

News for Scattered Pews

Summer 2024



Val's Voice

Hope your lazy days of summer have started in earnest by now, and that you are able to spend time with family, neighbours and friends, enjoying good weather in this beautiful world!

By the time you read this Paul and I will be off for a week doing just that! Rev. Helen Holbrook will lead worship on July 21, and I will see you again for St Mary Magdalene Day.

In the midst of these lovely summer things, I want to let you know that Corporation has met and looked carefully and the trends of giving in our parish.

Our immediate conclusion is that at this point in time, we don't have enough income to meet our expenses. We have withdrawn \$15,000 of our parish investments (the fund established upon the sale of the Rectory a few years ago to help us meet our current expenses over the next few months.

The longer-term solution, of course, is not clear. Knowing that we needed some planning and inspiration, a couple of months ago, Vestry asked Simon Blaikie, Executive Archdeacon of the Diocese to meet with us and help us work through where we should be going. That meeting will be in early August.

Simon has been meeting with a lot of parishes in the Diocese facing similar challenges over the last few years. Some of them have also come up with plans themselves. You may know that a few years ago, St. Mark's, just north of us in St. Vital, sold their building to the daycare that has operated there for 30 years, and maintained their ability to worship in the same space. A North End parish has found a church renter who will use space in their building and help them meet their expenses. (They even honoured their intent to keep a large Pride flag in their building, until they found a renter who was happy to join them there, flag and all.) Other parishes in other parts of the city have begun to worship in the buildings of their Anglican or Lutheran neighbours. Some have

merged their parishes. St. Michael and All Angels has sold their building to True North, to be used as a concert space, and maintained their ability to worship there for a number of years. Other parishes, of course, are sharing priests – two parishes sharing the salary of a priest to serve both of them.

I am sure, as well, that there are parishes where some of their parishioners have taken a look at what is needed to fund the work of the church in their place, and decided that they are able to increase their giving... and if enough of the people do so, then the life of the church can continue in the shape it has.

All sorts of solutions in all shapes and sizes. But what is good news is that these parishes are finding solutions that work for them, and allowing the community building, hospitality offering and good news sharing of the church to continue. It seems like these days we at St. Mary Magdalene are joining the ranks of our brothers and sisters in Christ who are working to discern what shape of being the Church will work for us these days. How will we live and grow in faith? Where will we live and grow in faith? How will we continue to serve our neighbours?

This time of discernment might well be unsettling – but we will get through it. We have all reshaped ourselves and grown throughout our lives and we have become more resilient many times.

Over the next months, we will have conversations that help us figure out what matters to us as a community who belong to Christ, and how we can live well... We will figure out who God is calling us to be, and how we can afford to do it. I am convinced that our time of discernment will be good because we will be in it together... Learning with people we have loved for years... It will be good as we stretch our minds and our hearts and see where God takes us...

Blessings to each of you, for the wisdom you have that we need during these times... and blessings also, for who you are... so loved by God, all of you! (And loved by us, as well!)

In Christ's love,

Val

Vestry Notes from June 25

Our parish **financial situation** remains a concern. Since the beginning of 2024, we have been working with an average monthly deficit of about \$4,300. We have withdrawn some of our parish investments to cover costs, and continue to seek solutions. Vestry will be meeting on August 6 with Archdeacon Simon Blaikie to start discussions regarding the future of the parish.

Rental agreements for one-time use rentals and for regular building users have been updated. We have a wonderful building that would be a great meeting place or venue for non-church events or activities during the week. As a parish we need to be approaching other agencies about this. If you know of any group that needs space please let them know that we are a good option.

We are planning a couple of **educational events** for the fall, to which we will also invite our community neighbours. In September, we are planning a presentation on Fraud/Scam Awareness and Prevention, and in November our hope is to have a speaker to help us walk through some part of advanced care directives, palliative care and MAID (medical assistance in dying).

Ben Girgis and Val have met with the youth leader at Faith Lutheran to discuss how our **youth groups** might be able to work together in the fall. It looks like there may be some fun opportunities! As well, in our own parish youth will be invited to participate as server or crucifer in Sunday services.

Our Saturday morning **Bible Study** will resume in the fall, and the hope is to have a book/film club starting then too. Please submit book/film suggestions that we can consider.

The parish is investigating hosting a **monthly senior luncheon** starting in the fall. Our motivation is to get folks socializing. There will be no cost to the parish – attendees will cover the cost of the meal.

Look in the weeks ahead for a **“Ministry Fair”** information project that will highlight projects that have happened in other parishes, as well as the activities, gifts and happenings in our parish and through our presence in the community.

Once again in **honour of St. Mary Magdalene Day, which we will celebrate on July 28:**

- We will be collecting food for a one-day Food Bank; food that has been donated will be blessed during the service on July 28. It will be distributed on Saturday, August 3 from 10 am – 12 noon. As well as food items, donations by e-transfer, cheque or cash (*please mark ‘for food bank’*) will also be accepted so we can purchase the food needed. Posters and food lists are available at the back of the church.



- After service on July 28, we will have a barbeque. The parish will supply the hamburgers / hotdogs / condiments and cake. It will be potluck for salads and sides. It will be a fun event! Please sign up to help...



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

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Have a wonderful summer enjoying all of God's gifts!

St. Mary Magdalene Church Calendar

July 2024		August 2024	
<i>July is Food Bank Month, preparing for our Community Food Bank Day on August 3. Bring in your donations July 1-28.</i>		3 Sat	Food Bank 10 am – 12 noon
7 Sun	Seventh Sunday of Pentecost Eucharist 10:30 am	4 Sun	11th Sunday of Pentecost Eucharist 10:30 am
14 Sun	Eighth Sunday of Pentecost Eucharist 10:30 am	11 Sun	12th Sunday of Pentecost Eucharist 10:30 am
21 Sun	Ninth Sunday of Pentecost Eucharist 10:30 am	13 Tues	Vestry 7 pm
28 Sun	Celebration of St. Mary Magdalene Day Eucharist 10:30 am Potluck Barbeque 12:00 ACF 7 pm	18 Sun	13th Sunday of Pentecost Eucharist 10:30 am
		25 Sun	14th Sunday of 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	Resumes in September	Contact: Nancy
Bible Study	Resumes in September	Contact: Val