



March 2020

Minister's Message

Dear Friends,

The season of Lent is a forty day journey of reflection and self-examination as we walk with Jesus towards the cross. During Lent we are invited to deepen our relationship with God through prayer, the giving up or taking on of something, and spiritual practices. Our parish has been marking our Lenten journey in Sunday worship this year by doing a "reverse countdown" of six purple candles. Each Sunday one less candle has been lit, symbolizing the growing darkness around Jesus as he moves towards his approaching suffering and death.

With the reality of the coronavirus pandemic that is spreading around the world and now in our own province and area, our Lenten journey this year has taken on a whole different meaning. This global emergency has transformed our lives in profound ways. Terms like "social distancing", "flatten the curve" and "an abundance of caution" are becoming part of our daily vocabulary. Changes are happening quickly each day, with many places and events shutting down, leaving the future seeming more and more uncertain. We are living in times like none of us have ever known. In some ways this feels like a true Lenten journey of being in the wilderness, increasingly aware of our own vulnerability as the growing darkness threatens to overwhelm us with anxiety and fear.

For us as people of faith, this time of crisis can be an opportunity to deepen our faith and trust in God as we honestly share these difficult feelings. It is also a time when we are reminded of what it means to truly be the Church – not a building but a community of faith: called to love and care for one another, to reach out to those in need, and to share Christ's compassion for everyone, especially the most vulnerable. We do so in hope, trusting that we will come through this crisis with God's grace, emerging with new awareness and understanding. This is a time when the Easter message of Jesus' resurrection can become even more meaningful for us, as we celebrate the triumph of life over death, hope over despair, and love over fear.

Last Sunday our St. Paul's choir sang a beautiful anthem that can become our prayer during this time. It is an arrangement of Hymn #182 in Voices United: "Stay with Us through the Night". The verses are as follows:

*Stay with us through the night.
Stay with us through the pain.
Stay with us, blessed stranger
till the morning breaks again.*

*Stay with us through the night.
Stay with us through the grief.
Stay with us, blessed stranger
till the morning brings relief.*

*Stay with us through the night.
Stay with us through the dread.
Stay with us, blessed stranger
till the morning breaks new bread.*

In these uncertain and anxious times, as in all times, let us remember that God is with us and will stay with us, bringing us to that new morning of joy and resurrection. May that hope sustain us through whatever lies ahead, uniting us with one another, our world, and all of creation as we walk this journey together.

Lenten blessings and peace to all of you,
Rev. Cathie

Pembina Parish Leadership Team: COVID-19 response

As part of our concern for the health and well-being of our church family, and to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the wider community, the Leadership Team held a special meeting on March 19th to discuss our response to this health crisis. The following are the decisions made and information confirmed on behalf of our parish in that meeting:

- Sunday worship services at Zion-Calvin and St. Paul's will be suspended indefinitely until further notice effective immediately. There will no services beginning Sunday, March 22nd.
- All in-person parish gatherings, meetings and activities will be suspended indefinitely effective immediately until further notice.
- Zion-Calvin and St. Paul's United church buildings will be closed to the public effective immediately until further notice. This includes all groups and individuals utilizing or renting space in both churches.
- Those needing to contact the parish can call the parish office at 204-822-4508 for a message directing them to our Office Administrator Laurie Wiebe at 204-823-3545 or Rev. Cathie Waldie at 204-745-2959 (home) or 204-750-2681 (cell). Please do not leave a message on the parish answering machine. Laurie and Rev. Cathie can also be contacted via email at office@pembinaparish.com or revcathie@pembinaparish.com.
- Rev. Cathie will begin working at home indefinitely until further notice effective Saturday, March 21st She will be available by phone and email and to respond in person to emergency pastoral care visits in hospital, home or Personal Care home. Laurie will also be working at home indefinitely effective Tuesday, March 24th until further notice. The St. Paul's custodian Thong Bouachanthala will continue to check the church on a regular basis. Arrangements will be made for Zion-Calvin church to also be checked on a regular basis.
- A brief worship service will be posted every Sunday by Rev. Cathie on the Pembina Parish Facebook page beginning Sunday, March 22nd. Sunday readings and prayers will be posted on the parish website at www.pembinaparish.com beginning the week of March 23rd. Rev. Cathie also intends to send a short daily "Bread for the Journey" reflection by email to those on our parish email list.
- Other options for worship during this time are joining Sunday online worship with our Moderator Richard Bott or joining one of the many churches that are live-streaming Sunday worship services. These can be accessed at www.united-church.ca/commnity-faith/being-community/worship-online-during-covid-19.
- During this time of closure the St. Paul's Sunday School team will send out lesson plans to the Sunday School children and youth on Fridays for families to use at home. They will also check in with families at that time to see how they are doing. The Zion-Calvin Sunday School will explore possible options for teaching and communication with their children and youth.

