

Advent

2021



Greetings friends and welcome to the Season of Advent.

While Christmas is often billed as a time of celebration, joy, feasting and family togetherness, Advent has a rather different tone. Advent is about waiting, preparing, and longing. And even more so, it is about God with us as we wait, prepare, and long for God to be with us in a new way. It may seem strange to wait for an event that has already occurred and to prepare for the birth of Jesus who is thousands of years old. But the truth is that Christ was, Christ is, and Christ is coming – always.

Life is more of a spiral than a circle; a spiral in which we return each year, not to the same space on the circle, but to a shifted and sometimes deeper space. A space in which we are different than we were. And just as we are different, our longings are different, and so God is born in us differently as well.

Followers of Jesus together also walk this same spiral of change and transformation. While the church's longing for hope, peace, love, and joy remain, the specifics of our lives have changed dramatically from the 1st century. Even dramatically from 2 years ago. And so, Christ meets us in the past as a 1st century infant in a manger, but also and again in the present and the future, though we may not yet know what that birth will look like.

This year as we make this Advent journey together, I offer this invitation: to consider how you might have become a different person this past year. Consider how your longings may have changed. And then to invite Christ to be born in you anew as hope, peace, love, and joy for this time and place.

Advent blessings,
Rev. Carrie



Note from the Leadership Team

As we turn our calendars to December, our thoughts turn to traditional Christmas gatherings and sharing our time and gifts with family, friends, and those who need a visit or helping hand. We wish there be many of those special Christmas activities this year, but know that much has changed in recent times.

Predicting and planning has been challenging. Our church life at Pembina Parish has swung between open and closed, in-person and virtual worship, with difficulty predicting what is coming.

Despite those challenges, looking back at the past year brings to mind pleasant memories and fellowship at our churches. Even while masking, we can “smile with our eyes”.

One such happy occasion was the Covenanting service for Rev Carrie in late June. It might have happened earlier, but again, advance planning was difficult.

The service was special and part of it was some symbols of our Parish’s covenant with Rev Carrie. We chose something to grow outside of our churches, but with the heat and drought of the summer, it was not the time for new plantings.

This completion of the covenanting took place on a sunny Sunday in October. Fall rains had given the soil welcome relief and it offered a home to a flowering crab tree at St. Paul’s and a golden elder bush at Zion-Calvin. We wish for timely rains next summer for those plants and for our farmers’ crops and pastures.

Your Leadership Team wishes you new light, hope, and harmony through this Advent season. Take good care and stay safe.

Brian Saunderson, chair of Pembina Parish Leadership Team



Fall Supper Interest Group

November 7, 2021

How marvellous it was to see the work of so many people working diligently to make St. Paul's United Church become a beautiful, inviting and usable space for the 8th Annual Fall Supper. Our committee can't express enough gratitude towards those that made it possible, thank you for the extra kitchen door opening, making the transfer of food and roasters manageable.

The sanctuary was transformed into a working area with a meat and carving station, assembly station, finishing station and delivery station, with a crew in the kitchen doing the hot stuff. Flexibility is the key word here.

A huge thank you to our office manager Laurie Wiebe who sold advance tickets and a bigger thank you to those that purchased meals. It was nice to see that family and friends gathered together as we packaged up large numbers of meals into boxes. 42 meals were delivered by three teams to the Outreach program including Legion House 1 & 2, Vistas Terrace and Elks Place.

254 meals were picked up at the front door of the church using our drive through format.

The committee would like to thank those that donated food, money, time and much effort to making this event a great success. Happy to report we made over \$5,000.00 to go towards the building fund.

I would like to give a special thanks to the Fall Supper Interest Group Committee, Lois Dudgeon, Sue Nelson, MaryAnn McElroy, Edith Lovatt and Freda Lumgair.

Respectfully submitted
Lesley Andrew



Book Club

Sometimes it's hard
to pull myself
away from my
book so I can
leave for book
club.



The book club is meeting the last Thursday of the month in the church meeting room at 7pm.

*Everyone is welcome,
but please let Sue Nelson know if you plan to attend.
(204-822-6357)*

Books are available at the library. Masks are mandatory.

Nov 25 Little Fires Everywhere - Celeste Ng

Dec 30 The Four Winds - Kristin Hannah

Jan 27 Olive Kitterage - Elizabeth Strout



Unfortunately we have no
concrete plans to restart Soup
and Pie lunches.
Hopefully in January.



