

FIRST THINGS FIRST

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, REGINA

OCTOBER 2015

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

This Presbyterian Church of Ours - Who does what?

The Minister:

Officially speaking, the minister is responsible for very few things. According to the Book of Forms section 111 "As the executive of the presbytery, the minister is responsible for the conduct and content of public worship." Added to this, the minister is the Presbytery's representative to the Session of the local congregation or church. The minister's job is also described in our official records as the person responsible for "the Word rightly preached and the Sacraments rightly administered."

So what does all this mean? Basically it means the minister has very little power in the church. As far as the local congregation is concerned the minister is responsible for only one thing but has total and complete control over that one thing – the worship service. The minister is responsible for every single thing that happens therein: the order, the music, the words, the silence, the sacraments... everything. Outside the worship service, however, the minister essentially has no power. The reason for this is simple. I don't work for the local church. Yes, the church called me and yes I am a member of the Presbytery (not the church) but I work for God, I am responsible to the Presbytery (the only body which can question anything that happens during worship). I serve the local church but don't work for it. And that's actually where the job ends. Fun right.

The Session:

According to the Book of Forms section 111.1 the Kirk Session "is responsible for regulating the hours and forms of public worship and for arranging special services. The Session determines the appointed times and provides for the administration of the sacraments". This means the Session decides what kind of service it will be (e.g., a baptismal service, a communion

service) and the hours the service can take place (e.g., at 10:30 am or say an evening service set for 6:30pm). And that is actually all the input the Session has into what happens during worship – not much. But wait, there is more. You see we are actually a Session-run church. The Book of Forms lays this out very nicely over many pages so in the interest of simplification here is a helpful little chart I've drawn up to explain who is responsible for everything in the church.

The Session is Responsible for...	The Minister is Responsible for...
Providing a program for Christian Education for all ages, including its administration, oversight, support, recruitment, training, selection of materials, and evaluation	The conduct and content of all public worship
Evangelism	Moderating the Session and counting the vote as a non-voting member
Presenting candidates for baptism and profession of faith	Moderate all congregational meetings and to count the vote as a non-voting member
Providing all instruction for persons requesting the Sacrament of Baptism for themselves, their children or their wards.	Residing on all committees of the church as a non-voting member
Providing a clerk to record the minutes	Casting a vote in case of a tie
Supporting parents of children in the nurture of their children in the Christian faith	

The Session is Responsible for...	The Minister is Responsible for...
Creating full or part-time positions for professional church workers	
Guaranteeing the stipend and benefits of the minister and pay of other staff	
All aspects of stewardship and mission both spiritual and material	
Encouraging the participation of others in all life of the church	
Developing programs for outreach in the immediate community and beyond	
Connecting with children, youth and adults in the community by encouraging them to participate in worship	
Providing for persons in need of financial or material assistance (may involve the establishment of "deacons" for this express purpose)	
Maintaining a witness in the world beyond the church	
All decisions relating to stewardship	
Making the congregation aware of allocations for General Assembly, budgeting and other responsibilities beyond the congregation as aids the local Presbytery, Synod and National church and its programs	
Arranging for all special offerings	
Ensuring efficient performance of those charged with the financial affairs of the congregation	
Establishing a Board of Managers or Committee of Finances if it so chooses to do so	

The Session is Responsible for...	The Minister is Responsible for...
Carrying out all duties as directed to it by the higher courts	
Providing a Representative Elder to represent the will of the congregation for all higher courts of the church	
Considering and acting upon all remits and referrals	
Receiving petitions and complaints and transmitting them to the presbytery with all appeals and related documents (also corrective cases if necessary)	
Submitting all records, including annual reports, records of baptism, members roll and marriage register to the higher courts	
Appointing a treasurer	
Holding meetings for devotion and religious conference	
Rejecting any complaint against the minister and responding that "no session can entertain a complaint against the moderator", and redirecting any such complaint and named "accuser" to the Presbytery	
Watching over all interests of the congregation	
Transmitting all complaints and memorials	
Reading all correspondence sent to the session without interference	
Compulsory attendance at all meetings	
Facilitating the election of new Elders (in good order – a lengthy section)	

The Session is Responsible for...	The Minister is Responsible for...
Receiving all transfer of certificates, historical or otherwise	
Keeping strict privacy of all meetings and speaking no contrary word of motions passed	

Within every Court of the Church there sits a Moderator and a Clerk. What do they do?

