

**Inside This Issue:**

<i>Baptisms &amp; Sympathies</i>	2
<i>Christmas Cantata</i>	2
<i>Advent and Christmas Services</i>	3
<i>Region 4—First meeting</i>	4
<i>McClure Church Visitation</i>	4
<i>From the Church Board</i>	5
<i>Egadz Collection Boxes</i>	6
<i>Ministry with Families</i>	6
<i>A Volunteer Opportunity</i>	6
<i>McClure Place Happenings</i>	7
<i>Saturday Morning Women's Gathering</i>	7
<i>Socks for the Homeless</i>	7
<i>Call to Action</i>	8
<i>Prayer Tree Group</i>	8
<i>ICM's Chop &amp; Chat</i>	9

### *Church – what's next?*

The single most important influence in my life has been the Jesus movement as it has been embraced and lived out in the community of the church. When I reflect on my life I realize that almost every significant relationship I have experienced originated in the community that seeks to follow in the way of Jesus. My education has, in large, part focused on studying and understanding what Jesus' life has meant for the world. My world view, including my passions, interests and political perspectives have all been influenced by the wisdom of Jesus. As I have chatted with some of you, and listened to others in the context of Spiritual Conversation groups, I realize that many of you have been touched by the Jesus story and the Jesus community (church) in significant ways. Acceptance, music, inspiration, friendships, justice commitments, support in the midst of grief, and celebration in the midst of good times, have been central to your experience of church. Perhaps that is why it is so difficult to think about the church dying. Of course this death is not immanent, especially here at McClure, but there are signs that we might be living in the last days of church as we have known it.

The reasons for this are complex. The scientific method, the end of the co-operative spirit, the impact of unrestrained capitalism with its related emphasis on wealth accumulation at all cost (with the corollary of driven, busy, and tired young households) all mitigate against church as an institution and a movement. Some of the suspicion and disinterest in church by the current culture is the result of our own bad actions – from atrocities in residential schools to the pettiness and exclusiveness of some church communities – there is much for the 'next generation' to be suspicious about. Those more learned than I, suggest that we are simply experiencing an "emergence" from an age of belief which demanded conformity, to the age of the spirit with an emphasis on individual spiritual self-actualization. Others suggest that every 500 – 700 years the church needs to have a 'rummage' sale and throw out what is broken or no longer useful. In light of this larger context we need not feel that we have failed, but rather that we are caught up in a cataclysmic shift of moral and spiritual values.

A few years ago I was the presbytery representative present to a little rural congregation in search of a minister. While interviewing one candidate, a very senior member of the search committee ventured a challenging question – "Do you think God is in our church?" The candidate paused and then responded, "I don't know if God is in your church, but I'm confident that God is in your community." This response came back to me to me the other day when I was asked to conduct a somewhat unconventional funeral, in an uncommon setting at an uncommon hour of the day. In retrospect, I realized that I anticipated this event with some anxiety; yet, at the end of the memorial, I had a very strong sense that God (or the God-power) had been palpably present in the room. It was an "aha" moment for me, which led me to conclude that I need to be willing to **follow** the Spirit.



## Baptisms

### Next Baptism Date:

- December 9

Please contact the church office if you are interested in having a child baptized



## Sincere Sympathies

† *Donna Pollard* on the passing of her brother-in-law *Stan Sokalski*

† The family of *Norma Karlensig* and her dear friend Brenda Wilde on the passing of Norma

† *Trevor and Dawn Bell* and family on the passing of Trevor's Step-father

† The family of *Margaret Strautman*

## Church, What's Next (continued)

Perhaps the task for McClure Church is two-fold during this era rummage sales. I recall a book entitled *To Live Until We Say Goodbye* written by the renown palliative care doctor, Elizabeth Kubler-Ross. In the book she highlighted the determination of many palliative patients to embrace life as fully as they could for as long as they could. Surely that is our first task – to continue being church, to continue singing, to continue supporting one another, to continuing doing justice, to continue welcoming refugees, to continue exploring the Jesus story as fully as we can for as long as we can. The second task is to keep our eyes (and our minds) open to the movement of the Spirit. As the Spirit leads us into the future we may discover that 'Tweets' and 'Facebook' are the mediums for spiritual renewal. We may need to pursue wisdom with the Bible in one hand and the most recent Brene Brown book in the other. We may need to sell our building and rent space in the neighbourhood Mosque. We may need to ask our children (largely absent from today's church) to show us the version of 'God' they know. Even as we remain faithful to the Jesus movement within the institutional church we need to trust that God is at work in the world and will beckon us forward into ever new spiritual realities. Let us embrace the courage to live faithfully in the moment even as we are seeking to follow where God is leading.

