

FIRST THINGS FIRST

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, REGINA

April 2019

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Many of you will have heard by now that earlier this week I was elected to serve as Moderator for this year's General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. It is both exciting and scary for me, as I anticipate moderating the Assembly and serving as Moderator throughout the year.

The announcement that was published online on Monday, April 1st after the ballots were counted and it was determined that I received the majority of votes, reads as follows:

On behalf of the Committee to Advise the Moderator, I am pleased to announce that the name of the Rev. Amanda Currie, minister of First Presbyterian Church in Regina, Saskatchewan, will be placed as the sole nominee to be Moderator of the 2019 General Assembly, which takes place June 2–6, 2019, at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario.

—*The Rev. Stephen Kendall, Principal Clerk*

No, this does not mean that I will move away or cease to be your minister at First Church. I will be travelling quite a bit so you will see other ministers filling in, but I'll be here fairly regularly too -- likely about 3 Sundays each month. The Moderator's term is from June 2019 until June 2020, at which time a new Moderator will be installed.

When the Rev. Brad Childs, Minister of First Church from 2011-2016, posted on Facebook about the election on Monday, he wrote: "Congratulations to Moderator elect Rev. Amanda Currie and to the lovely people of First Presbyterian Church, Regina who once more share in this honour." The reason for that comment is this is not the first time a minister of First Church has been elected to serve as Moderator of the General Assembly.

I did a little research and found that the first Moderator from Saskatchewan was the Rev. William G. Brown, Minister at St. Andrew's in Saskatoon, who served in 1931. The next Saskatchewan Moderator was the Rev. Norman D. Kennedy, Minister at First Church in Regina, who served in 1951.

Our congregational history book, *The First Fifty Years*, describes Rev. Kennedy's election in this way: "First Church congregation felt highly honoured when our minister Rev. Norman D. Kennedy, M.C., M.A., D.D. was elected moderator of the General Assembly at the June 1951 Assembly, held in Ottawa. Our supply Committee took action at once and the congregation again felt honoured when word came that it could be arranged with Rev. R. A. Davidson, Grande Prairie, Alberta to fulfill all responsibilities as Acting Moderator at First Church for the duration of Mr. Kennedy's term of office as Moderator of the General Assembly. Our Moderator, the Right Rev. N.D. Kennedy was to be a very busy man and it was not long until he was on his way to take part with others in a mission on behalf of the Canadian Government and our Church to the Canadian troops in Korea. A message was sent to Dr. Kennedy on behalf of the Session, expressing our highest regard and affection for him and our prayers for his safe journey and return to us."

After that, there are no other Moderators listed with Saskatchewan beside their name until now. However, in 1989, the Rev. J.J. Harrold Morris, then living in Toronto, was elected as Moderator. Rev. Morris was the minister at First from 1967 until the late 1970s and is fondly remembered by this congregation. Then in 2005, the Rev. M. Jean Morris (daughter of Harrold Morris, and a sister of Mary Jesse) was elected as Moderator. Although Jean was based out of Calgary by then, I have no doubt that this congregation celebrated her election with great joy and pride.

Another interesting piece of information about Moderators in the PCC is that I will be only the sixth female Moderator. Although our denomination began ordaining women as elders and ministers in 1966, we have still elected relatively few women to the Office of Moderator. The list consists of Linda Bell (1992), Tamiko Corbett (1996), Jean Morris (2005), Wilma Welsh (2006), and Karen Horst (2015). So, I am not exactly “shattering the stained-glass ceiling” with this election, but the PCC is still not very used to having women in this role.

Thanks for your prayers and support as I move into a challenging and exciting year. I look forward to sharing with you about my experiences and travels as Moderator, as well as sharing about First Church’s ministry and mission with the people and congregations that I will meet this year.

Rev. Amanda Currie

STANDING TOGETHER

We put a quote from Martin Luther King Jr. on the sign outside First Church this week. Next week we will post the service times for Holy Week, but for now, another message seemed appropriate. Had the full quote fitted on the sign it would have said this: “Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.”

We live in a world that knows much darkness and experiences a great deal of hatred and violence. We pray Sunday-by-Sunday for people near and far who are struggling; and many of the people we pray for are those suffering from oppression, racism, persecution, and violence in many forms.

