

**FIRST THINGS FIRST
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, REGINA
June 2025**

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

I love Pentecost Sunday! I enjoy the chance to wear my red stole in worship and to celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit being poured out on the church. As the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles tells the story, the Spirit came upon the disciples, and it was a spectacular experience that they described as wind rushing around them and tongues of fire anointing them with power.

They were not blessed by the gift of the Holy Spirit in order to just feel good and happy. Rather, they were anointed with the Spirit's power in order to go out and share the good news of God's love in Jesus Christ with the world. Miraculously, they were suddenly able to preach the gospel in all the languages of the world – a wonderful sign that the church's mission of love is for everyone!

Often, Pentecost Sunday falls in the month of June, so we celebrate Pentecost at the same time that we are aware of Indigenous History Month and Pride Month.

Certainly, Pentecost reminds us of the mission of the church to share the good news with all people, but we may be very aware during the month of June that our church history has been marred by attempts to share the gospel that were tainted by colonialism, paternalism, and judgement of our neighbours whom we did not understand.

If we read the Pentecost story carefully, however, we'll notice that the disciples did not teach the diverse people gathered in Jerusalem to speak their language (Aramaic) in order for them to understand the good news about Jesus. And as the mission of the church continued through the Book of Acts, the disciples were discovering that new Christians need not adopt the cultural practices associated with Judaism that were still important to Jewish Christians.

The Spirit of God gave the first disciples the ability to communicate the gospel in all the languages of the world, emphasizing the fact

that the good news was for everyone with all our beautiful diversity of language, culture, and experience. It's not about making us all the same as each other.

In recent times, The Presbyterian Church in Canada has made confessions and apologies for the ways that we have tried to impose our cultural norms on both Indigenous people and members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community. I hope that during the month of June as we hear about Indigenous History Month and Pride festivities, we'll remember our church's confessions and keep on learning how to share God's love with our neighbours in the spirit of Pentecost.

Link to the PCC's 2024 Apology to Indigenous People:

file:///C:/Users/amand/Downloads/PCC_Poster_Indigenous_Apology2024_11x17_LR.pdf

Link to the PCC's 2022 Confession to God and LGBTQI People:

<https://presbyterian.ca/2022/06/07/confession-to-god-and-lgbtqi-people/>

Rev. Amanda Currie

SESSION

This is an exciting time to be part of the First Church congregation! There's no better way to celebrate 100 years of our history than with plans for growth and development for the decades to come!

We had a wonderful community engagement project with our Alley Murals during the Cathedral Village Arts Festival. Approximately 400 people participated in painting a mural on the exterior of the back wall of the church, so be sure to drive down the alley and have a look! It was a very positive and enjoyable day, with lots of people expressing interest in the church and its activities - we have registrations for VBS and interest in Messy Church! The day definitely made a very positive impression on behalf of the church. Thanks to all who organized and

participated! The murals were planned and supervised by Olivia Redston-Davies.

The Directions Task Force is finalizing the Request for Proposals for a feasibility study relating to options for our church buildings, so that package will be going out to a number of consulting and architectural companies next week and we hope to receive some good proposals by the end of the summer. Then we will spend some time interviewing companies and checking references, before presenting the top three proposals to the congregation in the fall.

At the annual meeting, the congregation approved expanding the role of our Youth Leader, Sumi Jung. We have received a grant from Canadian Ministries (New and Renewing Ministry) so the Session has written to the Presbytery of Assiniboia to request permission to proceed with a process that could include a call to Sumi as a half-time Assistant Minister for Youth and Families. Again the congregation will be consulted as we proceed along that path. It is an exciting possibility for ministry at First Church!

We have an energetic group of volunteers (Mary Jesse, Bette Kelly and Heather Mazurak) who are cleaning out rooms and assessing the best use of the spaces we have in the church. Consulting with all parties involved, the group will make recommendations to the Session in the fall. Thanks for all your efforts to help us make effective use of our space!

We are excited to have four youth becoming members of the church through profession of faith on June 8 - Timothy Omolida, Elijah Yakemchuk, Jonah Yakemchuk and Ashan Ferozdin. We also have a group of adult members who will become new members by transfer at a later date. Welcome to all of you to membership at First!

