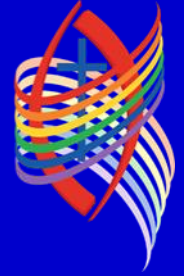




St. Andrew's United Church, North Bay

Reaching Out



a weekly online newsletter for members and friends of the
St. Andrews faith community, shared for the purpose of
bringing peace, hope and comfort during these special times.

August 2nd - Ninth Sunday after Pentecost



Today's Scriptures

1 Samuel 17: 32-50,

David & Goliath

"Master," said David, "don't give up hope. I'm ready to go and fight this Philistine."

Saul answered David, "You can't go and fight this Philistine. You're too young and inexperienced - and he's been at this fighting business since before you were born."

David said, "I've been a shepherd, tending sheep for my father. Whenever a lion or bear came and took a lamb from the flock, I'd go after it, knock it down, and rescue the lamb. If it turned on me, I'd grab it by the throat, wring its neck, and kill it. Lion or bear, it made no difference - I killed it. And I'll do the same to this Philistine pig who is taunting the troops of God-Alive. God, who delivered me from the teeth of the lion and the claws of the bear, will deliver me from this Philistine." Saul said, "Go. And God help you!"

Then Saul outfitted David as a soldier in armour. He put his bronze helmet on his head and belted his sword on him over the armour. David tried to walk but he could hardly budge. David told Saul, "I can't even move with all this stuff on me. I'm not used to this." And he took it all off.

Then David took his shepherd's staff, selected five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in the pocket of his shepherd's pack, and with his sling in his hand approached Goliath.

As the Philistine paced back and forth, his shield bearer in front of him, he noticed David. He took one look down on him and sneered - a mere youngster, apple-cheeked and peach-fuzzed. The Philistine ridiculed David. "Am I a dog that you come after me with a stick?" And he cursed him by his gods. "Come on," said the Philistine. "I'll make roadkill of you for the buzzards. I'll turn you into a tasty morsel for the field mice."

David answered, "You come at me with sword and spear and battle-ax. I come at you in the name of God-of-the-Angel-Armies, the God of Israel's troops, whom you curse and mock. This very day God is handing you over to me. I'm about to kill you, cut off your head, and serve up your body and the bodies of your Philistine buddies to the crows and coyotes. The whole earth will know that there's an extraordinary God in Israel. And everyone gathered here will learn that God doesn't save by means of sword or spear. The battle belongs to God - he's handing you to us on a platter!"

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That roused the Philistine, and he started toward David. David took off from the front line, running toward the Philistine. David reached into his pocket for a stone, slung it, and hit the Philistine hard in the forehead, embedding the stone deeply. The Philistine crashed, facedown in the dirt. That's how David beat the Philistine - with a sling and a stone. He hit him and killed him. No sword for David!

Mark 4:35-41

The Wind Ran Out of Breath

Late that day he said to them, "Let's go across to the other side." They took him in the boat as he was. Other boats came along. A huge storm came up. Waves poured into the boat, threaten-

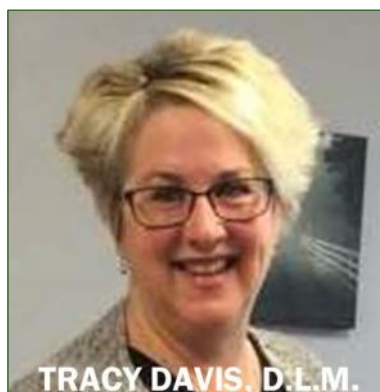
ing to sink it. And Jesus was in the stern, head on a pillow, sleeping! They roused him, saying, "Teacher, is it nothing to you that we're going down?"

Awake now, he told the wind to pipe down and said to the sea, "Quiet! Settle down!" The wind ran out of breath; the sea became smooth as glass. Jesus reprimanded the disciples: "Why are you such cowards? Don't you have any faith at all?"

They were in absolute awe, staggered. "Who is this, anyway?" they asked. "Wind and sea at his beck and call!"

David and Goliath

A Reflection on Passages 1 Samuel 17:1-11, 19-23, 32-50, and Mark 4:35-41



David said, 'The Lord, who saved me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will save me from the hand of this Philistine.' So Saul said to David, 'Go, and may the Lord be with you!'

This morning we're continuing our consideration of some of the best loved stories from the Old Testament.

