

# FIRST THINGS FIRST

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, REGINA

MAY 2015

#### MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Pepe Rodriguez, one of the most notorious bank robbers in the early settling of the American West, lived just across the border in Mexico. He regularly crept into Texas towns for work. The problem however was that Pepe's job was that he robbed banks. Pepe would cross the border, rob banks and return to Mexico before the Texas Rangers could catch him.

The frustrated lawmen were so embarrassed by this that they also illegally crossed the border; this time into Mexico. Eventually, they cornered Pepe in a Mexican bar that he was often known to frequent. Unfortunately, Pepe couldn't speak English, and the Rangers didn't know very much Spanish. Luckily, the bartender spoke both. Because of this, the Texas lawmen asked the bartender to translate for them. The bartender explained to Pepe who these men were, and Pepe began to shake with fear. He knew his time was up.

The Texas Rangers, with guns drawn, told the bartender to ask Pepe where he had hidden all the money he had stolen from Texas banks. "Tell him that if he doesn't tell us where the money is right now, we're going to shoot him dead on the spot!" The bartender translated all this for Pepe who immediately explained in Spanish that the money was hidden in the town well. He told them they could have it all back and all they needed was a 10 foot ladder. He told them they could find the money by counting down seventeen stones from the handle, and behind the seventeenth stone would be almost every penny from his numerous bank heists. He had barely spent any of it yet. The bartender then turned to the Rangers and said in English, "Pepe is a very brave man. He says that you are a bunch of stinking pigs, and he is not afraid to die!"

Things sometimes get lost in translation. Much of what we read and hear and watch is second-hand information that may or may not be true.

We need to make sure that we are not only getting the truth, but also communicating the truth to others.

Proverbs 20:26 says "For lack of wood the fire goes out. And where the people stop whispering about one another conflicts die out."

Churches, schools and work places - just like every other gathering of people - can sometimes become gossip mills. We all crave inside information and the juicier it is the more tempting it is to believe. Often we hear or pass along information that just isn't true. Sometimes the words we believe or share have just about as much weight behind them as the old west bartenders words did. It's easy to get confused sometimes. But as Christian people remember if you want to know something - go straight to the horse's mouth. It's always better to talk *to* people than to listen to others talk *about* people.

*Bradley Childs*

Rev. Brad Childs

#### STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

##### Roof Generosity Initiative

Plans are going ahead to replace the sanctuary roof this summer and the roof over the gym and offices next summer. We have applied for assistance from the Chisholm Fund and will be applying for funding for next year from the Wells Memorial Fund. It is anticipated that we will use about \$70,000 from the Property Fund and the balance will be raised by the congregation. The current expected costs are as follows:

##### **Cost:**

2015 Sanctuary Roof (updated quote)	\$86,000
2016 Gym/offices Roof (estimated quote based on 2014 quote of \$77,000)	<u>\$84,000</u>
Anticipated Cost for both projects	\$170,000

## **Funding:**

First Church Property Fund	\$70,000
Grant applications (Chisholm and Wells)	\$55,000
Raised within congregation	<u>\$45,000</u>
	\$170,000

As you can see, **we have to raise at least \$45,000 within the congregation.** Please consider prayerfully what you are able to contribute to these projects over the next two years.

Please complete your pledge card by May 20 and either place it in the offering plate or return it to the church office. Thank you for your gift!

Jo Szostak  
Stewardship Convenor

## **WORSHIP COMMITTEE**

Greetings from your Worship Committee.

Spring is here and we all look forward to new and renewed activities that come with the season. With the arrival of spring we also look back on the most Holy season of the church year, "Holy week." That week started with Palm Sunday and with children entering the sanctuary during the service waving palm branches. Thanks to the children for making the day special for all of us. Once again, we were pleased to see so many at the Maundy Thursday potluck supper and communion. Good Friday and Easter Sunday services were also well attended. We do hope each of you found this time meaningful in your lives.

Looking ahead to up coming events:  
Sunday May 10 will be a busy day at First Church. We will be remembering our Mothers that day; and all the ladies present in church that morning will be given carnations in recognition of their contributions to family life. Also the long-awaited memorial to Jack Partridge will be dedicated to the glory of God as we remember his 46 years of service as music director at First Church. His picture has been framed and at the end of the service it will be unveiled in the Narthex where it will permanently hang.

The next important date in the Church calendar is Pentecost which falls on Sunday May 24. The church season colour for that day is red so the pulpit and chancel table will be adorned with red. The following Sunday is Trinity Sunday and white will remain on the pulpit and chancel table. After Trinity Sunday the colour is green for the ordinary time of the year.

