



ST. ANDREW'S
HALL

March 2023



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Monthly Newsletter of St. Andrew's Hall

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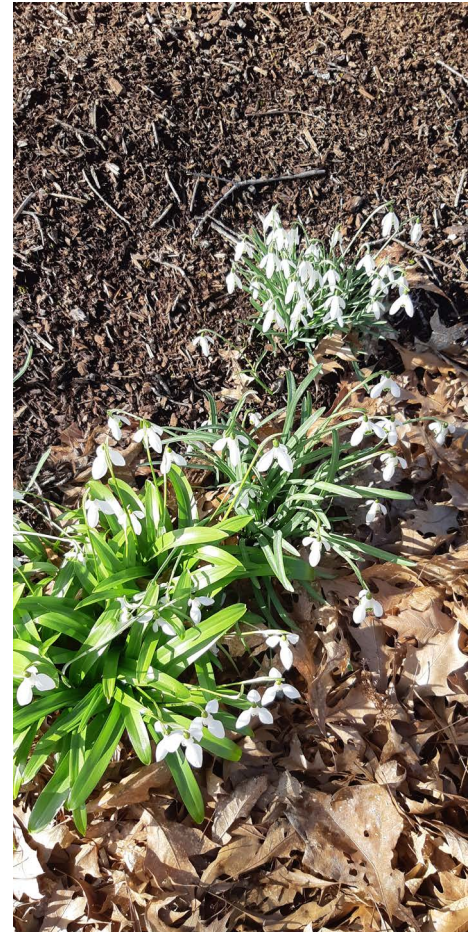
Springtime

Hannah

It's almost spring and the flowers around campus and SAH are starting to bloom again! While I am a big winter fan, I do love having different seasons. I just love how nature always changes with each new season. In Vancouver, I particularly love the cherry blossoms you can see all around the city in March and April!

Spring is also the perfect time to visit one of Vancouver's many botanical gardens. There is the one here at UBC, which is so convenient because it is so close and really beautiful. Plus, there is also the Nitobe Japanese Garden that just looks so much more beautiful in the sunlight. Another park I love is VanDusen Botanical Gardens because it is so big and well maintained! Those gardens are also just a short transit ride away. Queen Elizabeth Park also has beautiful gardens if you are looking for a cost-free option. Other than that, there are so many little flower beds all around the city, for example in English Bay they always have really nice ones as you enter Stanley Park.

Spring is a great time for spending lots of time outside. It is also a time where you can start thinking about summer plans and vacations. Temperatures are getting warmer which puts us in the right mood for it. The days also finally get longer and sunnier again in Vancouver during springtime, making everything look even more beautiful. Easter is also right around the corner, and we have a fun event planned for everyone at SAH to finish off the rest of the term and get ready for Easter together! Watch your inbox for information!



Credit to
Hannah

In Stressful Times

Chaplain
Sumarme Goble



Credit to Sumarme

It's that time in the term when stress levels are high, and they will probably stay high until everything is completed. You may be preparing for final projects and exams. You might be in the midst of a predicament that feels unsolvable right now, and it's draining you mentally and emotionally. Maybe you are raising children and teenagers while working on a degree, and balancing your family and your studies is difficult. On the world scene, you hear of tragedies that grip your heart, but you feel helpless to act. There's also the good stress of participating in concerts, sporting events, and celebrations. Sometimes it seems like everything is coming at us all at once, and we feel overwhelmed by the responsibilities that life is constantly throwing our way. It's intense juggling all these things, and we don't know who can help us keep all the "balls" in the air.

Brené Brown, a research professor at the University of Houston, Texas, points out the difference between being stressed and being overwhelmed. When we're *stressed*, we are under a lot of pressure, but we know what actions to take, and we do them. When we're *overwhelmed*, we may be incapable of taking action because we're under an extreme level of stress.

