

**FIRST THINGS FIRST
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, REGINA
NOVEMBER 2024**

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

I can hardly believe that it's already the middle of November! We are sharing this November newsletter a little later than planned due to illness, but the later date does allow us to start talking about Advent and Christmas which are just around the corner!

During the Season of Advent at First Church we are planning for lots of opportunities to worship, learn, reflect, pray, and share together as an intergenerational church family. We have chosen to use resource materials from *Illustrated Ministry* this year to guide much of our Advent program for 2024, including the Bible passages and themes for worship, Sunday School, adult study groups, and family devotionals.

The theme will be *From the Manger*. We are reminded that hunger is a universal human experience, drawing attention to our most basic needs for food and nourishment and our more complex needs—peace, liberation, and meaning in this life. So, it's no wonder that the story of Jesus—the one who came to feed the hungry—begins, ends, and centres around food. *From the Manger* gathers around the birth story in Luke 2, embracing the playful symbolism of a newborn Jesus being laid down to sleep in a feeding trough in a town called “House of Bread” (Bethlehem).

The *From the Manger Advent Devotional* invites you to reflect on the life-sustaining hope, peace, joy, and love Jesus brings and notice how the baby born in a bread town continues to feed a hungry world today. You can pick up a copy of the devotional at the church and choose to use it for your personal reflection and/or **join in a discussion and prayer group: Choose Mondays at 2:00 pm in the Morris Room or Tuesdays at 7:00 pm on Zoom. Sessions will begin on Monday, Nov. 25th and Tuesday, Nov. 26th.**

The *From the Manger Advent for Families* resource invites you to reflect on the life-giving hope, peace, joy, and love that Jesus brings, and consider how the baby born in Bethlehem—literally a “bread town”—continues to feed a hungry world today. These devotions are designed for families with children, youth, and adults of all ages. Pick up a copy at the church!

The *From the Manger Advent Calendar* invites you to reflect on the life-sustaining hope, peace, joy, and love Jesus brings and notice how the baby born in a bread town continues to feed a hungry world today. Beginning December 1, each day offers a simple activity for you or your family to complete. Pick up a copy at the church!

Also mark your calendars for these special events and services during the Advent and Christmas Season:

- “Songs of Celebration” – A Christmas concert and fundraiser for our music program on Saturday, Nov. 30th at 3:00 pm.
- First Sunday of Advent & Holy Communion – Sunday, Dec. 1st at 10:30 am.
- Annual Advent Party – After worship on Sunday, Dec. 1st, including lunch, carols, and seasonal fun and games.
- Blue Christmas Service – Wednesday, Dec. 11th at 7:00 pm.
- Messy Christmas! – A Messy Church program in the gym for all ages on a Christmas theme, Saturday, Dec. 14th 10:30 am – 1 pm.
- Christmas Eve Candlelight Service – Tuesday, Dec. 24th at 7:00 pm.

I am looking forward to celebrating this season of hope, peace, joy, and love with all of you at First Church.

Rev. Amanda Currie

SESSION

This fall is a very busy time in the life of First Church! As we move into the holiday season, here are some dates to remember:

- * We held an intergenerational Messy Church event on November 9, that was very well attended. Mark your calendars for the next event on Dec. 14!
- * Our concert will be held on Saturday, Nov. 30 at 3:00 pm. There are no tickets, but there will be an offering to support the First Church music program. Plan to come and be a part of this special presentation!
- * Our annual Advent Party will be held on Sunday, December 1, following worship. Plan to stay for lunch and join the fun!
- * We will celebrate Communion on Dec. 1, and then again on January 5. The Session has been exploring different types of Communion glasses and we will begin using plastic recyclable glasses.
- * There will be a Blue Christmas service on Wednesday, Dec. 11 at 7:00 pm, and the Christmas Eve service will be Tuesday, Dec. 24 at 7:00 pm.
- * We've received a significant bequest from Keith Jeal, so we are grateful to Keith and his family for this gift to the church.
- * The Saleem family continues to settle in well to their life in Canada. Abiel is now attending the Regina Christian School. Both Adnan and Nomia have their learners' licenses and are practicing their driving! Adnan hopes to begin a new job in the next little while. It's hard to believe that their one-year anniversary in Canada will be January 18! The Christmas In Memoriam flower project this year will benefit our Refugee Sponsorship Fund. We will be supporting our family until the end of January, so your offerings are appreciated.

