore Him, Ye behold Him face to face; Sun and moon, bow down before Him; Dwellers all in time and space, Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise him! Praise the everlasting King.

Call to Confession

Listen to this testimony of the writer of Psalm 32: 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.

Unison Prayer of Confession

Most gracious and most merciful God, we confess to you and to one another that time after time we have entered your presence with countless prayers but with hearts that have been closed to your grace. We have lifted our hands to you in praise, but our feet have still walked in the ways of evil. We have rehearsed your commandments but have refused to see your face in the needs of our neighbor. We pray, Lord, that you forgive our lack of faith and pardon our acts of injustice. Grant us the healing that comes from your presence and the cleansing of your all-powerful Word,

through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon (1 Peter 2:24)

Jesus himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

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

Psalm 100

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.

Worship the LORD with gladness;

come before him with joyful songs.

Know that the LORD is God.

It is he who made us, and we are his;

we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving

and his courts with praise;

give thanks to him and praise his name.

For the LORD is good and his love endures forever;

his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Ministry of Music:

"Is He Worthy?", Chris Tomlin

(Click on the link below to listen to the Ministry of Music.) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-c6pl6CaiD0 Verse 1

Do you feel the world is broken **We do** Do you feel the shadows deepen **We do** But do you know that all the dark Won't stop the light from getting through **We do** Do you wish that you could see it all made new

We do

Verse 2

Is all creation groaning

lt is

Is a new creation coming

lt is

Is the glory of the Lord

To be the light within our midst

lt is

Is it good that we remind ourselves of this

It is Chorus 1

Chorus 1

Is anyone worthy Is anyone whole Is anyone able to break the seal and open the scroll The Lion of Judah who conquered the grave He is David's Root And the Lamb who died to ransom the slave Is He worthy Is He worthy Of all blessing and honor and glory Is He worthy of this He is

Verse 3

Does the Father truly love us

He does

Does the Spirit move among us

He does

And does Jesus our Messiah Hold forever those He loves

He does

Does our God intend to dwell again with us **He does**

Chorus 2

Is anyone worthy Is anyone whole Is anyone able to break the seal and open the scroll The Lion of Judah who conquered the grave He is David's Root And the Lamb who died to ransom the slave From ev'ry people and tribe every nation and tongue He has made us a kingdom and priests To God to reign with the Son Is He worthy Is He worthy Of all blessing and honor and glory Is He worthy Is He worthy Is He worthy of this **He is**

Ending

Is He worthy Is He worthy He is He is

Scripture Reading:

Acts 16:6-15

Paul's Vision of the Man of Macedonia

<u>6</u> Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. <u>7</u> When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. <u>8</u> So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. <u>9</u> During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." <u>10</u> After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. <u>Lydia's Conversion in Philippi</u>

<u>11</u> From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day we went on to Neapolis. **<u>12</u>** From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.

13 On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. **14** One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. **15** When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn:

"He Knows My Name"

(Click on the link below to play the video. Lyrics are on the screen.) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXsiWoyjw60 I have a Maker He formed my heart Before even time began My life was in His hand

Chorus

He knows my name He knows my every thought He sees each tear that falls And hears me when I call

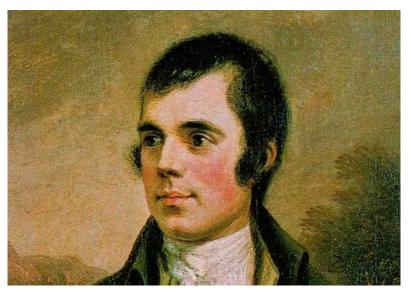
 I have a Father He calls me His own He'll never leave me No matter where I go

Prayer for Illumination

Lord God, let the words of your servant's mouth and the meditations of all our hearts be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, our Rock and Redeemer. Through Christ. **Amen.**

(Based on Psalm 19:14)

"There's Got To Be More" Acts 16:6-15 Rev. Stephen Dunkin



The official patron saint of Scotland is St. Andrew, the disciple of Jesus. The unofficial one is the poet Robbie Burns. Actually, I think Scots think more about Robbie Burns than they ever do about St. Andrew. Every year there is a Robbie Burns night that is celebrated, not just in Scotland, but around the world.

One day the poet was out plowing in his field when his plow turned over and destroyed a mouse's nest that it had built to survive the winter. In response he wrote one of his best known poems, **"To A Mouse, On Turning Up Her Nest With the Plow, November, 1785"**. In the poem is this well know line. *The best laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft agley, An' lea'e us nought but grief and pain, for promised joy!* Burns wrote in an old Scots dialect that is hard for us to understand. A modern rendition of these words is: *The best laid schemes of mice and men often go awry, And leave us nothing but grief and pain, for promised joy!* How many times have I heard those words quoted, at least the first part: - "The best laid schemes of mice and men often go awry..."

