

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth
Sunday, April 18th, 2021
Worship Leader: Rev. Beryl Orok

Call to Worship (Psalm 29:1-4)

Ascribe to the Lord the glory of His name;

Worship the Lord in His holy splendor.

The voice of the Lord is over the waters;

The God of glory thunders,

The Lord thunders over mighty waters.

The voice of the Lord is powerful;

the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

Amen.

Prayer of Invocation

It's your voice we long for this morning, Lord, thundering into our lives, mighty and powerful.

The voice of wisdom instructing us,

The voice of hope encouraging us,

The voice of love, calling us by name, and leading us home.

Give us ears to hear this morning; whether Your voice comes to us in powerful or still, small ways; so that in hearing we might become faithful and productive disciples for Your glory.

We ask this in the holy name of Jesus. **Amen.**

Hymn #352: "And Can it be That I should Gain" (Lyrics)

<https://youtu.be/sQelGbKqiw8>

1. And can it be that I should gain
 An interest in the Savior's blood
 Died He for me who caused His pain
 For me who Him to death pursued
 Amazing love how can it be
 That Thou my God shouldst die for me
 Amazing love how can it be
 That Thou my God shouldst die for me

2. He left His Father's throne above
 So free so infinite His grace
 Emptied Himself of all but love
 And bled for Adam's helpless race
 'Tis mercy all immense and free
 For O my God it found out me

'Tis mercy all immense and free
For O my God it found out me

3. Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray
I woke the dungeon flamed with light
My chains fell off my heart was free
I rose went forth and followed Thee
My chains fell off my heart was free
I rose went forth and followed Thee

4. No condemnation now I dread
Jesus and all in Him is mine
Alive in Him my living Head
And clothed in righteousness divine
Bold I approach th'eternal throne
And claim the crown through Christ my own
Bold I approach th'eternal throne
And claim the crown through Christ my own

Call to Confession

Saints of God, we have this opportunity, at this time, to come before our God and to confess our failures and our sins. Let us in all humility and honesty lay open our souls before the Lord.

Prayer of Confession (Psalm 51:10-12)

Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. Do not cast us from Your presence, or take Your Holy Spirit from us. Restore to us the joy of Your salvation and sustain us with Your bountiful Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

This embodies our confession today, as we recall our personal sins, before You Lord.

Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Our God is faithful and just to forgive us all our sins. He has engraved us on the palms of His nail scarred hands. Through Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Let us rejoice and be glad!

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, Who art in heaven
 Hallow'ed is 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 our debts as we
 forgive our debtors.
 Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from the evil one.
 For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory
 Forever and ever. Amen.

Responsive Reading:

Psalm 16: 1-11

A prayer of David.

Protect me, O God, for I have taken shelter in you

**I say to the LORD, "You are the Lord,
 my only source of well-being."**

**As for God's chosen people who are in the land,
 and the leading officials I admired so much; their troubles
 multiply;**

they desire other gods!

**I will not pour out drink offerings of blood to their gods,
 nor will I make vows in the name of their gods.**

LORD, you give me stability and prosperity;
 you make my future secure.

It is as if I have been given fertile fields
 or received a beautiful tract of land.

I will praise the LORD who guides me;

yes, during the night I reflect and learn

I constantly trust in the LORD

because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

So my heart rejoices

and I am happy;

my life is safe.

You will not abandon me to Sheol

you will not allow your faithful followers to see the pit.

You lead me in the path of life.

I experience absolute joy in your presence;

you always give me sheer delight.

Ministry of Music: “Before The Throne of God Above” – Grace Community (Lyrics) - 2

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

Before the throne of God above
 I have a strong and perfect plea
 A great High Priest whose name is love
 Who ever lives and pleads for me
 My name is graven on His hands
 My name is written on His heart
 I know that while in heav'n He stands
 No tongue can bid me thence depart
 No tongue can bid me thence depart

When Satan tempts me to despair
 And tells me of the guilt within
 Upward I look and see Him there
 Who made an end of all my sin
 Because the sinless Savior died
 My sinful soul is counted free
 For God the Just is satisfied
 To look on Him and pardon me
 To look on Him and pardon me

Behold Him there, the risen Lamb
 My perfect, spotless Righteousness
 The great unchangeable I AM
 The King of glory and of grace
 One with Himself, I cannot die
 My soul is purchased by his blood
 My life is hid with Christ on high
 With Christ my Savior and my God
 With Christ my Savior and my God

Scripture Reading:

John 1: 35-42

35 The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. **36** When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, “Look, the Lamb of God!”