The Moderator:

The Moderator is to “preside; to preserve order; to take the vote; to announce decisions and pronounce censures”.

The Clerk of the Session:

The Clerk is to “take regular minutes of the session’s procedures and hold the same in a permanent record, to take charge of all session documents and prepare and issue all extracts of minutes and papers authorized by session.”

Now, what does all this mean? Well it means three things.

1. If you have questions or concerns or ideas about the worship service, you should take those to the minister.
2. If you have questions or concerns or ideas about anything and everything else, you should take those to the Session.
3. You have the power to make changes and bring up ideas. If ever you have a suggestion, an idea, a concern or want to make a change, or have a question or really anything at all, all you have to do is write a letter to “The Session of First Presbyterian Church” which must be read and addressed by the Session within one month.

Bradley Childs

Rev. Brad Childs

SEARCH FOR PASTORAL CARE ADVOCATE

Funding for a part-time Pastoral Care Advocate to serve First Church community was approved as a Planned Giving initiative earlier this year. Although the position was advertised internally in the spring, the hiring process was not completed. This process is now proceeding, and members of First Church community are being informed through this newsletter and Sunday bulletins. The job will also be posted on the Saskjobs.ca website as of Wednesday October 21 for a two-week period.

A complete job posting with details on how to apply and a closing date for the competition will be available in the Narthex and from Shirley in the Church Office as of Wednesday October 21. The primary duties of the Pastoral Care Advocate are described below. This part-time position will involve up to eight hours per week, depending on need.

Members and adherents alike of our community may find themselves in need of information and advocacy in accessing community resources and programs as they deal with temporary or ongoing medical issues or incapacity due to aging. Some individuals may not have a support network person sufficiently knowledgeable or able to provide assistance. The Pastoral Care Advocate will:

- have or develop a strong connection to First Church Community and further build relationships with members and adherents through participation in a variety of church activities such as Sunday Services and Freedom 55ers. This position will work closely with the Pastoral Care Committee and support and enhance their work.
- provide information and assistance to members of First Church Community in identifying and accessing community resources for housing, transportation, medical, social and other programs, including home care, senior housing options, meals on wheels, paratransit services, etc.
- build a resource file of available services and contacts within various agencies and programs in the Regina area to facilitate

connecting members of the First Church Community to needed services.

Once the competition closes, Session will appoint and oversee a hiring committee who will conduct interviews to fill this position.

Lisa Ann Wood
Board of Managers

SESSION

Committee Member Needed: The Ministry Liaison Group is a sub-committee of Session. It is made up of 3 people, one of which is a member of the congregation. This group generally meets once a year to look at stipend, leave and employment policies, provide pastoral support and care to the Minister and report to session. The group also acts as a liaison between the Minister and the Session, Board, Committees and Congregation when needed. If you are interested in helping on this committee, please contact Jo Szostak.

Bette Kelly
Member of Session

ANNUAL SYNOD MEETING

BILLETS FOR SYNOD - The Synod of Saskatchewan will hold its annual meeting and conference this year at First Church Oct. 23 - 24. We would like to offer billets as an option for accommodation. If you would be willing to billet someone for the nights of Oct. 22 and 23, please contact the office and let Shirley know.

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Advance Notice – Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

This year First Church is hosting the Synod of Saskatchewan for their Annual Synod Meeting and Conference. They will be with us October 23rd and 24th.

We will be providing two lunches, one supper and four coffee breaks. The Fellowship Committee is coordinating this project however we will be asking for others from the congregation to help with such things as providing some muffins or cookies and also for

people who can help serve at a coffee break or a meal.

We will be putting up signup sheets in the next few weeks and we look forward to your help as we show what great hosts we are at First. Thank you everyone for all you do at First!

