

First Presbyterian Church News

17 Royal Road South, Portage la Prairie, MB

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God bless you all as you walk the path God has called you upon. May you be granted rest and healing when you need it and the opportunity to serve God and neighbour in love. Be at peace.

Gladys Anderson, Interim Moderator **e-mail:** gladys@andersonbunch.com
Phone – 204-476-3027

Raymond Reichelt, Clerk of Session **Margaret McNutt-Reichelt, Organist**
September 2024

Sunday Worship at 10:30 a.m.

Church e-mail address: firstpc@mymts.net

Church Website: www.firstpcportage.com

A MESSAGE FROM LAURA HARGROVE

How I spent my Summer Vacation.

When last I wrote you, I was full of plans for my Summer Vacation. I was counting my blessings as I packed for several weeks on the west coast with my family. I had planned to begin that time with my sister who was in need of some companionship after surgery.

Some of you will know that I had been mildly ill for many years. I had been diagnosed with chronic sinusitis that sometimes flared up into a sinus infection. In preparation for my trip, I went to the doctor and was referred for a CT scan as I had not had any imaging of my sinuses done for about 20 years. I had the CT scan mid-June before I left for BC.

Imagine my surprise, to get a phone call from the Doctor that my sinuses looked fine! BUT, the scan revealed the probable source of my discomfort: a large tumor in my skull and as a result considerable brain swelling. I was being referred to a neurosurgeon. And the neurosurgeon had me back in Manitoba a week after I left for BC. I had surgery to remove the tumor which has since been found to be benign. Since then, I have been on medical leave as recovering from such an operation takes a while.

You might think of your skull as a place to keep your brain, maybe like a box to keep it safe. But there are other things in there. First of all, the brain is wrapped in several layers of protective tissue called Meninges. You might think of this as a few zip lock bags to separate the brain from the bare skull. You may have heard of Meningitis – this is an inflammation of the meninges caused either by bacteria or a virus often affecting young people. I had a Meningioma – which is a slow growing benign tumor of the meninges – not a brain tumor if you were wondering. There are other things inside the skull as well: veins and arteries, nerves, tendons. My tumor was near my left optic nerve and located behind my sinuses. And although the tumor was outside my brain, the tumor took up space and my brain was a little bit injured.

Since my surgery, I have needed time to rest and heal. It has been strange to let go of so many things: things I feel called to do and gifted to do and things I enjoy doing as well as believing they are important. I do not know if or when I will see you all again. I don't know when I will be able to drive again let alone conduct worship or go to meetings with groups of people. It has been challenging and bewildering! I give thanks to God for medical care. It seems like a series of miracles: that I had the tumor discovered before any permanent injury was done to me and before the symptoms got worse, that I had an excellent surgeon and very diligent care while in hospital and the care of friends and family since I came home. That I have been able to rest and heal. I am amazed at what can be done in these circumstances!

I am humbled that I have been gifted in this way. I know that many people have suffered dreadfully. Why not me, too?

I do have some symptoms left from the brain swelling and the surgery. You might think of them as if I have a bad concussion. I get headaches but while they are persistent, they are not terrible. My scar is hidden within my hair. Apart from some mild swelling, you would not know to look at me that I have had any medical troubles. I have had some challenges with balance and standing for very long. It has been difficult to read or do any close work like sewing or crafts or reading music. My ability to concentrate and focus on things that require thinking has been quite short. I have been very sensitive to crowds and have been easily overwhelmed by too much sensory data. And I have been easily tired out.

The Neurosurgeon tells me that all these symptoms should resolve themselves in time. Indeed, they are much better than they were when I was released from the hospital. And when I was able to return to my own home. And when I began to live alone again. I can see progress as time goes by.

I have finally been given permission to travel, "carefully." So, I will soon go to BC to see my family and let them take care of me. My sister travels with me. The doctor reminded me that travel will challenge me in many ways. I will face crowds & noise and frustration. It will make me very tired. But the fact that I am going somewhere I grew up and that I am familiar with the airports and the route and it should be fairly straightforward; this makes it possible.

Someone asked me recently if I had any good suggestions for a book club. Did I have some favourite movies? I had to explain I have not been reading books or watching movies. Nor have I been listening to radio or very much music. I don't have the tolerance yet for these things. "What have you been doing all summer? Just lying about?" Pretty much, yes! And I give thanks to God for this time of rest and healing.

I have learned that our brains have priority within our body over other systems. We are fearfully and wonderfully made. And a healing brain requires more energy than usual. So, my brain right now demands much of me especially when I need to concentrate or focus on close work. This makes me very tired. For someone with an acquired brain injury, rest is medicine. I have learned better how to rest.