*Brian*

## CHRISTMAS CANTATA 2018

*"In one great crescendo of purpose, the season of Christmas sweeps us into the arms with an unfettered flourish of festivity. The glare of this explosion of activity often overshadows the fragile light that is the spiritual centre of this sacred time"*

The McClure family and friends are invited to experience the hope, peace, love and joy of this year's cantata featuring many beloved carols of the season.

**Sunday, Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>**

**9:15 and 11:00 AM**

**"Let There Be Christmas"**

**By Joseph M. Martin**

**Featuring McClure United Church Senior Choir, Guests, Soloists and Orchestra**



## Advent and Christmas Services

### Sunday, December 2 (Advent I)

- 9:15 and 11:00 - Worship Service and Rainbow Village
- Following the 11:00 am service - Hotdog lunch and **Advent Festival**

### Sunday, December 9 (Advent II)

- 9:15 and 11:00 - Worship Service, Baptism and **White Gift**
- 7:00 p.m. - **Blue Christmas Service**

### Sunday, December 16 (Advent III)

- 9:15 and 11:00 - Worship with **Cantata**

### Sunday, December 23 (Advent IV)

- 9:15 and 11:00 - Worship Service

### Christmas Eve, December 24

- 5:00 pm - Family Christmas Eve Service (pageant)
- 7:00 pm - Family Christmas Eve Service (pageant)
- 9:00 pm - Youth-led Christmas Service
- 11:00 pm - Communion Christmas Eve Service



*Children and adults are invited to be Magi, Shepherds or Angels at both the 5 pm and 7 pm Christmas Eve services. Costumes will be provided.*

*Ushers and greeters are also needed for the 5:00, 7:00 and 11:00 pm services.*

*There will be sign-up sheets in the church lobby beginning in December if you would like to welcome our many visitors on this special evening of Joy.*

### Sunday, December 30

- 10:00 a.m. (one service only) - Worship Service



## Are You Passionate About the United Church of Canada?

Around the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century people began talking about the potential to be found in joined ministries. Formal discussions began in 1899 about amalgamating several branches of Protestantism and in 1925 the United Church of Canada was born.

The inaugural sermon by Rev. S.P. Rose based on John 12:24-32 challenged the listeners to be willing to figuratively die in order to enter new life. The symbolic death of the old congregations led to the new church which embraced, and continues to embrace, change. Many thought at the time that the venture was destined to fail. So here we are, seven years from the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, still facing change and still determined to be a church that makes a difference.

This year's General Council approved a change to the church structure as outlined in the Basis of Union. With the demise of the Presbyteries and Conferences we will be working to define how the new regional structure will function and, here is where opportunities are available for those who are passionate about the future of our Church.

**Region 4 will hold its first meeting in Swift Current on May 31, June 1 & 2, 2019.**

Each congregation needs to send representatives to this gathering. This conference will begin the work of deciding how the church continues to provide direction to its congregants and meets our outreach and mission goals.

McClure United Church will be electing Congregational Representatives to this conference at the 2019 Annual General Meeting. Please prayerfully consider if this opportunity calls to you. Contact Board Chair, Past Chair or Chair –Elect if you would like to put your name forward. Also feel free to respectfully approach someone you feel may fulfill this duty but is too humble to put themselves forward and ask if you may suggest their name to the above Board members.

As more information becomes available, it will be shared with the congregation.  
All material is available for review on the United Church of Canada website.

Maureen Sinclair  
Presbytery Representative to River Bend Presbytery

## McClure United Church Visitation Ministry

Special visitors of McClure United Church have kept alive our connection with members of our congregation who can no longer attend worship. Volunteers check in once a month with those who have indicated they would like a visitor. These visits are spiritual "life lines" for those in care facilities or for those confined to their homes. Volunteers also visit McClure members in hospital.



If you would like to become a visitor or if you know of someone who would benefit from a visit please contact Debra.

## From the Church Board:

### **An update about where we are at with exploring what church renewal means at McClure United Church – where are we at 8 months into the process?**

As you remember, our journey into renewal as a congregation began on March 18, 2018, when the recommendations of the Joint Needs Assessment Committee (who began their deliberations in March of 2017) were approved at a congregational meeting. The board was tasked with striking a search committee to look for a Minister of Worship and Renewal. Please have a look at the JNAC report on the McClure website for more detail about the position. It was agreed at the congregational meeting to support the JNAC recommendation that the congregation would not wait for a new minister to be hired to begin exploring renewal, but rather that the Board would “begin immediately to engage the congregation in the initial phases of examining how congregational renewal can and should occur.” This process was to begin with celebration of the history of the congregation and continue with a process of active reflection and discernment, which would lead to regeneration and renewal.