37 When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus.

38 Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, “What do you want?”

They said, “Rabbi” (which means “Teacher”), “where are you staying?”

39 “Come,” he replied, “and you will see.”

So they went and saw where he was staying, and they spent that day with him. It was about four in the afternoon.

40 Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. **41** The first thing Andrew did

was to find his brother Simon and tell him, “We have found the Messiah” (that is, the Christ). **42** And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas” (which, when translated, is Peter).

This is the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

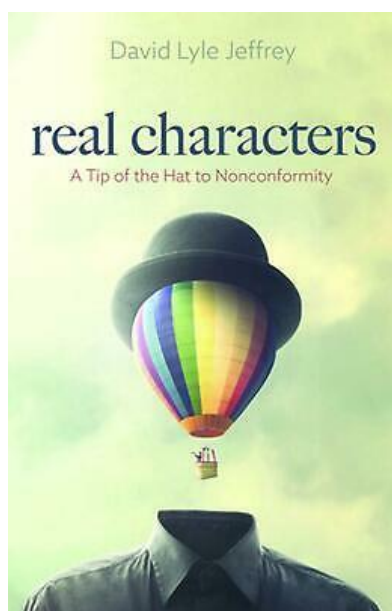
Prayer of Illumination

Gracious God, as we turn to your Word for us, may the Spirit of God rest upon us.

Help us to be steadfast in our hearing, in our speaking, in our believing, and in our living, as we strive to bring glory to You and You alone. **Amen.**

An Ordinary Man

Our next door neighbors, who recently moved to our area from Ottawa, have embraced country living for the first time ever and they have been such a wonderful addition to our neighborhood. He is a retired philosophy professor and she was teacher, who now bakes the most delicious German style cakes from her mother’s recipes. Admittedly we were somewhat concerned when we learned we would be getting new neighbors, because



you see, we share a divided driveway; as well as, the drive down to the back of our respective properties. But God has blessed us with these good Christian folk, and as an added bonus, they have an amazing library. So we trade reading materials and enjoy each other’s books.

For Christmas this year they gifted us with a book from an author they are personally acquainted with, David Jeffrey.

Its title is: “real characters.” It relates excerpts from the life stories of many local and international people the author has met and interacted with, in one way or another, over his life time and travels. It’s a very interesting, and

often amusing book. The title “real characters,” came to mind as I was preparing for this sermon.

Part of Graeme’s (our neighbor’s) commentary describes the author’s writing as “a wide and tender understanding; a mingled yarn about extraordinary –ordinary people who set him (author) straight on life’s path”

When we think of real characters we have known, they stand out amongst the crowd for various, but always distinct, characteristics or actions.

If I were to ask you this morning who immediately comes to mind when I mention the disciples of Jesus; I would be surprised if the majority did not say Peter; followed very closely by Thomas.

Peter, of course, is the most often written about disciple in the Bible; appearing repeatedly and prominently in all four Gospels, as well as the Book of Acts, so we are most familiar with his story.

Peter, was clearly the leader, and spokesperson of the group known as, the 12 disciples of Jesus

Peter, the fisherman, turned “fisher of men” and finally, a shepherd to many.

He’s the guy who got out of the boat to walk on the water to meet Jesus.

Peter was the man who used his sword to cut off the ear of Malchus, the servant of the High Priest Caiaphas, who participated in the arrest of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane; all in a valiant attempt to prevent the arrest.

He was also the guy who abandoned Jesus in His final hours; claiming he never knew Him; not long after his declaration at the Last Supper, “even if all fall away on account of You, I never will.” And when Jesus declared to him, “This very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.”, with great bravado, Peter then declared, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.”

Peter, the man who wept bitterly after he heard the rooster crow, and he realized the truth of Jesus’ words.

Peter, who was the one Jesus commissioned to “feed my sheep,” even after his dismal failure.

Peter was the first one to preach on the day of Pentecost to huge crowds of people, so that 3,000 were converted.

Peter performed miracles in Jesus name; people sought to just have his shadow fall across them in search of healing.

Peter authored the Epistles of 1st and 2nd Peter.