The Doctor counsels me to Prioritize my activities for the week and for the day. To Plan how I will accomplish those things. To Pace myself carefully to manage my energy and accomplish my priorities. And to be Patient.

I think I might write out that advice and put it in prominent places of my home. It is good advice. As I have been recovering, I have had plenty of time to Ponder as well as the Doctor's "P"s. I have pondered on who my Maker is and what a wonderful gift it is to know my Lord. I was able to trust my surgeon and his team. How much more have I trusted my Saviour? That is who has ultimate authority over my life. Praising God. Considering God's Word. Trusting God. Waiting on God's timing for my healing. Praying prayers of Thanksgiving but also prayers of Intercession. Placing all things in God's hands where they belong. These are things I already "knew" but they have become more precious to me through my healing journey.

God bless you all as you walk the path God has called you upon. May you be granted rest and healing when you need it and the opportunity to serve God and neighbour in love. Be at peace.

COMMUNION



Our October Communion service will be held on Sunday, October 20th, 2024.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

a) Regularly-scheduled events:

- Tuesday, 7:00 p.m. - Bible study begins, by Zoom
- Finance & Maintenance Committee mtg., by Zoom - 2nd Wednesday, of the month, 6:30 p.m.
- Men's Breakfast - Saturday, October 5th at 9:00 a.m. and every other Saturday following

b) One-time events:

- Communion Sunday – October 20th
- Meal in a Bowl – October 23rd for \$12.00
- Remembrance Day Service – November 10th
- Fall Supper – November 17th pre-order by Nov. 9th ** See poster below**

SOUP KITCHEN

Staffing over the summer months was challenging as many of the volunteers took the summer off. Many thanks to John Knott for filling in as soup kitchen leader and kitchen helper in addition to the days he normally worked. PCRC volunteered their 2 summer students on a number of days to assist. Not all volunteers returned after the summer. We need to undertake a volunteer drive in the near future. We have served an average of 30 people per day over July and Aug. In past years there has been more served over this same time frame. We know that several of our patrons are attending the Portage la Prairie Soup Kitchen, located at Highway Pentecostal.

We have been able to serve a number of special meals over the past few months due to the generous donation of food from the closure of MDC, Sommerfeld and Brantwood Hutterite colonies, and others. Prairie Welcome House shared bread/desserts with the Soup Kitchen over the summer that they receive from Sobeys. Because of these donations, the costs of the Soup Kitchen have decreased significantly. Presently, all the freezers are full. Now that garden harvests have taken place, the Soup Kitchen has received numerous donations of fresh vegetables and fruit. These have been given out to the patrons of the Soup Kitchen. We have been able to provide the Soup Kitchen patrons with a variety of meals other than soup and sandwiches 2 – 3 times a month. This has included spaghetti and meat sauce,

Lasagna, chicken dinner, and several hot dog days. There are plans in place to have a Thanksgiving Dinner on Oct 11.

On Jul 30 we had a successful fundraising day at MCC, where MCC donated \$4000.00 to the Soup Kitchen. Many thanks to all that volunteered to help us at MCC over the day.

The Soup Kitchen purchased smaller garbage cans for the kitchen and hall. We found the existing garbage cans and the plastic bags needed for them to be too large, leading to a waste of plastic. The newer garbage cans appear to be working well. A vacuum food sealer and a hand blender have also been purchased. An AED defibrillator has been ordered and will hopefully arrive soon.

Manitoba Harm Reduction Network gave a presentation on Sept. 26, outlining their work in the community to decrease substance use/ abuse; 17 Soup Kitchen volunteers attended. As well, participants were instructed in the use of Narcan (Naloxone), the antidote for opiate overdose. Narcan will be kept in the Soup Kitchen.

FINANCE & MAINTENANCE

It looks like the weather is starting to cool with fall approaching. Thank you to everyone for their continued support of the church, we could not keep going without it.

The Finance and Maintenance Committee has started to meet again. The only thing we have to report at this time is that we are arranging for snow clearing for the winter and we are also looking into having someone repair the concrete steps at the North entrance. If you look closely, you will see that they are starting to degrade.

Please continue to keep our church and congregation in your prayers as well as the wider church throughout the world. May God continue to bless you.

The Comfort Doll Project

The Comfort Doll Project began in October of 2009 with members and friends of our congregation knitting Comfort Dolls and Baby Caps for children in needy areas of the world. The dolls were used in packaging for medical supplies. Instead of using bubble wrap the boxes were packed with the dolls and once the medical supplies were unpacked, the dolls were given to the children.