Most of us would substitute the word "plans" for "schemes". In the world of business, an often used adage is *"Plan your work and work your plan."* What is it saying? If you want to be successful, then you need to set out your game plan. Once you have a game plan, stick to it. There is another adage that similarly stresses the importance of planning. *"If you fail to plan, then you are planning to fail."*

Is this true of the Christian life? Does planning have a place in our Christian lives? I think it does, but I want to make three qualifications.

- 1. Make your plans under the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- 2. Be prepared to have the Holy Spirit upset your plans.
- 3. Learn to go with the flow.

We have a perfect example of this in Acts 16. Paul was a missionary. He was a man with a mission. He felt called by God to take the message of the good news of Jesus Christ all over the Roman Empire. Undoubtedly he had some plan in mind as to how he felt he should carry out his mission. He went from town to town. He never travelled alone but always went on preaching missions with one or two companions. On this occasion he was travelling with a young man named Timothy and Dr. Luke who penned this account. They were travelling throughout what we now call Turkey and each one of the regions mentioned here was actually a province of the Roman Empire. As they travelled, they ran into several road blocks. They wanted to go into the province of Asia, and while that may have been their plan, they could not carry it out. Verse 6 tells us that they were kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. This door was not closed by physical circumstances. No, it was closed by the Holy Spirit. Next they tried to enter another province called Bithynia, 7 ... but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. These men had a game plan, but that game plan was only a rough draft. Even knowing where they wanted to go, they were sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit or the Spirit of Jesus. When the Spirit said "Don't go!", when there was a check in their personal spirit, they didn't go. They kept travelling, knowing that sooner or later, the Lord

would open up a way for them. God had a specific mission for them and they knew that at the right time, He would show them what that was.

In one sense it must have been terribly frustrating. They were travelling by "shank's mare" – that is, by foot. It was tiring to walk day after day only to find that when they

reached the border of where they felt they were suppose to go, the Holy Spirit closed the door and prevented them from entering. Finally, they found themselves at Troas, a small port on the Aegean coast of Turkey. The Aegean Sea lies between Greece and Turkey. So here they are at Troas. What do they do now? Where do they go next? They had no idea. **9 During the night Paul had a vision of a** man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."



How does God speak to his people? According to the Bible, there are many different ways. Sometimes God speaks through the Scriptures themselves, sometimes through another person, sometimes through circumstances, sometimes through a specific personal word, sometimes through angels and sometimes through visions. God has not changed over the last two thousand years. In Hebrews 13 we read: **3 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.** God still speaks to people today in the very same ways.

In this instance, God spoke to Paul through a vision of a man from Macedonia, which is an area in northern Greece. If I have any understanding of the kind of man Paul was, I bet he was so fired up that he couldn't sleep. What Luke writes bears this out. **10** After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. After all the "No's" they were finally getting a "Yes!" They concluded that it was God's plan that they preach the gospel in Macedonia. After receiving a vision like that, they might have concluded that this was the next really big thing. In short order, they found themselves in Philippi, the leading city of Macedonia.

Paul had a "modus operandi". That is, he had a well established method of carrying out his ministry. In almost every city that he visited he followed the same Plan A. When he arrived in a new place, he would size the place up and the first thing he would look for was a Jewish synagogue. Known as the "diaspora", Jewish people were spread throughout the Roman Empire. Wherever they went they established synagogues. On the Sabbath, that is Saturday – the Jewish day of worship – he would visit the synagogue. Being a Jewish rabbi or teacher, usually he would be invited to preach.

Paul arrived in Philippi about the middle of the week, so he had lots of time to look around. One of the first things he did was to look for a synagogue. When he did he made a startling discovery. There was no synagogue. Now, in Jewish law it was clearly stated that you had to have 10 Jewish *men* to start a synagogue. Obviously, there weren't 10 Jewish men in Philippi so there was no synagogue. He had to scratch Plan A and move on to Plan B.



