

FIRST THINGS FIRST

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, REGINA

March 2016

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

As the old poem goes:

"Tomb, You shall not hold Him longer,
Death is strong, but life is stronger
Stronger than the dark, the light;
Stronger than the wrong, the right;
Faith and hope triumphant say; Christ will rise on
Easter Day.

While the patient earth lies waiting
Till the morning shall be breaking
Shuddering beneath the burden dread
Of her Master, cold and dead,
Hark! she hears the angels say; Christ will rise
on Easter Day.

And when sunrise smites the mountains
Pouring light from heavenly fountains
Then the earth blooms out to greet
Once again the blessed feet;
And her countless voices say; Christ has risen
on Easter Day."

- Phillips Brooks

A young man from a wealthy family was about to graduate from high school. It was the custom in that affluent neighborhood for the parents to give the graduate an automobile. Bill and his father had spent months looking at cars, and the week before graduation they found the perfect one.

On the eve of his graduation Bill had expected to get a set of keys. But instead his father handed him a gift-wrapped Bible. Bill was so angry that he threw the Bible down and stormed out of the house. He and his father never saw each other again. It was the news of his father's death many years later that finally brought Bill home again.

As he sat one night going through his father's possessions, he came across the Bible his father had given him. He brushed away the dust and opened it. And with that, a cheque slid out and fell to the floor. It was dated the day of his

graduation - in the exact amount of the car they had chosen together.

As I think about this story, I can't help but wonder how many people in this world have done the same thing to God... literally tossed aside a wonderful promise, because they didn't understand it, or they didn't believe that it is possible. In our world, we are taught that; "if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is." And that's a good lesson. Because many of us have been taken in by "empty promises", we are leery of anything or anyone that tells us we can have something for nothing.

But, that is what Easter is about. It is about the cost of Grace: The cross of Christ and the free gift to you.

The world is full of empty promises. We watch TV, and the advertisements tell us that we can be happy, sexy, rich, famous or all of the above, if we only purchase a certain product. It doesn't take long before we have been fooled enough to know that the world's promises are full of nothing but emptiness. But, God is different. Instead of promises full of emptiness, on Easter, God gave us emptiness (in the form of a tomb); that is full of promise.

Happy Easter and God Bless!

Bradley Childs

Rev. Brad Childs

BOARD OF MANAGERS

Annual Congregation Meeting

Please plan ahead to attend the annual congregational meeting which will be held **Sunday, March 13 after the service.** Lunch will be provided.

Lisa Ann Wood,
Board of Managers

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The Worship committee met for the first time in 2016 on February 20. We reviewed the services during the Christmas season and reported that the Christmas Eve Service was well attended. Our thanks go out to Rev. John Ferrier for leading us in that special service. The children who participated did a splendid job having practiced their readings and doing them so well. Well done to all of you.

The Lenten season arrived early this year and once again we have relied on families to take part in the Lenten readings at the beginning of each service. We decided to continue the practice of lighting seven candles at the beginning of the service. There is a candle for each Sunday of Lent and one for Good Friday. One candle is extinguished at the end of each reading leaving the seventh to be put out on Good Friday, signifying the light of Christ disappearing from the World. On Easter Sunday the Christ Candle is lit again, with the return of the light of Christ in the world.

You will have the opportunity to place a memory flower on Easter Sunday for that special person you wish to remember. Donation slips can be found in the Sunday bulletin. Several azalea plants will be purchased with the remainder of the funds collected going to a special project chosen by the Mission and Outreach Committee. Plans for Palm Sunday through to Easter services are being formulated. There will be a Maundy Thursday potluck supper on March 24 at 6:00 PM. For your information, buns and dessert will be supplied. A signup sheet will be placed in the narthex of the church and in the auditorium.

The Good Friday service will be at 10:30 am, March 25. Easter Sunday Service will be at the usual time. We are looking forward to seeing what our choir Director, Bill Sgrazzutti, has in store for special music. Thanks Bill and the choir for all your work at making services so meaningful. Special thanks to Rodolfo Omolida for his music ministry each Sunday at First.

The Lenten season colours of purple are in place in the sanctuary until Good Friday when all colour is removed. Easter Sunday, the colour is White and remains so until Pentecost, at which

time red is added to the chancel table and the pulpit.

Greeters are needed for April through June. If you can help out, please contact Wendy Prior. Lectors are also required for the same period. Please speak to Marianne Woods if you would like to read the Lessons. Our thanks go out to each one of you who help out in this way every Sunday. Special thanks to our Youth Lectors as well, who take one Sunday each month.

Joyce McKersie,
Worship Committee member

MISSION & OUTREACH

Thank you!! You contributed \$3650 to the PWSD Appeal for Mother and Baby Health. Funds will be put to work in Malawi and Afghanistan shortly.
Mary Jesse,
M&O Convenor

FREEDOM 55ers

This lively group meets in the gym every Tuesday at noon from mid-September to mid-June with a short break over Christmas. There is no business meeting. Folks just bring a bag lunch and come for fun and fellowship. We spend just over an hour together, eating laughing and sharing stories. Most weeks, we have a program and it varies greatly in content and often includes speakers on various topics, or performers. The past few weeks we have been wonderfully entertained by two talented musical guests and we enjoyed an interesting presentation from an African Safari. The photos shown on the big screen were amazing. It was like being on safari!

Last week, we celebrated St. David's Day (March 1) and a member read her most recent poem, written specifically for the day and then asked the blessing prior to lunch, speaking in Welsh and then English. Following lunch, our extremely knowledgeable guest speaker gave an interesting and informative lecture on Climate Change, covering the past history, causes, effects and possible solutions for this serious problem. Our speaker projected maps and graphs on a screen so we could better

understand the comparisons and we all came away with a much greater understanding of the problem facing us and future generations.

Occasionally, we just spend time visiting and getting to know each other better. Always, we have fun!

The group is very informal and attendance is not taken. It is not necessary to commit to every week, just come when you can. You are welcome any Tuesday and bring a friend if you wish.

MARCH EVENTS

6	10:30 AM	Worship Service & Sunday School
	2:00 PM	Youth
8	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	10:30 AM	Bible Study
	Noon	Freedom 55ers
10	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	9:45 AM	Riverbend Walk
13	10:30 AM	Worship Service & Sunday School
	11:30 AM	Lunch & Annual Mtg
15	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	10:30 AM	Bible Study
	Noon	Freedom 55ers
16	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	9:45 AM	Riverbend Walk
20	10:30 AM	Worship Service & Sunday School
	2:00 PM	Youth
22	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	10:30 AM	Bible Study
	Noon	Freedom 55ers
23	7:00 PM	Board of Managers
24	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	9:45 AM	Riverbend Walk
27	10:30 AM	Worship Service & Sunday School
	2:00 PM	Youth
29	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	10:30 AM	Bible Study
	Noon	Freedom 55ers
31	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	9:45 AM	Riverbend Walk