



News The Pews

St Paul's United Church
10206 – 100 Avenue, Grande Prairie, AB T8V 0V6

Called by God, as disciples of Jesus, The United Church of Canada seeks to be a bold, connected, evolving church of diverse, courageous, hope-filled communities united in deep spirituality, inspiring worship, and daring justice.

The United Church of Canada

These words were crafted and adopted at the Annual Meeting of General Council 43 on October 23, 2021, as the **United Church of Canada Vision**. It is a vision of what the church aspires to be over a 5-10 year span

Over the next two years the communications team have chosen to use it as the “theme” topics for the newsletter. We hope to take it apart a piece at a time and reflect on these words so as to challenge and discern and engage in discussion of the import of these words to us as individuals, as a community of faith and as a denomination.

We are starting with the first three words in this issue.

Called by God

Three powerful, scary, awesome words. The God who created the universe, the birds of the air, the animals that walk the earth, the multitude of species that inhabit the oceans and lakes, the sun, the moon, the stars, and we intricate, wonderfully complex human beings....wants to talk to me! They want to be in relationship with me and are seeking me out!

So just revel in the awesomeness of that for a while...don't rush into the fear and the scary aspects of that statement too quickly. God desires to spend time with us, they created us for relationship with them, with each other and with all creation.

What would it have been like to be Adam and Eve – able to walk and talk with God in the garden of Eden? What deep conversations would you engage in? Do you picture God telling you stories....laughing at jokes....just sitting and enjoying a beautiful sunset over a glass of wine? What questions would you ask God?

Now think about how you can have that experience in your life now in this day and age. Do you take time to read God's word and pray and reflect? We are each made in the image of God, so what's to stop us from re-creating that with the people that come into our lives...for a day, for a month, for a lifetime? At work, at school, at home - make time to build relationships that challenge you, inspire you, give you hope, make you smile, help you just rest, that make you feel loved and appreciated for all God built into little old or young - AWESOME YOU!!!

Sharon Adams

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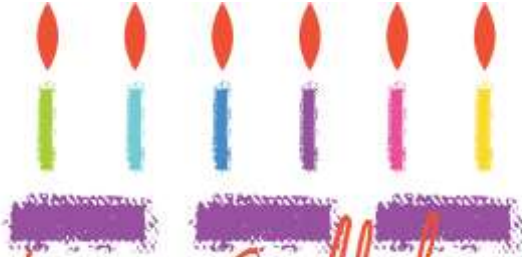
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Please send comments, ideas, articles for inclusion in the next issue to Sharon Adams, sharad2224@yahoo.ca

FEBRUARY

12th Jenny Nicholson
22nd Martha Dawson
29th Tim Brown



Happy Birthday to...

MARCH

5th Barb Hofmeister
10th Gord Waldie
12th Laurie Anderson
15th Karen Scott
16th Mae Allen
22nd Tanya Ayre
24th Judy Barber
25th Alec Brown
27th Blake Brown
27th Mason White
28th Kaitlyn Brown

Grandm  ther
to Grandm  ther
Fundraiser Coffee Party

Even though we can't
meet this year – donations
can still be sent directly to
Stephen Lewis Foundation
100 – 260 Spadina Ave
Toronto, Ontario
M5T 9Z9



You can read more about this 15 year campaign that still needs our support to continue the good work begun <https://grandmotherscampaign.org/>

How Will You Answer?

“Called by God” What does that mean for you? Does it bring up stories like Peter and Andrew meeting Jesus along the shores of the sea of Galilee, or Moses arguing with a bush, or Jonah hopping on the next ship headed directly away from Nineveh? Or maybe you have the chance to sit with someone as they discern if God is calling them to paid ministry within the church and you listen to their story of feeling called. Or maybe the chair of the Nominations Committee calls you up and uses language about call to help convince you to take on a new task.

Called by God. Is that a comforting idea or a terrifying thought? Maybe a bit of both?

Called by God. Is that an individual thing or a communal thing? Again maybe a bit of both? Actually it is definitely both. We are called as individuals *and* we are called as a community.

In both cases when we are called by God it is really, as I see it, an invitation. We are being invited to join in the work of Kingdom living and Kingdom creating. We are being asked to take part in *tikkun olam*, the mending of the world (<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/tikkun-olam-repairing-the-world/>). We are being invited to be part of the new thing God is doing in the world. Really the only question left is to wonder how we will respond to the invitation.

This means we are called to help create a more equitable world. We are called to actively work against structures that create haves and have nots, that declare some people more valuable than others. We are called to actively break down things like racism, and heterosexism and a bunch of other isms. We are called to actively change the way we interact with the non-human parts of creation. We are called to actively create a more loving and caring world.

That sounds a little bit overwhelming now that I see it in print. Luckily being called to do those things does not mean it is up to us to accomplish them. We are not meant to complete the task, we are meant to play our part.

It is my belief that our congregational decision to explore officially becoming an Affirming congregation is responding to God’s call to us as a community. It is my belief that this congregation’s long standing support of the local outreach fund is a part of how we are responding to God’s call. Same with our long-standing commitment to provide space for 12 Step groups to meet. How else do you see us as a community responding to God’s call? What other possibilities do you see that we as a community might choose to pick up for a season or two?