There is, of course, much more about Peter the dynamic disciple that could be said.

Then Thomas; very commonly referred to as “doubting Thomas.” I have always been reluctant to refer to him as such, because I have wondered; if I had been there, would I have thought the same as Thomas? But of course, would have been too scared to say so.

Thomas, the courageous follower, who was first to say “let us go also, that we may die with him.” This he said when the Jews had already made two attempts on Jesus life. But on receiving the news that Lazarus was sick, Jesus decided to travel, at huge risk, to Bethany. Thomas was willing to join Jesus on this dangerous journey, and to die with him possibly.

Thomas, the honest man, who asked questions and once declared to Jesus that he didn't understand, when Jesus said in John 14:4 “You know the way to the place where I am going.” Verse 5: Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?” Jesus' reply was one familiar to us all, John 14:6: Jesus said to Thomas, “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except by me.”

It is important things to realize that Thomas' questions elicited a response from Jesus, and in turn we have vital information, which forms a basis for our faith and doctrine.

In John chapter 20, on the days following the death and resurrection of Jesus, the disciples are in hiding, for fear of the Jews, and Jesus appeared in their midst. Thomas was not there, and what followed was the comment he is most infamously, but unjustly, remembered for. Verse 25: “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

It is noteworthy that on the next appearance of Jesus to His disciples, 8 days later, Thomas was present. Jesus did not condemn Thomas; but

rather gave him the evidence he needed to believe. Jesus did not reject Thomas for his questions and his doubts. I am thankful for Thomas and his courage to be honest about his doubts, because the response of Jesus gives us a picture of the love, patience and mercy Jesus has for those who struggle with questions and doubts concerning their faith.

So these things and more we know about Thomas!

Today, I would like to focus more directly on an apostle we possibly do not know as well; because his brother Peter gets most of the attention. But we should know him; Andrew of course.

Truth is we see the dynamo character of Peter only a few times over our lifetime, but we see Andrews every day!

Andrews are mechanics, grocers, and farmers; police officers, postmen and firefighters and more! Every church, school, or civic group has its leader; a version of the Peter type; but behind the scenes are those who are the hardworking, steadfast Andrews, who seldom get the credit for their contributions.

Let Andrew's life and ministry speak to us today.

His family lived in a city of Bethsaida on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. John 1:44 tells us that Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter; but later Andrew moved to Capernaum, where he and his brother Peter, had a fishing business. Luke 5:10 tells us, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were partners of Simon (Peter).



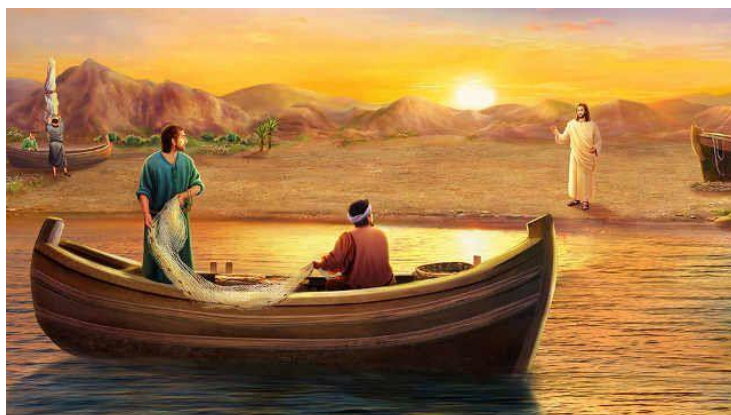
Andrew was first a follower of John the Baptist. He was intrigued by this rugged man, who lived in the desert, clothed himself in camel hair, and ate locusts and wild honey. John came as a forerunner of the Messiah. It had been over 400 years since God spoke through the last prophet Malachi and when Andrew heard “the voice of one calling in the wilderness” challenging him and others to “prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him”, it resonated with his spirit. John

was baptizing people in the Jordan River, for the second day, when Jesus walked towards him and he proclaimed for all to hear: **“Behold the Lamb of God.”** Andrew was there and heard him speak these words. He was convinced and followed Jesus. Thus we learn; that before Andrew met Jesus, he was a disciple of John the Baptist. He recognized the authority of John who declared “Behold the Lamb of God.” Andrew is often called by the title “protokletos” which means, “first called”. Andrew followed Jesus that day to where he was staying, after witnessing John’s proclamation, and spent the day with Him. We would call Andrew a “seeker” as he followed, first John and then, Jesus; searching truth and spiritual direction.

