

# News for Scattered Pews

April 2021



## Val's Voice

Another spring day...  
perennials poking their  
heads up, trees budding, a  
forecast for weather that  
offers a sense of optimism...  
and at the same time, we  
have been hearing that  
cases of Coronavirus have

risen drastically over the last week or so, here  
as well as more so in other locations around the  
world.

The uncertainty of our world is clear. And yet  
in the midst of this uncertainty, we are also in  
the season of Easter. As God's people, we know  
that God's presence in our world and in our lives  
doesn't mean that there will not be chaos and  
struggle. While Jesus and his friends were  
threatened by the powers, they also learned  
that God's life is not taken down by illness,  
uncertainty or even the violence of empire.

Even in these uncertain times God is with us.

In our time, we affirm that God's life is not  
defeated by this virus, or by famine or poverty.  
The hope that God gives is not changed by  
threats of war or racism.

Sometimes faith is spoken of as a private matter,  
something that lives in our hearts and within  
our families. I am sure we all have had times  
when we have known God is with us; that  
knowledge can offer a tremendous amount of  
hope and strength.

The knowledge of God's presence, *with God's  
people as a community*, is even more a part of  
our tradition! This time of the Church year we  
remember that Jesus appeared in rooms on the  
other side of locked doors, encouraging his  
followers as a group not to live in fear, *but to be  
sent!* We recall how the Spirit blew through God's  
people gathered, giving them the language of  
their neighbours and helping them learn how to  
live together.

So then, we are also reminded that Jesus invites  
us to live God's love in the world. The Spirit will  
inspire us in ways we never would have imagined,  
to understand our neighbours and learn how to  
work together for the good of everyone. In this  
venture, prayer will be important, but so will  
laughter, creativity and a vision of God's world  
from a bird's eye view, so that we can see over  
walls, and understand in a new way what might  
need to happen...

Need in our world is great, but God's love for all  
of Creation is greater. These days, take some time  
to consider how we can act out God's love for the  
good of our neighbours. Think like God! with love  
for all the world, and discern what it means to be  
God's people.

In what ways do we already, and in what ways  
can we live in love, stand for justice, and act for  
the good of community?

Now, when we are not in our building, is a time  
for us to imagine new ways of doing things, new  
partnerships, and what God's vision means for us  
as a community.

What is God's vision for the world?

What is our place as a church in that vision?

What can we do to become part of working  
towards God's vision?

Val



Photo by Mike Peters / Economic Development Winnipeg

## Notes from Vestry April 27, 2021

People from our parish were pleased to **worship with our Anglican neighbours** from St. Bart's in Windsor Park and St. Marks in Old St. Vital Maundy Thursday via Zoom; it was good to be reminded of the larger church. Next time we will aim for a day when we are able to stay around and chat with each other after the service!

As per the **latest provincial health regulations**, Bishop Geoff has issued a directive requiring all in-person worship to be discontinued for the next month. He encourages the good work that parishes are doing offering worship online.

Last month, Vestry approved the establishment of a **Refugee Ministry Committee** for our parish; so far members include Bryan B., Qaiser, Irene and Ify. This month, Ify was named as the person who will sign on behalf of the parish when Vestry approves a sponsorship. Thanks to all for your service!

Currently, our parish has approved sponsorship of one family of six (Qaiser's brother and family), and two individuals (one of whom is Abid's brother), Some of these people were sponsored five years ago, and they still await resettlement. Please remember them in your prayers.

After a good discussion, Vestry also approved the sponsorship of a couple who are in Malaysia after having fled Pakistan. Marlene and the Refugee Ministry Committee will submit this application in the next while.

From time to time, both Worship Committee and Vestry have discussed the **online evening worship time of 7 pm** we've used since the beginning of the pandemic. Vestry had another thorough discussion this week and learned a lot about the complexities of people's perspectives on this! These include:

- Some people miss coming together on Sunday morning
- Others value the gathering of so many together on Sunday evening
- Some people have health concerns that would make Sunday morning worship very difficult
- Others express concern that if we divide up our group or offer recorded services with small numbers of people, there would be much less of a feeling of community, which would increase isolation for some.

All this will be weighed by Worship Committee in the next few weeks, and we will keep you posted! We may also survey participants at a Zoom gathering sometime in the next couple of weeks.

## Dates to Remember



On **Sunday, May 2**, the head of the National Church, Primate Linda Nicholls, will join us for online worship at our usual 7 pm service time. We are so pleased to have Linda preach, and invite everyone to attend via Zoom or landline telephone.

We will have a blessing of seeds and plants at our Mothers' Day worship on **Sunday, May 9**. If you are able, bring some plants to your computer, or send some photos to Val as we seek God's blessing for Creation!



**Sunday, May 23** is the Feast of Pentecost, when we remember that God's Spirit was sent on God's people in tongues of fire and "the rush of a mighty wind." **Wear something red to our Zoom worship service on May 23, so we can be reminded of the fire of God's Spirit!**

Val will be away **May 17-30**. She is taking a week of continuing education leave May 17-23, attending The Festival of Homiletics (an online preaching festival); following that she will be on holidays until May 30.



The Parish of St. Mary Magdalene is on Treaty 1 territory.

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