

**FIRST THINGS FIRST
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, REGINA
JUNE 2022**

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

As many of you know, I'm a Presbyterian minister who is deeply committed both to the local congregation that I serve and to the denomination. An important part of being a Presbyterian is being connected to other Presbyterians through the structures and relationships of our denomination, The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Although I am called to First Presbyterian Church in Regina and give much of my time and attention to leading worship, preaching, pastoral care, Christian education, mission, and leadership in and through our congregation, I also give my time and talent to serve the Presbytery of Assiniboia, the Synod of Saskatchewan, and the General Assembly.

Within the Presbytery of Assiniboia, I currently serve as the Interim Moderator for St. Mark's, Moose Jaw and Knox, Briercrest. I am the convener of the Ministry Committee, serving on the Nominating Committee, and helping out with other short-term committee work like assisting with the process for Grace Church, Yorkton, which will be closing later this month. Within the Synod of Saskatchewan, I'm currently serving as the Clerk of Synod, which means a lot of paperwork, organizing agendas, keeping minutes and correspondence for the Synod Executive and the Annual Synod meeting in October.

At the national level of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, I've been deeply involved for a number of years. In fact, I've attended every General Assembly of the PCC since 2015 in one capacity or another. For several years, I convened the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee for the PCC, and just after I finished my term in that role, I was elected as Moderator of the 2019 General Assembly. In that capacity, I attended meetings of many of the General Assembly committees, and I was asked to continue on the Life and Mission Agency

Committee after my moderator term was completed.

This year, when the General Assembly meeting came around in June 2022, I actually did not have any reason to attend the meeting which was going to be happening in an online format once again. When I was invited to go to the church offices in Toronto to help out on the team that was running the online Assembly, I jumped at the chance.

It was a really great week of watching and taking in the proceedings of the General Assembly. My role was a technical one in the background related to posting in the IOBs (Items of Business) on screen for the commissioners and maintaining the speaker queues for those seeking recognition to speak on an item of business before the court. I didn't have to think about how to vote or whether to speak to an issue, but had a great seat for watching and listening along with other colleagues on the team.

It was another historic General Assembly. The Assembly elected and installed the Rev. Bob Faris as its 147th Moderator. Bob is an ordained minister of the PCC serving St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (King Street) in Toronto. Bob is also a member of the LGBTQ+ community and married to another man. He did a wonderful job of moderating the Assembly, especially given the extra challenges of doing it online. I am looking forward to reading his reflections throughout the year and watching how he engages with the denomination as Moderator.

If you haven't already checked out what happened at the 147th General Assembly, I encourage you to do so by going to the General Assembly page of the PCC website: <https://presbyterian.ca/gao/ga2022/> You can read highlights from each day of the Assembly, check out the photo gallery, watch videos of report presentations, guest speakers, and daily worship. I highly recommend the worship

services with the Rev. Paulette Brown as the preacher (particularly Wednesday morning's sermon).

We are blessed to belong to this connectional church that is The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Even when we struggle with differences and with making changes together, we stay together, discern God's will together, and are blessed by the relationships and partnerships that we share.

Rev. Amanda Currie

SESSION

A number of decisions were made at the Session meeting this week:

- During July and August, we will not be serving refreshments in the gym following worship. We will resume in September.
- We encourage people to come to worship in person. Wearing masks is encouraged but not required.
- With new elders being admitted to the Session, some adjustments have been made to elders' districts. A "Meet your Elder" event will be held in the fall.
- Vacation Bible School (VBS) will be held July 4-7 at the church. Register your children now! Helpers and snacks are still needed.
- A "Welcome Back" potluck supper will be held Sept. 18 so mark your calendars now. Won't that be wonderful!
- New members will be received on June 26.
- First Church will be hosting the Interchurch Saturday Sandwich Lunch on Saturday, July 9 at First Baptist Church. Volunteers are needed. Contact Mary Jesse if you can help.
- The closing service for Grace Presbyterian Church, Yorkton will be held Saturday, June 25 at 3:00 pm. All are welcome.

Have a restful and relaxing summer!

Jo Szostak

REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP UPDATE

Two weeks ago we received an email from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) requesting the completion of quarantine plans for the Mathiang/Thiey family. This is our first refugee family. In order to complete the quarantine plans we needed to have an address

where they would be able to quarantine for 14 days, so we decided to go ahead and rent a home for the family effective July 1. Our contact at PCC said that first the quarantine plans need to be approved, then travel arrangements would need to be made. Usually, she said, when we receive an email with arrival information it will still be 3-4 weeks before they actually arrive. So we anticipate that it would likely be at least be mid-July before they come and possibly later. We have rented a half-duplex at 1435 Rupert St. The landlord will do some work the second week of July - painting, etc. Then we will move furniture in during the third week of July and get things set up and ready.

