

First Presbyterian Church News

17 Royal Road South, Portage la Prairie, MB



John Zondag, Minister

March 2020

Raymond Reichelt, Clerk of Session
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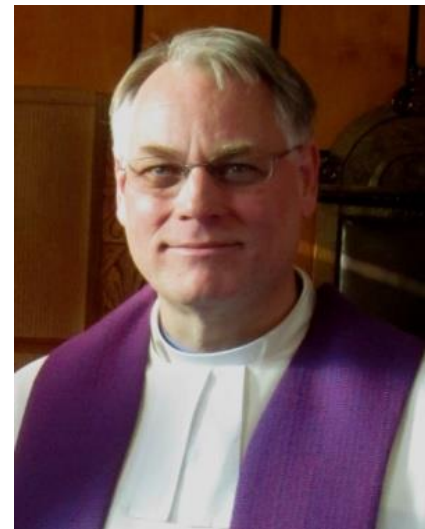
Sunday Worship at 10:30 a.m.

We acknowledge that we are in Treaty 1 territory, and that the land is the traditional lands of the Anishinabe and Dakota Nations, and the homeland of the Métis Nation

FROM THE MINISTER

On Sunday, 19 January, we held a special congregational meeting to decide whether to apply to participate in the "New Beginnings" program for congregational renewal. The decision was overwhelmingly in favor of participating in the program, providing we can obtain a grant of \$4,500 to assist us with the cost of the program, which is \$5,000. On the 26th of February, the Presbytery endorsed our application, which will be considered by the Grants Committee of our national church after the 15th of April. It will be a while, then, before we find out if we'll be taking part in New Beginnings.

On Sunday, 26 January, we had our first service in which the sermon was preached by a lay person even though I was not away. The preacher that day was Keith Kelly. He opted to do the sermon in three segments, and it went very well. He also led Theme Time. Coincidentally, that happened to be the only Sunday that month on which Charlie Clifford was available to lead the Prayers of the People. I led the remainder of the service. It's great to have lay people share their gifts for ministry in this way. We had planned to have Raymond Reichelt take a turn preaching on the 15th of March, but those plans changed when I found out that I needed to be away on the 1st of March to attend to my responsibilities as interim moderator for Knox Church in Neepawa. Instead, Raymond led the entire service in our church on the 1st of March, which I really appreciated. We look forward to having Charlie Clifford take a turn preaching on the 24th of May. In addition, Keith will be leading the entire service on Sunday, 19 April, when I will be away attending the annual "Consultation" for clerks of Presbyteries and Synods, in Mississauga, Ont.



We look forward to our annual commemoration of the death of Jesus and our celebration of his resurrection, in our special services for Holy Week and Easter. Be sure to join us for our **Maundy Thursday** pot-luck supper and Communion service on Thursday, 9 April (6:00 p.m.); our **Good Friday** service on the 10th (10:30 a.m.), and our **Easter Sunday** service on the 12th.

WEEKLY PRAYER FOCUS

For this year, the Session has chosen **refugees** to be our weekly prayer focus in the Prayers of the People each Sunday.

EASTER ENVELOPE

For those who receive a printed copy of the Newsletter, the annual **Easter Offering envelope** is enclosed with it; for those who receive their Newsletter by e-mail, the Easter envelope is being delivered separately. **Many thanks** to those who contributed to the annual Christmas Offering in December (which totaled \$1,810)!



COMMUNION

Join us as we celebrate the **Sacrament of the Lord's Supper** on Sunday, 29 March (two weeks before Easter Sunday). After that day, John Zondag will be available to conduct Communion services at home for our homebound members. If you would like to have a Communion service at home, please speak to your elder, or call John at the church (857-4351), and we can arrange a suitable time.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

a) Regularly-scheduled events:

- Men's Breakfast - Alternate Saturdays at 9:00 a.m. - See the weekly announcements sheet for dates
- WMS meetings - 1st Wednesday of the month, 1:30 p.m.
- Prayer Time - 1st Thursday of the month, 1:30 p.m.
- Finance & Maintenance Committee - 2nd Wednesday of the month, 6:30 p.m.
- Meal-in-a-Bowl suppers - 4th Wednesday of the month, 5:00 p.m.
- Session meetings - 4th Thursday of the month, 7:00 p.m.

b) One-time events:

- Communion Sunday - 29 March
- Pasta Dinner - Sunday, 5 April, 5:00 p.m.
- Maundy Thursday pot-luck supper and Communion service - Thursday, 9 April, 6:00 p.m.
- Good Friday service - Friday, 10 April, 10:30 a.m.
- Easter Sunday - 12 April
- Stewardship Sunday - 26 April
- Spring Dinner - Sunday, 3 May, 5:00 p.m.
- Christian Family Sunday - 10 May
- Deadline for June Newsletter submissions - Sunday, 17 May
- Communion Sunday - 7 June
- Outdoor Service and Barbecue, at the Sneesbys' - Sunday, 14 June

SOUP KITCHEN

In January 913 meals served February 813 meals were served.

We are still getting calls from people due to seeing us on Facebook.

I presently have 2 quotes for new counter tops now just need to have a few more meetings to finalize the plan.

Presently I have someone who is interested in being an assistant coordinator. I am going to work with her for a while to see if we are compatible. She is going to work a few shifts and then will take on a leader position which will be great.

SHAKING HANDS

Some people have expressed reservations about our usual practice of shaking hands with the Greeters, the minister, and others on Sunday mornings, in view of the current Corona virus outbreak, since hand-to-hand contact is one way in which the virus can be transmitted from one person to another. So, if you feel uncomfortable shaking hands with someone else, feel free not to do so. And if someone doesn't wish to shake hands with you, please don't be offended.

