

FIRST THINGS FIRST

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, REGINA

FEBRUARY 2015

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Max Lucado has a wonderful book titled, *It's Not About Me*. In it he goes through a review of biblical attributes of God and His people and then moves on to talk about people as God's mirrors. His first chapters explore the human-centric and "me-centric" life and ask how that life fits into honest worship. His final chapters are titled My message is about Him, My salvation is about Him, My body is about Him, My struggles are about Him, and My success is about Him. Well that's all well and good for Max Lucado but the truth is; "me-centric" thinking is always going to be the norm. Lucado himself admits that he's not immune to it.

That doesn't make it right or good but it is certainly present. Worship is the perfect example of this. What do you suspect the chances are of everyone appreciating the exact same things in a worship service? Did everyone feel the presence of God while singing that exact same song you did? Do you suppose that everyone connects with God each week in the same prayers or sermon or reading that you do? I doubt it. For every one person that tells me they don't like something, two others tell me it was the most impacting thing that day. For every person that wants to stay the same I talk to a visitor on the phone that's not coming back for that exact same reason. But aren't both sides being a little "me-centric". Isn't there room for us to give and take, to share with each other and with those people that aren't here but we hope will come?

Everyone is different. Although I play a lot of new songs, my preference is actually 1930's southern gospel music. And while I choose the music I don't think we've ever done one. So, one person might not like learning new songs. But I know someone else that only wants new ones. Someone might not like a bulletin full of lyric. But the same day you tell me that the bulletin is getting a little hearty, someone else will tell me that they got to sing the songs that Sunday for

the first time in a year because terrible arthritis usually makes it impossible to hold the hymnal. Perhaps one person would rather not have a words projected onto a large screen... but then again the person with very poor vision may get to read the scriptures along with the rest of us. One person may prefer paper, but maybe someone else likes projection because it means we're being good stewards of our environment and not killing so many trees every week.

So it's true from time to time I have put a song in the bulletin just because it means that someone with arthritis can participate with the rest of us. I have at times done a whole Sunday filled with "Golden Oldies" just because I know that people who are essentially blind still have certain songs memorized and so these are the only ones they will get to sing along with all year. Sometimes I've chosen something because a certain little someone in the Sunday school asked me to and I'm a big softy when it comes to them.

We are a big group of people from different ages and races and histories and places. We have different ways of connecting with God and with each other. But when it comes to worship, we all, me too, need to give more than we take. And while I'm as "me-centric" as the rest of 'em. I hope not to be. I hope everyone will stand up and proudly proclaim, "It's not about me". Because it's about US and more to the Point, it's about Him.

Bradley Childs

Rev. Brad Childs

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Worship committee met February 21 and preceded to look forward and make plans for the upcoming season of lent. Thank you goes out to the Fellowship Committee for the pancake supper to start of the season.

This year we are introducing the lighting of six candles starting the first Sunday of lent and extinguishing one each Sunday during the Lenten reading to indicate that the light of Christ will disappear slowly until we reach Good Friday, when the light of Christ is taken from the world for a short time, then the re-lighting of the Christ candle on Easter.

A big thanks goes out to all the families at First who have participated in the Lenten readings. Purple is the church season colour for the Lenten season and will remain in the sanctuary until Good Friday service when all colour is removed. On Easter Sunday white is the colour and symbolizes purity, holiness and virtue. White will remain in place until after Pentecost.

March 1st Communion was celebrated and we were pleased to see our youth members taking part in the Communion service passing out the bread and wine. Thanks to all the youth that took part in this service.

We were also honoured to have had the moderator of General assembly visit our congregation and deliver the homely on February 22.

Our youth members continue to participate on a monthly basis in reading the scripture. Thank you goes out to all those who take part for a job well done.

Plans are being made for Holy Week which begins March 29 with Palm Sunday. There will be a potluck April 2nd at 6:00PM to celebrate Maundy Thursday when we gather to remember Jesus' last supper with His disciple followed by a service of remembrance and Communion will be included in the evening. A Good Friday service will be held the next morning at 10:30AM. Easter Sunday we will celebrate our risen Lord when the church is redecorated in white and the flowers donated in remembrance of loved ones. We also are looking forward to the hiring of a contemporary arts coordinator.

Lectors area also needed for the months of May and June. If you would like to participate please speak to Marianne Woods

Joyce McKersie
Worship Committee

FELLOWSHIP

A very successful Pancake Supper was held on Shrove Tuesday, Feb 17, with approximately 85 people attending. The pancake flippers – Brad, Al, Gordon and Bob did a great job and even got creative with 'Mickey Mouse' pancakes. Syrup, strawberries and cream completed a delicious supper. An impromptu basketball game with Brad, Alfred and a 'whole bunch of kids' topped off a fun evening.