It feels particularly scary when we hear about people of faith in various parts of the world being attacked because of their religion, and often during their gatherings for prayer and worship. We imagine the horror of someone interrupting our Sunday morning prayers by opening fire on worshippers, and our hearts break for those who have experienced just such an attack.

A few weeks ago, two such attacks took place in a couple of mosques in New Zealand. Not long

after, there were stories of priests being attacked while celebrating Mass right here in Canada. And we are aware that Christians in many parts of the world, including Pakistan for example, experience terrible persecution, including violence, burning of churches and much more, just because of their faith.

In the midst of all this, we continue to pray. We continue to applaud the leaders and countries that make real changes to gun laws that could reduce such attacks in the future. We continue to reach out to people of all faiths who are persecuted where they live, and who work to provide asylum or refuge for them and their families.

Here in Canada, Saskatchewan, and Regina, we must continue to work on loving one another -- building good relations with our neighbours, with people of diverse faiths, learning about one another, breaking down stereotypes and building a society that is free from discrimination and hatred.

Following the New Zealand attacks, I wrote a letter of encouragement to the Islamic Association of Saskatchewan as a small part of the effort towards building good relations in our community. Thanks to the many members of First Church who signed the letter before I delivered it on Sunday, March 17th. Part of that letter said this:

Our hearts are breaking at the news of the terrible shooting in two mosques in New Zealand on Friday, March 15, 2019. We are shocked by this horrific violence and the fact that it took place during a peaceful gathering for prayer.

We are thinking of the Muslim Community here in Regina, and just want you to know that we are glad that you are here with us. We value your contributions to our community, respect your religious commitment, and pray that this will be a safe place for you to live, work, and raise your families.

We are praying for you today, as well as for the Muslim community in New Zealand that suffered such a horrible attack this week.

Please know that many Christians and Churches around the world are also praying for our Muslim brothers and sisters, and want to work together to create societies of peace, cooperation, and goodwill around the world.

On Thursday, March 21st, some of our members gathered with other citizens at City Hall for a Prayer Vigil to remember the victims of the attacks in New Zealand. The vigil was well-attended by people from many faith traditions as well as no faith.

Another opportunity to learn and build good relations with our neighbours took place on Saturday, April 6th, and several members of First Church participated. "The Islamic Association of Saskatchewan (Regina) cordially invites you to an Open House at our Mosque at 3273 Montague Street, Regina. Join us for an informative afternoon and enjoy food and company as we stretch out our hand with a message of peace and understanding. The IAOS will open its doors, inviting the community to learn about Islam and to dispel myths and encourage conversation to remove barriers."



Rev. Amanda Currie

MISSION & OUTREACH

Donations for Easter in Memoriam This year's donations will be collected for Regina's Indigenous Christian Fellowship (ICF), an urban ministry serving the spiritual and social needs of Indigenous and Metis people in Regina for over 40 years. From their Dewdney Avenue location, ICF offers welcoming drop-in space, a children's program, regular worship and smudging, weekly

meals and community connections. ICF is a ministry of the Christian Reformed Church, and is supported by several Regina congregations from several denominations. We will learn more about ICF on Healing and Reconciliation Sunday in May when the Rev. Bert Adema, ICF Executive Director, will be our guest preacher.

Mary Jesse, M&O Convener

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

During the month of March and most of April, the Christian Church observes the Season of Lent. This is a time when we remember Jesus's ministry leading up to his Crucifixion. The pulpit and chancel table are adorned in purple, signifying that Christ is King. During this time, we are looking forward to Holy Week beginning with Palm Sunday and leading to Easter the following Sunday.

The Worship Committee is making plans for Holy Week. First, we will celebrate Communion on April 7th during our usual Sunday morning service. On Palm Sunday, April 14, we celebrate Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. A special service of Communion is planned for the evening of Maundy Thursday, April 18th immediately following our Maundy Thursday pot-luck supper. Sign-up sheets for the supper are posted in the Narthex and the gymnasium for you to indicate your attendance and to give the Worship Committee an idea of how many people to expect. Please feel free to bring a friend. Our Good Friday Service is scheduled for 10:30 am the following morning.

Special music is planned for Holy Week. On Easter Sunday, there will be a presentation on the events that occurred on the first Easter.

