

FIRST THINGS FIRST

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, REGINA

September 2014

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Recently I've begun to notice a very close correlation between my energy levels and the battery life of my cell phone. See the battery life of your phone isn't constant. It's dependent on how much you use it. Little things, like actually using your phone to talk to people, use almost no battery life. Downloading a video clip or going to a web site with a complicated page or checking 200 emails a day on the other hand uses a lot of battery life.

The busier I am during the day, the quicker my phone dies. If I'm not using it much, my phone battery will last a few days. But most days I have to plug it in as soon as I get home or it will just shut down and become an expensive paper weight. A lot of the time I just plug it in for 20 minutes and let it charge up about half way and then put it back in my pocket, determined to answer only the most urgent or important communications. It buzzes all day and at all hours of the night. Really my phone only seems to get a rest (not when I'm home from working) but rather when my day is totally over and I've already climbed into bed.

It seems my phone and I have the same levels of energy. In reality I don't really get re-charged until it's plugged in and we're both out for the night.

But as someone once said, "The thing about life is that... it's so daily."

Sure it gets plugged in and I go to sleep but the recharge never seems to last.

Probably that's the case because sleep isn't really where I get my strength.

Ephesians 3:16, says, "I pray for you, that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with

His power through His Spirit and into your very inner being".

As the summer comes to a close, as schools start up again and the church year starts getting busy once more, and as our daily lives start to drain our batteries faster and faster, may we all find time to recharge with "His power through His Spirit and into our very inner being".

Bradley Childs

Rev. Brad Childs

SESSION

Welcome back! We hope you've had a good summer and a chance to relax and be rejuvenated!

As we get back into the swing of things, plans are being put in place for fall activities. Communion will be celebrated on Sunday, Sept. 7. Also, please mark your calendar for Sept. 28 so you can be a part of the Welcome Back potluck supper!

Elders' lists have been revised and letters will be going out to all members and adherents to ensure that everyone knows who their elder is.

Rev. Brad Childs has been elected Moderator of the Presbytery of Assiniboia for the 2014-15 year and we wish him well in that position.

The next Presbytery meeting will be held at First Church on Sept. 20. Anyone interested in sitting in is welcome to attend.

Jo Szostak
Clerk of Session

BOARD OF MANAGERS

Finance: Once again, the Board would like to thank everyone who gave generously to help us get through the summer! We had to borrow from our investments to cover cash flow and we are currently \$33,000 in deficit. We are hopeful that offerings through the fall will help us to catch up.

Jo Szostak,
Board of Managers

What Is Pre-Authorization Remittance?

Pre-Authorized Remittance (**PAR**) is a means by which church offerings are made through automatic monthly debits from individuals' bank accounts. **PAR** is convenient for the donor and offers a reliable income for First Church.

Benefits of PAR

Receiving regular donations through the **PAR** plan benefits our congregation in several ways by:

- . it provides a convenient and effective way for you to give faithfully in a consistent manner, as you have determined
- it encourages you to think through your giving pattern
- it increases the regularity of offerings
- it reduces the seasonal low giving periods
- and it provides a substantial foundation for budgeting

How to Sign Up

You can join **PAR** simply by:

- (a) Completing an authorization form (available from a table in the Narthex);
- (b) Attaching a **void cheque for your** account(s) to be debited each month;
- (c) Returning the completed form and void cheque to the church office, attention Donna Wilkinson.

Your account will be debited on the 20th of every month.

If you have any questions please contact Donna at donnaw@sasktel.net or 306-586-4026.

Donna Wilkinson
Board of Managers

MISSION & OUTREACH

Mission and Outreach has much to report since the last newsletter:

Camp Christopher: Camp Sunday in June and the excellent church school "Cookies for Kayaks" project raised \$926 for Camp Christopher.

Ngor Appeal: The congregation raised \$5700 on very short notice and with great generosity to assist Elijah Ngor travel to Africa to help his family members move from South Sudan to Ethiopia. Elijah returned home safely in late June after some difficult experiences, but with his relatives safely housed in Gambella, Ethiopia. We will share some photos of his relatives soon so you can "meet" them and see where they travelled. See Elijah's message elsewhere in this newsletter.

