

# First Presbyterian Church News

17 Royal Road South, Portage la Prairie, MB

Telephone: [204-857-4351](tel:204-857-4351)

**Laura Hargrove, Interim Moderator**

**e-mail:** [hargrove@mymts.net](mailto:hargrove@mymts.net)

**Phone – 204-727-5874 (church) or 204-573-4360 (cell)**

**Raymond Reichelt, Clerk of Session**

**Margaret McNutt-Reichelt, Organist**

**December 2023**

**Sunday Worship at 10:30 a.m.**

**Church e-mail address:** [firstpc@mymts.net](mailto:firstpc@mymts.net)

**Church Website:** [www.firstpcportage.com](http://www.firstpcportage.com)



*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 INTERIM MODERATOR**

Minister's message for Advent 2023 – Rev. Laura Hargrove

If the news and local gossip was the only source of information about our world, we might be forgiven for thinking it was “going to hell in a hand basket.” We can think of droughts and fires or earthquakes and storms. We can think of wars and other economic hardships. The cost of living seems to keep going up and up and there is less housing than we need. We hope we have come to the end of the pandemic but it seems like there are fewer medical workers to take care of us all. Never mind I personally know 5 people with Covid right now! For some of us, it might feel like the beginning of the end of the world.

At this time of year, we are heading into Advent which some of us think is the run up to Christmas. We might be tempted to be so focused on Christmas – because we think it's fun, because we have nostalgic memories of past Christmases, because of the music, the visiting, the food! And so, we can get very busy baking and cleaning and decorating to say the least. I'm sure that there are many things you can do in the coming weeks. You might find that you can barely think – you are that busy!

But Advent is its own season although a short one. It's a time when we look not only towards celebrating Jesus' birth as the Christ Child but when we also think about Christ's Second Coming – a time we can barely imagine and that we might fear just a little bit – it reminds us that our Loving God is also the judge of the world and that one day justice will prevail.

I think this season of Advent invites us to pause and to ponder. Sometimes we can be so busy working and worrying or preparing and celebrating we become exhausted. Enjoy all that God provides to us. But do not lose sight of what it means for God to be with us. Whenever I hear myself saying “I just hafta...” I know that I am getting worn out. The reality is that I don't “hafta” anything to please God. And I please God by living in God – resting on the everlasting arms. “The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself in love.” (Gal. 5:6) “Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” (1 Cor. 10:31) “The Lord has told you what is good and this is what he requires of you; to do what is right, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8) “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, *with thanksgiving*, present your requests to God. And the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4:6-7)

We have four Sundays in Advent with a theme for each week: Hope, Peace, Love and Joy. I pray that you may take time this season to pause and consider what you really “hafta” do. Pray: giving thanks to God and seeking God's will. Enjoy God's love and the beauty around you, the people around you. Take a moment to reach out to others whether a relative across the country or the neighbour across the hallway. Rest in the hope we have in God. Share Christ's Peace. Contemplate the Love of God. Rejoice with all of creation that the Creator of the world has come to us with saving power. Hallelujah! Christ is coming.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS**

### **a) Regularly-scheduled events:**

- Tuesday, 7:00 p.m. - Bible study will resume in January, by Zoom
- Finance & Maintenance Committee mtg., by Zoom - 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday, of the month, 6:30 p.m.
- Session meetings - the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month, at 7:00 p.m. (except nothing in December), by Zoom
- Men's Breakfast - Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. and every other Saturday following

### **b) One-time events:**

- Communion Sunday – December 17<sup>th</sup>
- No Christmas Eve service – just the morning service – December 24<sup>th</sup>
- Meal in a Bowl – January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at a cost of \$12.00
- Annual Meeting – Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024 following the service
- First Sunday in Lent – February 18<sup>th</sup>
- Daylight Saving Time begins March 10<sup>th</sup>
- Good Friday – March 29<sup>th</sup>
- Easter Sunday – March 31<sup>st</sup>

## **FINANCE & MAINTENANCE**

Not much to report from Finance and Maintenance.

The boiler was acting up but has been repaired, the furnace will be inspected soon and snow removal has been organized.

Thank you to Rob MacPherson for cleaning up the leaves this fall and to Philip Dunn & Rob for hauling them to the composting site.

Please keep our church and the wider church in your prayers.

May you all have a Merry Christmas!

## **SOUP KITCHEN**

The Soup Kitchen continues with 35-40 people attending daily. A Volunteer Appreciation event was held Nov 27 as part of a Volunteer / Soup Kitchen Leader Meeting, with cake and coffee, attended by about 30 people.

## **OUR SYMPATHY**

We extend our sympathy to Lalaine & Ruth Buan, in the death of Lalaine's father, Rolando Laserna, on November 9<sup>th</sup> in the Philippines.

## **CHRISTMAS OFFERING ENVELOPE**

The annual **Christmas Offering** envelope is enclosed with this issue of Newsletter, for those who receive a hard copy. For those who receive their Newsletter by e-mail, the envelope will be mailed out separately.

<p><b>COMMUNION</b></p>  <p>Our Advent Communion will be held on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023</p>
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## **CHURCH FINANCIALS**

### **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH – 2023**

#### **JANUARY – OCTOBER 2023**

##### **FINANCES:**

INCOME RECEIVED:	51,753.47
EXPENSES PAID:	<u>39,547.13</u>
<b>SURPLUS (DEFICIT):</b>	<b><u>12,206.34</u></b>

Included in the above income is: \$5,000.00 from the Endowment Fund.

