

FIRST THINGS FIRST

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, REGINA

March 2017

FROM THE INTERIM MODERATOR

Greetings everyone,

I am happy to report a few coming events at First Church.

In March, you will have the opportunity to hear two guest preachers, the Rev. Diane Tait-Katerberg and Henry Friesen. Rev. Tait-Katerberg will conduct worship and Communion on March 5, the first Sunday of Lent; and Henry Friesen, on Sunday, March 12.

I will be joining you in worship alongside the Rev. Bob Wilson on Sunday April 2, and moderating your Annual General Meeting following that service.

I would like to take a moment, though, to focus on one special upcoming event. The Rev. Dale Woods, principal of The Presbyterian College in Montreal, will be coming to visit the congregation. On **Saturday, April 22nd**, all are invited to hear Rev. Woods speak of the work the College is doing on congregational renewal and new church development, as well as on a number of other initiatives aimed at strengthening the work of congregations. Rev. Woods feels the gulf between theological education and congregational ministry has become far too wide and he and the College would like to see the two being brought more closely together. The time of this talk is yet to be determined and will be announced closer to the date. Rev. Woods will also be the guest minister for Sunday, April 23rd.

Finally, the Search Committee has been hard at work and I will have an update for you very soon.

Blessings,
Rev. Devon Pattemore

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The church season of Lent is now upon us and is a reminder that Spring is very near. Looking back on our worship services over the winter, one of the highlights was a service in February which focused on youth, with those from our congregation who attended the Canada Youth Conference last summer at Brock University giving us an over-view of events and their experiences at the conference. Thanks to all the youth who participated in this service.

For Heritage Sunday, February 26, Rev. Bob Wilson focused on some of our past and present members who have given so much to First Church.

February 26 was Transfiguration Sunday. The church colour for that date was white. March 5 is the first Sunday of Lent, when the colours for the chancel Table and the pulpit will change to purple.

Memorial Easter flower donations will be available once again for those who wish to remember loved ones. Watch for this notice in your Sunday bulletin. Flowers will be placed in the sanctuary Easter Sunday.

Maundy Thursday, April 13, will be observed beginning with a pot-luck supper followed by a Communion service around our supper table as would have been in the very first Communion given by Christ Himself. Supper will begin at 6:00 pm. There will be sign-up sheets in the Narthex. Congregants residing in independent living homes and who are not cooking their own meals

are urged to please come. There will be plenty of food.

The Good Friday service, April 14, is scheduled for 11am.

We are in need of greeters, ushers and lectors for Sundays throughout the Spring. If you would care to be a greeter, please speak to Wendy Prior; if you would care be a lector or an usher please speak to Marianne Woods. Your participation in these activities is most appreciated.

Joyce McKersie
Worship Committee

MISSION & OUTREACH COMMITTEE

2017 PWSD Appeal Our annual appeal for Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWSD) is directed to Syrian refugees living in Lebanon and Jordan. The numbers are in the millions – many in UN refugee camps and others living in cities and towns in these host countries. The story below gives one example of how our PWSD appeal funds are helping to meet the needs.

“In Syria we were happy,” shares Fatima, smiling as she remembers her once peaceful homeland. “Oh yes, we were, and comfortable, too.”

Brutal violence forced Fatima to flee Syria in 2013. She now lives with relatives in a rented room in Lebanon. Because of the war, her three brothers are missing. Though Fatima is now safe, she feels sad and empty away from home. She misses her life in Syria—especially her job. All Fatima wants to do is go back to being a teacher.

She covers her face with her hands. “Now I can’t do anything.”

Mousa, a neighbour, is facing similar challenges. Back home, Mousa bought and sold livestock. “I had a good life,” he says. “In Syria, I could do anything.”

Now in Lebanon, the father of four is not allowed to have a job because of restrictions placed on Syrian refugees by the Lebanese government. To get by, Mousa picks fruit for local farmers. The farmers aren’t allowed to employ him, but know that Syrians will work for cheap. Mousa earns \$8 a day—significantly less than what the Lebanese can make. Mousa doesn’t like being taken advantage of. But in his position, he has no other choice.

Unable to find secure employment, Fatima and Mousa worried about meeting their basic needs. Fortunately, a PWS&D-supported project with Canadian Foodgrains Bank is helping them get enough food. The project is providing food vouchers for refugees so they can purchase groceries while saving money for rent and other expenses.

“We are very dependent on the vouchers,” shares Mousa.

“Yes, yes, yes,” Fatima echoes quietly.

While Fatima and Mousa miss the comforts of home—their families, jobs, routines—with this assistance, they are surviving. In this time of great uncertainty, knowing they can save money for rent and enjoy a warm dinner is a source of comfort and strength.

“Thank you for helping us,” says Fatima to visitors from Canada. “The vouchers help me survive.”

*(*story from PWSD website)*

Our PWSD appeal continues until March 12. Your donations make a difference. If using a cheque, make it payable to First Presbyterian Church, with PWSD Appeal marked.

Freedom from Freezing knitting project has now concluded for the winter season. Many thanks to all those who knitted over 150 winter items for local children.

Carmichael Outreach uses recycled plastic containers for their food distribution program. If you have clean containers (with lids), please

leave them in the green drop-off bin in the Narthex.

Mary Jesse
M & O Committee

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

We had a great time at the Pancake Supper held last Sunday, February 26th. Approximately 75 people attended and \$198.16 was raised for Canada Youth.

A big thank you to everyone who helped make the Pancake Supper a success. Pancake flippers Al, Albert, Alfred, Emily, Gordon, Bob, Ace, Calvin, Bette, Keith and to all whose who worked in the kitchen: Tammy, Aksa, Wendy, Marg, Jo, Ambreen, Matthew and Ashley, and to Joyce Rivers for turning on the dishwasher. Good food, good fun, good fellowship. Thanks everyone!

Sheila Wilson
Fellowship Committee

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Vacation Bible School at First

Families mark your calendars!

Maker Fun Factory VBS 2017

Monday, July 10 to Friday, July 14

More details to come...

Bette Kelly
Christian Education Committee

CAMP CHRISTOPHER

Camp registration forms are available in the narthex. Pick up your form today!

Summer Staff and Volunteers Needed

Do you...like working with kids? Want to develop leadership skills? Like the outdoors? Camp Christopher is the place for you this summer! We are now recruiting:

- **Counselors**
- **Kitchen Staff**
- **Maintenance Staff**
- **First Aid Staff**
- **Chaplain**

Please fill in an application form and mail it back to us (or scan a copy and email it to us). Have questions? Let us know! Send us an email at info@campchristopher.ca.

Please pray for the ministry of Camp Christopher as we get things lined up for summer.

Camp Christopher will gladly take donations of Canadian Tire money. There is a box in the narthex located above the mail slots.

Donna Wilkinson
Camp Administrator