~ HAPPY BIRTHDAY EVERYONE! ~
It's that time of year again and Birthday Sunday will be celebrated on March 29th. This year's Special Project is to donate the money to the roof fund. The idea is that you "pay" for your delicious piece of cake with nickels, dimes, quarters etc. according to your age – so if I am 70 and contribute a nickel for every year it would cost me \$3.50 and so on. However there is nothing to stop you from contributing more if you wish or you can simply make a donation. Plan to join us after church on the 29th for cake and fellowship.

Sheila Wilson
Fellowship Convenor

PLANNED GIVING

The Power of Planned Giving

First Church has had a formal planned giving program for just over a year, but there is a strong legacy of planned giving in our community. Thanks to gifts both recent and in the past, we have been to establish action funds to fulfill our mission to be joyful in our worship, tender in our lives together and daring in our outreach. At the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held in February 2015, First Church congregation approved the following initiatives to be funded by our Planned Giving Program:

Pastoral Care Advocate – a person will be hired to work with and on behalf of those in our church family who need support and services, particularly seniors. The Advocate will visit and maintain contact with people who are in a vulnerable position and need help, work with families and the pastoral care team to provide advice and support and assist in identifying and accessing appropriate resources or services in

the community. With an awareness of needs and situations within our community, the Pastoral Care Advocate will be able to tie in other groups in the congregation to provide support and assistance. This position will be funded on a trial basis for one year, from our "Tender in our Lives Together" Planned Giving action fund.

Contemporary Worship Arts Coordinator – a person will be hired to initiate, grow and integrate contemporary praise music into the already vibrant worship life at First Church. Continuing to expand the range of musical offerings will help us to be even more 'Joyful in our Worship'. This one-year trial position will also occasionally make use of other mediums of communication during worship, such as video clips.

Choral Scholar Program – this is not a new program, but our choral scholars of previous years have made a significant contribution to our mission to be 'Joyful in our Worship'. Therefore, this position will be funded from the 'Joyful Worship' Planned Giving Action Fund, with applications to be to the Planned Giving Program to fund future Choral Scholars.

Thanks to Doug Garner

These initiatives, as well as the Property Fund of First Church, have benefited from the planned gifts of the Reverend Doug Garner, who passed away in October 2014. As reported at the AGM, Doug bequeathed First Church a gift annuity, with amounts going to the Property Fund and to the Tender in our Life Together Fund. He also made First Church a beneficiary of a Life Insurance policy. Since the AGM, First Church has been notified of a third gift, a portion of the annual interest earned by the Rev. Doug and Lenna Garner trust investment. An interest payment will be provided to First Church each year, which means that Doug will be contributing to the life of this church for years to come, providing a demonstration of the power and legacy of Planned Giving.

Lisa Ann Wood
Planned Giving Team

MISSION & OUTREACH

Freedom from Freezing: The last installment of knitted items were taken to Kitchener Community School last month. It was an amazing assortment of beautifully crafted mitts, scarves and hats! The school Principal expressed her gratitude to First Church for its generosity. This project is now concluded - many thanks to everyone who provided wool and knitted for the kids.

Annual PWSD appeal: Our Winter appeal for PWSD programs raised \$2,250. Thank you for your generosity in bringing about a sustainable, compassionate and just world.

Mary Jesse
Mission & Outreach Convenor

GARAGE SALE



We are getting there . . . Spring *is* right around the corner! As you start to do your spring cleaning would you consider donating items to our garage sale taking place May 2, 2015? The proceeds will be going to Children's Ministry. For more information please talk to Tammy MacDonald, Tracy Childs or Donna Wilkinson. Thank you in advance!

FEBRUARY EVENTS

13	7:00 PM	Youth
15	10:30 AM	Worship Service & Sunday School
17	9:00 AM 10:30 AM Noon	Adult Walk Bible Study Freedom 55ers
19	9:00 AM 9:45 AM 7:30 PM	Adult Walk Brightwater Walk Choir
20	7:00 PM	Youth
22	10:30 AM	Worship Service & Sunday School
24	9:00 AM 10:30 AM Noon	Adult Walk Bible Study Freedom 55ers
26	9:00 AM 9:45 AM 7:30 PM	Adult Walk Brightwater Walk Choir
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