

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

17 Royal Rd. S., Portage la Prairie, MB. R1N 1T8
Office Phone: 204-857-4351 email firstpc@mymts.net
www.firstpcportage.com

Minister: **John Zondag**

Home Phone: 204-239-6719 email jzondag@mymts.net

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

THE 2ND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS NEW YEAR'S DAY EPIPHANY SUNDAY 1 January 2023

Welcome! We extend a warm welcome to our guests, and invite you to sign the guest book at the back of the sanctuary. Everyone is invited to remain for coffee and fellowship, downstairs in the Church Hall, following the service. We thank **Margaret Dunn** for hosting today.

The Greeters this month are **Bruce and Lisa Sneesby**.

We thank **Raymond Reichelt** for leading the service this morning.

The Reader today is **Lalaine Buan**.

Scripture Readings - The readings for today's service are

- Ecclesiastes 3.1-13
- Psalm 8
- Revelation 21.1-6a
- Matthew 25.31-46

Coming Up:

- Tuesday, 10 Jan., 7:00 p.m. - First session of a new Bible study
- Wednesday, 11 Jan., 6:30 p.m. - F&M Committee meeting, by Zoom

Tasks - John used to carry out a number of routine tasks that now need to be done by others, including the ones listed below. Thanks to those who have already volunteered to take on some of those tasks, as noted! Those still needing a volunteer are in bold print.

- *Day-to-day:*

- Checking the church's voicemail and e-mail, and responding to (or forwarding) messages, as needed -

Mardine

- **Picking up the church's mail, and directing letters, bills, etc., to the appropriate people**

- **Keeping an eye on the thermostats, and making sure that the boiler and furnace are working properly**

- Keeping the congregational directory up to date (addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses) -

Lisa

- **Being the person to call whenever something needs to be serviced (e.g. boiler, alarm system, plumbing, etc.)**

- **Being on the list of people that the alarm company (Telus) can call if there's an incident that causes the alarm to go off (ideally, two more people)**

- *Preparing for Sundays:*

- Lining up people to read the scripture readings - *Margaret D.*

- **Preparing the PowerPoint slides for the service**

- **Writing announcements for the weekly Announcements Sheet, and e-mailing them to Philip**

- Sending the Announcements Sheet out by e-mail on Saturday evenings (or other suitable time) - *Keith*

- *Sunday mornings:*

- Unlocking the doors and turning the lights and sound system on before the service; turning the lights and sound system off and locking the sanctuary doors after the service - *Margaret McN-R*

- **Locking the outside doors, and setting the alarm on Sundays, following Coffee Time**

- *Other:*

- **Writing material for the quarterly Newsletter, and e-mailing it to Lisa**

- Sending the Newsletter out by e-mail - *Lisa*

If you are interested in taking on any of these tasks, please speak to **Raymond**.

Tasks such as moderating Session meetings, arranging pulpit supply, responding to pastoral emergencies, and getting organized for the Annual Meeting will be the responsibility of our interim moderator, Laura Hargrove (hargrove@mymts.net).

Scripture readings and hymns will be chosen by those who provide pulpit supply each Sunday.

Interim Moderator - The Rev. **Laura Hargrove**, the minister of First Church, Brandon, is our interim moderator, as of today. "Moderator" refers to the fact that she is the moderator of the Session, in the absence of a called and inducted minister, who normally is the moderator of the Session. "Interim" refers to the fact that the position is temporary. Laura can be contacted by e-mail at hargrove@mymts.net or by phone at 1-204-727-5874 (church) or 1-204-573-4360 (cell).

Recognition - We will have a recognition of retiring Soup Kitchen treasurer **Henry Riendeau** in our service next Sunday (the 8th), including coffee and cake following the service. John will be back to lead the service that day.

This Past Week - A funeral service for **Donna Graham** was held in the sanctuary this past Wednesday. Donna died on the 31st of January. We again extend our sympathy to Harold and family.

Directory - We thank Lisa Sneesby for offering to keep the **congregational directory** up to date. Whenever there are any changes to your address, phone number, or e-mail address, please notify Lisa (bsneesby@mymts.net or 385-2847).

Moving Out - The Session has granted John a couple of weeks after the end of December to move his things out of the minister's office. After twelve years, there are a lot of things to sort through, to dispose of, and to pack, so you may see him around the church during the week yet, this week and next.

The Christian Year - This Friday is **Epiphany**, the second of the four major festival days of the Christian Year (the others being Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost). On Epiphany, we commemorate the **visit of the Magi** (or **Wise Men**) to Jesus and his parents, as described in Matthew 2.1-12, which is the only account there is of this event. The account suggests that Jesus was as much as two years old by then. In any case, it is unlikely that the Magi arrived at the same time as the shepherds did; therefore Epiphany is celebrated as a separate festival from Christmas.

The Magi were the first Gentiles (non-Jews) to worship Jesus, and so Epiphany celebrates the fact that Jesus came into the world to benefit *all* people, not just a single ethnic group. The word epiphany itself is a Greek word meaning "manifestation", and it refers to the fact that, in Jesus, God "manifested" himself to all humanity.

Epiphany is always on **January 6**, the 12th day after Christmas Day. It originated in the Greek-speaking part of the church (in Asia and eastern Europe) in the early 300s, as a festival celebrating Jesus' birth and baptism. However, after the date for celebrating Jesus' birth was officially set at December 25, the focus of Epiphany changed. In the Greek-speaking part of the church, it became a festival celebrating Jesus' baptism and his first miracle (changing water into wine), while in the Latin-speaking part of the church (in western Europe and northern Africa), the focus of Epiphany became the visit of the Magi.

The symbolic color for Epiphany is **white**, signifying joy and celebration.

Drought in Somalia - Donations in support of relief efforts for the drought in Somalia can be made to Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&D). Donations can be made either through our congregation, using your regular offering envelope (write "Somalia" and the amount you wish to donate in the blank line), or online, through PWS&D's website (www.WeRespond.ca), using your credit card. Click on the heading that says "Responding to Drought in Somalia" under "Latest News"; then scroll down to the bottom of the page, and click on the button that says "Donate Now". Updates on responses to the floods in Pakistan and the war in Ukraine also can be found under the heading "Latest News".

Available - Copies of the Winter issue of *Presbyterian Connection*, our national church's quarterly newspaper have been set out on the table behind the back pew. Copies of the January-February issue of the daily devotional booklet *Today* are now available, as well.

Mission Moment

Adau Maduok Dut lives in South Sudan with her four children. Struggling to make ends meet after her husband left the family, **Adau's life improved after receiving assistance through a project, supported by *Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D)* and Canadian Foodgrains Bank, that provides food packages to struggling families in South Sudan.** "I knew immediately that my children would not have to suffer again since we had food and were equipped with the seeds and tools to start a fresh life," Adau said.

Prayer Calendars - Copies of the Prayer Calendar for January are ready to be picked up at the back of the sanctuary. Don't forget your copy!