Sheila Wilson
Fellowship Convenor

MUSIC NOTES

Music Program A new year has begun for the Music Program. The choir continues to grow and welcomes new members. The choir meets every Thursday evening at 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. I would like to acknowledge and thank our choir members for their dedication and talent. This year we will continue to introduce a variety of musical styles into Sunday morning worship. We are fortunate to have a large and diverse group of talented musicians in the congregation. Glenn Wolfe will be presenting more of his original compositions in October. Catherine Folstad, cellist, will be providing special music early in November.

We are also pleased to invite members of the Regina music community to participate in the Music Program. Lynn Channing will be singing in November and December.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Rodolfo Omolida, Contemporary Worship Arts Coordinator, for his leadership in introducing contemporary songs for congregational singing. He is planning to involve children and youth in contemporary hymn signing, including offertories, and is planning to do a music workshop for them as well. There are plans to form a small group for special contemporary music.

We are pleased to announce that Will Ireton will continue as one of the Choral Scholars this year, and plans are underway to advertise for a second Choral Scholar.

Anyone interested in joining the choir or participating in the Music Program should contact William (Bill) Sgrazzutti by phone at

306-216-0170 or by email at william.sgrazzutti@hotmail.com.

Anyone interested in learning more about contemporary music initiatives should contact Rodolfo Omolida by phone at 306-540-8872 or by email at r20jr@yahoo.com.

Respectfully submitted,

William (Bill) Sgrazzutti, Music Director
Rodolfo Omolida, Contemporary Worship Arts Coordinator

BOARD OF MANAGERS

Roof Update: The sanctuary roof was replaced this summer at a total cost of just over \$86,000. There are a few spots the Board would like to have addressed, so we have withheld part of the final payment to the roofer until we are satisfied. We applied for \$25,000 from the Chisholm Fund (held at the national church level) and received \$22,500. We have requested the balance of \$2,500 from the October allocations so are waiting to hear the response to that request.

Thanks to everyone who has given so generously to the roof project. The intent of the pledge campaign was to provide assistance from the congregation of \$20,000 for the sanctuary roof and \$25,000 for the roof over the gym and offices (which is a project for 2016.) To date we have received just over \$25,000 with another \$13,500 in pledges for 2015 and 2016. That means that we are within \$7,000 of our goal. If you haven't made a contribution or pledge yet, there are pledge cards available in the narthex.

Operating Update: Budget and cash flow projections are moving targets and we know that, traditionally, givings are higher in the months leading up to Christmas. We have expenses of approximately \$20,000 each month, including \$10,000 for payroll. We saved money on heating during the summer months but as we move into the heating season, energy costs climb. The offering for the first two Sundays in October was \$8,300 plus \$1,000 in roof contributions. Offerings on Sundays later in the month are not usually as strong as the first Sunday. We are fortunate that we have a consistent renter for the gym, which helps to

support our bottom line. At this point, it looks like we have a deficit of \$10,000 - \$15,000. The good news is that we had budgeted a much larger deficit... Thank you for your ongoing generous contributions to the life and mission of our church!

Board of Managers

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Mark Your Calendar – “MEET YOUR ELDER” November 1st

A “Meet Your Elder” luncheon will be held after church on November 1. The format would be similar to that for Birthday Sunday. Elders will be at designated tables and members of their districts are invited to join them over lunch and to get to know them a bit better. Lists of Elders and their districts will be posted in the Narthex and the Gym letting people know who their elder is. Please plan to join your elder for lunch on November 1st.

Sheila Wilson
Fellowship Committee Convenor

PLANNED GIVING COMMITTEE

Giving Thanks Our First Church community has much to be thankful for. Contributions to the Roof Fund over the past few years and since the roof campaign was launched earlier this year have, as of this summer, resulted in a new roof over the sanctuary. The funds necessary to proceed with the gymnasium roof replacement are already growing. These contributions are being provided in addition to weekly offerings, which support the day to day operation of our church community. Just as vital, we are also thankful for the non-monetary gifts – the time, compassion and talents that so many contribute to enrich our community life.

Our Planned Giving Program combines financial generosity by providing the framework for planned gifts, and also gives our community the opportunity to use the funds generated by those planned gifts for programs and activities that fulfill First Church’s mission now and into the future.