Included in the Y-T-D expenses: is the repayment of the \$5,000.00 received from the Endowment Fund in January.

##### **PRESBYTERIANS SHARING – Total Allocation for 2023 is \$2,200.00**

DONATIONS RECEIVED:	<u>2,240.00</u>
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##### **FUNDRAISING:**

INCOME:	6,275.00
EXPENSES:	<u>3,151.77</u>
<b>SURPLUS (DEFICIT):</b>	<b><u>3,123.23</u></b>

Summary of the surplus (deficit) – the amounts are included in the above year to date information:

Spring Dinner	893.20
Fall Supper	
Meal In A Bowl	3,693.85
Catering	48.00
Supplies	(1,511.82)
Your support for our fundraising is appreciated	

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ENDOWMENT FINANCIAL STATEMENT – October 31, 2023

REVENUE:	MONTH	Y-T-D
High Interest Saving Account – Stride CU	66.46	574.37
Investment Interest – Stride CU	22.50	22.50
Share Dividend – Stride CU		19.45
Investment Redeemed – Stride CU		
Memorial Gifts		136.25
Honour Gifts		
Offering Envelopes		80.00
Finance & Maintenance		5,000.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>88.96</b>	<b>5,832.57</b>

### EXPENSES:

Bank Charges – Stride CU	
Investment Purchase	
Finance & Maintenance	5,000.00
Miscellaneous	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>5,000.00</b>

### BANK: STRIDE CREDIT UNION (SCU) (Chequing Account)

Opening Balance: January 1, 2023	\$ 9,138.72
Total Revenue Year to Date	5,258.20
Total Expense Year to Date	5,000.00
Closing Balance: October 31, 2023	\$ 9,396.92

### BANK: STRIDE CREDIT UNION (High Interest Saving Account) – Included Below \*\*

Opening Balance: January 1, 2023	\$ 38,619.57
Total Revenue – Year to Date	574.37
Total Expenses – Year to Date	
Closing Balance: October 31, 2023	\$ 39,193.94 - Included below **

### INVESTMENTS:

DATE	BANK	INVESTMENT	AMOUNT PURCHASED
April/19	SCU	High Interest Saving Account**	\$39,193.94 **
Oct 31/23	Westbourne	Due Oct 31/26 @4.50% 400450	1,500.00
<b>TOTAL INVESTMENTS</b>			<b>\$40,693.94</b>

**ENDOWMENT HAS GIVEN THE CHURCH \$5,000.00 to date in 2023**

**Paid back August/23**

## **CONGRATULATIONS!**



### **VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH - Margaret McNutt Reichelt**

Margaret is an invaluable volunteer at her church, First Presbyterian, actively participating in fundraising events. In addition to her commitment at church, she serves as the Kitchen Leader at the Presbyterian Church Soup Kitchen, dedicating her time at least twice a week. Furthermore, Margaret contributes to the MCC Furniture Shop - Quilt section, crafting quilts destined for children in impoverished countries, offering warmth during cold weather.

Margaret has been consistently observed for her selfless dedication, particularly at the Soup Kitchen, where she tirelessly assists those in our community who rely on this service daily. Her volunteering efforts are marked by a joyous spirit and an unwavering commitment. Prior to retirement, she used to spend her mornings until half past one in the afternoon at the Soup Kitchen, exemplifying her remarkable dedication and passion for community service.

Margaret's impact on our community and the lives of others is truly commendable. Her interactions with patrons at the Soup Kitchen are extraordinary; she engages with them, discusses their days, and provides a welcoming environment. She ensures that everyone is nourished with soup and sandwiches, bridging the gap until the doors reopen the following day.

Moreover, Margaret's love for quilting extends beyond personal enjoyment, as her passion is reflected in the beautiful quilts she creates for recipients in impoverished regions. These quilts, sent by MCC, are a testament to Margaret's heartfelt commitment to making a positive impact on the lives of those in need.

In essence, Margaret serves as a role model for her tireless efforts, dedicating countless hours to enhance the well-being of our community. Her generosity and compassionate spirit make her someone truly worth emulating.

## HAPPENINGS IN FIRST CHURCH



### Fall Supper 2023



- 1<sup>st</sup> – Patron picking up supper with Marg Clark selling the meals
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Mel Edmunds packaging the meals
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Mardine Garnham & Margaret Reichelt filling containers with Carlee Sneesby & Bruce Sneesby
- 4<sup>th</sup> – Marg Clark filling gravy containers with helpers Brooke & Carlee Sneesby
- 5<sup>th</sup> – Brian Yeo & Bruce Sneesby carving the turkeys



## **Hanging of the Greens & Anniversary Sunday**



Brian Yeo, Marg Clark, Winnie Duncan



Lisa Sneesby, Winnie Duncan, Raymond Reichelt



Marg Clark, & Miep Verhoeven



While the rest were “Hanging of the Greens” -  
How many Presbyterians does it take to  
change a light bulb??

Philip Dunn, Keith Kelly, Bruce Sneesby,  
Raymond Reichelt



Miep Verhoeven cutting the  
Anniversary Cake with Margaret  
Reichelt