One thing I've discovered is that I can't do everything, but I can think through the things I need to do today and then do them, focusing *on one thing at a time*. I admit that sometimes it's hard to accept my limitations. There are no quick and easy life hacks that will help me "do it all." At times I have had to say to someone seeking my help, "No, I'm sorry. I don't have the capacity to do this thing now, but may I point you to someone who may be able to help? Other times, I have had to ask myself (and maybe you've asked yourself this question too), "What is pushing me to fulfill all these obligations and tasks that I've said "yes" to?" In addition, you may need to let go of some obligations that are not essential (hopefully not all the ones that give you joy) in order to make room for things that absolutely must be accomplished (e.g., course assignments, daily personal care, providing for your family). Sometimes, I have had to reframe the story of how I usually do things, and I shift my thought from "I have to do each project perfectly" into "I think this is good enough."

As a Christian, when I face stressful times, I try to slow down for a moment and trust that God will meet me in my anxiety, hear my cries for help, and assure me that I am loved for who I am, not for what I do. Slowing down is a bit like refocusing and rebooting your system. If you can go for a walk, meditate or pray, listen to calming music, or take a short nap, you open yourself to God, making it possible to gain a broader perspective, find strengths where you were feeling weakened, become refreshed where you were feeling tired. If you open yourself to the possibility, God can provide the tangible love of friends and the gift of spiritual community.

Many people have gone before you, feeling the weight of the many stresses they carry. Even in ancient biblical times, those writing the poetry of the psalms felt it, too. Psalm 62 is a good example of this and you can read a few verses of it below. In these stressful days, may you recognize the specific ways that God is providing for you in your circumstances.

Here's a breath prayer based on Psalm 62:

Inhale: God is my refuge and strength.

Exhale: I will trust in God who is near.

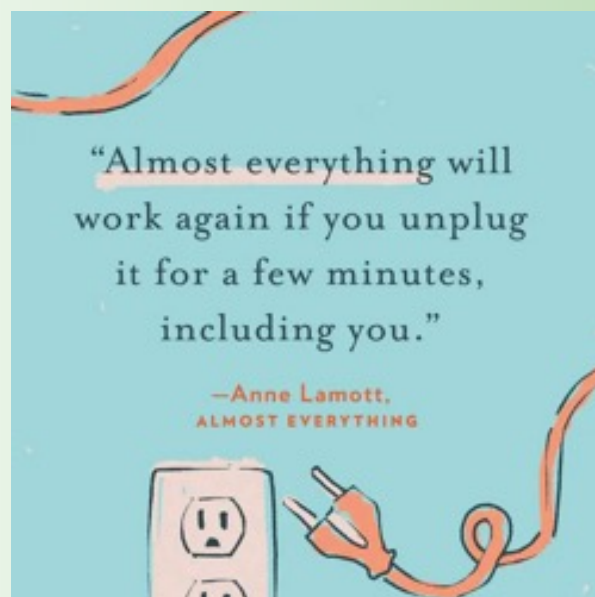
Psalm 62:5-8

⁵ *For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from God.*

⁶ *God alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken.*

⁷ *On God rests my deliverance and my honor; my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.*

⁸ *Trust in God at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us.*



Resident Interview

Lisa

Interview with Lisa Burgener

I enjoy... biking in the sunshine and under the stars!

The meal I like best right now is... chickpea curry... and I make it myself :)

Don't talk to me ... passionately about one or the other side of the pandemic politics. Unfortunately, our community in the north became incredibly divided during the pandemic... even my own extended family became incredibly divided, and I long for those divisions to heal.

I could talk forever about... dance and also cross-cultural experiences.

Someday I'll be rid of... clutter and live a materially simple life.

Friends know me as ... a free spirit.

One of my favorite books is "Plain Living: A Quaker Path to Simplicity" by Catherine Whitmire. Reading it calms and centers me. I'm reading it again right now for the fourth time this decade! Another book that I love and also calms and centers me is "Embers" by Richard Wagamese. I highly recommend it.



Credit to Lisa

Both books have quotations or small wisdom writings that a person can read and reflect on for the day. 'Embers' is from an Indigenous spiritual perspective.