Our thanks to all who have participated in the Lenten and scripture readings, as well as to our greeters and ushers. If you would like to be a reader or usher in the future, please speak to Marianne Woods. If you would like to greet, Wendy Prior will be pleased to accommodate you on a date suitable to you.

Joyce McKersie
Worship Committee Member

FUNDSCRIP

FundScrip - The next order Sunday is April 14, followed by May 5 and 19. Our final order Sunday will be June 16 before we take a break for the summer, so it's time to start stocking up for summer! Stokes is on special this month for 8%. Gas and grocery cards are for sale at the table in the gym following worship.

ADULT WALK & RIVERBEND WALK

Adult Walk and Riverbend Walk will be finished at the end of April. Thank you to those who came out to walk and to those who volunteered with Riverbend for another successful year. Don't hang up your walking shoes! Enjoy the fresh air and outdoors during the spring and summer. We will let you know when we start up in the fall.

CAMP CHRISTOPHER

Camp Christopher is looking for Staff, Campers and Volunteers for summer 2019! Look for applications and Camp Brochures in the Narthex and on the bulletin board down stairs.

Donna Wilkinson
Camp Administrator

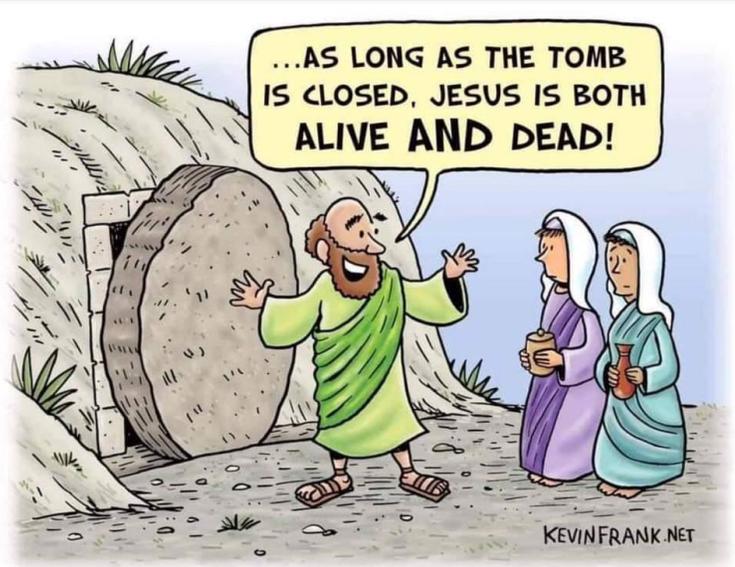
**Saturday April 20
from 1:30 - 3 pm at the
White City Community Centre**

JOURNEY TO EASTER
A FAMILY EASTER EXPERIENCE

whitebuttechristiancommunity@gmail.com
Sponsored by Ambassadors for Christ, Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, and United Churches

APRIL EVENTS

7	10:30 AM 11:45 AM	Worship & Sunday School Birthday Sunday (stay for cake!)
9	9:00 AM 10:30 AM Noon 6:00 PM 7:30 PM	Adult Walk Bible Study Freedom 55'ers Youth Group Membership Class
10	9:45 AM 7:30 PM	Riverbend Walk Wondering Wednesday
11	9:00 AM 7:00 PM	Adult Walk Choir
14	10:30 AM Noon 3:30 PM	Worship & Sunday School Annual General Meeting Wascana Voices Concert
16	9:00 AM 10:30 AM Noon	Adult Walk Bible Study Freedom 55'ers
17	9:45 AM 7:00 PM	Riverbend Walk Board of Managers
18	9:00 AM 6:00 PM	Adult Walk Maundy Thursday Potluck & Worship (in gym)
19	7:30 PM 10:30 AM	Choir Good Friday Service (office closed)
21	10:30 AM	Easter Service
22		(office closed)
23	9:00 AM 10:30 AM Noon 6:00 PM	Adult Walk Bible Study Freedom 55'ers Youth Group
24	9:45 AM 7:00 PM	Riverbend Walk Book Club
25	9:00 AM 7:00 PM	Adult Walk Choir
28	10:30 AM	Worship & Sunday School (Masonic Church Parade)
30	9:00 AM 10:30 AM Noon	Adult Walk Bible Study Freedom 55'ers



Saint Schrodinger, the forgotten disciple.