



P.S. NEWS September 2021

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Susan's Ordination—You're Invited!

"Look! I'm doing a new thing...I'm making a way in the desert, streams in the wilderness."

(Isaiah 43:19)

Susan McIlveen is being ordained on Sunday, September 19 at 7 p.m. and you're invited to attend!

After five long years of full-time ministry placement and Master of Divinity studies through the Atlantic School of Theology, Churchill Park United Church (the community of faith which sponsored her candidacy) and Prairie to Pine Region invite Prairie Spirit United to celebrate this rite of passage with Susan. God is doing a new thing!

In Person: The service will take place in the sanctuary at Churchill Park United Church (CPUC), 525 Beresford Ave., Winnipeg. Masks and physical distancing are required; vaccinations are not. If you have questions, please call the CPUC office at 204-452-8561.

Online: Email CPUC to request the Zoom link for the service and it will be sent to you. The livestream will begin at 7 p.m.

Prairie Spirit United Church

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Office Hours: Tuesday - Friday • 10 am - 2 pm

prairiespirituc.org

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Farewell from Reverend DuVal

A Word of Thanks, and Best Wishes

Friends, this week marks the end of my work at Prairie Spirit. I want you all to know that I feel privileged to have walked some of this path of transition with you.

It is the nature of faith community, and also of ministry that we join together for a time to build a mission on the foundation that has been left for us by others. Then when the time comes we leave the task in the hands of those who will carry it forward. I am delighted that Susan is taking on the next part of the journey.

The Regional Council has some guidelines that are followed when a clergy leaves an appointment. Primarily it means you will not see me at worship, or funerals in the foreseeable future. This is simply to allow you to be focused on the future without distractions. I am not shutting myself off, just creating a buffer so that you can build some new relationships and new ministries.

Be assured, I will be following news of Prairie Spirit with enthusiasm as you embark on new initiatives and pursue new directions.

Thank you all for your support and guidance as we have lived through this uncharted territory.

God's blessing be with you as the coming months lead us to new possibilities.

Paul DuVal

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Blessings and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ!

What exciting days these are to be the people of God at Prairie Spirit United Church! It is September, always a time for fresh energy and excitement as we return from summer schedules (those who had them) to the rich life of an active community of faith.

And our community of faith is definitely active. We've found new ways to live into our calling—both as an amalgamated congregation and as a congregation mid-COVID. We're worshipping, now online. We're serving, now with masks and sanitizer and routines for keeping one another safe. We're giving, digitally or by mail or PAR. And we're caring for one another, over the phone or outdoors in person or by any one of a dozen other ways that this friendly, compassionate community has come up with for showing love and concern.

This is a beautiful time for me, then, to begin my relationship with you as your new minister. I've been diligently working away since early July when I relocated to Winnipeg. I've met your staff, most of your leadership team, and many more of you through phone calls and outdoor visits. Gradually, bit by bit, one at a time, we are getting to know each other. In the process, over time, we'll discover together why God has called us into this new relationship.

While some of the specifics of how we will “be church” together continue to evolve, we know this much is true: we serve God who created something out of nothing (Genesis 1-2), who makes a way where there appears to be no way (Exodus 14-15), who has proven to us that love is stronger than death (John 20). We are resurrection people. This is our specialty. Though there are ways of being church that have changed, God has already begun a new thing in us.

I ask two things for our family of faith as we begin September together. First, I ask that you'll pray for our congregational leaders, for their strength of purpose and clear discernment as they continue to make good decisions on our behalf. Second, I ask that you'll actively look for your own, personal way of “being church” with this family of faith. It may not be through the same ways you enjoyed pre-COVID (or even pre-amalgamation); it may be time for a new way for you to live into your calling.

You are a vital part of God's purposes for this time in the ministry of Prairie Spirit. If you have questions or concerns, please let me know. And in the meantime, I am praying for you, that as people called to serve God through Prairie Spirit, you will know how important and loved each one of you is.

May the grace of God go with you, now and always.

Susan McIlveen

OVERSIGHT COUNCIL

It seems a long time since Prairie Spirit's Annual Meeting in March of 2020, when a motion from the floor caused us to close our doors due to the very real threat of a global pandemic. We didn't know very much about COVID-19 in those days but we knew that we needed to keep our congregation, staff and renters safe from the threat of an illness that was air born, thrived in close quarters and hit seniors and immunocompromised people hard.

Since then we have learned to cope, we have gone on-line in order to bring our Sunday services to our congregation, our teams and the Oversight Council continued to conduct the business of the church over zoom. We were able to have a Community of Faith Meeting and an Annual Meeting during this time. We have found ways to connect socially with people through The Happy Gang and Let's Talk Books as well as phone calls. Most importantly during this time we have been able to bring Susan McIlveen, our first called minister, to Prairie Spirit. These are all successes for our congregation.