The very next thing Andrew did was go and fetch his brother Peter, and bring him to the Messiah.

Now Mark 1: 12 tells us that, immediately after John baptized Jesus, the Spirit drove him into the wilderness, where he was tested for 40 days.

According to scripture, during this time, Andrew and Peter returned to Capernaum; after Peter’s introduction to Jesus, and continued their fishing career during the time Jesus was in the wilderness; until Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee, and called them to become “fishers of men”. **Mark 1: 16 As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee; he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 17 “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”** ⁸ At once they left their nets and followed him.



These 2 brothers, which is often the case in families, were polar opposites in personalities and leadership styles.

Peter was often brash, impulsive, and hasty in his conclusions and actions. Growing up with Peter, Andrew would have been

very aware of how Peter operated and must have realized Peter would take charge in the group of disciples. And yet, there was no sibling rivalry or estrangement to be found between the two men. Andrew trusted in the love

and authority he had experienced while in the presence of Jesus; thus believing, because He called both himself and Peter, He had a plan and much to teach them both.

Bold and brash Peter was certainly noticed; but Andrew used his gifts and people skills to work in the background with people. While we don't find Andrew walking on water or preaching to large crowds of people; Andrew knew the value of relational ministry.

Andrew's commitment to follow Jesus, and his keen zeal to bring others to meet Jesus, characterized this man's leadership style.

This ordinary guy, did great things for God, because bringing others to Christ, was his heart and mission in life.

I use the term relational ministry. I believe relational ministry depicts exactly the nature of Andrew's ministry in serving Jesus.

Relational ministry is most commonly associated in our context with ministry to teens. As leaders of teens, people would strive to become aware of the day-to-day life struggles of a teen; things like emotional wounds, neglectful or absent parenting, broken relationships, bullying issues in school, poor self-esteem, identity issues, as well as, questions about faith; all of which would receive intentional attention. This type of ministry is in full agreement with the following scripture: **Mathew 22: 37-39**
37 Jesus said to him, “you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all you mind.” **38** This is *the* first and great commandment. **39** And *the* second is like it: “you shall love your neighbor as yourself.”



Many of us are doing relational ministry, without perhaps realizing, or naming it as such. Why? Because relational ministry is just a natural flow from lives following the leading of the Holy Spirit. Everyone can be involved in relational ministry; individually or in a group context. Alpha is a good example of relational ministry.

You might be thinking that, because we have been so isolated during this pandemic, doing relational ministry is not practical, or maybe even possible. I'd like to suggest there are many ways to be relational ministers during this time. Phone calls, social media contacts, sending cards, drive by or drop ins; if the law currently permits, practicing physical distancing and mask wearing, of course. Online prayer groups are another possibility, and I'm sure your creative minds can come up with many more possibilities.

When Jesus sent the twelve out to proclaim the kingdom of God, he said to them "Take nothing with you for your journey." He wasn't meaning material articles so much. So don't worry about your inadequacies; God will make a way, because it is His heart to see us, as His disciples, sharing His love with those around us. The Spirit will lead, and don't underestimate the ordinary, simple things, you are led to do. God will bless you, your efforts and others, through your sincere actions.

The following theological concepts are essential to a relational ministry:

- 1) **God- awareness:** This is further extrapolated into viewing all of life in the light of God's character, works and promises. So it stands to reason then, that knowing the Scriptures, is vital for us to be effective relational ministers.
- 2) **God- engagement:** means we trust, obey, and imitate God in ways that are pleasing to Him. This is an essential life commitment, if we are to be credible witnesses to others.
- 3) **Self-awareness:** is our personal ability to master our thoughts, words, emotions and actions, in order to advance God's purposes. Relational ministry is not about focusing on ourselves; but with all humility, it is about being aware of the issues/ needs we bring to relationships with others, and how these affect our witness.
- 4) **Other- awareness:** speaks of compassion, kindness and caring; in our ability to encourage, cooperate and resolve issues with others, while at the same time, respecting the needs of all.
- 5) **Lastly is engagement with others:** which is serving God and others for the good of the kingdom, and to bring glory to God. This is all about building relationships, with the other in mind.

