

News for Scattered Pews

November 2020



Val's Voice

Skies are grey, and fall is slipping away into winter...

I think many of us are feeling the chill of the days a little more than usual, with isolation filling too much of our time. Strange,

but perhaps it is timely that in this part of the world, All Saints' Day comes just now.

As days become more chilled and dark, we are reminded of the warmth and faith and love of countless generations who have gone before us. We are reminded of those we have known, who have added to the meaning of our lives; perhaps parents or grandparents, cousins or friends.

We are also reminded of those whose words or actions we never knew personally, but whose names we know. People like Benedict, Aidan, Julian. Frances, Mary Magdalene, Patrick. Martin Luther King Jr., Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Nicholas. They teach us faith in the midst of dark times. Generosity in the midst of uncertainty. Strength in the midst of sorrow. Hope in the midst of fear. (They even remind us to laugh heartily and wear green, though, no doubt those had little to do with Patrick's real attributes!)

With an open heart, consider who it might be who has been a saint in your life. What wisdom did you learn from them? How did they give you new life? Check out the stories of more famous saints. How do they stretch your perspectives?

One of the readings for All Saints' Day, in Revelation 7:15-16, speaks of God's saints "having come out of the great ordeal" now seated around God's throne, God sheltering them, the Lamb being their shepherd, guiding them to springs of the water of life, God wiping away every tear. If you are a practical person, the words may not connect easily, but they provide a vision... of shelter and nurture and healing.

These days, there are so many people struggling, so many people at odds with each other. Yet in this vision, we are told that healing will come. The role of saints has always been to mediate the grace of God when it is hard for us humans to see.

These days we can know that as we struggle or deal with sorrow, we do not do so alone. We do so with countless sisters and brothers in Christ.



Photo credit: Philip Rispin "Prairie Winter Sunset"

We do so united with a great cloud of witnesses, who have moved past their own ordeals, and now gather around the water of life, God and Jesus - the Lamb - offering grace and healing enough for a world in turmoil.

As the world is buffeted these days, we gain strength and wisdom for the struggles of our generation from those witnesses and from our God. God be with you and yours, giving strength, courage and faith.

Val

Welcome to *News for Scattered Pews*, our newest communications tool. Delivered via email (with paper copies mailed out to those without email) the *News* will be a monthly update on what's happening in, to and around our parish. It will replace the venerable *Magdala News*, which we have retired after many years of faithful service, and will supplement information available on our website and Facebook page.

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Vestry Notes from October 27, 2020

Envelope giving is more than \$8,000 above budget. However, with a deficit budget approved for 2020 and revenue from rentals and garage sales down significantly due to the pandemic, parish income is currently \$12,000 behind expenses. Vestry made the difficult decision to consider withdrawing money from our Integra fund (from the sale of the Rectory) to ensure our bills can be paid.

Some folks give much of their offering at the end of the year, so with the attention of parishioners this situation can improve. If you are able, one extra month's offering from each parishioner would take care of our deficit.

Vestry also had a good discussion about the generosity of the parish (thank you!!!), the philosophical approach we take to our giving, and our spending. Should the church run like a business, making sure our budgets are always balanced? Or should we be using the money we have for the work of the church, for God's mission? What do you think? What are we called to be? This will be an ongoing discussion and your input is welcome.



Our Thanksgiving Special Offering was \$1,160 and was divided between parish expenses, a Survival Garden project in Southern Africa, and Winnipeg Children's Rehabilitation Foundation. Thanks to all for making your thanks tangible in this way!

Did you know that some donations made to PWRDF (Primate's World Relief and Development Fund) will be matched 6:1 by the federal government? Part of our Christmas offering may take advantage of this offer; stay tuned!

Many thanks to Brian Crow, Carey Isaac and Debra Arsenault for their work with the newcomer family whose sponsorship year has just been completed.

The parish and co-sponsors of the Asian Christian Fellowship (ACF) and a parishioner are currently waiting for the arrival of three more families. If you are curious about being part of a refugee ministry committee who will assist these newcomers to settle in Winnipeg, please speak to a Warden, Marlene or Val.

Vestry also discussed the first point in "The Bishop's Charge", Bishop Geoff's address to Synod. We considered how we can be part of moving from a 'settler's Church' to one that welcomes and embraces Indigenous traditions as well as those from other cultures. We discussed planning regular opportunities to smudge and inviting speakers to Zoom with us, and hope that Amanda Wallin, who was one of two elders at Synod, can be a helpful resource in this regard.

Vestry has decided to continue our tradition of assisting people in our parish and neighbourhood at Christmas, but this year we will follow the Christmas Cheer Board's lead of giving vouchers rather than hampers. More information on this will be coming soon.

Consecration Sunday

Consecration Sunday and budget planning are upon us! Thank you so much for your generosity in the last year. You have allowed us to support a newcomer family, give Christmas hampers, assist St. Matthews-Maryland Community Ministry, as well as continue with online and in-person worship services these past strange months. You have done so much! Over the next few weeks, watch for an email or letter asking you to identify your planned giving for the year ahead. This giving information is used to set next year's budget.

No computer? You can still be part of our Sunday evening Zoom service

If you (or someone you know) want to be part of our 7 pm Sunday Worship but don't have a computer, you can listen in on your home phone (landline) Here's how:

1. Call **1-204-272-7920** at about 6:55 pm.
2. When prompted, type the Meeting ID number **891 4271 8972** using your phone's number pad.
3. When prompted, type the Passcode **323893**.