SESSION NEWS

Highlights of the November, January, and February Session meetings:

- **“People in positions of authority”** was chosen to be our Weekly Prayer Focus in the Prayers of the People each Sunday this year. If you should have any suggestions, at any time through the year, on specific individuals or categories of people that we should pray for, John would appreciate hearing from you.
- Pat Mullins was re-appointed our Representative Elder to the Presbytery, and Raymond Reichelt our Alternate Elder. Incidentally, the Presbytery also has appointed Pat to serve as our elder commissioner to this year's General Assembly, in June. Our Presbytery sends one minister commissioner and one elder commissioner to the General Assembly each year. The minister commissioner will be Glenn Ball, from St. Andrew's, Brandon.
- John Zondag is sharing with the Session highlights from a book he read while he was on his Inter-Mission last spring, *Twelve Dynamic Shifts for Transforming Your Church*, by Stanley Ott, a Presbyterian minister who was serving a congregation in Pittsburgh, Pa., at the time of writing (2002). The Session is looking at one “shift” each month, and has looked at the first two so far: “From your present aspiration for your congregation's future to the high expectation that God has a vital future for your church”, and “From merely running programs to implementing a vision for ministry”.
- Ria Zwiep was given permission to organize the sale of greeting cards as a fundraiser for the congregation.
- A concern was expressed about our usual practice of shaking hands, in view of the Coronavirus outbreak. A separate announcement on this can be found at the top of this page. It is also being printed in the weekly Announcements Sheet.
- Cindy White was appointed to the Soup Kitchen Committee, which was established back in September. The Session was looking for an additional committee member from outside the congregation, and Cindy is a member of St. Mary's Anglican Church.

STEWARDSHIP VISITATION

Sunday, 26 April will be **Stewardship Sunday**, and our annual Stewardship Visitation will take place in the two weeks following, as the elders visit the families in their districts. A mailing will be sent out to every family in the congregation prior to that Sunday.

A REMINDER

We now send out the weekly **Announcements sheet**, the quarterly **Newsletter**, and the **Annual Report** by **e-mail** to everyone for whom we have an e-mail address. If you have an e-mail address and are not currently receiving communications from the congregation by e-mail, please notify John Zondag (τζondag@mymts.net), and we'll add you to the congregation's e-mail list.

INTERIM MODERATOR

John Zondag was appointed interim moderator for Knox Church in Neepawa, as of the 1st of February. Neepawa has been without a minister since the Rev. Jeanie Lee left at the end of September. The Rev. Minho Yoo (Carberry) had served as interim moderator from October through January, but chose to step down when his own Session decided to contact the Neepawa Session to explore the possibility of the two congregations forming a two-point charge (two congregations sharing one minister). The term “interim moderator” means that the person serves as temporary (interim) moderator of the congregation’s Session, while the congregation is without a minister. The interim moderator therefore moderates (chairs) all Session meetings, arranges weekly pulpit supply, takes care of pastoral emergencies, and chairs any congregational meetings that may be held. Normally also, the interim moderator leads the Session and its Search Committee through the search process for a new minister; however, the Neepawa Session feels that the congregation is currently not in a position to call a new minister, due to financial constraints.

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION CALLS TO ACTION - 18-24 - HEALTH

18 - Recognize and implement the health-care rights of Aboriginal people. Projects have been **proposed** and some provincial and territorial governments have begun but the federal government has not yet tackled this.

19 - Identify and close the gaps in health outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. Projects have been **proposed** but the federal government has not yet established measurable goals to identify and close gaps although it has committed to some measures.

20 - Recognize, respect, and address the distinct health needs of the Metis, Inuit, and off-reserve Aboriginal peoples. Project is **underway**. The federal government has committed to recognize and address distinct needs of Metis and Inuit but financial commitments are only in the beginning stages.

21 - Provide sustainable funding for existing and new Aboriginal healing centers. It is underway. The 2019 budget allowed the construction and operation of a mental health and substance abuse treatment facility in Nunavut.

22 - Recognize the value of Aboriginal healing practices and use them in the treatment of Aboriginal patients. Project is **underway**. Canadian Medical Association, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and the Canadian Nurses Association are working on incorporating Indigenous knowledge and practices in health care.

23 - Increase the number of Aboriginal professionals working in the health care field. Projects **proposed**. Efforts are in place to retain and increase the number of Indigenous health care providers but most are in the development stage. Not all health care professionals are required to take cultural competency training.

24 - Require all medical and nursing students to take a course dealing with Aboriginal health issues. Projects **proposed**. Several medical schools are offering a course but not all are mandatory.

In terms of health care, all 7 calls to action have projects either proposed or underway. Hopefully progress will continue to be made.

CALLS TO ACTION AS OF JANUARY 20, 2020:

Not started - **24**; Projects proposed - **39**; Projects underway - **21**; Complete - **10**

FINANCES:

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH – 2020

JAN – FEB 2020

FINANCES:

INCOME RECEIVED:	13,504.54
EXPENSES PAID:	<u>17,074.80</u>
SURPLUS (DEFICIT):	<u>(3,570.26)</u>

PRESBYTERIANS SHARING – Total Allocation for 2020 is \$3,200.00:

DONATIONS RECEIVED:	<u>340.00</u>
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FUNDRAISING:

INCOME:	1,229.00
EXPENSES:	<u>362.07</u>
SURPLUS:	<u>866.93</u>

A summary of the surplus from the following events (the amounts are included in the above year to date fundraising information):

Burns Dinner	
Spring Dinner	
Fall Supper	
Catering	
Meal In A Bowl	967.90
Presbyterian Pie Sale	

Thank you for your continued support to the success of these events