The Session has agreed that, during July and August, we will not be providing refreshments in the gym following worship. We have a lot of very busy people who all need a break in the summer, and we don't want the responsibility to fall on the shoulders of a couple of people! So for July and August, we encourage fellowship

and visiting, but without the coffee, tea and cookies we have during the year!

Last but not least, I want to offer congratulations to Rev. Amanda, who attended the Knox College Convocation in May and received a Knox College Alumni Achievement Award. Congratulations, Amanda!

Jo Szostak
Clerk of Session

BOARD OF MANAGERS

Congratulations and thanks to Gavin MacLean, who is assuming the role of chair of the Board of Managers! We look forward to Gavin's leadership!

Many of you have been wondering about the scaffolding in the courtyard. The first part of that project was repointing brick on the north wall of the sanctuary last fall. The next stage is to reset the eavestroughs a little lower and install drip edge, to prevent ice damming on the roof. There will also be two new downspouts installed to assist with roof drainage, and an inspection of the front entrance roof, all with the goal of solving the leakage problems with the north wall of the sanctuary. Once the outside work is done, the interior wall of the sanctuary will be repaired. When the courtyard work is being done, scaffolding will be erected on the front lawn by the sign, to enable a working bridge over the front entrance way (and prevent the need to walk on the roof.)

We would like to be able to get through the summer without having to make further withdrawals from our investments. So please make arrangements to continue with your offerings during the summer months!

Jo Szostak
Member of Board of Managers

MISSION & OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Upcoming: First Church will host the Saturday Lunch Project at First Baptist on Saturday, June 14. We have enough sandwich making volunteers but could use a few more helpers to set up and serve lunch. Email Mary at maryjesse@gmail.com if you can help from 11:30 am - 1:30 pm that day.

Reusable water bottle drop off: If you have extra water bottles at home that you no longer use, we invite you to drop them off at the bin in the narthex. Queen City Wellness Pharmacy provides unhoused folks with a water station and the donated bottles so they can fill up over the hot summer season.

Community Art Mural: We don't think of our church back alley as a gathering place, but that's exactly what happened on May 24 during the Cathedral Village Arts Street Fair. For several hours, families, individuals and groups stopped by to create a fun and meaningful mural on our back wall. We estimate that 400 people spent time painting and then enjoyed a free hotdog and soft drink.

We were delighted with the beautiful way that people interacted with the mural and the pleasure they took in being invited to paint something. Many expressed gratitude that the church was hosting this. We frequently heard "What a great idea", "This is so wonderful", and "Really? We don't pay for the food?". A few expressed how peaceful and healing the painting time was.

Thank you to the congregation for approving the project funds at the Annual Meeting, and to artist Olivia Redston, who proposed the concept and encouraged all participants so kindly. Special thanks to the youth group and several church members for their dedicated presence by hauling furniture, groceries and equipment, grilling hot dogs, visiting with our neighbours, and generally helping wherever needed.

Mary Jesse
M&O Committee Convener



YOUTH

Amari Vixamar's birthday was in May. We sang a song for her and enjoyed cupcakes during the coffee hour since there was no Sunday School that week.

We had a regular Open Gym Day on May 3rd.



The Youth Volunteering program has become a regular initiative for us! Our youth group was scheduled at the Souls Harbour Rescue Mission on May 16th. Although the group was small this time, I was really impressed by how warmly our youth welcomed and willingly assisted those in need. Our next regular volunteering event will be on June 14th at First Baptist Church.

This month's youth gathering was a bit different than usual. We started off by enjoying pizza, for which we would like to express our gratitude to **Taeyang No** for supporting our lunch. Following that, one of our church members, **Gail Witherspoon**, kindly offered to host a special session introducing Métis culture, which included a Dot Art activity. Creating Dot Art was enjoyable and fostered meaningful discussions about reconciliation, along with a lovely presentation on Métis culture by Gail.

At this point, we would greatly appreciate it if anyone from our church could share their own culture, faith journey, or meaningful experiences with us. Please let Sumi know if you're interested.



Lastly, the Q&A session with **Rev. Amanda Currie**, which followed the membership class, effectively addressed some lingering questions about the professions of faith. Additionally, **Taemin (Tim)**, **Rina**, and **Diana's** support kept us engaged throughout our entire time of gathering. Thank you!

