

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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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

THE 14TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST 6 September 2020

We begin a new year in the life and work of our congregation under most unusual circumstances! Contrary to what we may have thought in the spring, the COVID-19 pandemic has not yet run its course, and so we continue to live with the restrictions that are necessary to safeguard our health and the health of others.

For the time being, we are continuing to offer our Sunday services **online**. Today and next Sunday, we continue and conclude our joint services with First Church and St. Andrew's Church in Brandon. We have been doing a sermon series on the Ten Commandments, and today, Laura Hargrove (First, Brandon) will preach on Commandment #9. Next Sunday, John Zondag will preach on Commandment #10. The **link** for accessing these services will be e-mailed out each Sunday morning, along with a service script that can be printed for those who don't have access to the internet.

On Sunday, 20 September, we will resume services on our own, probably online, at least for the time being. Keith Kelly will be the preacher that day.

The Session is currently conducting an informal **poll** to determine how much support there is within the congregation for resuming in-person Sunday services. A **letter** has been sent out (by both e-mail and hard copy), asking for people's input. The letter outlines the main conditions under which services would need to be conducted. Please respond by this Friday (the 11th), if you haven't already. Feel free to jot down any comments that you may have.

Scripture Readings - The readings for today's service are
- Deuteronomy 5.1-21 - The Ten Commandments
- Psalm 5 - "Listen to my words, LORD"
- John 14.1-7 - "I am the way, and the truth, and the life"

This Week in First Church:

- Tuesday, 7:00 p.m. - Bible study “The Armor of God”, by Zoom
- Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. - Finance & Maintenance Committee meeting

Coming Up:

- Sunday, 13 September - Deadline for submissions for the October issue of the Newsletter
- Wednesday, 30 September - **Assessment Visit** (details below)

Newsletter - If you have a submission for the October issue of the Newsletter, please send it to Lisa Sneesby (bsneesby@mymts.net) by next Sunday (the 13th). Even though we will probably not have a Communion service on the 4th of October, as we normally would, we are sticking to our regular schedule for publishing the Newsletter.

New Beginnings - We have begun working our way through the New Beginnings program for congregational renewal. In June, our “Assessor” was appointed: the Rev. **Mark Lewis**, a retired Presbyterian minister who lives in Hamilton, Ont. We are currently sending him information on our congregation, including the following:

- a roster of members and adherents
- a “space use” table (how and when various spaces in the church are used)
- financial statements for the past three years
- last year’s Annual Report
- a list of all financial assets, with a current balance sheet
- the insured value of the church
- the square footage of the church
- the acreage on which the church is located (FYI, it is 0.26)
- a brief history of the congregation

On Wednesday, 30 September, Mark Lewis will meet with members and adherents of the congregation, to gather additional information for his assessment of the congregation. This is called an **Assessment Visit**. Normally the Assessor would visit in person, but current conditions make it hard to do that safely; so the visit will probably be done online, by Zoom. The visit will include an **Appreciative Inquiry Session** at 7:00 p.m., with as many people in the congregation as possible. **Please plan to take part in this meeting.** Details will be provided as the date gets closer.

On the basis of the information he receives, Mr. Lewis will then write an **Assessment Report**, which will form the basis for a congregation-wide discussion of future possibilities for our congregation — the next stage in the New Beginnings process.

Soup Kitchen - The Soup Kitchen remains closed for the time being, due to the pandemic.

Finances - **Thank you very much** for your financial support of the congregation throughout the summer! The annual Summer Offering totaled **\$1,830**, far exceeding the \$450 anticipated! In addition, **\$2,205** has been contributed through the Virtual Fundraising initiative, as of the end of July! A more detailed financial summary will be included in the Announcements Sheet in the next couple of weeks.

Today - Copies of the September-October issue of the devotional guide *Today* are now available, and are set out on the stairs at the office entrance. Feel free to drop by and pick one up.

Mission Moment

World Literacy Day (September 8)

In Afghanistan, cultural norms dictate that men often play a more central role in public life, while women and girls have more significant roles in the home. Because of this, many girls do not have equal access to education. Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D), with the support of local partners, has been working to provide girls with access to high quality education. Through summer camps, girls are informed about human rights, gender, sex, and leadership and democracy. Sadaf and Nargi participated in this summer camp, where they were inspired and excited about the great things they could achieve in the future. For the two girls, access to fair and equal education is vital for their goals and dreams; it is also essential to allow their communities to flourish.

PWS&D supports equal education

Thank You

Dear friends,

I am sorry that the weather did not co-operate this past Sunday so that we could spend time together before I left for my new home in Winnipeg. Thank You so much to those who gave of their time and talent planning the event and to everyone for the very creative and thoughtful gifts. I will certainly put the generous Gift Cards to good use. In addition, the “super-size card” of personal messages and the booklet depicting my life at First Church are very special keepsakes.

I feel blessed to have had the opportunity to be part of the congregation at First Pres. for the past 23 years. During this time, we have shared a great deal in faith, in fellowship and in fun and I will miss all of you. In fact, I do intend to continue attending the virtual Bible Study sessions via Zoom where I will still be able to share time with some of you.

I wish you all the best as you move forward with the “New Beginnings” program.

With gratitude,

Gwen