Many heroes in the Bible failed at one or more of these principles, and some failed at all of them. Sexual immorality and murder haunted David's

house and his pride led him to be insensitive to how his actions harmed others. If you think about it, similar narratives can be thought of in the lives of Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Peter and Paul. Disasters resulted in the lives of these men, when there was failure to value the relational principles of God, revealed in His Word.

But God loved these people and we can learn from their lives and from our own mistakes too!

In specific today; we can learn from the relational ministry of Andrew.

First let's look at when he went to find Peter, with the intent to bring him to Jesus. Who knows where he had to search for Peter; he may have been out in the boat fishing, or mending nets or even selling his fish in the marketplace; but Andrew purposed to find him and share his exciting news with Peter.

John 1: 41 tells us 41 the first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called "Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter).

Someone has said: "it often takes more courage to witness your own brother than it does a person over in China" It definitely does take more courage to witness to our own family than it does to strangers. If you have ever been rejected or mocked by a family member for your beliefs, then you know this to be true.

I wonder if Andrew, having grown up with and worked alongside of Peter, would have been prepared to be chided or rebuffed by Peter when he sought him out to introduce him to Jesus? Yet, Peter knew his brother; the kind, considerate, steadfast man he grew up with. What Andrew told him that day impacted him, and convinced him. Andrew's witness rang true to him. We need to have a credible witness; not so much by what we say, but how we live our lives. Others are watching and will only listen, if we have presented as truthful, honest and above reproach in their dealings with us over time. We must earn the privilege to share in another's life, and then to share, only as the Holy Spirit leads us.

We cannot be witnesses for Christ if our lives are not without reproach. Now that doesn't mean being perfect. It means being genuine, humble, good listeners, accountable, faithful and accessible to others.

Andrew probably never preached a sermon, but no doubt, he lived a better sermon than a preacher can ever preach. He never wrote an epistle; but he was a living epistle.

The picture depicted of Andrew when he brought the young boy to Jesus in the account of the feeding of the five thousand; is especially telling of his relational ministry. This first miracle of the Bible is recorded in all four gospels and Andrew played a key role in it. This event took place down by the seashore, where the multitudes following Jesus had congregated, to hear him preach and teach. They were unaware of the passage of time; as they listened to him speak. No doubt, the babies and children were starting to fret, and people were noticing they were getting hungry as the day drew to nearing an end. Realizing that it was a very long journey for these people to get home; Jesus was concerned for their welfare. He inquired about food to feed the multitude and Andrew responded, telling him, "There is a lad here, who has brought 5 barley loaves and 2 small fishes."

I have always been touched by the humility and simple trust Andrew displayed, in bringing this lad to Jesus. Firstly; he did not disregard the boy's lunch as so small it could never be of any use in this situation. Andrew was exhibiting his faith in Jesus, and his trust in Him, to do what He might do with the lad's offering.



This question has occurred to me too; in such a large crowd, how did Andrew know about this boy and his lunch? This boy was, after all, the most important one in the crowd it turned out, in relation to having something to share with others. Andrew, the people person, no doubt made it his business to check in, to meet people that day and had it not been for Andrew, there would not have been lunch. What is interesting is that this boy had confidence in, and trusted Andrew to lead him to Jesus, to present his lunch.

You know you can't fool children and young people. They know whether we are genuine. Someone has said –"neglect the child and you spoil the

future; recognize the child and you determine the future.” Ordinary Andrew noticed the boy and brought him to Jesus. Imagine how the lad felt being so close to Jesus, and witnessing Him bless his little lunch to feed thousands of people.

But others trusted Andrew too!

John 12:20-22 Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. **21** They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” **22** Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

These Greeks were a prelude of the Gentile church. They had been brought up heathen: they were not, however, at this point now, idolatrous Gentiles; but proselytes to the Jewish religion, and worshippers of the true God. They were persons who had come to Jerusalem, it seems, on purpose to worship God. It is likely, however; that they had heard of the Messiah, and cherished expectations of His coming. But, being foreigners, they had never seen Jesus. They came, therefore, to Philip, who was from Bethsaida. This circumstance is mentioned to show why these men came to make their request of Philip. Probably they were Syro-Phœnicians, dwelling about Tyre and Sidon, who, having commerce with Galilee, might have been acquainted with Philip previously. They asked Philip, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” Our Lord’s fame, and the general opinion, which then prevailed, concurred to persuade these proselytes that Jesus might be the Messiah; for which reason they desired an interview with him. But Philip came to Andrew with their request. Philip probably was justified in not taking these people to Peter. God had not yet dealt with Peter about his issues with the Gentiles coming to Christ.