The 2nd Youth Project collaborated with the community on Mural Art on May 24th! It was a privilege to participate in this outreach initiative, which made us even prouder of ourselves. We had the opportunity to create our own artwork on the wall of the church alley, serve BBQ hot dogs to the community, guide people in participating in the project, assist wherever needed, and clean up after the event. It was a full day filled with experiences of joy, love, care, delicious food, hard work, conversation, sharing, and much more! A big thanks to **Mary Jesse** for suggesting this project to our youth and organizing it so well.

Now, it's time to have fun and be energetic together! After finishing school, we will enjoy a fun day on June 27 and more in the summer!



Please keep our youth in your thoughts and prayers and give them plenty of compliments and encouragement for their participation.

Youth Leader
Sumi Jung

FUNDSCRIP

Our last order before summer is June 8. Then we will not have another Order Sunday until September 7. In the meantime, you can stop by the church and purchase grocery and gas cards from Shirley. Or you can place an online order and have cards mailed to your home.

You can continue raising money for First Church during the summer. Place an order and you can have it mailed to your home. Specials for June include Bath & Body Works (6%) and Home Hardware (4%). You can check on the FundScrip website for specials in July and August.

1. Go to the FundScrip website: fundscrip.com
2. Create your own account. Be sure to enter the Invitation code for First Church - 86MLRU That way, First Church will get credit for your purchases.
3. Shop for the cards you wish to purchase. To qualify for LetterMail™, there is a maximum of 4 gift cards or \$500. But you can order as many times as you want! If you have

at least \$300 in your order you qualify for Lettermail™ Free Shipping.

4. When you go to Checkout it will show that First Presbyterian Church is the beneficiary. **Be Sure** to edit the Shipping (or your cards will be shipped to First Church!). Click on Edit and choose Direct Shipping. Then enter your home address. Select Lettermail™ from the options.
5. Choose a payment method. The easiest and best is EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer) where it will be transferred directly from your bank, like paying with debit! Click on the link to set up your EFT. It's easy to do - just log in to your own bank account. (You may have to click on Shop then back to Checkout for it to be an available choice).
6. Click on Checkout and you will have a chance to review your order, then click on Place Order. It will show you how much the church will receive for your order.

Thanks for your support!

WELCOME & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

The welcome and inclusion committee has been working on a Welcome Statement for First Church so that we can let people in the community know that everyone is welcome here. The following statement was developed by the committee and edited by Session. It is now your turn to provide feedback. Do you like it? Is anything missing? You can provide your comments to Donna at donnaw@sasktel.net.

"First Presbyterian Church celebrates the diversity of our community and is striving to become a more welcoming and inclusive church for everyone. Regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status, all are welcome at First Presbyterian Church."

In the fall the Welcome & Inclusion committee will take the comments and come up with a final draft that will be brought forward at a congregational meeting for discussion and approval. When it is ready, we'll plan to use it like our Mission Statement – sharing it on our website and bulletin, and using it to guide our decision-making and plans.

Regina Pride Parade - June 14

Once again this year, First Church is participating along with other welcoming faith communities in the Regina Pride Parade. Our goal is simple: to proclaim publicly that God's Love Includes Everyone. There are several ways that you may choose to participate:

1. Join the Youth Group at 10am on June 14th to **decorate the sidewalk around the church** with chalk messages of love and welcome.
2. **Walk with other faith communities in the Pride Parade.** Some of us will walk over from the church at 11am, so you can meet us there, pick up a sign, and walk together. Alternately, you can meet us at the start of the parade no later than 11:30 am. We will gather on 12th Avenue, between St. John Street and Ottawa Street. We are entry D37. (There will be many volunteers to help you find us.)
3. **Watch the parade.** Route maps will be available at the church, or you can download a map from the website at queencitypride.ca
4. **Visit or volunteer at the Welcoming Faiths booth in the park.** We will be giving out glitter blessings!