Jo Szostak
Clerk of Session

100th ANNIVERSARY

First Church will be 100 years old on January 11, 2025! We will be celebrating with two major events that weekend.

- 1) Plan to attend the **birthday party** at 1:30 pm on Saturday, January 11. The celebration will include a talent show. If you have a talent you would like to share, please let Sheila Wilson

know. The afternoon will be lots of fun - and of course there will be cake!!

- 2) On Sunday, January 12, we will have an anniversary worship service, with The Rev. Brad Childs as guest minister. Following worship, we will take a picture of the congregation in the sanctuary. Then there will be a **catered lunch** in the gym at 12:30. It will be a turkey dinner with seven salads. Tickets go on sale this month, so be sure to purchase yours now! For adults, they are \$30, Children 7-12 they are \$10 and Children 6 and under there is no charge. Plan on joining this special celebration!

Remember When The Living History of First Church

As we look forward to celebrating 100 years in the life of First Church in January, 2025, we want to recognize the rich history of the church over the decades. This month we are celebrating the life and dedication of Margaret Purse, a longtime member of First Church.

The Living History of First Church: Margaret Purse

Margaret began attending First Presbyterian Church after she arrived in Regina to begin her teaching career in 1955 with the Regina Public School Board. She was rooming with a friend in the area, at 2050 Robinson Street, just north of 13th Avenue. Margaret officially became a member of First Presbyterian Church on October 5, 1969.

Margaret spent her early years on a farm by Pense, SK. Her family moved from the farm to the town of Pense when she was about 10 years old. Margaret's mother played the organ at Cottonwood Presbyterian Church. She recalls that when the United Church was formed in 1925, with the merger of the Methodists and Presbyterians, her grandfather, Robert, and grandmother Broomfield were not pleased with the fact that Cottonwood Presbyterian Church was to become a United Church. As a result, they began attending First Presbyterian Church in Regina, while still living in Pense. They would have been part of the original congregation of First Church.

Margaret's first memory of First Church in Regina was attending her grandmother's funeral

in 1951 as a 14-year-old girl. She clearly remembers entering through the doors on 14th Avenue, which would have been the main entrance to the church at the time.

In 1961, Margaret's Aunt Gladys moved to an apartment in Regina on 13th Avenue and Albert St. In 1962, her parents also decided to relocate to Regina, and they purchased a home at 2835 Lakeview Avenue. Her mother and aunt began attending church with her on a regular basis. Margaret returned to the family home, and she lived with her parents until their passing.

Margaret recalls being on the Board of Managers of First Church in the mid-1970s. At that time, Bill Kelly was the chair, and Larry Kitson was the secretary. The others were Allan McLeod, Ev Smith, and Jo Morris. The church's structural foundation was a concern, even then, and work was done to repair it. Margaret also served as a Sunday School teacher at First Church for some time.

Margaret remembers Mrs. Kennedy as being the choir director and accompanist at First Church, and asking her several times to join the choir. She also recalls Jack Partridge taking over as music director in 1967. Coincidentally, Jack was a new grade 7 teacher with Regina Public Schools, and Margaret visited him as the Intermediate Consultant with the School Board.

Margaret also remembers when the Teachers' Bowling League was housed at the Regina Bolodrome, kitty-corner to First Church. Today it is a parking lot. The Texaco service station was directly across the street, where an empty lot now stands. The teachers held their bowling banquets in the old church hall located beneath the sanctuary. They were catered by the 'Circles', the ladies' groups that were so crucial to the life and fundraising efforts at First Presbyterian Church.