Healing and Reconciliation Work:

- Early in 2014 the Session authorized First Church to participate in an ecumenical group working to commemorate the Regina Indian Industrial School cemetery. The group contacted 45 affected First Nation communities regarding the cemetery and, on June 8, hosted a meeting of 60 First Nations representatives. The meeting included a visit to the site, and a discussion of how the cemetery could be protected. Since then, First Nations people have held meetings to discuss next steps. Our ecumenical cemetery group is represented at those meetings by Doug Stewart and a United Church person. Doug is continuing to conduct research on the students at the school and Mary is chairing the ecumenical cemetery group for the upcoming year.

- On August 22, Mission and Outreach committee members, Brad Childs, and several from Knox-Met United attended a feast at Okanese First Nation. This feast was held in honour of children buried at the File Hills Residential School near Balcarres. This school was run from 1889 - 1925 by the PCC and then taken over by the UCC. This is the first time Presbyterians attended this annual feast, and we were welcomed warmly by the community.

Please mark Saturday, October 25 on your calendar. David Phillips, Presbyterian Church in Canada staff person responsible for healing and reconciliation is visiting Regina. He will present a morning workshop on historical and present relationships of our denomination with aboriginal peoples. It will also include a visit to the Regina Indian Industrial School cemetery site. It promises to be an informative and stimulating gathering.

Submitted by Mary Jesse
Mission & Outreach Convenor

RISKY MISSION

The trip I took to Kenya and Ethiopia to rescue my brother's family was risky and very emotional for me. I was away for one month in June to arrange for my brother's wife and children to move to safety after he was killed in the South Sudan war. Tribal hatred against me made it too dangerous to go to South Sudan so I made arrangements from nearby Kenya. My sister-in-law and eight children ages 3 to 18 travelled by truck, foot and then by boat to arrive at a U.N. refugee camp in Ethiopia. I then went to Ethiopia to meet them. The refugee camp is very overloaded so there were no tents or shelter for them. I helped them find a house in the city of Gambella. They are safe there and the children can go to school.

It was quite risky for me to meet them in Ethiopia due to ethnic tensions, but knowing that the Lord can shield the believers from the enemies is really true. The group who killed my brother were also trying to find me in Ethiopia, so I had to flee and walk a long distance through the jungle to get to safety.

The most difficult part of this mission was the day I said goodbye to my wife, Nyabani. I told her that I do not want her to lose her mind if I died in this mission because God wanted me to do this. Tears ran down our faces. Memories of the bushes and jungles where I spent night and day walking, and the many other things I saw, all have left me with trauma to this day. I ask you,

please, please continue praying for me and the entire family of Ngor, as well as our relatives.

I have no words to describe the generosity of First Presbyterian Church for your support and for making this risky mission successful. The family of my deceased brother is now in good shape where his kids can have the chance to go to school. Please meet me in person to learn more about this. Thank you again First Presbyterian for your help.

Peace be with you all,
Elijah Ngor

CHOIR

REHEARSALS It's that time of year once again. Starting September 4, 2014, Thursday evenings from 7:30 p.m. - 9 p.m. Please join us for good music and fellowship. All are welcome.

For more information, contact Bill Sgrazzutti (306-525-4292). We look forward to seeing you!

Bill Sgrazzutti
Music Director

SPY WEEKEND

WHO: Saskatchewan Presbyterian Youth
(ages 11 and up)

WHEN: Friday September 26, 2014, 7pm -
Sunday September 28, 2014, 1pm.

WHERE: St. Andrew's, Saskatoon
436 Spadina Crescent

COST: \$50 per Youth

Please send cheques:

Attention: Logan deBrujin

For more information and registration forms please contact Joel at fp youth@sasktel.net.

FUNDSCRIP

FundScrip orders are once again being taken. Shopping for groceries or gas, planning a meal out, purchasing a gift - there are gift cards available from a wide variety of retailers, and the church makes a percentage on every card without any additional cost to you! Gift cards for Walmart are now available! Current promotions are Cabela's (7% to the church instead of 4%), Shell (3.5% instead of 2%) and M & M (4% instead of 3%). This is a very easy way to contribute financially to the congregation. The gift cards are as good as cash and cost you no extra, yet the church benefits greatly from your participation. Visit the FundScrip table in the gym after worship. Thanks for your support!

WELCOME BACK POTLUCK SUPPER

Hope everyone has had a wonderful summer ~ relaxing, traveling, getting together with friends and family, reading a good book or just enjoying the great weather we have had this year.

Now it's time to catch up on our church family's activities and adventures over the summer, so the Fellowship Committee is hosting a Potluck Supper on **September 28th at 5:30pm.**

Signup sheets are available in the Narthex and gym so please let us know how many in your family will be coming ... and it would be great if you invited your friends to join us!