One of our members, Jean McBurney, personally knitted 895 dolls as of March 2014. Initially the dolls were mailed to ICross Canada and more recently to Compassionate Resource. Both are located in British Columbia.

Over the fifteen years 2,935 dolls and 969 caps were knitted. Just think of the joy the 2,935 children received from those dolls!

Thank you to everyone who knitted dolls and caps or donated money toward shipping costs.

Thank you to Gwen Henwood who initiated this project and maintained it until 2020 when she moved to Winnipeg. Thank you also to Debbi Miles who took over from Gwen.

Gwen put together a photo album called *The Dolls of Joy*. You can find it on the table at the back of the sanctuary. It's worth a look!

CHURCH FINANCIALS

JANUARY – AUGUST 2024

FINANCES:

INCOME RECEIVED:	42,751.48
EXPENSES PAID:	<u>38,200.31</u>
SURPLUS (DEFICIT):	<u>4,551.17</u>

The income reported above includes \$5,000.00 transferred from the Replacement Fund to help pay for the Church’s new boiler. The expenses includes the payment for the new boiler

PRESBYTERIANS SHARING – Total Allocation for 2024 is \$2,000.00

DONATIONS RECEIVED:	<u>1,295.00</u>
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FUNDRAISING:

INCOME:	6,649.45
EXPENSES:	<u>1,273.64</u>
SURPLUS (DEFICIT):	<u>5,375.81</u>

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

Spring Dinner	1,259.21
Fall Supper	
Meal In A Bowl	3,882.07
Catering	773.09
Supplies	(538.56)

Your support for our fundraising is appreciated

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ENDOWMENT
FINANCIAL STATEMENT – August 31, 2024**

REVENUE:	MONTH	Y-T-D
High Interest Saving Account – Stride CU	58.93	489.64
Investment Interest – Stride CU		
Share Dividend – Stride CU		97.68
Investment Redeemed – Stride CU		
Memorial Gifts		868.12
Honour Gifts		
Offering Envelopes		80.00
Finance & Maintenance		
TOTAL REVENUE	58.93	1,455.44

EXPENSES:
Bank Charges – Stride CU
Investment Purchase
Finance & Maintenance
Miscellaneous
TOTAL EXPENSES

BANK: STRIDE CREDIT UNION (SCU)	(Chequing Account)
Opening Balance: January 1, 2024	\$ 9,446.92
Total Revenue Year to Date	965.80
Total Expense Year to Date	
Closing Balance: August 31, 2024	\$ 10,412.72

BANK: STRIDE CU (High Interest Saving Account) – Included Below **	
Opening Balance: January 1, 2024	\$ 39,325.00
Total Revenue – Year to Date	489.64
Total Expenses – Year to Date	
Closing Balance: August 31, 2024	\$ 39,814.70 - Included below **

INVESTMENTS:			
DATE	BANK	INVESTMENT	AMOUNT PURCHASED
April/19	SCU	High Interest Saving Account**	\$39,814.70 **
Oct 31/23		Westbourne Due Oct 31/26 @4.50% 400450	1,500.00
TOTAL INVESTMENTS			\$41,314.70

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR FORMER MINISTER

From the time I retired, it has been my intention to write this note once I got settled in my new home in southern Ontario. Unfortunately, though, that whole process ended up taking much longer than I had anticipated! For one thing, it took until March of this year to sell my house - more than a year after retiring. Then, once I had left Portage la Prairie, it took another three months before I had a home I could move into. My sister and her family, in Cambridge, generously let me stay with them for that in-between time. As you probably know, I had hoped to find a suitable place in or near Cambridge, but, as it turned out, real estate prices in much of southern Ontario are higher than what I could afford. To make a long story short, I ended up buying a townhouse-style condo in Windsor, of all places, approximately a three-hour drive west of Cambridge. I moved in at the beginning of July, and the moving van from Winnipeg arrived the following week with my things. For the past two months, then, I've been gradually unpacking my boxes, and finding places for all of my things, and so my condo is starting to feel like home. It's quite a bit smaller than my house in Portage la Prairie, but I think it's adequate for my needs. I recently ordered blinds for the windows, and they have just been installed. My condo is close to Tecumseh Road, a major thoroughfare in Windsor that resembles Portage Av. in Winnipeg, except that it's not as wide!

As you may have heard, my mother died last fall, at the age of 101. We had a memorial service for her in April, after I got back to Cambridge, on what would've been her 102nd birthday.