Lectors are still needed for June. Please speak to Marianne if you would like to participate

Joyce McKersie  
Worship Committee

## **GARAGE SALE**

Thanks to all who supported the 3rd annual First Presbyterian Church Garage Sale! With your support through donations and shopping we raised \$738.75 for the children's ministry at First Church.

Donna Wilkinson

## **BRIGHTWATER**

Brightwater residence will be walking Thursday mornings at 9:45am until the end of May. Thank you to those that volunteer to come out and help with this ministry.

Donna Wilkinson

## **GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The 141<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada will be held in Vancouver at the University of British Columbia from June 4 to June 8.

In the lead-up to this year's Assembly some 24 Sessions and Presbyteries over the past 12 months have submitted overtures – an overture is a formal request by a lower court of the Church for specific action by a higher court such as a Synod or an Assembly – pertaining to matters of full inclusion in the life and worship of the PCC of every person regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity. Specifically, several of these overtures seek Assembly's approval for same sex marriages in the Presbyterian Church and for lifting the ban

against the ordination of openly gay or lesbian candidates for Presbyterian ministry, while many other overtures support and re-affirm the Church's 1994 Statement of Human Sexuality that upholds marriage as a union of a man and a woman in the sight or the presence of God.

It is, of course, impossible to predict whether any substantive decisions regarding these matters will be reached or whether Assembly will, in the end, vote to refer these issues to one or more of the Church's Standing Committees, such as the Committee on Church Doctrine, for further study. What is more certain, however, is that a good deal of respect for the expressions of sincerely-held but differing viewpoints will be needed during these debates regardless of outcomes, as will a good deal of sober reflection and much prayer.

Closer to home, it is probably not well known by our congregation at First Church that the April meeting of Session passed a motion urging "the Commissioners representing the Presbytery of Assiniboia to the 141<sup>st</sup> General Assembly ... to support overtures asking the Presbyterian Church in Canada to allow for full recognition of same sex marriage including permitting ministers ordained in the Presbyterian Church in Canada to officiate at same-sex marriage ceremonies within the sanctuary of a church of this denomination."

This motion will be forwarded to the two commissioners who will attend the General Assembly on behalf of our Presbytery.

Doug Stewart  
Editor

### **ART FROM THE MORRIS ROOM**

(May 2015)

The twelfth painting I'm going to discuss from the Kitson collection is Toby Edward Rosenthal's "**The Cardinal's Portrait**" or "**The Sleeping Cardinal**".

The artist, an American painter, was born in New Haven, Connecticut on March 15, 1848 and died in Munich, Germany December 23, 1917.

Moving to San Francisco with his parents in 1855, he studied painting under Fortunato Arriola. In 1865 he went to Munich where he was a student at the Royal Academy. He received medals in Munich in 1870 and 1883 and in Philadelphia in 1876.

Except for some visits home, his professional life was spent in Europe.

Many artists use a commercial or hand-made viewfinder in order to find apt subject matter in landscapes or photographs. You would be surprised how many possible subjects can be found in a single photo or painting.

Depending on perspective, purpose or design one can find examples of portraits, still-life, abstraction, realism, fabric, rugs and more. It's rich in colour, detail and excellent use of light and dark.

This particular painting by Rosenthal is a study in contrasts. Youth versus age, aspiring monk versus an aging cardinal, heroic, inspiring portrait versus the feeble, sleeping cardinal. Note the red detail in the carpets, the tapestries, the paintings (especially the Madonna and son), the soft fabrics and cushions, table clothes and rags and the still life of the wine and fruit and the fallen Bible.

All in all, it's a painting to be studied very closely. Note also this artist loved the colour red and often painted red cardinal birds.

Many years ago, Larry & Elizabeth gave us a framed reproduction of this painting and we've long enjoyed it. Hopefully, you will now enjoy it too.

John Macfarlane

## MAY EVENTS

<b>10</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>	<b>Worship Service &amp; Sunday School</b>
<b>12</b>	10:30 AM Noon	Bible Study Freedom 55ers
<b>14</b>	9:45 AM 7:30 PM	Brightwater Walk Choir
<b>15</b>	7:00	Youth
<b>17</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>	<b>Worship Service &amp; Sunday School</b>
<b>18</b>	Victoria Day - Office closed	
<b>19</b>	10:30 AM Noon	Bible Study Freedom 55ers
<b>21</b>	9:45 AM 7:30 PM	Brightwater Walk Choir
<b>22</b>	7:00 PM	Youth
<b>24</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>	<b>Worship Service &amp; Sunday School</b>
<b>26</b>	10:30 AM Noon	Bible Study Freedom 55ers
<b>28</b>	9:45 AM 7:30 PM	Brightwater Walk Choir
<b>29</b>	7:00 PM	Youth
<b>31</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>	<b>Worship Service &amp; Sunday School</b>