Remember Acts 10: 9-16 tells of Peter’s vision wherein God changed his viewpoint about the Gentiles. **9** The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. **10** Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance **11** and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. **12** In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. **13** And a voice came to him, “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.” **14** But Peter said, “Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything

common or unclean.” **15** And a voice *spoke* to him again the second time, “What God has cleansed you must not call common.” **16** This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.

So Philip, no doubt, recognized that Andrew was the best person to deal with the request of these Greeks. This tells me Andrew had credibility, and that perhaps, his relational ministry identified him as the best person to introduce these people to Jesus. His heart mission of bringing people to Christ was likely known by Philip.

Andrew’s life was not a perfect one, of course.

The story of the crucifixion tells us of the sad account of Jesus’ disciples abandoning Him at His most desperate hour. Was Andrew among them? Yes, no doubt he was.

After the crucifixion did Andrew return to fishing with Peter, as it seemed the story was over? Yes; it was what he knew and had returned to the familiar for solace.

Was Andrew hiding with the other disciples for fear of the Jews after Jesus’ death and resurrection? The Bible tells us they were all there, except Thomas, on that first appearance of Jesus; so yes he was!

Andrew was not a perfect person! But he loved Jesus and when presented with the opportunity, he used his God given gifts to serve Him.

Although Andrew is only mentioned by name 12 times in the bible and 4 of those times it was just among an inclusive list of the disciples; and was commonly identified as Peter’s brother; he knew who he was! He knew the value of serving God. He was a man “about His Father’s business”.

I think perhaps the words of the prophet Micah describe his life objective in pleasing and serving God:

Micah 6: 8 He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.

And what does the LORD require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy

and to walk humbly with your God.

Andrew was an ordinary man, bearing great humility. He did not seek to be heard or seen as a leader. He was no “sour saint” either; resenting someone else, like his brother, being in charge or getting credit.

They say second fiddle is the most difficult instrument to play in the orchestra of life. It seems Andrew mastered it in order to be true to who he was in Christ and his calling. Andrew was a people person, and had great zeal in bringing others to Christ.

Tradition tells us that Andrew took the gospel message to Russia, Greece, Asia Minor and Turkey and that he died a martyr's death in Greece.

The story is told that when Andrew entered the Greek city of Patras he was made aware of a crisis in the family of the Governor. Andrew intervened with prayers for the Governor's wife who was restored to health. As a result, the wife and son of the Governor became followers of Christ. The Governor, however; was another story. He was so enraged by his family's conversions that he arrested Andrew. He had him bound to a cross; upside down it is said, where he was left to die of hunger, thirst and exposure.



He was crucified November 30th 60 A.D. on a Crux Decussata; which by the way, is the white cross symbol on the Flag of Scotland. Andrew is also the Patron Saint of Scotland.

Of course his name is the namesake of this beloved church.

During his lifetime Andrew exhibited characteristics of relational ministry in having a teachable spirit; being available to serve God and others, being friendly to strangers and colleagues alike, being welcoming; even having a global outlook, and of course, his faith in Christ as his Savior and friend. Faithful to the very end; he was an ordinary man who did extraordinary things for God!

May his life be an encouragement to us all!

Let us pray:

Loving God: deep within we long for You.

We are your messengers, your disciples, ready to tell of Your enormous love and mercy through the sacrifice of Your Son Jesus; so that all may be forgiven and restored to right relationship with You.

We pray that those with whom we live and work, will see Your love shining through all that we are, and all that we do.

It is Your Presence within each of us that will transform our lives into a tapestry of ardent devotion for all to see.