The decision to close was easy, now eighteen months later the decision to open is proving to be much harder. The Oversight Council has struggled with this decision. The results from the survey showed that you are having this same struggle. We all want to be back worshipping together in our sanctuary and visiting with our church family afterwards. However, that desire must be weighed against the need to keep our most vulnerable folks and our cherished children safe, while not turning some people away from the joy of worship. We encourage vaccination but must extend a loving hand to those who are hesitant or unable to be vaccinated.

So, for now, we will wait and see what September brings. Excited children are heading back to school, people are moving indoors and a fourth wave of infections is predicted. Our on-line services will continue and the Oversight Council will review the situation at the September Council meeting. We trust that we will be led with a loving hand to the decision that is best for all of Prairie Spirit.

Blessings
Val Goodridge

FINANCE TEAM

Finance Team Members

Marilyn McCorrister
(Treasurer)

Marg Fisher
Mike Hill

Carol Scott

LETTER TO EVERYONE WHO DONATED TO PSUC FROM JANUARY 1 TO JUNE 30, 2021

During the last week of July donation statements and a letter went out to everyone who donated to PSUC between January 1 and June 30 of 2021. The Oversight Council Executive requested that the Finance Team communicate the information contained in that letter to everyone in the community of faith. This was done in the August newsletter. The Oversight Council has requested that this information reappear in the September newsletter with updated year to date figures.

There are several individual/families who have not contributed to PSUC in 2021, or in some cases not donated since March of 2020 when COVID started.

The letter began by thanking those who had donated for continued contributions to the life and work of PSUC especially during this stressful and unusual time of the COVID19 pandemic.

Financial Overview

For your information the operating revenue, expenses and shortfall as of August 31, 2021 were:

Revenue \$144,145 - this figure includes donations, fund raising, rentals and gov subsidies

Expenses \$168,314 –

Shortfall \$(24,169)

Note: Contributions to and payments from restricted funds: M&S, I Just City, Portage Avenue Food Bank, Building Fund etc. are not included in these amounts.

July and August are usually months with less income. This year for the months of July and August we also had increased ministerial salaries. For two months PSUC had 1.75 ministers up from two half time ministers from mid February to June. Rev Paul Duval was previously approved to move to .75 time as of July 1. Paul's term ended August 31.

We also had to pay some moving expenses for Susan in July. It is noted and appreciated that members of the community of faith donated half of the money required to pay these moving expenses but the balance shows up as an increase in operating expenses for July.

There were also some unexpected property expenses over the summer as a result of a fire inspection requiring some jobs to be done.

It is also noted that the M&S givings for 2021 are currently more than 8% less than the same period in 2020. Five regular contributors have recently deceased. The loss of their monthly contributions will further decrease the M&S givings for 2021 as well as the contribution to local expenses.

The Federal and Provincial government have both greatly contributed to the revenue of Prairie Spirit United Church over the past year and a half. We have received \$42,853 Wage Subsidy money from the Federal Government and \$20,000 Manitoba Bridge Grant from the Provincial Government over that period. As we start to come out of the pandemic these funds are drying up and we can't expect much more will be available to us.

The contributions from our members for general operating funds for the first eight months of 2021 have decreased 9.7% over the contributions received for the same period in 2020. We are hoping that once the church is open again for services that these contributions will increase.

We anticipate that rental revenue will begin to increase as it has been reduced as well. We have been fortunate to have several renters who have continued to pay rent during COVID even though they were unable to access the building.

We provide you this information with a feeling of great hope. With Susan McIlveen arriving to be our first called minister, we can now begin to look forward to the future. There will be many new initiatives and projects embarked upon as we begin this new relationship. What do we envision for our future? What will we take on to be a vibrant and viable presence in St. James community? What are your hopes? How will the funds currently in investments from the sale of the two church buildings impact on these decisions? Are the funds going to be slowly eaten up maintaining our current building or are they going to be put to another use such as an outreach project or some combination of the two? This will be a decision made by the entire community of faith.

Making an offering is an important part of our worship time together. Your ongoing support funds the operation of the church as well as supports local outreach to the community such as The Happy Gang and the Portage Avenue Food Bank.

Thank you for your continued support of Prairie Spirit United Church.

Carol Scott Mike Hill Marg Fisher Marilyn McCorrister - Treasurer

GIVINGS

The Finance Team has started to review all givings for cash flow and budgeting purposes. It has been reviewing PAR (Pre Authorized Remittance) and has noticed that 50 of 81 individuals/families currently on PAR have not revised their giving since the amalgamation on October 1, 2018.