- Pastoral care will be co-ordinated through Rev. Cathie, Laurie and the Pastoral Care Interest Group and be done by telephone, email, text and regular mail. Those who know of someone in need of pastoral care are invited to be in touch with Rev. Cathie or the parish office.
- In times of bereavement, families will be encouraged to postpone funerals/memorial services until a later date if possible. Funerals/memorial services will be conducted in exceptional circumstances by Rev. Cathie in accordance with current public health recommendations. The church buildings will not be available at this time.
- Any outreach needs (delivering groceries, dropping off soup, responding to needs in the community) will be co-ordinated by Sue Nelson at 204-822-6357 or sue.nelson@mymts.net. Anyone willing to help with these needs is invited to be in touch with Sue.
- A prayer chain will be co-ordinated by Phyllis Dudgeon. Anyone with a prayer request is invited to contact her at 204-822-1213 or pidudgeon@gmail.com. Anyone interested in helping with this ministry is invited to contact Phyllis.
- Regular church donations for those who are currently not on PAR (pre-authorized remittance) can be continued by using the St. Paul's mail slot (east side door), by regular mail (Pembina Parish address: 353 Thornhill Street, Morden, Manitoba R6M 1M8) or online through www.CanadaHelps.org.
- The Ministry Search process will continue through the Ministry Search team.
- The building discernment renovations at St. Paul's will proceed at the discretion of the Building Discernment Interest Group in consultation with the Finance Interest Group and the Leadership Team.
- A parish vote to become an Affirming Ministry will be postponed to a later date.

Please note that this list will be monitored and updated as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to unfold. Communication on these and other changes will be done through weekly News and Notes, parish website: www.pembinaparish.com, and email.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all of our church family at this difficult time. Please remember to care for and support one another as we seek to respond faithfully to this pandemic together.

Yours in Christ,

The Leadership Team,

Brian Saunderson (Chair), Leslie Bezte (Vice-Chair/Secretary), Earl Gardiner (Treasurer), Karen Dyck/Mary Ann McElroy (Ministry & Personnel reps), Margot Craig, Esther Rothenburger, Kathryn Luger, Rev. Cathie Waldie.

This vote will be rescheduled when services resume

Ready... Set... VOTE To Become an Affirming Ministry

The Leadership Team and the Affirming Conversation Interest Group announce that on Sunday, April 26th following worship service at St. Paul's, a congregational meeting will be held to vote on whether Pembina Parish wishes to be designated an Affirming Ministry.

The Zion Calvin congregation will hold its own worship service that Sunday and will join folks at St. Paul's for the vote about noon.

The vote will take the form of a yes or no vote on a motion to the effect that Pembina Parish Pastoral Charge make a request to Affirm United to designate our Parish as an Affirming Ministry.

A light lunch will be served as we await the results of the secret ballot. If the vote is affirmative, a revised Parish Vision Statement will be presented for adoption. The revised statement would make explicit our welcome to people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

The Affirming Conversation Interest Group has been engaging congregants on this topic for several years. Many people believe we're already affirming but, in fact, there is a process/membership involved to **formalize** our commitment to inclusivity and justice for all God's people. The United Church of Canada officially endorses the Affirming Ministries Program and encourages its ministries to become affirming.

