

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

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

One of my favourite Scripture passages comes from Paul's letter to the Philippians – a letter that he wrote from his prison cell to one of the Christian communities that he had established. I've always found this passage (Philippians 4:4-9) to be comforting and encouraging words of good advice to us when we are feeling anxious and worried:

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

It's a beautiful passage, isn't it? I've always thought so. And in the past, when I have been feeling a little anxious about something, I've found that thinking about good things, and focusing on the task before me, and lifting up my concerns in prayer has usually helped.

But I had an experience this summer when these sorts of strategies didn't help very much. I think I experienced an anxiety attack, and then a second one a few weeks later. It was likely caused by a bad combination of several stressful events, physical exhaustion, and extreme heat. But the scariest part about the experience was that there was nothing I could "tell myself" to make that overwhelming feeling disappear. It was a physical response in my body that I could not conquer through the power of positive

thinking or saying a prayer over and over. Believe me, I tried!

Even as it was happening and I was naming it by saying, "I think I'm having an anxiety attack." I was aware that my experience was something that many others have gone through, but I don't think I really understood it until I experienced it myself. Even though I was perfectly safe, I felt helpless and vulnerable and scared.

No, your minister is not having a complete breakdown. Nor am I suggesting that prayer and trusting in God is not helpful. But what I want to acknowledge is that our faith doesn't magically fix everything in our lives. If you pray and you don't automatically feel better, it doesn't mean that you're doing it wrong.

To be healthy and well in body, mind, and spirit, we need prayer. We also need rest, exercise, healthful food, appropriate medical care, secure relationships, meaningful work, joyful play, and loving community. When I was having my anxiety attacks this summer, it was the steady presence and care of my spouse that got me through, combined with needed sleep and a little prayer too.

So, I want to remind you this Fall that whatever stresses and strains you may be experiencing, whether in your relationships, work, health, or other circumstances – that yes, you can pray. The Apostle Paul would encourage you to do so, and to reflect on the love and grace and faithfulness of God in Jesus Christ. But your community of faith is also going to be here for you – to listen, to help, and just to stay with you until the difficult time has passed. Don't hesitate to reach out to each other as we navigate this journey through life together.

After all, I don't think Paul was just reminding the Philippians that God loved them and was there for them. He was also saying that he loved them and he was there for them, even from his

imprisonment. The same is true of us, our community at First Church, and I'm glad that you are with us.

Rev. Amanda Currie

SESSION

The Session discussed the current COVID situation, and we have decided to resume in-person events at the church in October. We still encourage masking and social distancing to reduce any risks, but we encourage everyone to consider the risks for yourself and act accordingly. We think it's important to make these congregational activities available and we hope to have good participation in a safe manner. So, on October 2, we will resume having coffee after church in the gym. On October 4, 55ers will start meeting again in the gym at noon (but bring your own bag lunch as we won't be sharing at this time). Our fall congregational potluck supper will be held on Sunday October 23. There will be more information but mark this date on your calendar!

We welcome Chloe Golden as our Interim Music Director from September to April! Will Ireton will be studying at UBC this year as he completes his program, and this will give him an opportunity to engage more fully in his studies. We look forward to Chloe's musical leadership throughout the year!

We have a group of six who will be participating in the Certificate in Missional Leadership course online this year - Mary Jesse, Margaret MacDonald, Bette Kelly, Sheila Wilson, Amanda Currie, and Jo Szostak. We hope this will help to provide leadership within the congregation to be more missional in our life together - to participate in God's mission to bring peace, justice and reconciliation to the world.

We have a house rented and mostly furnished in readiness for our refugee family, but we are still waiting for word about travel! We hope that we will be able to welcome the Mathiang-They family to Canada soon!

With three new elders joining the session in the spring, the elders' districts have been rearranged. We will be holding a "Meet your Elder" event in November so you can visit with your elder and others in your district.