- In keeping with that directive from the congregation, the Church Board has been placing priority on using Appreciative Inquiry questions during every board meeting to explore renewal and celebrate who we are right now. These questions have been shared with the congregation through the announcements and in newsletters. The Board has also been considering what is necessary to maintain active and engaged membership on the Board and the committees of the Board. The committees have been directed to consider adding limits on the number of years that members will remain on committees to their Terms of Reference, to insure that all members take breaks from committee work to renew and refresh their energy.
- The Church Board is inviting members of the congregation to participate more actively in these Appreciative Inquiry discussions, with the first congregational event being planned for Thursday, Nov 22 from 7-8:30. Those who have been in ministry with the United Church and are currently connected to McClure, have been invited to a second event planned for Nov. 25. Additional events will be planned and advertised in the near future. The board has also asked for written feedback from the adult children of church members about what is important to them about church, even though they do not attend church regularly at present.
- Debra and Brian have been challenging us in Sunday worship to put our faith into action. Brian has opened up the opportunity to discuss these ideas in the Spiritual Conversations he has invited folks to throughout the fall. He has also invited us to a study of the book “Fishing Tips”, a story about the renewal journey of another United Church congregation. Laura’s sabbatical is an expression of the commitment to continuous renewal of energy and ideas. We were treated to a summer of original, unique and refreshing ministry with the addition of Robin Bray and Cassidy Bell to the staff leading us to consider exciting new ways to engage with our community.

We would ask that you reflect on your own experiences of renewal, either personal or organizational and then share your ideas with us about how you would like to see this process continue.

**These are just the first steps. As we have an opportunity to process these ideas in a variety of settings we will start to see themes emerge that will guide us into our next step on this transformational journey.**

Ruth Mireau

[ruthmireau@sasktel.net](mailto:ruthmireau@sasktel.net)

## The Place... For New Beginnings

Every year McClure sends boxes of gifts and supplies to Egadz- A centre that assists children/youth and their families by advocating for, doing referrals, housing and education, all towards helping them become contributing citizens in our community. Egadz tries to ensure each Youth/Child gets a gift for the holiday. Please help them reach their goal!

Collection boxes will be out **Sunday, Nov 25 – Sunday Dec 16** to accept your generosity. We will be sorting and packing the items on **Sunday Dec 16 and Deliver Mon Dec 17** if you would like to join in on the fun we could use your help with both.

Donation suggestions:

**Cash Donations-** please leave your cash/cheque (payable to McClure United Church – tax receipt given) donation labeled Egadz at the church office

**Teen “Stocking Stuffer” items** – individually wrapped Christmas candy, **Gift Certificate** (example Tim’s, Wal-Mart, McDonalds), ear buds, magazine

**Hygiene** (New only)- Male /Female Deodorant, Razors, Tooth brushes/toothpaste and dental floss, shampoo and conditioner, soap

**Sport, recreation or craft supplies**

**Clothing-** toques, gloves, new underwear, socks

**School Supplies** –pens, pencils, erasers, loose leaf, calculators, geometry sets, markers

**Baby Ideas** – receiving blankets, baby shampoo, lotion, baby bottles, baby wipes, baby bath towels, soothers, disposable diapers, teethingers, thermometers toys and games

**Any questions? Contact Terry Clark**  
**terryclark83@yahoo.com or 306-373-7518**



### Ministry with Families

It is hard to find family balance in this busy world. For those who are pulled in a dozen different directions and who are wanting to nurture the spiritual life of their children I invite you send me an email. How can I support you? How can your church support you? Think outside the box and send me your thoughts.

You have wonderful kids and we are doing our best to provide a creative and quality Sunday morning Rainbow Village ministry but maybe you need more.

Talk to me at [debra.b@shaw.ca](mailto:debra.b@shaw.ca)

### A Volunteer Opportunity

The worship committee is looking for a volunteer or a small group to edit the audio file of the Sunday worship service, and post the sermon to the McClure Website. We expect this to take about 2 hours a week. Training and support will be provided.

If you are interested, please contact the church office, and leave your name and contact information.

Thank you

### McClure Place Happenings

“To enrich the lives of McClure Place Residents by providing support and service”

We remembered those who have died in wars and peacekeeping missions, so that we can enjoy the freedom we have today. A special ceremony was held to commemorate Remembrance Day.

