

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

November 2020

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

It is a beautiful November day for Saskatchewan as I write this message. The high is expected to be 19C, a lovely reprieve from the winter that seemed to be beginning a few weeks ago. But looking at the forecast, I know that snow is on its way starting tomorrow and through the weekend. Winter is coming, and we will need to accept that reality as we do every year.

I am aware that the option we currently have to gather for worship in-person may be short-lived as well. The tightening of Covid restrictions in Saskatchewan this week served as a reminder that protocols will continue to change in response to the relative spread or control of the Coronavirus in our province. Effective Friday, November 6, all residents in Saskatoon, Regina and Prince Albert are required to wear non-medical masks in indoor public spaces. This includes churches, of course, and is consistent with our current practice when we gather in-person for worship.

You may have noticed the gathering sizes in private homes are now limited to a maximum of 10 people. This does not apply to our gatherings at church, but if we are not able to get the outbreaks under control in Saskatchewan, we can expect further restrictions to be added. Here at First Church, we will continue to be careful when we do gather, following the guidelines and adjusting how we do things when recommended.

Despite this degree of uncertainty about what lies ahead, we will persevere in our ministry and mission as a congregation – enjoying opportunities to worship together, continuing our online presence by livestreaming worship and occasional hymn sings from the church, holding most of our meetings and programs by Zoom, and connecting with homebound members by mail and telephone.

At the Session meeting on November 4, we spent some time discussing and confirming our plans for Advent and Christmas. Some of our

usual plans have been adjusted for the current reality, some will proceed pretty much as usual, and we'll be adding some new things as well – including an online Christmas Pageant and Advent and Christmas Hymn Sings that we will livestream and make available to care homes to share with their residents.

As we persevere through the Covid-19 Pandemic, let's continue to care for and encourage one another in faith and hope. And everyone, please, wear your masks when you're out in public spaces (including church) to protect yourself and others. Here is a prayer that you may want to use when you are putting on your mask. It was written by the United Church of Canada's Moderator, the Rev. Richard Bott:

A prayer as I put on my mask:

Creator,
as I prepare to go into the world,
help me to see the sacrament
in the wearing of this cloth -
let it be "an outward sign
of an inward grace" -
a tangible and visible way of living
love for my neighbours,
as I love myself.

Christ,
since my lips will be covered,
uncover my heart,
that people would see my smile
in the crinkles around my eyes.
Since my voice may be muffled,
help me to speak clearly,
not only with my words,
but with my actions.

Holy Spirit,
As the elastic touches my ears,
remind me to listen carefully -
and full of care -
to all those I meet.
May this simple piece of cloth be
shield and banner,
and each breath that it holds,

be filled with your love.
In your Name and
in that love,
I pray.
May it be so.
May it be so.

Rev. Amanda Currie

SESSION

As we approach the Advent and Christmas seasons, plans are being developed for a number of activities, so mark your calendars now!

- Advent party online Nov. 29
- Hymn sings Nov. 29, Dec. 6 and 13 at 2:30 pm
- Blue Christmas service Dec. 16 at 7:00 pm
- Christmas pageant Dec. 20 at 2:30 pm
- Christmas Eve service Dec. 24 at 7:00 pm

Many of you have also signed up to participate in the Advent Book Study in December. See the information below from the Mission & Outreach Committee regarding our Christmas In Memoriam projects.

Jo Szostak
Clerk of Session

MISSION & OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Advent In-Memoriam projects:

First Church has always focussed on giving to our neighbours in need during the Advent season. Your Mission and Outreach Committee selected two projects for the congregation to support this December: Indigenous Christian Fellowship (our Regina neighbours) and our two refugee families in Sudan and Thailand (our global neighbours)

- Indigenous Christian Fellowship is preparing Christmas hampers for the families it serves, including food and small gifts for children.
- Our Refugee Fund is growing, but still needs more donations to cover our commitment to the two refugee families we are sponsoring.

During Advent you can make your donation to either project in memory of a loved one or in

living tribute. Names will be published in the December 20 bulletin. Watch for more details in upcoming Sunday bulletins.

Mary Jesse
M&O Convener

PLANNED GIVING

Applications Welcome for Planned Giving Projects:

Our First Church Planned Giving Program is inviting applications for activities supported by our Planned Giving Funds. The project or initiative needs to support one aspect of 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 December 31, 2020. Applications will be considered by the congregation at the Annual General Meeting in spring 2021.

To comply with COVID safety precautions, we have attached an application form to this newsletter if you are receiving it by email. If you received the newsletter via regular mail and need a planned giving application form, please contact Shirley in the office at 306.522.9571 and she will mail you one. Once you have completed your application, please submit it to Shirley in the office by:

- email to firstpresregina@sasktel.net, or
- regular mail to First Presbyterian Church, 2170 Albert Street, Regina, SK, S4P 2T9, or
- by dropping your application off at the registration table if you are attending church in person on Sundays.

We welcome your proposals to further the mission of First Church!

Lisa Ann Wood
on behalf of the Stewardship Committee
(*** Application form at end of newsletter)

ADVENT WITH THE MODERATOR: **Letters of Encouragement**

When: Monday, November 30, 2020 | 2:00 p.m.

You are invited to spend an hour with the Rev. Amanda Currie,

[Moderator of the General Assembly,](#)

and begin the Season of Advent with Presbyterians across the country.



In this difficult and uncertain time, we will come together to reflect, pray and encourage one another in faith. We will look at the Epistle readings that come up in the lectionary during Advent, paying attention to the assurances of the apostles for the earliest Christian communities, and listening together for the encouragement that we need today. Please register for this gathering to receive your unique link to join the meeting.