To those who have not reviewed their givings in awhile, we ask you to review your financial situation and to consider increasing your donations in support of the life and work of Prairie Spirit United Church, if able. Your contribution will make a big difference!

For those who are not already using PAR, we encourage you to sign up because it:

1. is convenient
2. ensures regular monthly givings to help our church's ministry even when you are away.
3. provides our community of faith a dependable flow of contributions, which increases our overall financial stability.

PAR donations can be specified as local, building capital fund, Portage Avenue Food Bank, Mission & Service, World Development, 1 Just City, Agape Table, Oak Table, Harvest Manitoba, general outreach or any combination of these.

If you want to donate through PAR, modify your donation, change how it is designated, or change your information at any time, please contact Sherri in the church office, office@prairiespirituc.org or 204-832-1000 and she will be glad to help you.

Marilyn McCorrister

PROPERTY TEAM

Property Team Members

Dennis Bitton (Team Lead))
Bob Bilesky
Mike Hill

Judy Lawrence
Don Orchyk,
Randy Palmer

Jim Poole
Christine Urban

THE GREAT PSUC OUTDOORS

Despite the COVID pandemic, there have been several improvements to Prairie Spirit's 'great outdoors' over the past couple of summers and we can't wait till everyone can come in person to enjoy them.

Memorial Garden

The northeast corner (back) of our property is occupied by the lovingly restored Memorial Garden. The lawn here was in really poor shape with very little grass and mostly weeds. The garden too, was overgrown and weedy. The garden was completely rebuilt, vanquishing the weeds.



Thanks to the recent rains, the grass is now outperforming the weeds in the lawn. The area under the large spruce tree has been surrounded with interlocking bricks and is designated for those who wish to scatter the ashes of their loved ones. Our minister, Susan McIlveen, can provide more information about this.

Our intrepid gardeners who planned, planted, watered and weeded were Linda Bitton, Marg Fisher, Val Goodridge and Judy Restall. They initially had plenty of help from other members of PSUC but took week-about turns tending the area over the summer. Gerry McAlpine, as well, volunteered many hours watering lawns and newly planted trees. The garden contains petunias, hydrangeas, verbenas, day lilies, hostas, iris, zinnias, milkweed, cedars and a diablo ninebark. A beautiful Amur Maple was also planted in the lawn just to the south of the garden. Come and visit PSUC's Memorial Garden any time. Bring a friend! It has become a beautiful spot to sit and enjoy the outdoors.

Late last year, to commemorate PSUC's second Anniversary, we planted an Inferno Sugar Maple in the northwest corner of our property. With lots of watering, it survived our very hot and dry summer and should soon start to provide shade and colour to that area of our yard. The front (west) lawn was also becoming a weedy eyesore but is now slowly turning back into a luscious green space.

Memory Stone Sidewalk

The brick sidewalk from the parking lot to the front (west) doors was badly in need of repair and that too happened this summer. With the financial assistance of all who purchased “memory stones” (\$8,100.00), the old bricks were taken up, a new hard-packed base laid, new edging installed and the old bricks re-laid along with sixty, randomly spaced, 8” x 8” engraved pavers. The total cost of this project was \$12,786.25. There are 14 blank, ‘place-holder’ pavers in the sidewalk that can be easily removed, engraved and replaced should anyone want to participate further in the ‘memory stones’ program. Call or email the office for details.



Along with the renewal of the sidewalk, the main (west) entrance sidewalk was repaired as well as a short portion of the concrete sidewalk along the east side of the building that had sunk and become a dangerous trip-hazard. Exterior lighting at the main entrance and over the cross was also upgraded to be more efficient.

Our custodian, Manny, patrols daily to keep the grounds and parking lot litter-free. Our contracted groundskeeper, Ed, diligently mows and trims, both keeping our building’s grounds looking neat and inviting.



So now that Prairie Spirit’s outside has become more inviting, it’s time for the inside to do the same. And it will – soon! We may need masks and sanitizer and social distancing, but we will all soon be able to gather and celebrate and praise and pray. Together! We can hardly wait!

SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAM

Social Justice Team Members

Linda Uhrich
(Team Lead)
Betty Rogers

Val Goodridge
Sharon Thom
Marsha Jones

Chris Urban
Heather Friesen
(Mission Enthusiast)

SEVEN GRANDFATHER TEACHINGS (PART 7)

The Seven Grandfather Teachings have always been a part of the Native American culture. Their roots date back to the beginning of time. These teachings impact our surroundings, along with providing guidance toward our actions to one another.



WISDOM

The mixture of these teachings, combined with the experiences of life, is what we refer to as wisdom.