When there was no synagogue, a few devout Jews would gather at a place of prayer on the Sabbath. Luke writes: <u>13</u> On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. Notice the word "expected". Places of prayer were found outside the city limits and usually beside a river. Well, they hit "pay dirt". By the river they found only a few women who had gathered to

pray. There were no men. Paul could have been very disappointed. After his vision of the man from Macedonia, he was probably expecting great things in Philippi like a massive revival. The first blow to his expectations was to find that there was no synagogue. The synagogue had always been his most fertile ground when it came to preaching the gospel. Then to discover that his audience consisted of only a few women – well, for most missionaries that would have sent their spirits plummeting. Women were not highly regard in the ancient world, even in Judaism. Most Jewish men thanked God that they had not been born first a Gentile and second a woman. But Paul was not your usual Jewish male. For all that Paul has been maligned as being against women, it was Paul who wrote in Galatians 3: <u>28</u> There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

When Paul, Mark and Luke found only a handful of women, did they turn around and walk away in disgust? No! Luke writes: <u>13</u> We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. A woman was just as worthy of hearing the gospel of Jesus Christ as any man. A woman was just as precious in God's sight as a man. So naturally, this little group of missionaries sat down and spoke to them.

There is something that you need to realize about these women. They were not just ordinary, run of the mill women. Every indication points towards the fact that none of these women were Jewish. They were Macedonian women and they held a much different place in society than Jewish women did. Macedonians had what amounted to almost a matriarchal society. Women, not men, wore the pants.

So these were significant women. One of them with the Greek name Lydia was a business woman. She dealt in dyed fabrics and she was no slouch. However, you may be wondering why these women were gathering for prayer in the traditional

Jewish manner on the Sabbath if, in fact, they were not Jewish. The text tells us: <u>14</u> One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshipper of God. She was not a worshipper of the many Greek and Roman gods but a God worshipper – a worshipper of the one true God. Elsewhere in the Book of Acts, people like Lydia are referred to as "God-fearers". These were people – most frequently, but not exclusively women – who were turned off by gross pagan worship. Pagan worship was not a nice or attractive thing. It involved



debauchery, including sleeping with temple prostitutes. And it was not satisfying. There were so many different gods and so many different sacrifices. How was one to know which god was the right one to pray to in a particular situation? I expect that there came a time when Lydia said to herself: "There has to be more to life that this!" When she discovered the God of the Old Testament, the One true God who made heaven and earth, she said to herself: "This is it!" Here she found one God, not hundreds. Here she found morality, not immorality. Here she found the Law of God – a rule to live by.

But there is something else we know about Lydia. Even what she found in the Old Testament didn't satisfy. As a God-fearer or worshipper, she couldn't be a real Jew. She would never be fully accepted. She was not a full convert. While the Law of God

was perfect, Lydia discovered that she was always falling short. Here was a woman with a hunger and thirst for God that was not being fully met. And so she said to herself again: "There must be more to life than this."

On that Sabbath morning in 49 A.D., while Lydia was at that place of prayer by the river outside Philippi – not even in her hometown of Thyatira which was on the other side of the Aegean Sea – Paul and his companions began to talk to her:

- About Jesus and the message of the cross;
- Of how God accepts us, not on the basis of our performance in keeping the law;
- But on the basis of putting our faith in Jesus Christ and what he accomplished for us on the cross;

Then something happened inside of Lydia. <u>14</u> The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. She received Christ by faith and was born anew that very day. Notice that it was the Lord who opened her heart. This is not something we do on our own. On our own we are incapable of turning to Jesus. No, it was the Lord who opened her heart, but it was a heart prepared. Lydia was hungry. No longer did she have to suffer the guilt that comes from failing to keep the Law perfectly. She found forgiveness for all her sins and failures as she responded to the message of the gospel.

This was not something private that just affected Lydia. It affected her whole family. The text tells us that <u>15</u> ... she and the members of her household were baptized. That means that everyone under her roof – slaves, grandparents and children were baptized as a sign of the new covenant that was at work in them. Once the baptism was completed, Lydia handed out an invitation. Here is her response to the little missionary band: <u>15</u> When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us. Lydia was a very persuasive woman.

That is how the church at Philippi was started. It began with three men who were sensitive to the Holy Spirit and who were prepared to go wherever he led them. They were also willing to minister wherever and to whomever he gave them the opportunity. It began with one woman who was dissatisfied with her life under the law and who said: "There has to be more to life than this." It began with one household that was open to the message of the gospel. It started with one home that opened its doors to shelter these three men of God. And it probably met in that home for a period of time after that initial invitation. This is our introduction to the Church in Philippi and it is our introduction to the letter that Paul later wrote to this church – the Letter to the Philippians. It is one of the most joy filled and practical books of the Bible. It is a book that can give you a new perspective on what the Christian life is to be like. I trust that God will speak to you through it as he has to me.