When asked about her hopes and dreams for First Church, Margaret spoke of our beautiful and peaceful sanctuary, and lovely stained-glass windows. She is hopeful that we will be able to address any issues with the church's foundation, so we can enjoy First Church as we know it, for many years to come.

Respectfully submitted by Heather Mazurak

SONGS OF CELEBRATION



Invite your family and friends to the first Christmas concert of the season at First Church on Saturday, November 30th at 3:00 pm. The program will include a variety of Christmas selections by our own choir, soloists, and small ensembles. This musical afternoon will be a fundraiser to support our music ministry by increasing the resources in our "Joyful Worship" Fund. Admission is free but you are invited to make an offering with cash, cheque, or e-transfer to firstpresreginaoffering@gmail.com. (Security question: What street is the church on?)

MISSION & OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Christmas Mission project:

This year's Christmas In Memoriam project is raising funds for the congregation's Refugee Sponsorship Fund. The congregation has been faithful and generous in meeting the challenge of sponsoring two refugee families. Most of the financial requirements have been met, but we still need \$10,000 to meet our commitment.

When the congregation began this project, we budgeted \$61,000 per family for each one-year commitment, based on federal government guidelines. This amount has been raised, but extra medical and dental expenses, many needs of resettlement, and increased costs of living over the past few years mean that we still need \$10,000 to meet our commitment.

We are grateful that the Mathiangs and the Saleem/Adnan family are part of our church community after many years of exile from their home countries.

From Nov 24 to Dec 18, you can make a donation to this important project in memory of, or in tribute to, a loved one. Bulletin inserts will be available during Sunday worship, and the weekly Friday email will also provide details for how to participate.

Mission & Outreach is thankful for the enthusiastic and hard-working volunteers who took part in October's food assistance efforts; the Saturday Lunch Program on Oct 6 at First Baptist and sandwiches for Waterston House on Oct 20.

Thank you for participating!

Mary Jesse
Mission & Outreach Convener

ADVENT PARTY

You are invited to stay after worship on December 1st for our Annual Advent Party. We will have some Advent activities, Christmas Bingo – of course... and a lot of fun. We are having chili and mac 'n cheese. Please join all the other fun-loving people at First Church for this event. Hope to see all of you there.



Sheila Wilson
Fellowship Committee

FUNDSCRIP

Our next order Sunday is December 1. Cards ordered will be available for pick up the next Sunday. This is a great opportunity to do some Christmas shopping and pick up gift cards for family and friends, as well as for your usual grocery and gas purchases. The church gets a percentage of all gift cards sold, but it doesn't cost you any more. You can also buy grocery and gas cards at the FundScrip table in the gym after worship every Sunday.

YOUTH

At the **Monthly Youth Gathering on Oct. 20th**, we had time to grow and learn more about the Bible and share our thoughts and then enjoyed the Korean traditional game, 윷놀이 (Yutnori)! We appreciate Bette Kelly who provided the yummy lunch for our group, and SangHyuk (Joshua) Lim, who led the Korean game!



Again, **on Sunday, Nov. 17th, from 12:15 PM to 2:30 PM**, all Grades 7th -12th students are invited to enjoy an afternoon of food, fellowship, snacks, Bible discussions, ART THERAPY (only Nov.'s gathering), and more! Please keep an eye on the youth and keep them in your prayers.

First Presbyterian Church
A congregation of
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
2179 Albert Street, Regina, SK S4P 2T9

You're invited!
ALL 6th - 12th
Graders are
Welcome!

**Monthly
Youth Group
GATHERING**

Sunday, Nov. 17th, 2024
12:15 PM - 2:30 PM

FOOD, FELLOWSHIP, SNACKS, BIBLE DISCUSSIONS, GAMES & MORE!



At the **Youth Gym Night on Nov. 3rd**, The day burned off a lot of energy 🏽 and was fun! We played Pickleball, Basketball, Badminton, etc., and had Prime and fruits. We are planning monthly 'YOUTH OPEN GYM DAY.'

