

News for Scattered Pews

September 1, 2021



Val's Voice

As fall comes around the corner and the pandemic tapers off, for awhile anyway, Therasa and I found ourselves considering what shape our parish newsletter should take these days...

She noted that as long as we keep having worship services on Zoom, our pews will be a bit scattered anyway! So for now, we will continue with our monthly format, and even hang on to our name, although if you have another name to suggest, do feel free to send it in to her!

As September creeps up on us, leaves begin to change, and the drought takes a pause, it is natural for our thoughts to turn to this beautiful world which God has created.

For quite a number of years now, an ecumenical and international grouping of churches has celebrated the **Season of Creation**. The process was begun in 1989 by Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I, the patriarch of the Orthodox Church, and an avid environmentalist, who passed away this last year.

The idea he initiated was for churches to mark a Season of Creation from the beginning of September. A few years later the World Council of Churches encouraged their members (which of

course we are in the Anglican Church of Canada) to celebrate through to October 4, the day the Church traditionally remembers St. Francis of Assisi.

The Season has been embraced by the World Anglican Communion for many years now, and there is an excellent collection of resources coming out of the Anglican Communion Environmental Network this year!

During this season, we will continue with our regular lectionary readings, but some of the themes - expressed in daily prayers, hymns, Eucharistic prayers and even some church décor - will be based on God's gifts offered in Creation.

If you have gifts of flowers or other objects from nature you would like to share please feel free to bring them to the church on a Sunday, so we can incorporate them into Creation decorations at the front of the Church.

As Christians, it is so important to our identity to remember that we are children of God, who have been blessed with a beautiful earth to share with all of our brothers and sisters from around the world. Watch for other ways we will seek to celebrate the Season of Creation this fall.

Val



Christians around the world are invited to give particular attention to praying and caring for God's creation as part of the global Season of Creation, observed from Sept 1 to Oct 4 every year. General Synod 2019 passed a resolution adopting the Season of Creation in the Anglican Church of Canada as a time of prayer, education and action, and encouraging dioceses and parishes to participate.

There are many ways to participate in the Season of Creation. Hold an ecumenical or interfaith prayer service; worship outdoors; go for a hike with members of your parish; work to reduce your plastic or energy consumption; or advocate for stronger environmental policy.

www.anglican.ca/publicwitness/season-of-creation/

Notes from Vestry August 24, 2021

Our **financial picture remains bright**. As of July 31, our expenses were very close to budget (just \$265 over) and our income was significantly higher (\$14,000), as a result of government assistance to charities.

Spirit Sparks with the Primate: The Primate has asked parishes across the country to hold conversation groups to discuss **what we have learned about ourselves as a church through these strange years of the pandemic**.

- Were there ways that we did well?
- Were there ways that we struggled?

We will consider these questions put out by the national church. One conversation group is in the process of getting together; if you wish to be involved in the next, call Carol Mc at 204-253-6349 and she will ensure you get in the mix!

The Anglican Foundation has a grant available in **support of children and youth**. Activities a parish can create or partner in that would benefit children in a physical, emotional, educational or spiritual way may be eligible to receive a grant. We haven't settled on any ideas yet, but if you have an interest in working with kids, or know of a partner group with great ideas, please call Val. Deadline is October 1.

Over the summer our parish held four **conversation groups dealing with reconciliation**. Early on, two separate groups got together to share feelings about the sad news from the residential schools in June. Two conversation groups have since begun thinking about the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action. Conversations have been lively, and informative, with insight shared by Cheryl and Debra. The next conversation is scheduled for September 22.

Since we are **returning to in-person worship**, just a few words...

- Masks are required.
- Distance between our physical selves must be maintained, although our spirits are together.
- We are returning to more usual styles of scheduling readers, intercessors, etc. Thanks to Shiraz and Cheryl for working on this important ministry.
- Also thanks to those who are coming back to serve on the Altar Guild. We could use a few more members to assist where some have retired. Please speak to Carol or Caroline if you are willing.



We are planning our **Garage Sale for October 1 – 2**. Masks will be required and only 30 people will be allowed in the building at a time. Donations are currently being accepted, and volunteers for before, during and after the sale are needed.

To schedule a donation drop-off or to volunteer please call Cathy at 204-256-6157 or email her at stmarymag.garagesale@gmail.com

Visit our website for more information:
www.stmarymagdalenevpg.org/garage-sales.html

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

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Heading Towards Normal

A few Wednesdays ago my daughter and I played golf, then went to A&W for supper.

I've golfed sporadically for years, but have gotten into it more the last few years thanks to the encouragement of a friend. We now play a no-keeping-score game once a week. Lisa has never liked golf, but her fiance loves it so she recently took lessons and is slowly warming up to it.

At A&W we chose to eat inside as we'd had enough of the outside heat. The dining room was empty except for us, so there was no problem finding a seat. We ordered our food and waited for it to be delivered to our table. For the record, we both had chicken burgers – delicious.

At first glance this was just two people doing something people around here do in the summer. But it was more than that. That day was the first time Lisa and I have ever golfed together, just the two of us. It was also my first time in a restaurant in almost two years. So it was a day both mundane and extraordinary.

We wore masks in the golf shop, and we had to fill out the contact tracing form at the restaurant, but I'm okay with having to do those things. They are a reminder that we are still living in a pandemic and must continue to do individual things for the greater good.

But more than that, I am grateful for recognizing the presence of God that day, when I was able to do something new with my adult kid, and eat a meal in the restaurant where it was made. It was a reminder of how blessed I am, that I am able to start doing "normal" things again. My family was inconvenienced but we have not suffered these past 18 months – there were stretches of time we couldn't visit our mothers in long-term care; there were funerals missed and friends not visited and Christmas gifts not opened in person. But our kids kept their jobs and technology kept us connected and today we are safe and happy and looking ahead to new adventures and events.

I've been aware all through the pandemic that God has been with me and my loved ones, and also with the myriad of people – professional, parental and volunteer – whose dedication has inspired all of us, and that He will continue to be with us all as we head back towards normal.

Therasa Hunt

Did You Know?....

... that every week the National Church puts out **newsletters from all across the church?** (At the end you can click subscribe and receive your own!) They come in a variety of formats - here is a colourful version of the Anglican Journal: https://www.anglicanjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/aj-sep2021_web.pdf

... that the Anglican Church of Canada adopted a **Racial Justice Charter** more than a decade ago? Check it out here: <https://www.anglican.ca/about/ccc/cogs/arwg/charter/>

