

# FIRST THINGS FIRST

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, REGINA

November 2017

#### MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Winter arrived this week. We went from what was a pretty lovely October into a cold, blowy, slushy, frozen November. Just in time for the sudden change of seasons, I went shopping for a new winter coat. I found one that was on sale for a pretty good price, but most importantly, I got a nice warm one. The first few days that I wore it, I actually felt a little too warm! When I put it on, I feel “snug as a bug in a rug,” and when the cold wind blows during my morning walk from home to the church, I hardly even notice it.

My new winter coat makes me think about the Holy Spirit (not only because it's red – the colour of Pentecost and the Spirit of fire!) but because of its comforting warmth surrounding me in the midst of the wintery storm outside. I'm thinking about Jesus speaking to his disciples in John 14 before he is killed. He gives them some final instructions, and encourages them with the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Although Jesus will no longer be physically present with them, he will ask God the Father to send the Spirit to help them. The Spirit is described as an Advocate, a Helper, and a Comforter. The Spirit will teach them everything, and remind them of all that Jesus said to them. The Spirit will grant them peace. Even in the midst of the storms they will experience (storms of grief, storms of uncertainty, storms of opposition, storms of persecution) the Spirit will guard and protect them. The Spirit will guard and protect us also.

Here at First Church, we are starting up a new ministry that we hope will convey the comforting presence of God's Spirit to people in our church and beyond who may be sick,

grieving, or suffering in some way. The Prayer Shawl Ministry will be carried out by First Church folk who like to knit or crochet, and their purpose will be to make warm, comforting shawls that can be given to folks who are going through times of struggle.

If you would like to participate in the Prayer Shawl Ministry, you are welcome to join our first gathering for knitting, praying, and sharing fellowship on Friday, November 10th at 2:00 pm. We are going to gather in the meeting room at Wintergreene Estates (4950 Pasqua Street). You're also welcome to work on your knitting at home, and just bring it to the church when you finish one. Let me know if you need a pattern to get you started.

Stay warm this winter, and whatever weather you may be facing, know that God's Spirit is surrounding you to comfort, guide, and keep you through the storm.



Rev. Amanda Currie

## **SESSION**

The SPY weekend (Saskatchewan Presbyterian Youth) is being held at First Church this weekend. We welcome youth from around the province as they gather to learn about Peace. Everyone is invited to join the youth for the blanket exercise on Saturday from 1:30 to 3:30 in the gym - this is an exercise that helps us explore the history of our relationship with Indigenous Peoples in Canada. On Sunday, Nov. 5, the youth will be involved in leading worship and serving Communion. A bunwich lunch will be held following the service on Sunday.

Amanda has had a busy fall as she settles in to First Church. One of her initiatives was to hold membership classes. We are excited to be able to welcome new members during the service on Dec. 3.

Some dates to plan ahead:

- Blue Christmas Service Wednesday, Dec. 20 at 7:30 p.m.
- Christmas Eve Service, Sunday, Dec. 24 at 7:00 p.m.
- First will be hosting the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity service on Sunday, January 21 at 3:00 p.m.
- We will be producing a new photo directory in the spring. Artistic Impressions has been booked for April 26-28, so we hope everyone will be available to have their picture taken for our directory. More information will be provided in the new year.

## **ELECTION OF ELDERS**

The Session is working toward having 12 elders on Session for 6-year terms, with 2 elders elected annually. This year we have four elders completing terms - Jim Doolittle, Bette Kelly, Marg MacDonald and Gordon Wiles. They are eligible for re-election. We will be electing two elders to 6-year terms and two elders to 5-year terms. A nominating committee was established to prepare a slate of nominees for election at the annual meeting. All members of the congregation are invited to nominate members of the congregation to fulfill this role.

The Session is responsible for supervision and oversight of all activities of the congregation.

Elders attend Session meetings on the first Wednesday of each month from September to June. Each elder serves on one of the committees of Session. As well, each elder is assigned a group of approximately ten people/couples with whom to maintain contact.

According to the Book of Forms...