Let's plan to have a huge turn-out for the vote and decide in favour of becoming an Affirming Ministry.

Further notices about the meeting will appear in New and Notes.

ATTENTION

This concert will be rescheduled to November 14 & 15. People who have purchased tickets can keep their ticket and use it for the same day for the November concert, or refunds can be issued. Please call or text 204.242.4415 either way to confirm your option, and assist us in accurately looking after ticket sale issues.

Borderline Singers

Present

Imagine

Conductor: Myra Amy-McElroy Accompanist: Tracy Sanders

Saturday, April 4, 2020 7:30pm

Sunday, April 5, 2020 2:30pm

at the Manitou Opera House

For reserved seating, call 242-4415.

Tickets are also available at the Morden Art Gallery and
at the door.

Children from the Zion Calvin Sunday School along with other children will be participating as young choristers in a portion of this concert. The music features Beatles tunes, and songs of faith, wonder, and imagination.

Message from the Leadership Team

Pembina Parish's annual meeting on February 23rd marked a reporting of the 2019 year and a progressive way forward for our church community. Sixty five parishioners participated in the meeting after enjoying a soup and potluck lunch.

As she has for the past eight years, Rev Cathie opened and closed the meeting with prayer reflections. All were aware that this annual meeting is Cathie's last to share with us.

Treasurer Louise Gardiner offered the meeting a review of the 2019 financial year and explained the 2020 budget. The 2019 net income of \$67,809 exceeded the budget set for that year mainly due to lower than expected staffing costs as efforts were not successful in hiring an additional staff position. The 2020 budget projects a reduced net income as there may be some costs involved in our quest to have a new minister in place for the fall season.

The Discernment Interest Group, led by Earl Gardiner and Bruce Shewfelt, has guided us through years of engagement and study of possibilities for St Paul's church building. The practice of discernment is ongoing, but the time has come for action, for change. The work will be done in stages or phases and Earl guided meeting attendees through the rationale for choosing changes to the sanctuary as phase one. A motion was strongly supported to approve this direction. Work will commence in the spring-summer timeframe when church activities are reduced, with the CEU hall providing place for services through the construction period.

The long awaited roof repair to the CEU hall is now done. The renewal was expensive, but even with that cost behind us, Pembina Parish's financial resources are in good shape to head into our building changes. It will be a big effort and you will hear more about fund raising goals and plans.

The Outreach Interest Group generated a net amount of \$5,800 last year, with their major fund raiser being the Soup and Dessert Lunch. Sue Nelson spoke at the annual meeting, encouraging feedback about directing some of their funds to a kitchen renovation fund. A motion was passed to direct 50% of their giving to the kitchen fund for 2020. Sue listed the good causes that they will continue to support.

A big "thank-you" goes out to some dedicated church workers who have completed their terms: Ministry and Personnel members Karen Ching, Bruce Lyng, Cathy Lone; Elders Doug Lone, Joan Peters, Karen Ching; Leadership Team members Deb Hamilton, Bruce Lyng, Louise Gardiner. Louise made a large contribution as our treasurer, and passes those duties to Earl Gardiner.

It will be a year of changes for Pembina Parish, and there was a strong sentiment at the annual meeting of working together and optimism.

Pembina Parish Leadership Team

Brian Saunderson, chair, Leslie Bezte, vice-chair and secretary, Earl Gardiner, treasurer, Margot Craig, Esther Rothenburger, Kathryn Luger, Rev Cathie Waldie, and a member from Ministry and Personnel

Prepare and Prevent

How can I reduce my risk of infection from COVID-19?

Good hand hygiene provides significant protection from viral respiratory illnesses, such as COVID-19.

People are encouraged to take common prevention measures, including regular handwashing with soap and warm water for at least 15 seconds. Make sure to dry your hands thoroughly. You can also use an alcohol-based hand cleanser if your hands are not visibly dirty. It is especially important to clean your hands:

- after coughing or sneezing
- when caring for a sick person
- before, during and after you prepare food
- before eating
- after toilet use
- when hands are visibly dirty

You should also cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, or you can cough or sneeze into your sleeve. Throw used tissues in the garbage and immediately wash your hands, or use an alcohol-based hand cleanser.