Thank you for trusting us with the message of the Gospel and for calling us to serve You in relational ministry for Your glory and the good of Your kingdom. **Amen.**

Hymn #238: “Beneath The Cross Of Jesus”, Keith and Kristyn Getty

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbaHBmxckC8>

1. Beneath the cross of Jesus
I find a place to stand
And wonder at such mercy
That calls me as I am
For hands that should discard me
Hold wounds which tell me come
Beneath the cross of Jesus
My unworthy soul is won

2. Beneath the cross of Jesus
His family is my own
Once strangers chasing selfish dreams
Now one through grace alone
How could I now dishonor
The ones that You have loved
Beneath the cross of Jesus
See the children called by God

3. Beneath the cross of Jesus
The path before the crown
We follow in His footsteps
Where promised hope is found
How great the joy before us
To be His perfect bride
Beneath the cross of Jesus

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. standrewsperthoffering@gmail.com 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

Through this invitation to share our gifts, we acknowledge that God has blessed us abundantly, and that we are to be a blessing to the world. With each act of giving, we are blessed again to be a part of your plan, for Your kingdom. **Amen.**

Offertory Prayer

Forgiving Father, we faithfully give witness in this world by sharing these gifts and offerings. You shared Your Son, Jesus, so that we might be saved from our sins. Our hearts are filled with gratitude for the gift of His life.

We share these gifts today with the hope that your children everywhere will be anointed with the knowledge that Your perfect love casts out all fear. May your kingdom come! **Amen.**

Pastoral Prayer

Almighty God, as we have taken part in this worship time from our various locations, we give You thanks and praise.

While it may be tough to look for promise in circumstances which are so different, and we wonder if things will ever return to a semblance of the accustomed way of life; yet we are aware, that You are with us every step of this journey. Loving God: We pray today with the assurance that You hear our prayers and You care about our burdens. Many today have fearful hearts; burdened thoughts, concerning the ongoing pandemic. We ask that we, as your people, will have words of faith and encouragement to offer to those in such need. We pray for the opportunity to share the gospel of hope, peace, joy and love only Jesus can offer.

We give thanks for the hope found in the vaccination program; but as the variant strains of Covid are presenting across our nation, we ask for Your

intervention in this situation. Please protect all those in front line work who have and are, giving, sometimes to the point of exhaustion, in caring for the needs around them. May we all purpose to do our part in staying safe and protecting others. Many are struggling physically, emotionally, mentally, financially and in relationships during these uncertain times. God, may they know, with certainty, that You are their hope and salvation and may God's people offer what they can to help them in their situation

To the many who are grieving the loss of loved ones we ask that You would be the God of all comfort to them.

We pray for the leaders of our Government at all levels; federal, provincial, and municipal; that You would give them wisdom as they govern and will have the best interest of the people in their hearts, in decision making.

We continue to pray for all those involved in our education system, that they would be safe; teachers, students, custodial persons, bus drivers, volunteers and parents alike.

We are mindful of those with connection to our congregation specifically; but all, who are residing in long term care and senior's residences. Some continue to be isolated from their loved ones, as loneliness and isolation take a great toll on their wellbeing. Let us remember them in our prayers, and take part in sending cards or giving a phone call to remind them of our care and concern for them. May those who care for them be Your hands extended to them during this difficult time.

We pray today for all those listed in our Prayers for the People. There are numerous physical problems and we don't understand why these things come into our lives; testing our strength, and even our faith at times, making us feel we have been stretched to our limit. God give them comfort and peace in the knowledge of Your abiding love.

We pray especially for Ann Savage; hear our prayer for healing, O God. May the healing virtue of Jesus Christ flow through her body and may she feel the undergirding power of our love and prayers for her.

For the leadership of St. Andrew's, we pray for discernment, and direction. Thank you for those who labor faithfully in various capacities to ensure the needs of the congregation are met. Lead and guide in the search for a Pastor for this assembly; one who would have Your heart for the people and Your vision for the future of the congregation.

We pray for the Alpha Prayer Team, the Alpha Host and Helpers Team and all participants in the Alpha program that the course will enlighten and enrich their lives in the knowledge of our Lord.

Our hope in life, and in death, is in Your prevailing love.

Sovereign God: Attend to the cries of Your people, and answer our prayers through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn #620:

“Go Now In Peace” (No Lyrics) - 7

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 into your week knowing that you are loved, saved and empowered as a disciple of Jesus; called to share His love with everyone you meet. May the God who gives us this life to live, the Savior who walks at our side each day and the Spirit who fills us to overflowing with life abundant; grant to you, peace and hope and joy.

Go in peace now to love and serve the Lord and each other.