*"Election to the eldership is the call of God, through the congregation, for service in Christ's Church. Since the eldership is a spiritual office concerned with the rule and pastoral oversight of the congregation only suitable men and women should be considered. They should be committed Christians, in regular attendance at public worship, persons of sound judgment and upright character, and either knowledgeable or prepared to learn of the government of the church."*

If you would like to nominate someone, please contact either Jo Szostak or Bette Kelly.

Jo Szostak  
Clerk of Session

## **BOARD OF MANAGERS**

Do you know how it is when you run out of money before you run out of days in the month? That's what we've been experiencing in the church as well! It usually takes 2-3 weeks offering to cover our payroll, which is our top priority each month. The other expenses seem to mount up. We have just transferred another \$6000 from the Contingency Fund to cover cash flow. This means that a total of \$31,000 has been transferred this year and we have used up the Contingency Fund. We will need to look at solutions when we meet at our annual meeting in the spring.

## **PLANNED GIVING**

Projects to further our First Church mission Our First Church Planned Giving Program is inviting applications for activities supported by our Planned Giving Funds. Do you have a project or initiative that supports and furthers our mission to be:

- joyful in our worship
- tender in our lives together; and
- daring in our outreach?

The deadline for Planned Giving project applications is November 30, 2016. Applications

will be considered by the congregation at the Annual General Meeting in spring 2018.

Application forms are available in the Narthex or from Shirley during office hours. We welcome your proposals to further the mission of First Church!

Lisa Ann Wood  
Stewardship Committee Member

### **FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE**

**Bunwich Lunch** There will be a Bunwich Lunch today, November 5<sup>th</sup>, after church. We will celebrate with the Synod Youth who have been at our church for a conference this weekend. A free will offering will be taken. Please join us!

**Pre-Advent Lunch** The Fellowship Committee is hosting a Pre-Advent Party on November 19, immediately after church. We will be having chili and mac and cheese. Plan on joining all the other fun-loving people at First for this event. Hope to see all of you there!

Sheila Wilson  
Fellowship Convener

### **STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE**

**Value Village FUNDrive** Thank you to everyone who contributed clothing and other goods to the Value Village drive last Saturday. Also, a huge thank you to all the people who came out and helped to load trucks to haul it all to Value Village. Altogether we took 1482 pounds of soft goods, 1174 pounds of hard goods, and 471 pounds of books. The church will receive a cheque for just over \$300.

In addition to the money we earned, our drive helps in other ways as well. Value Village supports about 150 non-profits, the major one being Community Living. For every pound we contributed, Community Living is paid as well. Last year, Value Village provided \$1.83 million for Community Living alone. Any clothing that cannot be sold is recycled. Value Village also has a "Get to Give" program in which they pair up with non-profits for a special purpose. They've paired with schools to provide jackets for kids and had special programs for families with needs and the homeless. Our contributions help others in a variety of ways. Thanks for your support of this project!

Value Village is having an open house with tours of the production area on Dec. 3. If you are interested, please let me know and I can set up a time for a tour.

Jo Szostak  
Stewardship Convener

### **A MUSICAL ADVENT STUDY**

On Tuesday evenings during the Season of Advent, you are invited to join the Rev. Amanda Currie for a weekly study and reflection session on Advent hymns. The study from *The Thoughtful Christian* is titled, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel: Reflections on Four Seasonal Hymns." We will meet at the church on Tuesdays at 7:00 pm (Nov. 28, Dec. 5, 12, & 19) and finish up by 8:30 pm. Copies of the study materials are available in the narthex of the church or by email from Rev. Amanda. If you cannot attend, you are still welcome to use the materials for your personal reflection and prayer during the Advent Season of waiting.

### **YOUTH LEADER POSITION AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

First Presbyterian Church in Regina is looking for an enthusiastic, energetic and committed Christian to fill the permanent part-time position of Youth Leader.

The Youth Leader will work up to 10 per hours per week, leading programming for Youth (ages 12-18) with the purpose of maintaining and building solid and continuing relationships between the young people of First Presbyterian Church and Jesus Christ our Lord.

