

News for Scattered Pews

September 2024



Val's Voice

As I sit here this early afternoon, the sun is making its way in and out of clouds. All morning the day has been a bit dull, in the cloudy sense, but the air has been fresh, reminding us that Fall is around the corner.

I have "been occupied with many things", as Jesus said in the Gospel of Luke. But as I looked at suggested resources for the upcoming Season of Creation, I was struck by how lovely they are, even how delightful. They just about all encourage us not to worry about the many things about which we humans tend to worry. About our money, or our control. About our plans, or even about Scripture.

Let it all go, teacher after teacher writes. Don't worry, but instead savour the beauty of the world, the beauty of this moment. The gentleness (or perhaps hilarity) of the person in front of you. The brilliant colour of the flowers and the darkness of the soil where it all grows.

These days I think some of us are a bit preoccupied with how life in our parish will get sorted out – how the bills will be paid and how the budget lines will be reconciled. Many are also thrilled to see so many people at church on Sunday, joining together in prayer and song! (Many of us, of course, are also thinking about all sorts of other things that present themselves to us – grandchildren, the taste of fresh salad or pulled pork, the joys and challenges of relationships and life, the goodness of a coffee in the morning, or the troubles in our own lives or the lives of those we love.)

As I ponder the meaning of the Season of Creation, or the meaning of life itself, I find that I fall in line behind these matriarchs and patriarchs, wise ones of past generations, who just like wise ones of our own generation remind us to treasure the gifts of life and beauty that are given to us.

There will always be plenty to worry about, but there is at least as much to wonder at in the good in this creation where we live our lives.

Wherever you find yourselves sitting these days, pause to marvel at this world and to honour our God – the Trinity- who creates, renews and breathes through it day by day. The Trinity, our God, will do that as well for our lives – creating us anew, renewing our lives and world and breathing new life into us and all creation wherever it is needed the most.



Art of Bernard Seguin Poirier (pgs 1,2)

Collect for the Beauty of Creation

Loving God, Creator of all,
we thank you for the beauty of Creation;
show us, we pray, how to respect
the fragile balance of life.

Guide by your wisdom those who have power
to care for or to destroy the environment,
that by the decisions we make,
life may be cherished
and a good and fruitful earth be preserved for
future generations; through Jesus Christ our
Lord. Amen.

St. Basil the Great (329-379), Hexaemeron, Homily V, "The Germination of the Earth"

I want creation to penetrate you with so much admiration that wherever you go, the least plant may bring you the clear remembrance of the Creator... One blade of grass or one speck of dust is enough to occupy your entire mind in beholding the art with which it has been made.

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St. Augustine (354–430), *De Civit. Dei*, Book XVI

Some people, in order to discover God, read books. But there is a great book: the very appearance of created things. Look above you! Look below you! Read it. God, whom you want to discover, never wrote that book with ink. Instead He set before your eyes the things that He had made. Can you ask for a louder voice than that?

Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179)

We shall awaken from our dullness and rise vigorously toward justice. If we fall in love with creation deeper and deeper, we will respond to its endangerment with passion.

Glance at the sun. See the moon and the stars. Gaze at the beauty of earth's greenings. Now, think. What delight God gives to humankind with all these things. All nature is at the disposal of humankind. We are to work with it. For without it we cannot survive.

All living creatures are sparks from the radiation of God's brilliance, emerging from God like the rays of the sun.

Blessings to all of you this evening, and tomorrow, a new day. In the name of Christ.

Val

Vestry Notes from August 13

Vestry agreed to once again celebrate September by **asking parishioners to donate backpacks** to schoolchildren – some to kids from our own parish, to remind them of our care for them, and the remainder given to Victor Mager School. The donated backpacks were blessed on September 8 and distributed that day.

For our next **community information event**, the parish has invited a presenter from the Dept of Consumer Protection to speak about Frauds and Scams. The presentation will take place in early October – the date is still to be set.



We will be offering a **regular youth group at for kids Grades 6 – 12** in the church. Ben Girgis will be coordinating. The first meeting is Thursday, September 12 from 6-8 pm. If you are interested in assisting him, please speak to Ben or Rev. Val.

We would like **your input on Adult Education** programs for this fall. Some options include:

- Six-week online classes are available from Canadian Mennonite University including: *Wisdom, Tension and Conflict in the Gospel of John*; *Dreams and Dreaming in Scripture and our Lives*; and *Coming to Terms with Christian Anti-Semitism*. There are others as well. All are available on Zoom, and are designed for adult learners, not full-time students, for \$10. For more info, check out <https://www.cmu.ca/community/xplore>
- A book or movie club – please offer your suggestions for monthly book or movie discussions.
- A six-week program on prayer which could begin in mid-October.

Watch for a ministry fair in the upper hall during coffee time over the next weeks, which will **outline some of our past and upcoming parish activities**.

Vital Seniors is considering **resuming the monthly seniors' lunch** – with speakers. If this sounds like something you'd like, please sign the interest sheet on the table at the back of the church, so we can let Lesley Smith of Vital Seniors know.

Remember the **upcoming parish conversation on September 22 at 12:15** with Simon Blaikie from the Diocese. This is an opportunity for us to hear each others' thoughts about our parish and what our future direction should be.

A family that has been waiting for years to come to Canada as **refugees** is making progress through the system. Time will tell how things unfold, but please hold them in your prayers!

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

3 St. Vital Road, Winnipeg MB R2M 1Z2
stmarymagdalene.wpg.org

Phone: 204-253-0555 (church office) 204-930-7253 (Val's cell)
Email: stmary@mymts.net

St. Mary Magdalene Church Calendar

September 2024		October 2024	
1 Sun	15 th Sunday after Pentecost Eucharist 10:30 am	6Sun	20 th Sunday after Pentecost Eucharist 10:30 am
2 Mon	<i>Labour Day</i>	8 Tue	Vista Park Lodge 2:15 pm Dakota House 3:30 pm
8 Sun	16 th Sunday after Pentecost Eucharist 10:30 am	13 Sun	21 st Sunday after Pentecost Eucharist 10:30 am
10 Tue	Vista Park Lodge 2:15 pm Dakota House 3:30 pm	14 Mon	<i>Thanksgiving Day</i>
15 Sun	17 th Sunday after Pentecost Eucharist 10:30 am	15 Tue	
19 Thu	River Park Gardens 10:30 am	17 Thu	River Park Gardens 10:30 am
22 Sun	18 th Sunday after Pentecost Eucharist 10:30 am Parish Conversation 12:15 pm	20 Sun	22 nd Sunday after Pentecost Eucharist 10:30 am
24 Tue	Vestry Meeting 7 pm	22 Tue	Vestry Meeting 7 pm
29 Sun	19 th Sunday after Pentecost Eucharist 10:30 am ACF 7 pm	27 Sun	23 rd Sunday after Pentecost Eucharist 10:30 am ACF 7 pm

ACF = Asian Christian Fellowship service in Urdu

Weekly Activities

Christian Meditation	Thursdays 7:30 pm (online)	Contact: Barbara B
Choir Practice	Sundays 9 am	Contact: Nancy
Study Group(s) – Bible or Movie, Book or Prayer	Begins soon	Contact: Val