Theresa Bryshun is retiring from her position as Facilities Director this November. She has been an invaluable and dedicated employee, whom we will miss. Kylee Parfitt will be our new Facilities Director, Nicole Coquet the Administrative Assistant and Chris Redekop Is Housekeeping and Kitchen Manager. We appreciate the effort that staff contributes to our facility.

Social events included some Halloween fun with costumes and treats. We enjoyed a Pot Luck supper; our entertainment featured the Saskatoon Ukulele Players. McClure United Church Fall supper was a time to enjoy delicious turkey and fellowship. The North East Swale excursion was so successful that another will be planned for the spring.

The Health Fair presented us with many options to help us in our daily lives. Transit Travel informed residents of bus services available. CHEP let us know of their future plans

Our fitness center is being up-graded. A rowing machine and other equipment will be purchased to make our common areas more functional. Plans to redo landscaping around McClure Place are being discussed. The McClure Place Board of Directors recently treated us to a delicious breakfast, this was most appreciated by our residents.

Some happenings before Christmas include 10,000 Village Sale, Christmas decorating and banquet, Community Health Clinic Open House, bus trip to the Enchanted Forrest light tour and a Swap Party.

Life here can be full of fun and “busyness”. It can also be touched with care and concern for each other.

Elaine Tall

### Saturday Morning Women’s Gathering

Women of McClure and friends are invited:

January 2019



Come enjoy a light breakfast and great conversation. This informal time together includes visiting over food (brought by one or two of the participants - we take turns) and then Debra brings a topic for conversation. In the past we have had approximately 20 fabulous women attend. Please bring a toonie or two for the collection bowl to help cover the cost of the breakfast.

### Socks for the Homeless

Thank you to all who donated socks or money for gift certificates for the socks. Your donations are much appreciated and will certainly be appreciated by those who receive them. They will be distributed by the community police officers closer to Christmas. In past years we have been overwhelmed by your generosity and it looks as though this year is no different. If you watch the announcements in the bulletin I will let you know how many have been received for distribution, as soon as I have the numbers. Thanks to you those who are less fortunate than ourselves will have a happier Christmas and know that we care. God Bless You all.

## Call to Action

In an effort to support learning more about treaties, the treaty relationship and reconciliation, the Affirming Committee is providing suggested resources for congregants to consider accessing.

### On-line Resources

ConnectR, is a new comprehensive website developed by Reconciliation Saskatoon, a community of over 98 organizations, non-profits, businesses and partners who have come together towards one mission: to initiate a citywide conversation about Reconciliation and provide opportunities for everyone to engage in calls to action: (<http://www.beaconnectr.com/home>)

The following websites, and so much more, are included on ConnectR:

Office of the Treaty Commissioner (<http://www.otc.ca/>)

Reserve 107 (<https://www.reserve107thefilm.com/>)

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (<https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1309374407406/1309374458958>)

### Books in the Church Library

*The Education of Augie Merasty, a Residential School Memoir* by Augie Merasty (author) and David Carpenter (contributor)

*A Knock on the Door: The Essential History of Residential Schools* by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

*Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada* by Paulette Regan

*The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America* by Thomas King

*Residential Schools and Reconciliation: Canada Confronts its History* by Jim Miller

*Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life* by James Daschuk

## Prayer Tree Group

Prayer is a gift we can share with our church family at any time and from any location. "Prayer Tree participants" receive an email with specific prayer requests that have been collected during the week from the prayer request box and they are encouraged to regularly hold the whole of our church family in prayer.

**If you would like to become a Prayer Tree participant and get involved in this important ministry please contact Debra at [debra.b@shaw.ca](mailto:debra.b@shaw.ca)**

If you are uncomfortable receiving the prayer list via email you can drop by the office and pick up a paper copy.



## ICM's Chop'n'Chat

Thanks to McClure and Holy Spirit volunteers who helped with October lunch preparation at Integrated Community Ministries on Avenue V. Garry Joynt, a first time volunteer, describes his experience. *“Just a note to applaud the workers at chop and chat yesterday (17th). When the doors opened to the hungry public the laughter and visiting began. A mix of all ages were enjoying a good meal, friendship and community. They expressed gratitude to those of us working the shift and left with their belly's full and a smile on their face. Well done everyone 'community was achieved'! A pleasure to be involved, thanks for asking me.”*



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Letters, articles and comments are most welcome

### Next Deadline: January 20

For e-mail submissions:  
 Please send them as attached Word files if possible.

Thank you



May the *spirit* of  
Christmas bring you *peace*...  
the *gladness* of  
Christmas give you  
the *hope*...  
the *love* of  
Christmas grant you *joy*.