Please contact Donna if you have questions or require more information. Do let us know if you are walking so we can watch for you. You can reach me by email at donnaw@sasktel.net or by text at 306-535-6916

Donna Wilkinson
Welcome & Inclusion Committee Convener

SYNOD MISSION FOCUS

Focus 1

June is National Indigenous History Month and June 21 is National Indigenous Peoples Day. Celebrations may also occur on National Indigenous Peoples Day Sunday (June 16.) "On this day and every day, we lift up the rich histories, cultures, languages, and spiritual practices of Indigenous people. We honour the gifts, teachings, and skills of Indigenous people across what is now Canada and give thanks for their care, wisdom, courage, and expertise." (PCC Website)

<https://presbyterian.ca/2024/05/28/national-indigenous-history-month-june-and-nationalindigenous-peoples-day-june-21/>

On this PCC web page, there are links to more information about Indigenous Ministries and the church's commitments to truth and reconciliation, Indigenous rights and Indigenous justice.

In our Synod mission focus this month, we want to celebrate the good things that are being done in Indigenous Peoples Ministry. "Since 1994, The Presbyterian Church in Canada has been intentional about supporting efforts of confession, truth and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and communities. As a result, <https://presbyterian.ca/sharing/> provides funding for eight ministries that operate in and for Indigenous communities in Canada. These eight ministries comprise the National Indigenous Ministries Council." (PCC website)

Two of these ministries are in the Synod of Saskatchewan.



Mistawasis Memorial Presbyterian Church – Mistawasis First Nation, SK

"Mistawasis Memorial Presbyterian Church was established at the Mistawasis Nehiyawak First Nation since shortly after the signing of Treaty Six in 1876."

Rev. Stewart Folster provided this update on activities at Mistawasis:

"The Mistawasis Memorial Presbyterian Church has been busy doing a lot of renovations. In the past year, we put aluminum siding on the outside of the church. We painted the inside of the church and we installed video surveillance cameras all around the outside of the building. This year we plan to renovate our kitchen, paint the steps outside, and put in air conditioning. We continue to

worship every Sunday and we have added two new families to our congregation. My wife Terry teaches Sunday School and she spoils the children with lots of treats at Christmas and Easter. We did one baptism on Easter Sunday and we plan to do three more in June.



We have the same challenges every Reserve in Canada is facing and we feel the effects in our church family. The youth who come from poor families face a lot of peer pressure and they struggle to survive. They turn to drugs and alcohol to cope with family life and it only makes things worse. Sadly, the youth give up hope and they become suicidal. There is nothing that grieves us more than to have to do a funeral for a young person who has given up on life. So, pray for them and pray for the health workers who need more resources to deal with this crisis.

God bless you as you continue to do the special work of our Lord.

All my relations. Stewart and Terry Folster.”

Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry – Saskatoon, SK

Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry (SNCM) provides prayer, crisis counselling, nourishment, clothing and a weekly worship Circle to people on the margins of society. The ministry provides a sense of belonging, care, and inclusion for people of all nations,



though the activities uphold Indigenous cultural practices.

Through a mid-week worship Circle and an art program, people from all walks of life experience the love of God and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Some individuals who seek refuge at SNCM face poverty, abuse, alcoholism and life on the streets, and the ministry honours those stories, while sharing the good news of Jesus’ love.

Read more at [Stories of Mission - The Presbyterian Church in Canada](#), Study 7.

What can I do for National Indigenous Peoples Day?



“You can take part by getting in touch with an Indigenous community or a local Indigenous organization, or by organizing

your own activities with your relatives and friends. For more information about the day's activities, you can visit Canada.ca/national-indigenouspeoples-day.”

In **Regina, Saskatchewan**, National Indigenous Peoples Day 2025 activities will likely include events at Victoria Park, including performances, a Grand Entry, and an artisan market, hosted by the City of Regina and partners like EDIN, First Nations University of Canada, and SGI, according to the City of Regina. These events are designed to be accessible to all ages and celebrate Indigenous culture. Additionally, the Royal Saskatchewan Museum will offer a self guided tour through the First Nations Gallery and drop-in activity stations.

Other locations like Wanuskewin and Batoche will also host celebrations with activities, food, and cultural demonstrations.

Celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day at Batoche National Historic Site

June 20, 2025 - 11:00 am to 2:00 pm

Join in on a day of cultural demonstrations, enjoy traditional Métis food and activities, and take a tour of the site. Watch for more details coming soon!

This is a partnered event with Friends of Batoche and the Gabriel Dumont Institute.