The next one will be on **Saturday, Dec. 7th, from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM** at the gym. ALL 6th—12th Graders and Young Adults are Welcome. Bring your friends, a water bottle and a clean pair of runners!

Sumi Jung
Youth Leader



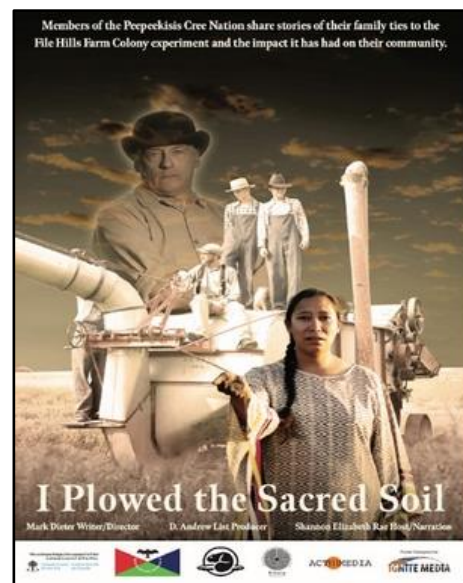
“I PLOWED THE SACRED SOIL”

The Justice and Peace Ministry Team of Our Savior's Lutheran Church, in co-operation with Indigenous Christian Fellowship (ICF), and funded by a grant from the Saskatchewan Synod of the ELCIC, invites you to a viewing of the documentary film “I Plowed the Sacred Soil” on **Sunday, November 24, from 2 – 4 p.m at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 190 Massey Road, Regina.** I Plowed the Sacred Soil is a feature-length documentary about the File Hills Farm Colony Experiment on the Peepeekisis Cree Nation. Descendants of this Saskatchewan Treaty Four reserve talk about their families' struggle to maintain a farming community under the original treaty agreement of 1874. The story focuses on William Morris Graham, a government-appointed Indian Agent and his 1898 “failed” attempt to solve the “Indian problem.”

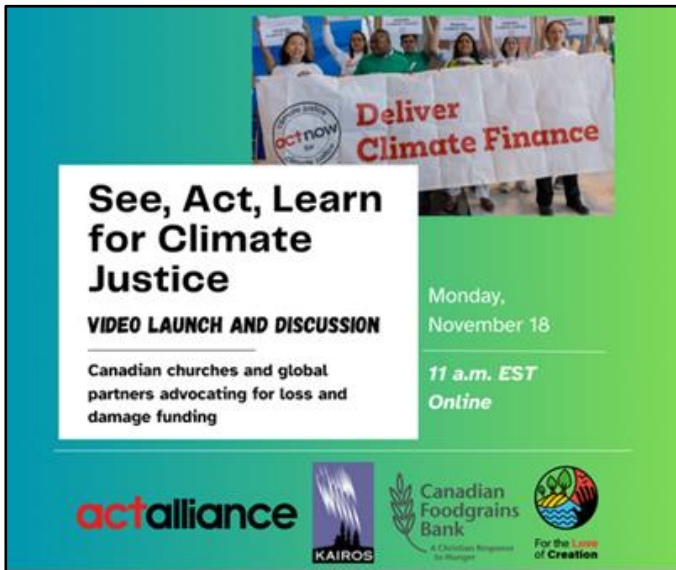
Following the viewing, all are invited to stay for conversation, coffee, and refreshments. We hope you can join us!

Accessible parking spots are available both by the front doors of Our Savior's Lutheran, and in the side parking lot. Elevator access is through the front door. Our Savior's strives to be a fragrance-free environment; please refrain from wearing perfume, cologne, and other scented products in our building. Thank you!

For more information, please contact Our Savior's Lutheran Church at 306-586-0006, office@oslregina.com



KAIROS



Join KAIROS for the launch of a new video: Coming Together for Climate Justice on Loss and Damage.

COP29 - the 29th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) begins next week and KAIROS Canada will be monitoring global progress on climate finance for mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage at this year's gathering. A global Loss and Damage Fund was established at last year's COP28 in Dubai. Canada committed \$16 million to the establishment of the Loss and Damage Fund, but much more is needed.