It is given to us by the Creator to be used for good. Wisdom carries other meanings, which also include intelligence or knowledge. When we cherish our knowledge or intelligence, we are also cherishing our wisdom. We must use sound judgement along with the ability to separate inner qualities and relationships. We must use a good sense and course of action to form a positive attitude. We must remember to listen and use the wisdom that has been provided by our Elders, Tribal leadership, and our Spiritual leaders. We must also always remember that Wisdom comes in all shapes, sizes, forms, and ages.

The beaver represents wisdom.

The building of a community is entirely dependent on how each member uses the wisdom and gifts they have been given by the creator. The Beaver's example of using his sharp teeth for cutting trees and branches to build his dams and lodges expresses this teaching. If he did not use his teeth, they would continue to grow until they became useless, ultimately making it impossible for him to sustain himself. The same can be said for human beings. One's spirit will grow weak if it is not fulfilling its use. When used properly, however, these gifts contribute to the development of a peaceful and healthy community.



**NOTTAWASEPPI HURON
BAND OF THE POTAWATOMI**

A FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBAL GOVERNMENT

HAVE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW NOT HAD THEIR COVID VACCINE YET?

Making appointments and printing off consent forms and getting transportation can be a barrier for some people to get their vaccine.

Did you know that:

- Appointments are no longer necessary at the Convention Center
- Most Doctor's offices have vaccines
- Many pharmacies have vaccines
- If you have Home Care, they can arrange for you to have your vaccine
- If you are Homebound, there is a program that helps those who cannot get out to get a vaccine. See below for details.

COVID-19 Homebound Vaccination Program: The province has a vaccination program for those who are homebound and cannot get to a vaccine clinic. Phone Health Links/Info Sante 204-788-8200 to learn more and you can make a referral. Eligibility Criteria is:

- a. 18 years of age or older
- b. Bedbound
- c. Homebound - Individuals who are **unable** to go to Prescriber office, Pharmacy or COVID-19 immunization site. For example, a trip of one hour or more outside the home would be detrimental to the client and/or their caregiver.
- d. Lives alone with limited social supports and:
 - i. Is immunosuppressed (Refer to Public Health Fact Sheet on Information for Individuals who are immunosuppressed – see link* below); OR
 - ii. Has impaired mobility – unable to transfer on their own; OR
 - iii. Does not have the ability to adhere to public health safety measures (i.e. unable to wear a mask)

*Information for Individuals who are Immunosuppressed and/or have an Autoimmune

Condition: https://www.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/covidvaccine/immunisuppressed-autoimmune-vaccine-factsheet.pdf

If you still cannot find a way to get your vaccine, please let the church office know. Public Health is very anxious to help in any way they can.



**DO YOU HAVE EXTRA GARDEN
PRODUCE OR NON-PERISHABLE ITEMS?**

HELP SUPPORT PEOPLE WITH LIMITED
ACCESS TO FOOD IN YOUR
NEIGHBOURHOOD BY DROPPING OFF
ITEMS **MONDAY TO FRIDAY FROM
9:00am to 4:00pm TO:**

529 COUNTRY CLUB BLVD

**Garden produce or non-perishables.
Contact the caretaker using number on the
phone panel at the front entrance.**

HEALTHY AGING RESOURCE TEAM

**Non-perishables only.
Inside St. James 55+ Centre- 3rd floor 3-203
Duffield St-Side entrance.
Phone: 204-940-3261 for entry to building.**

Initiative supported by the St James & Assiniboine
South Nourishing Our Neighbourhood Network

WORSHIP TEAM

Worship Team Members

Thomas Ormonde
Sharon McIntyre

Pat Rothney

Susan McIlveen
Renate Rossol (Music Director)



Fabric Art on The Teachings of Jesus Artist: Judy Morningstar, Goodlands, Manitoba

Matthew's gospel presents Jesus as the "New Moses" who brings new teachings about the realm of God. The banner is in the shape of an ancient scripture. Instead of Moses' Ten Commandments, Jesus' new teaching, The Beatitudes, is featured.

- The central scene is of the Good Samaritan, underlining Jesus' message of compassion
- The top scene is of the wise and foolish maidens, examples of his teachings on being alert and prepared for God's coming
- The sower scatters seed amongst four different soils (shallow, rocky, weedy and good). Which type are you?
- The other parables depicted in this banner are: the Prodigal Son; The Good Shepherd; the Persistent Widow; the workers in the Vineyard; and Lazarus and the Rich Man
- The five small circles are symbolic reminders of the teachings: the wheat and the tares; the pearl of great price; the mustard seed; the lost coin; and the salt of the earth