Don't miss out on this opportunity for a great feast, great friends and great fellowship.

Sheila Wilson,
Fellowship Committee

SCHOLARSHIPS

Apply for post-secondary scholarship from FPC:

First Church administers scholarship funds for post-secondary students which were established by long-time members of the congregation.

Each year several students receive awards that assist with the costs of their education. The application is available on the church website at www.firstpresregina.ca under Who We Serve, and paper application forms are in the narthex. Submit your completed application to the church office by **September 30, 2014.** The Memorial Fund Committee will review applications and make decisions in late fall.

Mary Jesse
Memorial Fund Committee

PLANNED GIVING

Planning to Fulfill our Mission

September in Saskatchewan is harvest time, the end of the growing season. But as everyone who remembers their school years or has children or grandchildren heading back to school knows, autumn is also a time of beginnings, fresh starts and new dreams.

Our Planned Giving Program, "Growing Our Vision: Seeds of Abundant Joy", means that autumn at First Church is a time to plant seeds, to develop proposals that will help put our mission into action.

Planned gifts at First Church flow to our endowment fund, as well as to four funds that support the priorities of our church community:

- our property fund, dedicated to major capital repairs that our church building requires;
- and the three funds dedicated to fulfilling the mission of First Church 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 that would further any one of these aspects of our mission, please consider applying for funding. Applications will be 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, 2014. 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 2015. 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.

What is your vision for First Church? Take this opportunity to help move our mission forward.

Lisa Ann Wood
Planned Giving Committee

DECEMBER CRAFT SALE

We are planning a craft and bake sale to be held on Saturday, December 6, 2014. Please start crafting or thinking about what you can give. For more information please talk to Tracy, Tammy or Donna.

ART FROM THE MORRIS ROOM

The eighth painting from the Kitson Collection is
Jean Baptiste-Camille Corot's
(1796 - 1875)

"Ville d' Avray" ca. 1867 oil on canvas.

Corot was unusual among many artists in that he didn't begin until he was 26 and only after his wealthy and successful parents gave him a yearly allowance of 1500 francs which adequately financed his new career, studio, materials and travel for the rest of his life.

During the period when Corot began painting, landscape painting was on the upswing and was divided into two camps - historical landscape by Neo-classicists representing idealized views of real and fancied sites peopled with ancient, mythological and biblical figures and realistic landscapes.

Artists typically began with outdoor sketching and preliminary painting with finished work done indoors. Corot studied under Achille Michallon whose only advice was to "render with the greatest scrupulousness everything I saw before me and I have always treasured precision."

In his early period he painted traditionally with minute exactness, clear outlines, thin brushwork and monochromatic underpainting.

After 1865 his painting became more lyrical and marked the transition from the plain-air paintings of his youth, shot through with warm natural light, to the studio-created landscapes of his late maturity, enveloped in uniform tones of silver.

Corot's palette is restrained, dominated with browns and blacks - "forbidden colours among the Impressionists" - along with dark and silver green. His paintings like "Ville d' Avray" are characterized by softness and indecision of line. He used warmer, pastel shades with a wonderful feeling for pattern and design. Note especially the delicacy in the tracery made by the trees against the sky. Corot usually mixed and blended his colours to get his dreamy effects.

Placing suitable figures in a secular setting was a necessity of good landscape painting in order to add human context and scale, and was even more important in allegorical landscapes. In the late 1860's, he was still mixing peasant figures and mythological ones.

Corot anticipates the plain-air innovations of Impressionism and is a pivotal figure in landscape painting. Among many others, Monet exclaimed "There is only one master here ~ Corot. We are nothing compared to him, nothing."

Corot is my favourite painter and he painted over 3,000 paintings.

John Macfarlane

SEPTEMBER EVENTS

4	7:30 PM	Choir
7	10:30 AM	Worship Service
8	7:00 PM	Stewardship meeting
11	7:30 PM	Choir
14	10:30 AM	Worship Service & Sunday School
16	noon	Freedom 55ers
17	9:00 AM	Board of Managers
18	7:30 PM	Choir
20	10:00 AM	Synod
21	10:30 AM	Worship Service & Sunday School
23	10:30 AM noon	Bible Study Freedom 55ers
25	7:30 PM	Choir
27	10:00 AM	Worship Committee
28	10:30 AM	Worship Service & Sunday School
	5:30 PM	Welcome Back Potluck Supper
30	10:30 AM noon	Bible Study Freedom 55ers