Avoid close contact (within two metres or six feet) with anyone showing symptoms of a respiratory illness, such as coughing or sneezing. Children and adolescents should avoid sharing food or drinks (e.g., sippy cups and water bottles), musical instruments or other things that have been in a person's mouth or hands.

Book Club

The book club meets once a month in members' homes the last Thursday of the month. The books are available at the Morden Library. We are book club number 6. New members are always welcome, join us every month or just now and then. We discuss the read of the month and share dessert and conversation.

If you would like to receive information about upcoming reads please contact Sue Nelson 204-822-6357
sue.nelson@mymts.net

We are reading:

By Chance Alone- by Max Eisen

-meeting Thursday March 26

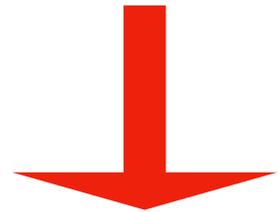
Less by Andrew Sean Greer

- meeting Thursday Apr 23

A Place for Us by Fatima Farheen Mirza

- meeting Thursday May 28

**← These events will be
rescheduled
due to health concerns**



Soup and Dessert Outreach

Mark your calendars for the next soup and dessert lunch Friday April 17, 2020 from 11:30-1pm.

Soup and Dessert lunches are on the third Friday each month. There will be a variety of homemade soups, biscuits, buns and a great selection of desserts. \$8.00 per person. Proceeds go to a variety of Outreach and Church projects. If you would like to help prepare soup, serve or help clean up please contact Sue Nelson 204-822-6357 sue.nelson@mymts.net

Thank you to everyone who supply desserts, help prepare, serve, clean up and come to break bread with us. Your support is very much appreciated.

Donations have been made to Genesis House \$500 and Rock Lake Church Camp \$500 on behalf of Pembina Parish.





Mission and Service

We have set our 2020 Mission and Service goal at \$35,000. Thank you to everyone who came to the Pancake Supper, we raised \$557.50 for Mission and Service.

Thanks to Sunday School families for the pancake games, we had a great time.

Mission and Service giving is the heart of what we do.

Pembina Parish Ministry Search Team

Pembina Parish members approved the Community of Faith Profile at the Annual Meeting on February 23, 2020. The Ministry Search Team was appointed consisting of: Martin Worrall, June Steiner, Marlene Holewka, Brian Saunderson, Beth Lovell and Louise Gardiner. The advertisement for the vacancy has been posted in Broadview on line and will be in the next two printed copies. The Profile has been posted on Church Hub, the website designed to advertise vacancies. The next step is for the Search Team to complete the training by the regional council on the Search and Selection policy. Please keep us in your prayers as we move forward in this very important process for the Parish.

PRAYER BOX

As part of my spiritual journey, I will be setting aside time for silent prayer during my lunch breaks. If you have a prayer request, please write it down and place in the prayer box. The prayer box will be located near the sanctuary entrance in St Paul's and also at Zion-Calvin. I will be checking the boxes regularly throughout the week. If anyone would like to join me in silent prayer, you are more than welcome.

Laurie

10





Clip & Save

Parish contact info

Parish Office at 204-822-4508

Office Administrator Laurie Wiebe at 204-823-3545

Rev. Cathie Waldie at 204-745-2959 (home) or 204-750-2681 (cell).

Please do not leave a message on the parish answering machine.

Parish Office email office@pembinaparish.com

Cathie's email revcathie@pembinaparish.com

Parish web site www.pembinaparish.com

www.united-church.ca/commnity-faith/being-community/worship-online-during-covid-19

Outreach needs Sue Nelson 204-822-6357 or sue.nelson@mymts.net

Prayer chain Phyllis Dudgeon 204-822-1213 or pidudgeon@gmail.com

St. Paul's mail slot (east side door), by regular mail

(Pembina Parish address: 353 Thornhill Street, Morden, Manitoba R6M 1M8)

or online through www.CanadaHelps.org.