In **Saskatoon** on June 21, 2025, Wanuskewin Cultural Education Centre (<https://wanuskewin.com/event/june-21-national-indigenous-peoples-day-celebrations-save-the-date/>) will host a day-long National Indigenous Peoples Day celebration with a variety of family-friendly activities. Additionally, the Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre will host a Walk for Reconciliation in Victoria Park, which is part of the Indigenous Peoples Day festivities.

Here's a more detailed look at the activities:

Wanuskewin: Expect a full day of events, including guided walks, traditional games stations, powwow dancers, and music presentations in the amphitheater, a keynote speaker, and opportunities to learn about hide tanning and other Indigenous practices in the Tipi Village. The galleries, exhibits, playground, gift shop, and restaurant will also be open.

Walk for Reconciliation: The walk, organized by the Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre, honors Residential School survivors and demonstrates a commitment to reconciliation. Participants are encouraged to wear their cultural regalia or orange shirts. The walk begins at 10:30 am and concludes at Reconciliation Circle in Victoria Park, where further programs and activities will be held.

Other events: Additionally, events may be happening at Remai Modern, and the University of Saskatchewan will also be holding events, as well as a local walk called "Rock Your Roots: Walk for Reconciliation."

For information, visit these Govt of Canada websites:

National Indigenous History Month – June
<https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1466616436543/1534874922512>

National Indigenous Peoples Day
<https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100013718/1708446948967>

[A Glance into Indigenous Incomes and Labour Force Representation](#)

Quantitative data released by Statistics Canada in 2025 in the report Indigenous peoples economic account, 2022 [1], showed a significant increase in Indigenous peoples' earnings over 10 years. Between 2012 and 2022, Indigenous GDI increased by 74.7%, which was greater than the total population of Canada, which saw an increase of 54%. The numbers don't tell the whole story. Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba did not report an increase in available jobs for Indigenous peoples, while British Columbia and Ontario saw the largest increase.

In a 2024 Stats Can report, a number of gaps were reported for off-reserve and Metis groups.

Some trends found included lower hourly earnings for off-reserve Indigenous peoples and Métis people, fewer managerial positions, higher rates of discrimination and sexual harassment, lower work-life balance, lesser job security, and fewer opportunities to participate in training compared to their non-Indigenous colleagues. The report also highlighted that there is a high pay gap between off-reserve and Métis men and women in comparison to the non-Indigenous population.

Another report, the 2024 *Indigenous Economic Progress Report* [3] by the National Indigenous Economic Development Board, indicated that employment rates for First Nations on reserve remain the lowest.

Government of Canada

It's notable that in the 2025 federal election, 12 Indigenous MPs were elected and three have been appointed to cabinet.

International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples 2025

<https://sdg.iisd.org/events/international-day-of-the-worlds-indigenous-peoples-2025/>

"The UN General Assembly (UNGA) decided to observe the International Day of the World's Indigenous People annually, on 9 August. The date represents the first meeting, in 1982, of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations.

There are an estimated 476 million Indigenous Peoples in the world. They make up less than 6% of the world's population but account for at least 15% of the world's poorest. Indigenous Peoples represent over 5,000 different cultures in more than 90 countries."

Each year, September 30 marks the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

Take time to celebrate with your family and with your congregation, in June, in August and in September.

Focus 2

This month, I'm going to share some resources in **Digital Ministry**. We live in a world where technology has advanced incredibly over the last thirty years. In 1995, the Internet was a new thing and few people had access to it. Very few people had a mobile phone. What a different world it was!

Now there are so many ways to use technology to do almost everything in our lives, that it's easy to be overwhelmed. The pandemic forced a revolution in communication and online meetings are now the norm. We can reach out to people anywhere in the world.

All of this raises the question – How can we be the church online? This is a question we need to wrestle with in our congregations. How can we reach out in meaningful ways to connect with those in our congregations, as well as those who live elsewhere but need the connection and support of a church community?

On the **Synod website** there is now a page with links to the online presence of a number of our congregations. Check it out:

<https://pccweb.ca/synodsaskatchewan/spiritualcommunity/>

and let me know if there are links I should add! We plan to add links to advent/lent studies, Bible studies, or other online events, so anyone could join in and participate.

The Ministry Forum (Knox College) is part of a learning network called **ChurchX**. There is a course available there called **Social Media: Platforms and Possibilities**. This is a free course, composed of a series of videos, where you can learn about the usefulness of a number of social media platforms, and make a decision about which one you'd like to experiment with.