There are two actions of the General Assembly, held in June, that I want to pass on to the congregation:

- That individuals and congregations be commended for their response to PWS&D's special appeals in 2021: COVID-19 and Haiti earthquake.
- That appreciation be expressed to the congregations, individuals and groups who faithfully supported Presbyterians Sharing in 2021 with prayers, financial gifts, volunteering for committees and working groups, participating in programs and advocacy campaigns.

Thank you for your continuing generosity and involvement in the life of the church both locally and throughout Canada and the world.

Jo Szostak
Clerk of Session

BOARD OF MANAGERS

You may have noticed that there is some construction underway in the Kennedy Room. In August we had major water damage on the Albert Street side of the building, with water seeping into the Kennedy Room and the primary classroom. As you know we had torrential rainfall a few times in the summer. We also had challenges with the sprinkler settings that resulted in over-watering. As a result, we have made a claim on our insurance. The carpet has been removed as well as the bottom four feet of the drywall. The tiles throughout the entranceway by the washrooms has also been removed. It is expected there will be a delay while we wait for the crew to complete the rebuilding, but it is safe to walk through that area.

Bob Dempsey has decided to retire as our caretaker effective October 31. The Board is considering options for caretaking in the future.

Thank you to those who continued to give generously throughout the summer. We are currently running a deficit and holding some payments until we have a more positive cash flow situation.

MISSION & OUTREACH

Presbyterian World Service & Development

75th Anniversary On October 16 we will celebrate this major milestone! Since 1947, PWS&D has been responding to needs around the world. From the first relief efforts in Europe after World War II to current sustainable development and humanitarian responses, PWS&D is an effective way for the church to reach out to our neighbours.

First Church has been a faithful partner in that work for many years. We are pleased to have PWS&D Director Guy Smagge as our special guest on Sunday, October 16. Please join us in person or online to hear what Guy has to tell us about PWS&D's work and vision for the years ahead.

Saturday Lunch Project A big thank you to all the First Church volunteers who made sandwiches, packed lunch bags, and served our neighbours on July 9 at the weekly Saturday Lunch program. Several Regina congregations take turns providing a simple lunch meal and some friendly visiting time each Saturday at First Baptist Church with folks who need a healthy meal and a place to sit down for a while. This practical outreach program is definitely meeting a need in the city.

Mary Jesse
Mission & Outreach Convener

WELCOME BACK POTLUCK SUPPER

We are so excited to finally be able to welcome everyone back to our "Welcome Back Potluck Supper". It has been a long time! This is where I normally say that its's time to catch up on the summer's activities – but this time we have a LOT of catching up to do – 2+ years worth! Everyone is welcome and we hope you will take this opportunity to come and visit, share food and your activities and adventures with your Church family.

The Fellowship Committee is hosting a Potluck Supper on **October 23rd at 5:30pm.**

Signup sheets are available in the Narthex and in the gym to let us know how many in your family will be coming...and it is great to invite 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 Convener

COME TOGETHER EVENTS

With the Women's Missionary Society

I am excited to tell you that our first Come Together event this season will be on Wednesday October 5th, 2022, 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm (EST). We will be having our Thanksgiving Worship using the resource written by the Rev. Dr. Jessie Fubara-Manuel. Please join us for a time of giving praise and thanksgiving to God our Creator. With grateful hearts, let us lift up our spirits to God!

I would also like to draw your attention to the following two Come Together events. Please save the dates:

- ◆ November 16th, 1:00 pm (EST) – Cathy Reid and Janet Brewer will speak about their recent attendance at the World Council of Churches Assembly
- ◆ December 14th, 1:00 pm (EST) – Christmas worship with guest preacher, the Rev. Jennifer Geddes, writer of the Christmas worship resource.

Please feel free to join us at 12:45 pm for a short time of virtual fellowship. E-mail Sarah at SKim@presbyterian.ca for the Zoom link.

