

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
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Organist: **Margaret McNutt-Reichelt**  
Clerk of Session: **Raymond Reichelt**

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

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS SHEET**

### **PENTECOST THE 8<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF EASTER 31 May 2020**

We continue our pandemic-style worship for another week, as we wait for conditions to improve. We will resume our regular services and activities as soon as the government determines that it is safe to do so. The Communion service originally scheduled for Sunday, 7 June, has formally been canceled, as has our annual Outdoor Service and Barbecue on Sunday the 14th. Our next regular Communion service is scheduled for Sunday, 4 October.

John is producing an abbreviated service video, approximately 30 minutes in length, every Sunday. Each Sunday morning, he sends out, by e-mail, the link that you need in order to access the video on YouTube, normally between 10:15 and 10:30. Attached to that e-mail is a full script of the service, which can be printed for any relative or friend who doesn't have access to the internet. You can access the current Sunday's service also through our congregational website, [www.firstpcportage.com](http://www.firstpcportage.com).

**Scripture Readings** - The scripture readings for today's service are

- Numbers 11.16-17, 24-30 - Seventy elders receive the Spirit
- Psalm 104.24-35 - "How many are your works, LORD!"
- Acts 2.1-21 - The followers of Jesus receive the Holy Spirit
- John 7.37-39 - "Rivers of living water"

Next Sunday's readings will be

- Genesis 1.1 - 2.3 - The first account of Creation
- Psalm 8 - "LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name!"
- 2 Corinthians 13.11-13 - Conclusion and blessing
- Matthew 28.16-20 - The Great Commission

The **Bible study group** will meet by Zoom on Tuesday evening at 7:00.

**In Portage Hospital:** Pat Antoski

**The Christian Year** - Today is **Pentecost**, the fourth of the four landmark festivals that give the Christian Year its shape (the others being Christmas, Epiphany, and Easter). Pentecost celebrates the giving of the Holy Spirit to the disciples and followers of Jesus, 50 days after Jesus' resurrection (and 10 days after his ascension), as narrated in **Acts 2.1-41**. The Holy Spirit was given to the community of Jesus' disciples and followers to take Jesus' place as their teacher and leader, and to empower them to continue his ministry in the world. The Holy Spirit continues to be given today to everyone who believes in Jesus as his/her Savior and Lord.

Pentecost is the Greek name for a Jewish festival which in the Old Testament is called the "Festival of Weeks". It celebrated the wheat harvest, and came fifty days after the Passover festival; in fact, "pentecost" is the Greek word for "fiftieth". On that day, offerings of the "first fruits" of the wheat harvest were presented to God. By the First Century, it was also celebrated as the anniversary of God's giving the Law to Israel at Mt. Sinai, during the Exodus. Thousands of Jews from all over the Roman Empire and beyond traveled to Jerusalem for this festival every year. It was in the midst of this international gathering that the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples of Jesus, and that they were enabled to speak in various languages — and were therefore understood by "Jews from every nation under heaven" (Acts 2.5).

The symbolic color for Pentecost is **red**, recalling the "tongues of fire" that appeared to Jesus' disciples in the Pentecost event (Acts 2.3).

**Day of Prayer** - The Session has decided to designate this Thursday, 4 June, as another **Congregational Day of Prayer**. Everyone is encouraged to spend time in prayer at 1:30 p.m. that day — or at some other time of the day. You are encouraged to pray for concerns around the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as our congregation, family, and friends. John will again send out a sheet of prayer suggestions by e-mail in advance.

**Accepted!** We were notified this week that our application to participate in the national church's **New Beginnings** program has been accepted! The program is currently being modified to comply with the current pandemic restrictions. Nevertheless, we will begin by gathering information about our congregation and community in the coming weeks, and the real "work" will begin in the fall.

**Pat Mullins** - As announced in the Newsletter, Pat is moving to Lockport this weekend. She has asked that this note to the congregation be put into the Announcements Sheet:

*To the congregation of First Church, Portage:*

*I want to say "thank you" to the members of the congregation. I thank you for your friendships during the past few years. When I go to a new community I always seek out a church in which I feel at home among fellow Christians and I have certainly felt at home here. I shall miss you and the work you do in and for the Church and the wider community. I pray that you may continue as we all face the uncertain future, and may God bless you all, now and always.*

*Pat Mullins*

**Prayer Requests** - If you have a request for prayer that you would like to have shared with the congregation, please phone or e-mail John, and it will be included in the weekly Announcements Sheet.

### **Mission Moment**

#### **A long journey for a Rohingya family**

Polio left 20-year-old Kafietula and his 10-year-old sister Shohita unable to walk. One day, arson and killings in their neighbourhood forced these Rohingya children to flee their home. For a week, Kafietula's family members carried him and his sister until they reached safety in Bangladesh. There are many families like Kafietula's who, after brutal journeys, are far away from home and without food or proper shelter. Working with partners at Canadian Foodgrains Bank, PWS&D is providing food vouchers so that families can shop at local markets. With diversified foods to help them stay healthy, many Rohingya people can begin to dream again. "Shohita is able to go to school and is learning English. She has a dream of being a teacher and wants to help others."

*PWS&D helps people who have been forced from their homes*

**Comfort Dolls** - For those who have been wondering about the comfort doll project, this is an email from the Compassionate Resource warehouse: "We are more than anxious to get back to shipping. I have been working on 8 shipments and as soon as allowed we will start the reopen process. Please thank your knitters. These are precious and the overseas need has only increased with COVID. Please tell them to keep those fingers busy." If you have any dolls, please make contact with Debbi at 204-871-1231 for pickup.