Click here to register: [Register now](#)

Note: After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

PCC SOCIAL ACTION HUB



A new resource has just been introduced on the website of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. It's called the Social Action Hub. The Hub contains information, liturgical resources, study guides and advocacy tools to help individuals and congregations discern and

live out the biblical call to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8). [Living Faith](#), a Presbyterian statement of belief and subordinate standard, tells us that God is *a/ways* calling the church to seek justice. It goes on to describe justice as being concerned with protecting the rights of others, including issues such as poverty, employment, education, health and corrections systems, and demanding the exercise of power for the common good.

The Social Action Hub is intended as a place where information and resources from The Presbyterian Church in Canada that aid the pursuit of justice in ways described in *Living Faith*, are gathered for ease of use. Here you will find, organized thematically, positions and actions the church has taken, as well as links to letters, reports and resources it has produced. The Hub is an ongoing project that is continually up-dated and expanded as new resources or information become available, so we encourage you to check back often and take time to explore all the many ways Christians can seek justice through social action.

Here is the link to the Social Action Hub:

<https://presbyterian.ca/justice/social-action/>

Rev. Amanda Currie

A RESPONSE TO WAR

Eternal God

Save us from weak resignation to violence

Teach us that restraint is the highest expression of power

That thoughtfulness and tenderness are marks of the strong.

Help us to love our enemies

Not by countenancing their sins,

But by remembering our own

And may we never for a moment forget

That they are fed by the same food,

Hurt by the same weapons,

Have children for whom they have the same high hopes as we do.

Grant us the ability

To find joy and strength not in the strident call to arms

To grasp our fellow creatures

In the striving for justice and truth.

Prepared by a Christian, a Jew, and a Muslim (August 1990). From A Collection of Prayers for Peace, posted on the World Council of Churches website. <http://www2.wcc-coe.org/>

NOVEMBER EVENTS

- Nov. 7 10:00 am Worship Committee
- Nov. 8 10:30 am Worship
(online & in-person)**
12:15 pm Sunday School
1:00 pm Coffee Hour
- Nov. 11 7:00 pm Mission & Outreach
- Nov. 12 12:15 pm Bible Study
7:00 pm Music Team Meeting
8:00 pm Choir Chat
- Nov. 15 10:30 am Worship
(online & in-person)**
12:15 pm Sunday School
1:00 pm Coffee Hour
- Nov. 18 7:00 pm Board of Managers
- Nov. 19 12:15 pm Bible Study
- Nov. 21 10:00 am Pastoral Care Committee
- Nov. 22 10:30 am Worship
(online & in-person)**
Rev. Bob Wilson preaching
- Nov. 22 12:15 pm Sunday School
1:00 pm Coffee Hour
- Nov. 27 12:15 pm Bible Study
- Nov. 29 10:30 am Worship
(online & in-person)**
12:15 pm Sunday School
1:00 pm Advent Party on Zoom
2:30 pm Advent Hymn Sing
- Nov. 30 2:00 pm Advent with the Moderator

DECEMBER EVENTS

- Dec. 1 7:30 pm Advent Book Study
- Dec. 2 7:00 pm Session Meeting
- Dec. 3 12:15 pm Bible Study
- Dec. 6 10:30 am Worship
(online & in-person)**
12:15 pm Sunday School
1:00 pm Coffee Hour
2:30 pm Advent Hymn Sing
- Dec. 8 7:30 pm Advent Book Study
- Dec. 9 7:00 pm Book Club
- Dec. 10 12:15 pm Bible Study
- Dec. 13 10:30 am Worship
(online & in-person)**
12:15 pm Sunday School
1:00 pm Coffee Hour
2:30 pm Christmas Hymn Sing
- Dec. 15 7:30 pm Advent Book Study
- Dec. 16 7:00 pm Blue Christmas Service
- Dec. 17 12:15 pm Bible Study
- Dec. 20 10:30 am Worship
(online & in-person)**
12:15 pm Sunday School
1:00 pm Coffee Hour
2:30 pm Online Christmas Pageant
- Dec. 22 7:30 pm Advent Book Study
- Dec. 24 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service
- Dec. 27 10:30 am Worship
(online & in-person)**
No Sunday School or Coffee Hour today

First Church Fellowship by Zoom Video Conference. Everyone is invited to join with First Church friends for fellowship and connection using Zoom video conferences every week: All Zoom links are sent out by email. If you do not receive the Zoom links you need, email, text, or phone Rev. Amanda.

Growing our Vision: Seeds of Abundant Joy

Application Process

- This process is designed to align with the annual congregational planning process.
- Applications are to be received in the Church office by December 31st.
- The Stewardship Committee reviews applications, considers money available, and develops recommendations.
- The Stewardship Committee presents all applications, with recommendations, to the joint Board/Session meeting in January/
February.
- All applications are forwarded from the joint Board/Session meeting, with recommendations, to the congregational Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- Applications are considered for approval by the congregation at the AGM.
- Other applications arising during the remainder of the calendar year may be considered as funds are available. For amounts up to \$2000, the Session may approve projects. For amounts over \$2000, congregational approval is required.

**Growing our Vision: Seeds of Abundant Joy
Application Form for Funds**

Name/Group _____

Contact: (Person Responsible) _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Project: _____

Describe your Project: (Attach supporting documents if necessary)

How does this further the Mission of the Church:

Joyful in Worship _____ Tender In Life: _____ Daring in Outreach _____

Amount requested: _____

Signature

Date

Forms due December 31st of each year to the office of First Presbyterian Church, 2170 Albert Street, Regina SK S4P 2T9. Completed forms can also be emailed to firstplannedgiving@sasktel.net