Every year, the Planned Giving Committee accepts applications for funding to support activities and programs to further our mission to be joyful in our worship, tender in our lives together and daring in our outreach. If you have an idea for a project or activity, applications are available in the Narthex or from Shirley in the church office. Individuals or groups/committees may apply.

The deadline to submit an application is October 31, 2015. In November and December, the Planned Giving Committee will review applications, develop recommendations and present applications and recommendations through the Stewardship Committee to a joint Board/Session meeting in January/February 2016. Applications will be forwarded by Session with recommendation for consideration of the congregation at the First Church Annual General Meeting, usually held at the end of February.

Lisa Ann Wood
Planned Giving Committee

MISSION & OUTREACH

Update on First Church participation in Regina Indian Industrial School project Sept 2015

In Spring 2014, the Session approved participation in an ecumenical and community-based project regarding the Regina Indian Industrial School, operated by the PCC from 1891 to 1910. The project focuses on preservation and commemoration of the school cemetery and the approximately 40 children buried there, as well as honouring the 400 plus aboriginal children who attended the school. The RIIS Concerned Citizens Cemetery Group is made up of Presbyterian (Doug Stewart, Mary Jesse) and United Church members, and a local historian. This report updates the congregation on work undertaken since that time.

- In June, 2014 the Cemetery Group hosted a gathering of 70 First Nations survivor descendants to visit the cemetery site, and to discuss next steps in protecting the cemetery. People from several First Nations in Saskatchewan and Manitoba attended. FPC provided funds to assist with travel and

meals for participants.

- From that meeting several First Nations persons took leadership of the project. This was the goal of our working group, as it is crucial that Aboriginal people lead the project. The First Nations Commemoration Association has been formed to raise funds for a commemorative structure at the cemetery. A key member of that leadership group is from Mistawasis First Nation. The PCC has a long relationship with Mistawasis.
- Extensive research into Federal Government, United Church, and Presbyterian Church archives has been conducted, uncovering a significant body of knowledge about the school, its students, staff, and its practices. Douglas Stewart, has done most of this work. Doug is also compiling a history of the school which he hopes to complete later this year.
- Dr. Stephen Farris, Moderator of the 140st General Assembly visited the cemetery site this year.
- A documentary film about the school and cemetery was produced by local aboriginal filmmakers, who have many links with our Cemetery group. The film, *RIIS from Amnesia* was funded by the UCC. It can be viewed online at <http://www.riismediaproject.com/riis-from-amnesia/>.
- In June 2015, FPC co-hosted an ecumenical event with Knox-Met United Church to screen the RIIS from Amnesia film and share the story about this school and cemetery more widely. 120 people (primarily church folks) attended the event, which was timed to coincide with the closing event of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Ottawa.
- In July 2015, First Nations and church representatives met with TRC Commissioner Marie Wilson for guidance regarding the best way forward in commemorating the cemetery. She provided many wise suggestions and also commended the churches and aboriginals for working together on this healing and reconciliation project.
- In September 2015, Regina Member of Parliament Ralph Goodale met with Justice

Sinclair, TRC Commissioner regarding the cemetery. Justice Sinclair provided recommendations regarding church, aboriginal and federal government participation in this project.

What happens next?

- Our group continues its research with the goal of finding the names of children buried in the cemetery. This is challenging work. We continue to meet with the First Nations Commemoration Association as they determine how the site should be preserved and commemorated. Doug Stewart is the Presbyterian representative to this group.
- Discussions regarding land purchase are underway. The land is owned privately – purchased before it was known there was a cemetery within the land parcel. The First Nations group has met with the private owner several times.
- No decisions have yet been made regarding a specific marker or commemorative structure, but there will certainly be some kind of permanent marker at the site. We expect a formal gathering with spiritual and other ceremonies will accompany the unveiling of a marker.
- A memorial walk to and a feast at the cemetery site took place on Saturday, October 10 at 1 pm.

Other healing and reconciliation involvements:

File Hills Residential School (north of Balcarres) was operated by the PCC from 1889 to 1925, and later by the United Church of Canada. Five years ago, the abandoned cemetery of that school was located. Okanese First Nation has held four annual memorial feasts for the children buried there in association with the local United Church folks. Last year, Presbyterian representatives were invited to attend for the first time, and this year we were invited to attend and speak again. Rev. Brad Childs spoke on behalf of the Presbyterian Church at the August 22 memorial feast. Many thanks to Brad for taking time to spend with church and Aboriginal peoples on this important day.