Through generous contributions over the last few years, we have 3/4 of the money we need for this family. However, we still need about \$20,000 to meet our budget for the first year, so your contributions would be appreciated over the next few months.

Jo Szostak
Refugee Committee

MISSION & OUTREACH

- RIIS Commemorative Association is hosting its first Flower Day and feast on Tuesday, June 21 beginning at noon. Flower Day is a time to clean the cemetery space and finish with a feast. Bring your gloves, garbage bags, garden pruners, and whipper snipper for refreshing the cemetery. Stay for the feast and bring your own plate, bowls, utensils, and cup, and a blanket to sit on. Feast items such as fruit, bottled water or juice, vegetable soup, and bannock are welcome. All are welcome. Location: Pinkie Road north of Dewdney Ave, just south of the train tracks.
- First Church is hosting the Interchurch Saturday Lunch program on Saturday, July 9 and we need your help! Several Regina churches co-operate together to provide 200 bagged lunches for people in the city who are chronically hungry. If you can give two hours of time on July 9, we need 3-4 people to make sandwiches in our church kitchen, and another 7 or 8 to help assemble lunches, hand out meals, visit with guests, and set-up and take-down tables and chairs. Please

contact Mary Jesse (marycjesse@gmail.com or 306-570-8662) if you can help.

- Many thanks for your generous response to the Camp Christopher Furnace Fundraiser. You contributed \$1,760 for this project.

Mary Jesse
Mission & Outreach Convener

BOARD OF MANAGERS

We have received word from the engineers that there has been no shifting in the foundation over the past year. That is great news!

Our caretaker, Bob Dempsey, will be taking holidays in August. The Board needs to hire someone to clean the sanctuary, office and bathrooms during August. Cleaning in the sanctuary and office would involve vacuuming and dusting and would preferably be done on Friday or Saturday so the sanctuary is clean for Sunday. Payment will be \$100 per week. If you are interested, or know someone who might like this job, please contact the church office.

Summer is always a challenging time to meet our financial commitments. Many people are on holiday, but we still have payroll and bills to pay. You are encouraged to continue your regular offering through the summer - either in person, by cheque mailed to the office, or e-transfer to firstpresreginaoffering@gmail.com.

Thanks and have a great summer!

MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP

What does it mean to be a missional church? To help with God's mission in the world - to care for the earth and all of its creatures and to bring peace, justice and reconciliation to all. The Centre for Missional Leadership at St. Andrew's Hall is offering a course in Missional Leadership beginning in September. Through 4 Saturday sessions throughout the year, you would explore what it means to be missional and ways to carry that out in a practical sense.

Anyone interested is invited to join a group from First. Check the website:

<https://www.standrews.edu/cml/certificate-in-missional-leadership/>

Contact Jo Szostak if you are interested or would like more information.

Jo Szostak
Congregational and Mission Development
Coordinator
Synod of Saskatchewan

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL: Wilderness Escape

Parents & kids! Please mark your calendars and plan to attend VBS at First Church from Monday to Thursday, July 4 - 7, 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Register online at



<https://vbspro.events/p/events/27359d>.

There are registrations forms and information on the table in the narthex. Please take an invitation for a friend!

We do need some volunteers for this event; helpers during the week and people willing to provide snacks. Thank you!



Summer Calendar

June 18	10:00 am	Presbytery Meeting (Zoom)
June 19	10:30 am	Worship Ordination of New Elders
	11:45 am	Celebration Coffee Hour With treats and activities!
June 22	7:00 pm	Book Club (Zoom)
June 23	7:30 pm	Choir Practice
June 25	3:00 pm	Closing Service Grace Church, Yorkton
June 26	10:30 am	Worship Baptism & Reception of New Members
	11:45 am	Coffee Hour
June 29	1:00 pm	Memorial Service for Betty Green at Speers Funeral Chapel
July 3	10:30 am	Worship Synod Summer Student preaching
July 4-7	9 am – 12 pm	Vacation Bible School
July 9		First Presbyterian hosts Saturday Bag Lunch Program at First Baptist Church
July 10	10:30 am	Worship

July 17 10:30 am Worship
July 21 7:00 pm Book Club
@ Jessica's place
July 24 10:30 am Worship
July 31 10:30 am Worship

Rev. Amanda Currie will be on holidays in August, and attending the 11th Assembly of the World Council of Churches in early September. Worship will continue on Sundays with a variety of guest preachers.

Sept. 13 12:00 pm Freedom 55ers
(in person at the church)

Sept. 18 Save this date for a special
"Welcome Back" event.

Sept. 21 Session Meeting