



St. John's Presbyterian Church
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St. John's Spirit – Summer, 2020

FROM THE SESSION

At the August meeting of Session, a budget was set and permission given to find a reliable way to continue offering services online. Once we resume worship in person, there are still going to be folks who will wish to join us electronically. We have enlisted the help of Dave Cruickshank (Gaslamp Village Media) to assess our needs and help us put the right system together. Once that system starts to take shape, we will be looking for volunteers to help us turn this vision into reality. If you are curious about the technology, or would like to help in the setup or operation, please speak to Jeff or any other member of session.

Session has also considered our renters and community groups who have been unable to use the building since March. We have been in contact with our rental groups, and while we are not yet ready to have multiple groups using the building, we have promised to keep them updated as things become clearer. We will do our best to see that St John's continues to be a place of gathering and grace in the community

At our regular meeting in August, in the midst of making plans for our return to in-person worship, the session received a letter from Edna Deering seeking to retire from active service on session. Edna has served St John's (and Riverside) with devotion and distinction, and we received her letter with regret, but also with deep thankfulness and gratitude for all she has done and continues to offer as part of our church family.

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You may remember that in the spring of last year (2019) the session began a search for people who were willing to stand for nomination to the role of ruling elder. The session has seen much change in the last several years, with retirements and departures, and we felt it was time to add to our number. The process began with Jeff and Judith approaching people whom the session had identified as possible candidates.

We believed it was important to present the congregation with candidates who were aware of the importance of the task, and who were willing to serve. Our approach led us to one person who is willing to serve – others have asked not to stand for various reasons – and so we are in the odd position of presenting to the membership a ballot with only one candidate.

Phyllis Pudwell has served St John's in countless ways – including time as an elder. She retired from active service some time ago, but has indicated she would return to service if that were the decision of the congregation.

The process that we follow from here is guided by advice from the deputy clerk of General Assembly, the Rev. Don Muir. While he acknowledges that a single candidate 'election' is an unusual thing, it does happen and it is proper. The privilege of electing elders to the session belongs to the professing members of a congregation. What that means is those of you who are on our roll as 'professing member' will receive a ballot and an envelope for that ballot. The ballot will have only Phyllis Pudwell's name on it, and your choice will be a 'yes/no' choice. The ballots are confidential and only mailed to members. If you are in doubt about your designation on our roll (member or adherent) please call Jeff at the church as soon as possible, and he will explain the differences.

Our return to in-person worship began on Sunday, Aug 23. We were delighted by this first step and acknowledge that things will look much different for a while yet. You will still be able to join us via Zoom each Sunday at 10:30 if gathering in person is not possible for you. The invitation and instructions for the zoom call are sent out each week on Friday by email. If you need assistance, please call Jeff at the church (Monday – Thursday).

SOME GOOD NEWS!

Congratulations and best wishes go out to Pearl Jenkins and Tim Fauser – early in August, Tim proposed and Pearl said yes! They are planning for a wedding in early July, 2021. We wish you continued blessing and happiness in your journey together.

We were delighted to honour Catriona Dunlop with a 'Drive by Birthday celebration to honour her birthday on August 1.

PASTORAL CARE

The St John's family offers our condolences to Dean and Allison Kapcala on the death of Dean's mother Gwen Herbert (March 30, 2020) Gwen was remembered at a graveside service August 18 at Hillside Cemetery.



WOMEN OF THE CHURCH

Sadly our planned garage sale dates in April passed us by due to COVID-19. WOC was hoping we might be able to reschedule the date for this fall; however, once again due to continued restrictions with the pandemic, we decided it would not be prudent to consider such an endeavour at this time.

I want to thank everyone who has brought in their donations, and assure you that they are safely stored at the church. We do ask that no more donations come in at this time; however, all being well, we hope to have our garage sale sometime in 2021, and will gladly welcome more of your treasures at that time. Thank you again for your continued support of WOC projects.

WOC, Chair
Bev Beresh

COMMUNITY NEWS

The planning committee for Project Connect has decided that they cannot hold the event this year. Due to the uncertainty around gatherings and the need for a radical change in the way the event is offered, they have chosen the spring of 2021 as target for the next Project Connect event.

The pandemic changed schedules in ways we could not have imagined in March, but one of the regular groups that uses Taylor Hall, the Hat Grannies for Africa, has come up with a novel approach to their annual sale.

The **Hat Grannies for Africa** will be holding a car boot style "**Yarn Only**" sale in the parking lot of All Saints Anglican Church, 606 – 12th Street SW, Medicine Hat (just off Bullivant Crescent SW and 12th Street SW) on **Saturday, August 29, 2020, from 10 am to 1 pm**. Masks are mandatory. Traffic will flow one way. All social distancing rules

will be followed. Cash sales only. There is on street parking but please be aware that there is construction in the area. It is a "**Yarn Only**" sale. Knitting needles and knitting and crocheting notions will also be available. Follow "Hat Grannies" on Facebook for any updates on this sale and any future sales!

BUILDING STEWARDSHIP

After learning that our custodian, Bryce Gerow, was forced by declining health to resign, a summer search led us to Drij Ibrahim. Drij has been in Canada since 2019, having escaped the civil war in Sudan. He is taking to the role of custodian quite well, and we are delighted to have him with us.