In setting its new international climate finance pledge, Canada has an opportunity to step up its leadership and rebuild trust with those least responsible for the growing impacts of climate change around the world.

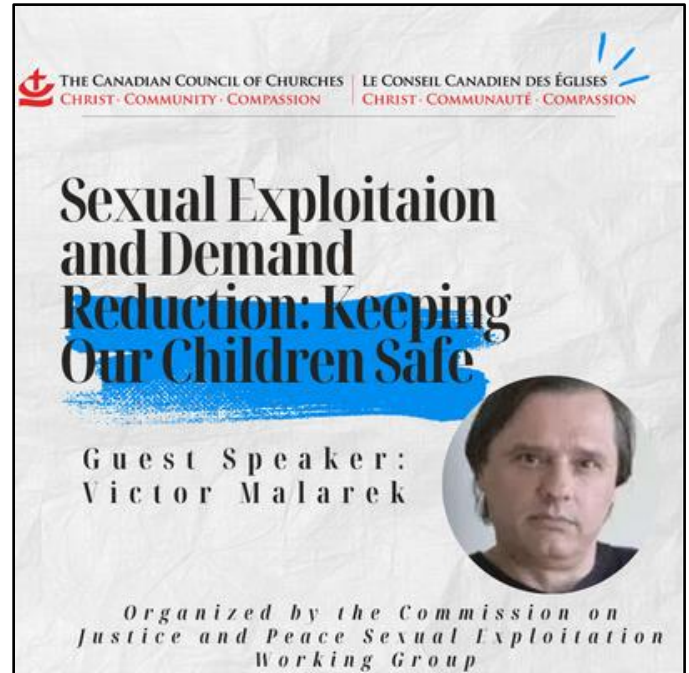
On Monday, November 18 (at 11:00 a.m. EST), join KAIROS and partners for a screening of the new video Coming Together for Climate Justice on Loss and Damage (6 minutes) and learn more about how loss and damage funding supports climate justice.

Hear from ecumenical and global partners attending COP29 and learn how you and your community can advocate for increased loss and damage funding from the Canadian government. Co-hosted by KAIROS Canada, ACT Alliance - Canada, Canadian Foodgrains Bank, and For the Love of Creation.

Register here:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUvceGugqTMiG91-vdJeTq2kd5DtrAIS4dX0#/registration>

Sexual Exploitation and Demand Reduction: Keeping our Children Safe



Join on November 18 at 1PM EST for the third of a series of webinars organized by the Sexual Exploitation Working Group of the Canadian Council of Churches!

One of the priorities of the Commission on Justice and Peace Sexual Exploitation Working Group is to educate, advocate and theologically reflect on the area of Sexual Exploitation and Demand Reduction. True justice requires reducing the demand. The demand for paid sexual services is what fuels sex trafficking. Minimize demand: minimize the need for vulnerable individuals to be exploited to meet the demand.

Our guest speaker, Victor Malarek, is a well known (retired) journalist and SR reporter for such show as W5 and Fifth Estate and is a prolific author for multiple books. His advocacy work was reflected in his past writings and into the present, revealing injustices of the vulnerable exploited persons of our world.

Register for the event: <https://bit.ly/4fbbg6P>

SYNOD MISSION FOCUS **EARTHSHOT PRIZE 2024**

Last week, the winners of the 2024 Earthshot Prize were announced. Founded by HRH Prince William in 2020, the Earthshot Prize is a global environmental prize designed to discover, spotlight and scale groundbreaking solutions to the world's greatest environmental challenges. Below are brief summaries of the winning initiatives, as well as links to brief videos about the projects. For more information about the Earthshot Prize and the other finalists, visit earthshotprize.org.