There are many who are uneasy about the story of David and Goliath. The story of David and Goliath is violent; so very violent, in fact, that one feature of the story never appeared in the flannel board lesson when I was little fellow in the Emmanuel United's Sunday School. (We used flannel boards before the invention of video.) While

the flannel board lesson depicted David slinging his stone at Goliath as the giant fell on his face, it never depicted what happened next: David ran up to Goliath, pulled out the giant's sword, and cut off his head. It was only when the Philistines saw David waving Goliath's head that they fled. I chose not to include reading that detail either.

As a child the story was great because of the thrill of a super adventure; it was captivating because a teenager trounced an enemy giant; it was exciting to learn of the courage and strength and skill of the shepherd boy who deals with marauding bear, then marauding lion, then marauding giant as the story builds to a climax. I know I am not a child anymore but I still love the story, however gory some may find it.

The point I want to invite you to reflect on, is David's faith; his profound trust in God for all that he faces in life. Listen again to what he said to King Saul as he prepares to go to face the giant Goliath. "The Lord, who saved me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will save me from the hand of this Philistine."

We learn in scripture that David was passionate about his love for God and that he was a great champion for the poor and dispossessed. He wasn't perfect but was said to be a person after God's own heart. His heart was attuned to the heart of God.

The story begins, "Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle." The simple beginning tells us that Israel, the people of God, are immersed in conflict yet again. King Saul gathers Israel's army to defend his people against the unprovoked Philistine aggression.

David's role in this story falls within that larger story of an enemy's aggression and Israel's legitimate defence of her people.

As I think about Covid-19, protests in response of systemic racism in our country, abuses by some in the police community, thinking about safe return to school and church, the financial realities of our belfry problem ... each is a giant problem.

Do we have faith like David's as we struggle with these sometimes dangerous and difficult issues?

Clearly the courage David finds for facing Goliath is because he knew God to be present with him in his shepherding work. David had known first hand that his triumph over marauding bear and lion wasn't because he had perfected bear-and-lion fighting skills; he knew that God was with him in this work of being a shepherd. David believed sheep worthy of protection in this livelihood of being a shepherd and that God would support him in that – it's the right thing to do to care for the sheep.

Relationship with God wasn't, for David, a spiritual activity he engaged in when he finished his other duties in life.

He knew God to be with him in all that he faced. I think we can learn from David. You face things in your daily life that require the courage of conviction

to do the right thing; the courage to persist with a vision that some circumstance raise questions about. The challenges of aging that rob us of our ability to do what we once did requires courage to face. Does faith help us in meeting these things in life? David's answer is a loud "yes"! More importantly, David's "yes" is an echo of God's "yes" spoken through God's own involvement in David's life.

Let us return to the beginning of this story that tells us that Israel, the people of God, are immersed in conflict yet again. We know what that looks like! The only way to avoid conflict is to avoid life; or at least avoid facing any of the giant injustices that face our families and world, today.

Will was helping his granddaughter, Emma, with a summer school assignment for her high school religion class. I overheard him telling her about John Wesley who, at age thirty-five, felt his "heart strangely warmed", knew that God's mercy possessed even a person like him, knew that the gospel was now etched so very deeply into him; from this point on he was immersed in conflict every day: conflict with church-authorities, conflict with civic authorities, conflict with judges and mobs and even fellow-ministers. What had he done to provoke this? He had upheld Jesus' insistence on "holiness of heart and life" as he put it. Wesley knew that by God's grace all who hang on to Jesus Christ are transformed within and from then on spend themselves trying to transform the society around them. This fosters conflict. We see it every night on the news. There are many who don't want individuals transformed, don't want them taking up "Black Lives Matter" banners ... protesting pipelines through indigenous territory ... because that kind of transformation points out their own inactivity. There are many who don't want society transformed, because they profit from the society the way it is. Despite the conflict that dogged Wesley for the next fifty years, he never backed away from it. Another great example of that was congressman

John Lewis, whose death this week is inspiring and motivating people against racism all across North America.

The gospel teaches that humans beings are created in the image of God. We need to stand opposed to the disregard for vulnerable human life and suffering wherever it takes place. And it is my experience that to take such a stand for life inevitably leads me to conflict.