St. Pauls Building Committee

The building committee has been very active over the summer and well into the fall. Construction of the Phase I/II of the renovations to St. Pauls are now over 95% complete. Unfortunately, we have to wait on materials to finish Millwork (doors, casings, baseboards), which has also delayed the final painting. We are hoping to finish everything in Phase I/II 100% by mid – January 2022. At this time, we are also waiting on new chairs which were put on backorder by the chair company. We had a last-minute surprise requirement to upgrade our out-dated fire alarm system, which was non-budget item. Lastly, we are not working in earnest with the choir representatives and suppliers/manufacturers to consider our best approach to light mobile choir risers, and hope to get this looked after by year end.

The project was complete enough that we were able to accommodate the Affirming Service in October, which was our first full use of the new Sanctuary. We have also utilized the new room behind the stage for choir and banner group storage, and it is available for meetings. The kitchenette in the Sunday School room is finished (except for range hood), and Sunday School has been using the new pod of five rooms for over a month.

Overall, construction went well and we were fortunate to have some extra effort made by the companies to wrap up in time for October use of the facilities.

More information to come in the new year on budget and final cost comparisons, fundraising, mortgage, next phase planning (kitchen and bathroom) and CEU and facility rentals.

You are hopefully also now aware that Morden Magic Gymnastics Club has rented our CEU to Spring, 2022. This has resulted in extra income for our Parish, something we hope to build on in the future. Our music teaching renters are back on Wednesdays. We have had some inquiries about renting the Sanctuary.

A quick note of thanks for the endless hours by the volunteers working on all aspects of the project - audio/visual, design, multi-use, worship, Sunday School, kitchen, bathroom, project management, disposals and storage - as well a big thanks to volunteers that helped with outside work this fall associated with repainting windows and siding, installing blinds, and temporary improvements to egress at our emergency exits.

It is our sincere hope that Pembina Parish will be able to enjoy this renovated space for decades to come. No doubt there will be small tweeks to the spaces as we begin to use them again, but for now we are happy to take a deep breath and consider thoughtfully what is next !

Best Regards

Bruce Shewfelt and Earl Gardiner, Co-Chairs

Building Committee St Pauls





Poinsettias

The Poinsettias will be arriving on Nov. 26 and will be in the Sanctuary of both church until after church on Dec. 12 at which time, with a little help they will be delivered to members of the congregation who have had a family loss in the past year, home bound members, and members who are residents of Personal Care Facilities. There will be a list to sign up to help deliver and if you would like to donate to help cover the cost please indicate so on your donation envelope.

We would like to thank Myrna Mayor for all the years her and Fred looked after the Poinsettia Fund and all the work she did to make Christmas special for so many.

Shannon Holenski

Cathy Lone



Protocol for church service cancellation (weather related)

Please check the following media:

CFAM Radio 950

The Eagle 93.5

CKMW Country 88.9

PembinaValleyOnline.com (- Road Reports and Cancellations)

Or ask your friends what they have heard about cancellation.

We will try to have any church service cancelled announcement on the media by mid-afternoon the day before (Saturday).



Listening and Learning: Indigenous Book Study

25-30 people have been gathering in the new (and wonderfully flexible!) sanctuary space at St. Paul's for a 4-week book study on Michelle Good's *Five Little Indians*. Each week has included prayer, conversation about land acknowledgments, video interview with the author, and discussion about the book's complex characters. It's been great to have participants from Zion-Calvin, St. Paul's, Morden Mennonite, and Pembina Mennonite Fellowship. Conversation has been animated and engaging, and the book—transformative! If you haven't read the book yet, we have a few copies left for purchase in the office (\$15.38) and we can always direct you to someone who has a copy to lend.



Sunday worship services are recorded for everyone to view online.

**The recorded video can be found on our YouTube channel
'Pembina Parish Pastoral Charge United Church'.**

[Pembina Parish Pastoral Charge United Church - YouTube](#)



gifts with vision

Prayer of Reflection on Gifts and Giving

A prayer for people who want to share God's generous gifts.

All-embracing God,

We often give gifts from a sense of obligation, or because we can't bear to disappoint someone.

Help us rethink that the next time we give a gift.

Help us think about giving, not because it's expected, but because it is needed.

Let us help the people who have little instead of giving a gift to "someone who has everything."

Let us delight children we've never met by bringing them comfort, and in doing so, show our own children the joy of giving.