Important words to me are... "If you must look back, do so forgivingly. If you must look forward, do so prayerfully. However, the wisest thing you can do is be present in the present... gratefully. (Maya Angelou)

The thing I like best (and least) about university is...best is the very compassionate personalities of all my teachers/professors. Least (although it is probably best for me!) is the slight (sometimes not so slight!) feeling of anxiety when I am stretched out of my comfort zone into growth, which happens constantly!

The hardest thing I've done so far in life and succeeded was... keep going through challenging personal circumstances.

Being connected to a faith tradition is... a source of deep sustenance and inspiration.

I'm at my best when... I connect daily to God, the Source of All Life, through prayer, meditation, singing, inspirational readings, and quiet contemplation.

Someday, I would like to ... live and work in Nunavut.

When I have free time, I like to ... meander (barefoot in some seasons!) in the woods and by the water.

The three things I practice for good mental health are ... movement of any type (walking, biking, dancing, yoga, workouts, etc.), prayer and meditation, connecting with people (friends or volunteering).

Living at St. Andrew's Hall is ... an absolute blessing! I feel grateful every day to be part of this welcoming and nurturing community and to be so close to UBC and the ocean.

I'm at my worst when... I have overworked for days on end and have had many sleepless nights. Sleep makes me so much sweeter!

A little known fact about me... one of my passions is white water canoeing and canoe tripping. Also, I studied Nihon buyo, Japanese Traditional Dance, when I lived in Japan twenty-five years ago.

What I'd like to do to make the world a better place in my corner of the world ... continue to work toward local food security and also work to create accessible and affordable housing for people without homes in our community in the north.

The most beautiful place I've been to so far ... I cannot possibly compare one place to another!



Resident Interview

It has been one-and-a-half years since my family and I moved from Kazakhstan (Astana) to live here in Canada, on the campus of UBC University. My husband is a PhD student and I work as a teacher. We have been lucky to live in this great place at St. Andrew's Hall where we met great people and the staff members of SAH. It was so important for us not to feel alone when moving to another country. Our close-knit SAH community is constantly supporting us. We constantly have various events to celebrate holidays like Christmas, Thanksgiving and Halloween. It has helped us meet our neighbours and other residents. At such events you can listen to wonderful concerts, taste food from different countries, meet people of different cultures, and not feel alone. Thanks to the support

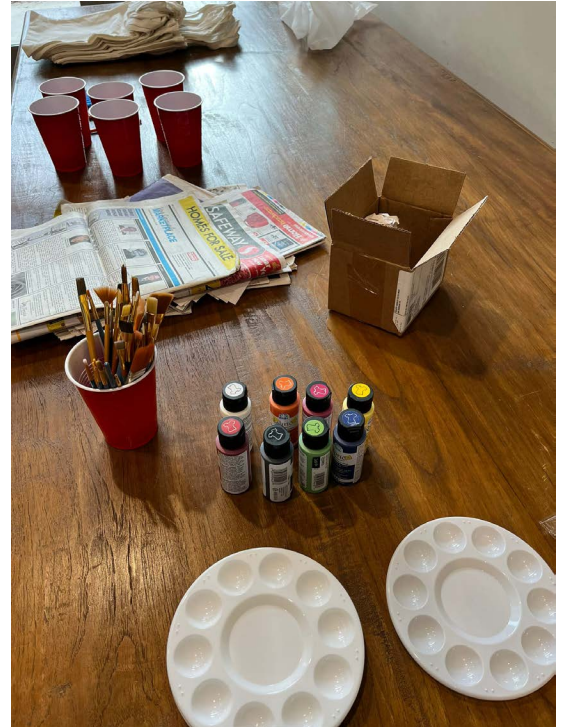
Takhmina Karambayeva

of SAH, our six year old daughter went to summer camp for the first time. It was her first independent trip without parents and she really liked and remembered it. She made new friends and this helped her learn English. We are thankful for all these blessings.



Credit to Takhmina

Tote bag painting



Credit to Hannah