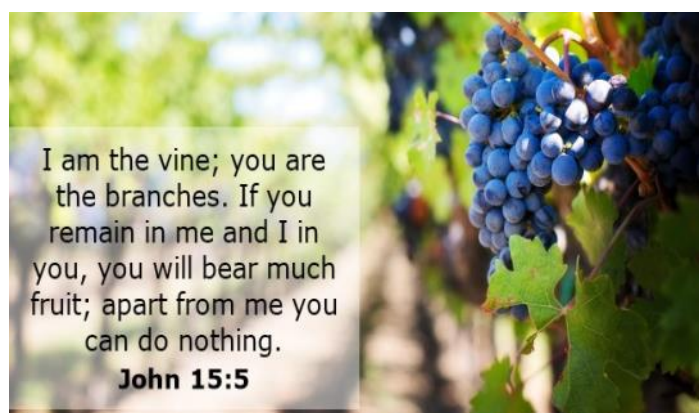
It also stands out to me that David's faith in God calls for the best in David of who he truly is. When David offered to go out and fight Goliath people thought him to be ridiculously under-equipped. King Saul offered David his own armour but David found it too heavy and laid it aside. David knew that he was sufficiently equipped because his equipment was right for him. He had to be himself and he comes to discover this about himself in relationship with God in his work in his life as a shepherd. It was there he discovered how skilled he could be with a sling-shot.

David needed to find his own voice... his own way. I think the same is true for life in general - and David shows us that the key to finding this is living every aspect of life in relationship with God. David found great courage through his faith in God. Goliath was massive; everyone knew that. Goliath was as mighty as he was massive. Before him the Israelites quaked just because he was so huge. "He's too big to hit!", they despaired before David. "If Goliath is that big", replied the shepherd boy, "then he's too big to miss!" Is David's courage born of someone too young to know better? I don't think it was youthful arrogance; it was born of confidence in the presence and power of God. David knew that God's people have nothing to fear really, nothing to fear realistically before the forces of those who oppose Truth. David declared, "The Lord saves not with sword and spear, for the battle is the Lord's."

Fourteen hundred years after David had defeated Goliath, Augustine wrote, "Without God, we cannot; without us, he will not." Both men were ex-

pressing in their own way the truth that Jesus Christ had impressed upon his disciples on the eve of his death: "Apart from me you can do nothing." ([John 15:5](#)) When Jesus insisted to his followers, "Apart from me you can do nothing" he never meant that you and I should, therefore, do nothing! Not at all.

In one and the same pronouncement he tells us both that apart from him we can do nothing and that our "doing" should always be bearing fruit and glorifying God. He tells us both that apart from him we can do nothing and that we must never be idle or useless. The battle is the Lord's,



even as David himself realizes.

God's people have always known this. John Lewis gave his entire life in tireless efforts to end the systemic racism in America. He suffered dreadful abuse for his efforts, but he never quit. His entire adult life! But he never quit. At the first of several memorial services this week, his brother said that Lewis knew the battle to be the Lord's ... and he knew because of that that he himself couldn't ever give up the fight.

There's more that could be probed about faith in this story of David and Goliath. As we go from this Sabbath Day into our own battle with giants, I want to conclude with the interchange between Jesus and his disciples that day he stilled the storm. He said to them, 'Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?' And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?'

Amen. 



O God, you come to us in unexpected places
 In isolation, behind closed doors
 On dusty roads, as we go from place to place
 In video chats with friends and telephone conversations with loved ones.
 You come bringing us peace, where there is no peace
 You come bringing us hope when everything seems hopeless
 You come bringing us courage when we are afraid.
 Come and be among us now, in every place where we are.
 Open our eyes to see you, open our hearts to know you.
 In the name of the Risen Christ we pray.

Amen



SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER !!

Please make a note that the Church Office will be closed as of **Monday, August 3rd** and will be open again on **Tuesday, September 8th**. You are invited to join with friends at Trinity United for the Sundays in August 9th through to and including Sunday, September 6th.

Emergency Pastoral Care coverage will be provided by the Rev. Ted Harrison from Trinity United Church. Ted can be reached through the Trinity office at 705- 474-3310

The “**Reaching Out**” newsletter will also be on holiday with the next issue slated for *Friday, September 4th* unless there is urgent information that needs to be sent out. Hopefully details of St. Andrew’s re-opening plan and protocols will be presented at that time, with resumption of in-church worship tentatively scheduled for Saturday, September 12 (4 pm) and Sunday, September 13 (10:30 am).

Online services for the Sundays of Aug. 9, 16, 23, 30 and September 6 will be coordinated by the folks at Trinity United and displayed on the [Trinity United YouTube Channel](#). We thank them in advance for providing this opportunity for Sunday worship .

e-mail contact: reachingout@standrews-northbay.ca



ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH

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July 31, 2020

Dear Members and Friends of St. Andrews:

What is St. Andrew's? Is St. Andrew's the building, the people, the mission, the community? These are questions we are all asking ourselves as we struggle though how to deal with the problems of worshiping in an old building.

St. Andrew's is many things to many people. It is the place where many of us where baptized, attended Sunday School, were married, celebrated the lives of loved ones, and made lifelong friendships. All this and so much more has happened within the walls of that wonderful old building.