<https://churchx.ca/local/shop/product.php?id=179>

Many churches have a presence on Facebook, but you may want to start using Instagram, TikTok, or WhatsApp to connect with others online. This is a great little introductory course.

With a smartphone it's easy to create short videos. Then you can post them in a variety of places. YouTube is a popular repository for video recordings or you can post Reels on Instagram.

You can use a free app like **Capcut** to edit your videos. You can try it online or download the app. Just looking through the menus, it's amazing what you can do with Capcut!

<https://www.capcut.com/>

Powered by artificial intelligence, Capcut can help you create a Reel for Instagram, create a podcast, a video presentation or a photo video, and much more.

There's a great project underway online called **Bible in a Minute**. The brainchild of Rev. Jim Keat, it provides one-minute videos on chapters of the Bible. It's still in production and will take a couple of years to complete, but there are lots of "shorts" already available online.

<https://www.trcnyc.org/bibleinaminute/>

Buzzsprout makes it really simple to create and post a podcast (audio file.)

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/blog/how-to-start-a-podcast>

If you would like to explore podcasting more thoroughly, Pat Flynn offers a free course (Podcast 101) on the basics of podcasting.

<https://community.smartpassiveincome.com/c/how-to-start-a-podcast>

Artificial intelligence (AI) is used in many applications to simplify tasks in our daily lives. I recently started using **Fathom AI Notetaker**. It's a free download. If you host meetings online, you've got to try it!

<https://fathom.video/>

You download the app and open it, then just copy the link to your online meeting into Fathom. It will record the entire meeting, as well as providing a transcript, a summary, and producing a list of action items (complete with who is responsible!) If you click on an action item, it will take you to the part of the recording where it is discussed.

You've probably heard a lot about **ChatGPT**, an AI app. But there are lots of apps available that can help you in similar ways. **Claude** (<https://claude.ai/>) or **Gemini** (<https://gemini.google.com/app>) are simple to use... all you do is ask a question. Try it out...

I just asked Gemini to write a brief prayer for people trying out new technology for use in the church.

"Heavenly Father, we lift up all those in our church who are venturing into the new landscapes of technology. Grant them patience as they learn, wisdom as they navigate, and excitement as they discover new ways to connect and serve. May these tools become instruments of your love and light, drawing us closer to you and to one another. Amen."

I've tried to provide a variety of apps and easy ways to learn about using them. Please don't be overwhelmed by this feast of new technology! Just pick one thing and try it out... and then come back later and try another new thing.

Let's see what new ways we can share our faith and be the church online.

Jo Szostak
Congregational and Mission Development
Coordinator, Synod of Saskatchewan

COME TOGETHER

Dear friends,

I trust you have all kept well! The warmer summer-like weather is a welcome change for some but not for those facing the horrible wildfires in western Canada. Our prayers are with all the people who have had to leave their homes and with the fire fighters working round the clock. May everyone be kept safe and secure!

I am excited to announce the next Come Together event, which I hope will be uplifting for all. From far away in Nepal, the Rev. Lora Nafziger, along with her husband, Mr. Mitch Rhodes will join us by Zoom and share about their work in Nepal as modern-day missionaries. Come and hear about Nepal and the mission work on the ground, first-hand from our missionaries!

The meeting will be on Wednesday June 11th, 11:00 am to 12:30 pm (SK). Please contact Sarah Kim for the zoom link at skim@presbyterian.ca.

I look forward to seeing you all next Wednesday!

Blessings,

Sarah Kim, Executive Director,
Women's Missionary Society,

150th GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA

On Sunday, June 1, 2025, commissioners and guests gathered for the opening worship service of the 2025 General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada at Central Presbyterian Church in Hamilton, Ontario. Almost 300 others joined the service via livestream. The service was led by the Rev. Dr. Philp Wilson, Interim Moderator of Central. Participants included Sara Traficante, a ministry student at Knox College; David Milmine, Moderator of the Presbytery of Hamilton; The Rev. Lois Whitwell, Clerk of Presbytery of Hamilton and the Rev. Dr. Alan McPherson, Moderator of the 1996 General Assembly. Central PC's choir led the congregation in contemplative hymns and anthems and the Charlton String Quartet also shared their musical gifts with the congregation.