Hymn:

"Holy Spirit, Living Breathe of God"

(Click on the link below to play the hymn. Lyrics on screen.)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8nbMfLQd2P4

Verse 1

Holy Spirit living Breath of God Breathe new life into my willing soul Let the presence of the risen Lord Come renew my heart and make me whole Cause Your word to come alive in me Give me faith for what I cannot see Give me passion for Your purity Holy Spirit breathe new life in me

<u>Verse 2</u>

Holy Spirit come abide within May Your joy be seen in all I do Love enough to cover ev'ry sin In each thought and deed and attitude Kindness to the greatest and the least Gentleness that sows the path of peace Turn my strivings into works of grace Breath of God show Christ in all I do

Verse 3

Holy Spirit from creation's birth Giving life to all that God has made Show Your power once again on earth Cause Your church to hunger for Your ways Let the fragrance of our pray'rs arise Lead us on the road of sacrifice That in unity the face of Christ May be clear for all the world to see

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.

Invitation to Offering

With joy, we offer our gifts to God as a sign of our deep devotion and his covenant faithfulness.

Offertory Prayer

O God, most merciful and gracious, of whose bounty we have all received, accept this offering of your people. Remember in your love those who have brought it and those for whom it is given, and so follow it with your blessing that it may promote peace and goodwill among all peoples, and advance the kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Prayers for the People by the In response to the Covid-19 Pandemic:

- For the leaders in our Government (federal, provincial, municipal).
- For the **Frontline workers**.
- For St. Andrew's Church and its leadership.
- For marriages that are struggling, as a result of the pandemic.
- For the **Education system**, that safeguards will be put in place to protect the students, teachers and staff.
- Shut-ins and Nursing Home residents and in hospital (Elva Fair, Audrey Ferrier, Germaine Vanderklok, June O'Hara, Gwen Travis, Lyn Harrington, Bing Juen, Jo Mott, Ruth McTavish, Jackie and Brian Stapleton, (Karen McKim's parents), Nellie Larabie).
- Shelagh Stevens's mother, Lyn Harrington Mom and I are meeting with an Occupational Therapist on August 26. She is able to move around quite nicely now. I'm impressed with her recovery. Shelagh.

Please continue to pray for:

- Stuart McKim & Louise Burke.
- Ann Savage A scan scheduled for September 1st. Praying that results are favorable.
- Rick and Colleen Richardson and their daughter Deborah We are not sure what the next step is but heard that Colleen is scheduled for an MRI but don't know for what.

Doctor to call on, September 1st. Other than that no change in Colleen's health. Still problems reading and loss of memory, but the Lord is in control and we will pull through. Much love to our church family who support us each and every day. Rick.

- Joanna Savage We are waiting to hear from the surgeon to discuss next steps regarding the removal of the primary tumor in her intestine now that the liver tumor has reduced in size. Marilyn
- Paul Thompson (eye condition) Next appointment in September.
- Dave (Parkinson's) and Anne Crawley (foot infection) Dave had an appt with his Neurologist last week. His medication has been adjusted and Added a different kind Of Parkinson's pill. He just started this one so we are waiting to see how effective it will be. Otherwise he is doing fairly well.

Anne recently saw an Orthopaedic Surgeon and an Infectious Diseases Specialist. After many tests the infections were diagnosed as Chronic Osteomyelitis (bone infection) related to a very old injury in her foot from a motor vehicle accident. She is back on another round of antibiotics. The foot looks and feels much better. Thank you all for your prayers for both of us.

- University and College Students For a safe return to school whether in-person or remote learning and for a successful semester.
- Angus Funston Angus has an appointment at Sick Kids in Toronto on Sept 17th. It will be all day with tests. He goes for Blood Work this week. Angus had a great summer and is looking well. We want to thank everyone who is praying for him. Carole
- Eric and Laurie Cosens & Family- Eric's mom is still with us in body. She is sleeping all the time and is not eating or drinking. She is not responsive. However, Eric and his siblings, Carol and Mark, are in need of prayer. They need strength to cope with the physical demands of caregiving and the peace of our Lord to ease the emotional strain they are under. Thank you so much for keeping our family in prayer. Blessings to you all, Lorrie.
- Fabiola's mother, Sofia Flores Mom started treatment with new medication following Doctor's recommendations. Next Thursday, she will see the Gastroenterologist. Please pray for wisdom for the Doctors to make correct decisions and that my Mom's heart will be transformed and filled with God's permanent joy and peace.

Closing Hymn:

"Go Now In Peace"

(Click on the link below to play the hymn.) 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, strong in the mercies of God. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that knowing the will of God your whole lives may become a sacrifice of praise, holy and acceptable to God.

And may God, the Creator of earth and sky, be your help; May the Son of the Living God ground you on solid rock; And may the Holy Spirit equip you with all the gifts and graces of Christ.

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 is continuing the Sunday 12-12:10 pm ringing of the bells as a reminder to pray for all aspects of the current crisis and everyone affected. This will continue until the church reopens for worship.