Sarah Kim,
Executive Director,
Women's Missionary Society,
Presbyterian Church in Canada

THE SYNOD OF SASKATCHEWAN

The Synod of Saskatchewan will be meeting at Queen's House of Retreats (601 Taylor St. W, Saskatoon) from October 13-15, 2022. Ministers and representative elders from all the Presbyterian churches in Saskatchewan will be meeting to oversee the work of the Synod, including regional ministries in youth work, mission, and congregational development, as well as Camp Christopher.

You are invited to join the Synod online for worship and to support the Synod's fundraising walk "Journey for Hope" for Presbyterian World Service and Development:

- Friday, Oct. 14, 7:30 pm – Public Worship Service at St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church (436 Spadina Cres. E, Saskatoon). Karen Plater will be preaching, and we will be celebrating the Sacrament of Holy Communion together. The Public Worship Service will also be livestreamed to St. Andrew’s YouTube Channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCK-rvToGh7GjP15se0rCSBw>.
- Support the “Journey for Hope” for PWS&D by making a donation here: <http://werespond.ca/donate-synod-sk>.

For more information, contact the Clerk of Synod, the Rev. Amanda Currie: amanda@curriejesson.ca or 306-580-8095.

Creation Care
In our Places of Prayer:
Energy Retrofits and other Faith-based climate action

Kairos Regina is hosting a gathering to help you and your church community learn, share, and begin to plan a path forward to decarbonize your church. We will tackle the questions of why does this question matter from a theological Christian perspective, what are others already doing about this, and what practical resources are out there to help us get started. We hope you will join us!




Saturday October 15th
Living Spirit Centre,
3018 Doan Dr., Regina
Doors open at 9:00
Event 9:30–4:00 Lunch included
\$25/in-person \$10 on-line
Register <https://bit.ly/3QL2KiI>



October Calendar

Oct. 1	10:00 am	Worship Committee
Oct. 2	10:30 am	Worship with Communion (In Person & Online)
	11:45 pm	Coffee Hour (gym)
	1:00 pm	Welcome & Inclusion Team
Oct. 4	12:00 pm	Freedom 55ers (gym)
Oct. 5	12:00 pm	Bible Study (Zoom)

Oct. 6	7:00 pm	Choir
Oct. 8	10:30 am	Christian Education Committee
Oct. 9	10:30 am	Thanksgiving Sunday Worship (In Person & Online)
	11:45 pm	Coffee Hour (gym)
Oct. 11	12:00 pm	Freedom 55ers (gym)
Oct. 12	12:00 pm	Bible Study (Zoom)
Oct. 13-15		Synod of Saskatchewan Meets in Saskatoon
Oct. 13	7:00 pm	Choir
Oct. 16	10:30 am	Worship (In Person & Online)
		Guest Preacher: Guy Smagge
		Director of PWS&D
	11:45 pm	Coffee Hour (gym)
Oct. 18	12:00 pm	Freedom 55ers (gym)
Oct. 19		No Bible Study Today
Oct. 20	7:00 pm	Choir
Oct. 23	10:30 am	Worship (In Person & Online)
	11:45 am	Coffee Hour (in gym)
	5:30 pm	Potluck Supper (in gym)
Oct. 25	12:00 pm	Freedom 55ers (in gym)
	2:30 pm	CML Follow-up (Zoom)
Oct. 26	12:00 pm	Bible Study (Zoom)
	7:00 pm	Book Club
		“The Book of Longings” by S. M. Kidd (New members always welcome)
Oct. 27	7:00 pm	Choir
Oct. 30	10:30 am	Worship (In Person & Online)
	11:45 am	Coffee Hour (in gym)
Oct. 31	7:00 pm	Mission & Outreach Committee (Zoom)

November Calendar

Nov. 1	10:00 am	Pastoral Care Committee (Zoom)
	12:00 pm	Freedom 55ers (in gym)
Nov. 2	12:00 pm	Bible Study (Zoom)
	7:00 pm	Session Meeting (Hybrid)
Nov. 3	7:00 pm	Choir
Nov. 6	10:30 am	Worship with Communion and Act of Remembrance (In Person & Online)
	11:45 am	Coffee Hour (in gym)