For the full ministry description go to:  
[http://www.saskjobs.ca/jsp/joborder/detail.jsp?job\\_order\\_id=808142](http://www.saskjobs.ca/jsp/joborder/detail.jsp?job_order_id=808142). To apply, email:  
[personnel@firstpresregina.ca](mailto:personnel@firstpresregina.ca) by November 15, 2017.

### **FUNDSCRIP**

Order Sundays in November will be November 5 and 17. The last order date before Christmas will be December 3. Then we will begin again in January. Plan ahead and start buying gift cards for Christmas now! Specials for November/December include Esso 3%, Winners 8%, Canadian Tire 5%, Marshalls 8%, Home Sense 8%, Hudson's Bay 5%, Home Outfitters 5%, Old Navy 10%, Gap 10%, Stokes 8%, Pet

Smart 6%. When you buy a gift card, you pay the face value and the church gets the percentage listed back. You can support the church with your regular purchases. Gas and grocery cards are available at the FundScrip table in the gym after church.

**SCENES OF WONDER ~ Norman Kennedy**

Dear Amanda & First Presbyterian Church,

For the last few years, one of Norman Kennedy's Christmas events has been 'Scenes of Wonder'. This is a display of Nativity Scenes, beautifully arranged, creating a reminder of what the Christmas season is all about. We open the display to the public, inviting folk to step in to view, to spend time in quiet reflection, to enjoy the hospitality of Christmas baking and hot cider, etc. We do not charge but have suggested a donation to the food bank or to a mission project. Every year, as the committee begins planning, they seek out more and more 'Nativity Scenes' (last year was about 200). These range from big living room or mantle sets to the tiniest of tree ornaments which depict the whole scene or just of the holy family; they range from wall hangings to puzzles to 'playmobil' sets.

On behalf of the committee, I send you this letter to ask if the congregational members of First Church could be asked to include their personal sets in our display this year. We find we need to ask early so that when Christmas decorations come out of storage, these can be set aside for the dates of Dec. 1-4. Our committee promises to be careful with the sets, to display them, to have the display area supervised, to carefully re-pack and return the sets immediately after the event is over. They will also arrange to pick up sets from homes, although if possible having them delivered to our church just prior to the event is preferred. It might work well if the sets were brought to your church, each one labelled of course, and then we could send drivers over to pick them up.

Of course, everyone is always welcome to come to view – the details and hours will be established soon and made available by way of a poster to be distributed in November.

Leanne Irving is the convener of the Scenes of Wonder committee and she would be so happy

to hear of some new scenes to be added to this year's display. If any are being offered, she can be contacted directly, or a message can be left with me at the church. Leanne's contact info is 306-949-6713 or [mrsdenri@sasktel.net](mailto:mrsdenri@sasktel.net).

Thanks for sharing this information and for any offers of Nativity sets.

Blessings,  
Ronda

**NOVEMBER EVENTS**

3	7:00 PM	SPY Weekend begins
5	10:30 AM	<b>Worship service &amp; Sunday School</b>
	11:30	Bunwich Lunch
7	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	10:30 AM	Bible Study
	noon	Freedom 55ers
9	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	9:20 AM	Riverbend
	7:00 PM	Choir
10	Office Closed	
	9:30 AM	Pastoral Care
	2:00 PM	Prayer Shawls @ Wintergreene
11	Remembrance Day	
12	10:30 AM	<b>Worship Service &amp; Sunday School</b>
14	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	10:30 AM	Bible Study
	noon	Freedom 55ers
15	5:00 PM	RIIS meeting
	7:00 PM	Board of Managers
16	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	9:20 AM	Riverbend
	7:00 PM	Choir
18	9:30 AM	Presbytery @ Yorkton
19	10:30 AM	<b>Worship Service &amp; Sunday School</b>
	11:30 AM	Pre-Advent Lunch
21	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	10:30 AM	Bible Study
	noon	Freedom 55ers

23	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	9:20 AM	Riverbend
	7:00 PM	Choir
25	10:00 AM	Worship Committee
<b>26</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>	<b>Worship Service &amp; Sunday School</b>
28	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	10:30 AM	Bible Study
	noon	Freedom 55ers
	7:00 PM	Advent Study
30	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	9:20 AM	Riverbend
	7:00 PM	Choir