Many thanks again for your farewell gifts - the iPad, the apron, the cash, and the collage of photos! I got my niece to show me how to use the iPad while I was staying in Cambridge. I hesitate to use the apron for its intended purpose, though, because I'm afraid that all your signatures would disappear (or at least fade) when the time came to wash it! As for the cash, I used it to buy a sideboard (from Ikea) for my kitchen, to give me additional counter- and cupboard space.

There are just two Presbyterian congregations here in Windsor, and although I have attended services at both of them, I haven't yet decided which one I'd like to join, and so I don't know yet what my involvement in the church's life and work, as a retired minister, will be. Currently, I'm in the process of having my membership transferred to the Presbytery of Essex-Kent.

I have many happy memories of my time at First, Portage la Prairie, and I miss all of you. I recognize that this is a challenging time for you as a congregation - as it is for most of the congregations in the Presbytery of Brandon, not to mention the Presbytery itself. I pray that God will continue to encourage, guide, and equip you in your ongoing life and work. I pray also that God will continue to bless and prosper each one of you.

If you would like to keep in touch with me, you can get my contact information from Raymond or Mardine. I would be glad to hear from you.

With gratitude and affection,

John Zondag

CONGRATULATIONS!



Bruce & Lisa Sneesby celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary in April. The entire family was here for the celebration.



Mary Henderson's 100th Birthday – photo taken by Ruth Buan

Mary – propped up in the bed, Margaret & Philip Dunn, Margaret McNutt-Reichelt, Bruce Sneesby, Mel Edmunds, Lisa Sneesby, Gwen Henwood, Lana Edmunds, Mardine Garnham, Lalaine Buan, Christina Robertson, Charlie Clifford, Ruth Buan

Doug & Betty Blyth celebrated their 65th Wedding Anniversary on September 26th. A celebration with family & friends was held on September 22nd at Dufferin Villa.

Rob & Cheryl celebrated their 18th wedding anniversary on September 9th, 2024 which was held at Boston Pizza

GOD'S ACCURACY

This is really interesting... Enjoy...

When GOD solves our problems, we have faith in HIS abilities.

When GOD doesn't solve our problems, HE has faith in our abilities.

One may observe God's accuracy in the hatching of eggs...

those of the Canary in 14 days;

those of the Barnyard Hen in 21 days;

Eggs of Ducks and Geese in 28 days;

those of the Mallard in 35 days;

Eggs of the Parrot and the Ostrich hatch in 42 days.

(Notice, they are all divisible by seven, the number of days in a week!)

See God's Wisdom in the making of an Elephant...

The four legs of this great beast all bend forward in the same direction.

No other quadruped is so made.

God planned that this animal would have a huge body...too large to live on two legs.

For this reason He gave it four fulcrums so that it can rise from the ground easily.

The Horse rises from the ground on its two front legs first.

A Cow rises from the ground with its two hind legs first.

How wise the Lord is in all His works of Creation!

Each Watermelon has an even number of stripes on the Rind.

Each Orange has an even number of segments.

Each ear of Corn has an even number of rows.

Each stalk of Wheat has an even number of grains.

Every bunch of Bananas has on its lowest row an even number of Bananas, and each row decreases by one, so that one row has an even number and the next row an odd number.

Amazing! There's more...

The Waves of the Sea roll in on shore Twenty-six to the Minute in all kinds of weather.

All Grains are found in even numbers on the stalks.

God has caused the Flowers to Blossom at certain specified times during the day.

Linnaeus, the Great Botanist, once said that if he had a Conservatory containing the right kind of Soil, Moisture, and Temperature, he could tell the Time of Day or Night by the Flowers that were open and those that were closed.

The Lives of each of us may be ordered by the Lord in a Beautiful Way for His Glory, if we will only Entrust Him with our Lives.

If we try to regulate our own Lives, we will have only Mess and Failure.

Only God, who made our Brains and Hearts, can successfully Guide them to a Profitable End.

When you carry the Bible, Satan has a Headache; when you open it, he collapses. When he sees you Reading it, he loses his Strength, and when you stand on the Word of God, Satan can't hurt you!



Turkey & Ham Fall Supper

Take-out

Sunday, November 17th, 2024
5:00 - 6:00 p.m.

****Must pre-order by Saturday, Nov.9th ****

Call 204-385-2847 to order – leave a message if no
answer

First Presbyterian Church

17 Royal Road South

\$20.00 each

Deliveries can be arranged for those unable to pick up.