Is it time for the Community of Faith which is St. Andrew's to move on without this building that means so much to so many of us? Or do we band together and find a way to save this wonderful old building so that we can continue our journey together.

Such hard questions we must all deal with. Thanks to Rob Smith and Melody Duncanson-Hales from the *Canadian Shield Regional Council* we have had two good information sessions to help our congregation to work through these difficult questions.

We will be holding one more meeting on **September 22, 2020** at which time we will have to make our decision. In the meantime, we are continuing to gather information and trying to find more options for us to look at. As we gather this information, we will be sure to forward it to everyone. A survey is currently being planned so that we can listen to the thoughts and wishes of as many people as possible. All those on the "Reaching Out" newsletter list will be offered the opportunity to participate in this survey.

If you have questions - or just want to talk about the future - you can contact Tracy or myself. We are here for you all. Our prayers are with everyone as we work through this difficult time.

Yours in Christ,

Patricia Kirton-Bailey
Chair,
St. Andrew's Church Council



**ST. ANDREW'S
UNITED CHURCH**

NORTH BAY, ONTARIO

"All are welcome in this place."



Help Wanted

PART-TIME CHURCH CUSTODIAN

St. Andrew's United Church (North Bay) is looking for a energetic flexible person who is insured to work as a private business person, for custodial contract work at the church. The duties of this position would primarily include the cleaning, and care and maintenance of the church building and property.

We are presently looking at 10 hours per week but this could change and fluctuate depending on the changing COVID- 19 regulations.

Pay offered is \$14.50 per hour; terms net 30 days.

If you are interested then please contact John Balfe by e-mail: jabalfe26@gmail.com

This search closes **5 pm on August 13th, 2020**. A selection process will follow.

Kid's Corner

This week's colouring activity reminds us that sometimes God will put a Goliath in your life so that you can discover the David in you!

Click on the image below to download and print out The colouring page.



ONLINE SUNDAY SERVICES

The theme of this Sunday's online worship service (**Sunday - August 2, 2020**) will be the Old Testament story of David and Goliath.



This *Sunday Service* video is recorded and can be watched on **YouTube** at any time. The service (usually posted by Saturday evening) is a collaborative production produced by **St. Andrew's**, with participation by **Emmanuel United**, and **Trinity United Churches**. To visit either channel, click on the links below.

[St. Andrew's United Church YouTube Channel](#)

[Emmanuel United Church YouTube Channel](#)

Starting on Sunday, **Aug.9th** and running through to Sunday, **Sept. 6th (incl)**, the Sunday worship videos will be found on the [Trinity United Church YouTube Channel](#).



75th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

"a small boy was reaching up to catch a dragonfly against a clear blue sky, and in a blinding flash - he was gone"



Hiroshima Remembered

8 a.m., August 6th
The Sundial
North Bay Waterfront
Memorial Drive

Nagasaki Never Again

8 p.m., August 9th
North Bay Museum/
Civic Square
100 Ferguson Street

All are welcome. Visit northbaypeace.weebly.com or find North Bay Peace Alliance on Facebook for details.

HIROSHIMA & NAGASAKI MEMORIAL

The North Bay Peace Alliance invites you to attend "Hiroshima Remembered, and Nagasaki Never Again." We will join communities around the world to honour the 75th Anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan when more than 200,000 people were killed. On Aug 6, 8am, we will gather to remember Hiroshima, at the Sundial at the North Bay Waterfront. At 8pm on Aug 9, we will gather to remember Nagasaki and in hope, proclaim "Never Again," at the North Bay Museum/Civic Square, 100 Ferguson Street. All are welcome. Visit northbaypeace.weebly.com or find North Bay Peace Alliance on Facebook for details.



HOW YOU CAN HELP ST. ANDREW'S DURING THIS SPECIAL TIME

1. Become a monthly **PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance) member** by downloading a *PAR Authorization Form* and mailing it to St. Andrew's. Complete PAR details and the necessary form can be found at: <https://www.united-church.ca/community-faith/get-involved/give-regularly> . Take or mail the form to the Church Office.
2. Mail a **cheque** at the Church at 399 Cassells Street, North Bay, ON P1B 3Z4. The incoming mail will be checked during August.
3. Give via the "**Donate Now**" button located to the right, or on our website (<https://standrews-northbay.ca/donate/>) Please note choosing this option allows you to use a credit card however the tax receipt will come from *Canada Helps directly to you by e-mail* but be reminded that they take a 3% admin fee.)