1. Protect and Restore Nature

Altyn Dala Conservation Initiative has saved the critically endangered Saiga Antelope from extinction. This mission has grown into one of the world's largest conservation projects – to protect and restore Kazakhstan's Golden Steppe. Watch the video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IC9qAz2T0g>

2. Clean Our Air

GAYO, Green Africa Youth Organization drives behavioural change to help communities clean up waste, create jobs and build infrastructure to support circular waste management across Africa. GAYO employs and trains people from every part of the community, including women, young people, waste collectors, and waste pickers. These people can then earn money from selling compost and charcoal briquettes made from waste. Watch the video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZGq9W7L-HjE&feature=youtu.be>

3. Revive our Oceans

High Ambition Coalition is turning words into action, engaging with governments around the world to officially protect 30% of our land and oceans by 2030. Currently, only 17% of the world's land and 8% of its oceans are protected. Watch the video:

<https://youtu.be/XwCpwPEbvgc>

4. Build a Waste-Free World

Keep IT Cool (KIC) provides sustainable refrigeration and smart distribution solutions for small farmers and fishers. It helps extend the shelf life of their produce, reduces spoilage, and creates more stable incomes. By improving profits and cutting down on food waste, KIC is helping build a more sustainable future for these communities. KIC currently works with eight fisherfolk cooperatives representing 4,500 members. As a result of their efforts, they've saved 25% of the catch that would have been wasted, and 3,600 fisherfolk have seen their incomes increase by more than 15%. Watch the video: <https://youtu.be/-H21tdbZ2Rs>

5. Fix our Climate Advanced

Thermovoltaic Systems (ATS) offers a simple, safe and reliable solution to transform industrial waste heat into electricity for use in hard to abate industries, with the potential to save gigatonnes of CO2. ATS's compact, container-sized units can easily be integrated into existing industrial plants. The technology converts waste heat into electricity by passing it over small, smartphone-sized plates with no moving parts. The plates are manufactured using a smartphone-style assembly process, making them easy to scale, transport, and install anywhere in the world. Watch the video:

<https://youtu.be/2vcFysRsKF4>

November Calendar

Nov 16	9:30 am	Presbytery (Zoom)
Nov 17	10:30 am	26th Sunday after Pentecost (Sanctuary & Online) Sunday School 11:45 am Coffee Hour (Gym) 12:15 pm Youth Gathering
Nov 19	11:30 am	Forever-In-Motion Exercises
	12:00 pm	Lunch Bunch (Gym)
Nov 20	7:00 pm	Board of Managers (Zoom)
Nov 21	7:30 pm	Choir
Nov 23	10:00 am	Directions Task Force (Zoom)
Nov 24	10:30 am	Reign of Christ Sunday 11:45 am Coffee Hour (Gym)
Nov 25	2:00 pm	Advent Study (Morris Room)
Nov 26	11:30 am	Forever-In-Motion Exercises
	12:00 pm	Lunch Bunch (Gym)
	7:00 pm	Advent Study (Zoom)
Nov 27	7:00 pm	Book Club (Zoom)
Nov 28	7:30 pm	Choir
Nov 30	3:00 pm	<i>Songs of Celebration: A Christmas Concert</i>
Dec 1	10:30 am	Advent 1 & Communion Sunday School 11:45 am Advent Party in the Gym
Dec 2	2:00 pm	Advent Study (Morris Room)
Dec 3	10:00 am	Anniversary Cmt. (Zoom)
	7:00 pm	Advent Study (Zoom)
Dec 4	7:00 pm	Session (Zoom)
Dec 5	7:30 pm	Choir
Dec 8	10:30 am	2nd Sunday of Advent Sunday School 11:45 am Coffee Hour (Gym)



Saturday, Dec. 14
10:30am-12:30pm
(in the gym)

A chance for families to have fun, explore faith and enjoy a meal!

Messy Church! On Saturday, December 14th, families, individuals, couples, and people of all ages are invited to a “Messy Church” program from 10:30 am – 12:30 pm in the gymnasium. The theme will be Christmas, and the program will involve exploring the Scriptures through worship, song, crafts, activities, and lunch together. Bring your kids, bring your grandma, and enjoy doing church together in a little different way!

(Rev. Amanda Currie is singing in this concert.)