The Rev. Dr. Pat Dutcher-Walls, Moderator of the 2024 General Assembly, preached on Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14. She drew comparisons between the church in Jeremiah's time and the church today, saying that God continues to reach out with words of challenge, instruction and the good news of Jesus Christ and ending with this thought-provoking question: Will we trust that God will give us a future and a hope?

Worship was followed by the first sederunt, during which the Rev. Jeffrey Murray was elected and installed as Moderator of the 2025 General Assembly of The PCC. The new Moderator thanked Pat for her support, guidance and counsel and expressed that it was a special honour to be inducted by Pat – a student being inducted by his professor. He addressed the commissioners and spoke of the blessing and honour to be with them this week as they work together to discern the mind of Christ.

Two people from First Church participated in the General Assembly this year: Bette Kelly served as the Elder Commissioner for the Presbytery of Assiniboia and Luke Yakemchuk participated as a Young Adult Representative. When you see Luke and Bette at church, be sure to ask them about their experience at Assembly. Also, see if you can find them in the group photo!



ECUMENICAL LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER ON THE WORSENING SITUATION IN GAZA

Marking one year of ecumenical efforts to bring attention to the situation in Gaza, Kairos and its members, which include The Presbyterian Church in Canada, have sent a letter to Prime Minister Mark Carney, calling on the government to “consider more robust actions to address the apocalyptic humanitarian crisis in Gaza.” Grounded in principles of justice and solidarity, the letter also requests an urgent meeting with the Prime Minister's office, noting:

We believe that under your leadership, Canada can take a principled stand in respecting international law, work to end famine, respond to Israel's plausible genocide in Gaza, and build conditions towards a just peace in Palestine and Israel.

One year ago [on March 22], the nation-wide Gaza Ceasefire Pilgrimage: Canadian Churches for Just Peace mobilized communities of faith and church leaders from coast to coast to coast who came together in prayerful solidarity to walk the length of the Gaza Strip with their bodies here in Canada. We were among the church leaders who met with Parliamentarians at the end of the Pilgrimage; our actions and calls continue to be informed by long-term partnerships with churches, development and human rights organizations in Palestine and Israel.


The letter, signed by the 2024 Moderator of the General Assembly of the PCC, is available for download at <https://presbyterian.ca/downloads/105133/?tmstv=1748021380>

SARCAN Donations for Youth

The church has set up a “drop 'n go” account so people can make donations for the First Church youth group at SARCAN without having to wait for bottles and cans to be counted.

The church's code is **FC1925**. You need this code to make sure that the church gets credit for your donation.

How to: 1. take donations to SARCAN

- 
2. enter through the “drop 'n go” door if there is one, or just go inside
 3. enter code FC1925 into computer and follow instructions - the printer will print out labels
 4. attach labels to bag of bottles/cans
 5. put donation in bin marked “drop 'n go” - done!

Please talk with Bette Kelly if you have any questions. If you would like to arrange a pickup, please contact the church office.

JUNE CALENDAR

Jun 8	10:30 am	Pentecost Intergenerational Service Holy Communion 11:45 am Birthday Sunday!!!
Jun 10	5:30-7:30pm	Bushwackers Fundraising Dinner
Jun 14	10:00 am	Ecumenical Bag Lunch Program
	11:30 am	Regina Pride Parade
Jun 15	10:30 am	Trinity Sunday Rev. Bob Wilson preaching
	11:45 am	Coffee Hour (Gym)
Jun 21	9:30 am	Presbytery at Grenfell
	12:00 pm	Potluck & "Spring Sing" Workshop at Grenfell
Jun 22	10:30 am	2nd Sunday after Pentecost
	11:45 am	Coffee Hour (Gym)
Jun 25	7:00 pm	Book Club (@ Brenda Wallace's)
Jun 29	10:30 am	3rd Sunday after Pentecost
	11:45 am	Coffee Hour (Gym)

Worship continues every Sunday through July and August at 10:30 am.

We won't have coffee hour during the summer, but folks will undoubtedly hang around to visit after worship for a little while.

The Sunday School takes a break during the summer, but worship will always include a Children's Time, and colouring or activity sheets will be available.

Compassion Camp VBS is planned for August 18-21, 9 am – 12 pm.