Let us give from gratitude and love,

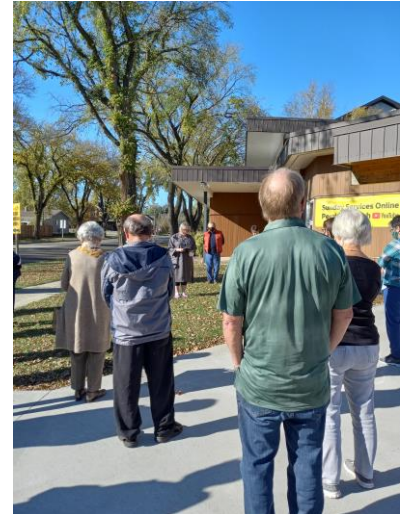
Sharing with those we love and hold close, and helping those we love but don't know.

And let our generosity, motivated by our love for you, extend to our whole-world family.

Amen

[Gifts with Vision | A Giving Catalogue from the United Church – Gifts with Vision - The United Church of Canada](#)

Tree planting, landscaping (Thanks Bob and Kathryn), new signs and Affirming Services.....
All reasons to Celebrate!



They are smiling under their masks!



Fall Supper



Financial report to the congregation

A few days ago a comment was shared ... Ecole Morden Middle school choir was setting up on the stage to record their Remembrance Day Choral piece ... Reverend Carrie was setting up chairs to host the Wednesday evening Book Study group of 30 plus attendees ... the fall supper Interest group was putting down plastic to protect the carpet at the back of the sanctuary as they prepared the fall supper A Cello student was heading to their lesson ... and the Morden gymnastics Club was meeting in the CEU. What a hub of activity!

Our goal to repurpose St Paul's space is almost complete and what a space that has been created. Many people have been involved in this transformation and I just want to update you on where we are at financially. I am justgoing to report on the renovations at St Paul's.

	Building Fund Donations	Expenses to Date
Balance at Jan 1, 2021	50,959	
Donations Jan 1/2021 to date	113,235	
Mortgage Proceeds	240,000	
Expenses to Oct 31/2021		274,719
Estimated Expenses outstanding		120,281
Totals	404,194	395,000

St. Paul's United has taken out a mortgage with Access Credit Union in the amount of \$240,000. Terms of the mortgage are 2.6% interest rate, 5 year fixed, with a \$1,625 monthly mortgage payment.

Our goal now is to pay down the mortgage. Through generous donations from our congregation, we have also received donations from community members who wanted to celebrate and support our new space. What a gift!

Please consider sharing your financial support between Local givings, Mission and Services and the building fund.

Together we can join in our journey of celebrating God's presence, sharing our gifts locally and globally while exploring our faith.

Nancy Penner



Zion Calvin Sunday School just got going again. So nice to see the young ones with their enthusiasm and energy. Looking forward to a Christmas presentation this year.

Zion Calvin will be collecting donations of non-perishable food items for the Manitou and area Christmas cheer and gift items such as personal hygiene items and toys for St Matthew Maryland Community Ministry.

Collection boxes at Zion Calvin.

Donations accepted up until Dec 5.

St. Pauls Sunday school is back and will join the Service on Dec 19!

Advent/Christmas

Nov. 28 Advent 1 - Hope: We will be sharing Communion during the service.

Dec. 5 Advent 2 - Peace: White gift Sunday at Z-C.

Dec. 12 Advent 3 - Love

Dec. 19 Advent 4 - Joy: Our Sunday school children will be sharing the Nativity with us.

Dec. 21 Longest Night/Blue Christmas service at St. Paul's. Time tbd.

Dec. 24 Christmas Eve service

- Zion-Calvin 6:30pm
- St. Paul's 7:45pm

Dec. 26 No service. We invite you to enjoy a selection of carols recorded for you by folks t Zion-Calvin and St. Paul's. It will be placed on our YouTube channel.

Jan. 2 No service. We invite you to receive a message recorded by Rev. Carrie. It will be placed on our YouTube channel.

- Sound Technicians Required with an 'ear' for the craft of operation of the audio equipment at St Paul's on Sunday mornings.
- Duties will include setting up microphones and learning the science of mixing audio adjusting the most appropriate sound levels for each speaker/singer.
- We are looking for 2 or 3 of interested sound enthusiasts to complete the team. **Training will be provided by Golden West Broadcasting.**
- This will also be a paid position.**
- Please email Laurie at the church office if you are interest. We would like to start the training in early November.