Mary Jesse
Mission and Outreach Convenor

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Greetings from your Worship Committee. We have all enjoyed a beautiful, warm and restful summer to renew ourselves for the upcoming fall and winter seasons, although some of you may not like to read that particular word.

The Worship Committee met Saturday, September 24 to discuss ways to make us more joyful in our worship as in our statement of faith. We look forward to another season of youth participation in the music of the church as well as reading the scriptures once each month. Thanks goes out to all who participate in this way. A special thanks to Bill Sgrazzutti, our Music Director, for his input in the music we all enjoy.

We celebrated World Communion Sunday, October 4. The following weekend was Thanksgiving Sunday and Harvest Sunday, when we gave thanks for the harvest that supplies us with abundance of food to sustain us throughout the coming year.

Greeters are needed each Sunday throughout the year. If anyone can help in this way please speak to Jeannie Macfarlane. This is a big job and a lot of time is spent on the telephone trying to find greeters. Please help to make her work a bit lighter.

Thanks to those who have volunteered to be Lectors this fall. Every Sunday is filled until the end of December. If you are interested in reading scriptures during January-June, 2016, please contact Marianne Woods.

Joyce McKersie
Worship Committee

ADULT WALK

The Adult Walk program resumes on October 6th. We will walk Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:00am in the Gym. Everyone is welcome. Bring your friends. A safe and warm place to walk all fall, winter and spring! See you there!

Bob Wilson

BRIGHTWATER SENIOR LIVING

Brightwater will be coming to First Church starting November 5 around 9:45am to walk, have conversations, and enjoy juice and cookies. Volunteers are needed to assist walkers. Please let me know if you can help or just come and join us. (donnaw@sasktel.net) Thanks.

Donna Wilkinson

ART FROM THE MORRIS ROOM

(October 2015)

The fifteen painting I'm going to discuss from the Kitson Collection is "**Avenue of Trees**" or "**Avenue Near Middelharnis**" by Meindert Hobbema, a Dutch painter who lived from 1638 - 1709.

The printing shows the village and church of Middelharnis in the province of South Holland. This view has scarcely changed since the 17th century. Hobbema's design with the Avenue of Trees receding towards the centre of the painting is simple yet at the same time majestic. The trees are employed to mark the quick recession from the foreground to background while the expanse of sky is emphasized by the upward-pointing trees. The design of this painting is called symmetry or balance. Each tree is different. Note the drawing of the roadway, but also the buildings, the fields and the people, especially as they go from large to small as they recede. The predominating colours are soft and warm ~ the trees and fields in soft green, the buildings warm brown and the sky soft blue-grey with dashes of colour throughout.

In his early works, Hobbema closely followed the compositions of Jacob von Ruisdael before developing his own style which is lighter in both tone and mood. He specialized in elaborate woodland scenes and painted this work in 1689. The majority of his paintings fall into four categories:

1. dirt roads by farms in woods;
2. water mills near or set back in woods;
3. pools at the edge of woods usually with farms or villages in the distance;
4. ruins in woods.

This, his most famous painting, hangs in the National Gallery in London. He died in 1709 and was buried in a pauper's grave in Amsterdam.

One further interesting note: in 1891 a small hamlet in Alberta was named Hobbema after this artist. On January 1, 2015 the name was changed to Maskwacis (meaning Bear Hills) at the request of the native Cree living in the area.

John Macfarlane



OCTOBER EVENTS

18	10:30 AM	Worship Service & Sunday School
	2:00 PM	Mission & Outreach
20	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	10:30 AM	Bible Study
	Noon	Freedom 55ers
22	9:00 AM	Adult Walk
	7:30 PM	Choir
21	7:00 PM	Board of Managers
23	7:00 PM	Youth
24	10:00 AM	Worship Committee
25	10:30 AM	Worship Service & Sunday School
27	10:30 AM	Bible Study
	Noon	Freedom 55ers