Now I get to the real question I want to ask. What is God calling *you* to do? Because God is calling each of us to do some thing, or a combination of things. Some of what God calls people to do is done in their faith community. Is God calling you to take on a role within the congregation? Maybe you are already doing that. That is part of how we are called. For some it may be a big part, for others a small part. But it is not the whole picture.

For many people the place they live out God’s call is outside the faith community. Some do it in their career. Some do it in their volunteerism. Some do it in their family life. Some do it through political or social activity. God does not only call us to fill roles within the faith communities. In fact I would suggest that God calls us to be part of faith communities primarily to gain the support and energy to live out our call to action in our everyday life.



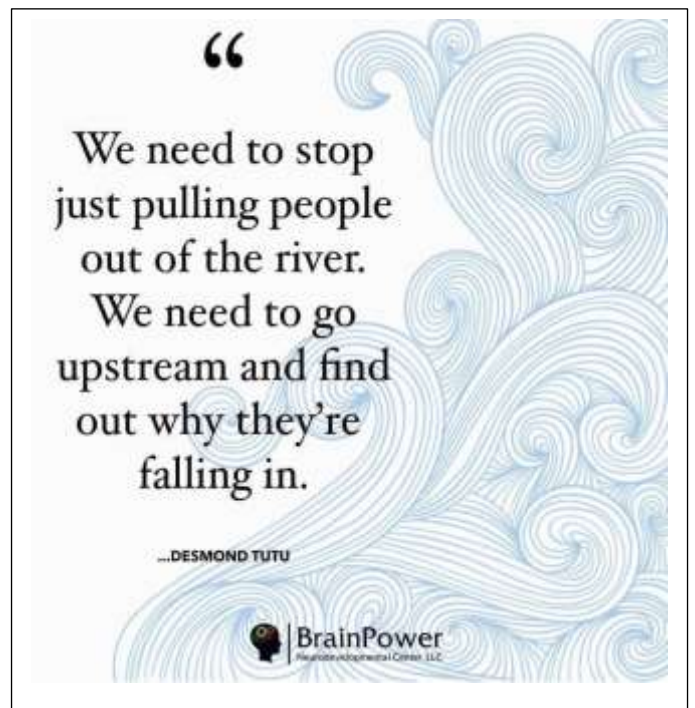
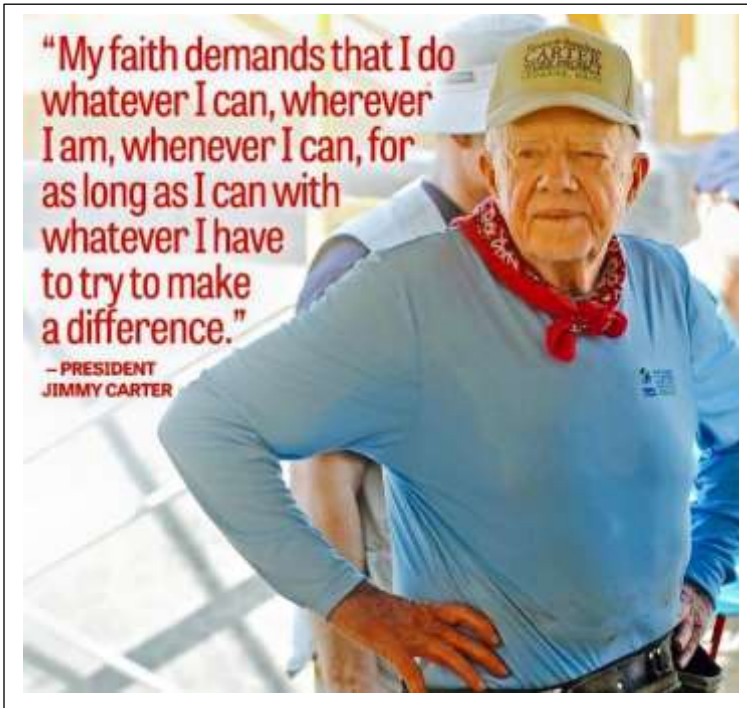
Words from Gord

I repeat. *What is God calling you to do?* How has that call stayed the same through the various seasons of your life? How has it changed? I fully expect that we are called to do different things in different parts of our lives. As our experiences and abilities and time availability change over time so are the ways we are called to live. But we are all called. In every season of our lives we are called to do those things I listed above. In every season of our lives, in every setting of our lives, we are called to join in the work of Kingdom living and Kingdom creating. So really the question we need to consider is “how will we answer today, this year, this season?” The answer may change over time. The specifics of what we are called to do might change. But the big picture remains the same.

God is calling us to be part of the new thing God is doing in the world. God is calling us to be a part of the new heaven and the new earth. God invites you to join in the work. How can you respond? How will you respond?

Gord

From Social Media



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CAN INDOOR PLANTS REALLY PURIFY YOUR HOME?

It appears there is some differing opinions on this topic, but if they can clean the air outside why not inside? One article I read said that you'd need 680 plants in a 1500 square foot home for the foliage to truly go to battle against toxins.

But from what I read out there they certainly can have other air-boosting and health benefits that lead me to suggest that it is another way of caring for our world and those of us inhabiting it.

Indoor plants can

- reduce irritation to eyes, ears, nose and throat
- prevent or ease coughing and congestion
- lower your stress
- boost your attention capacity

Air purifying plants are:

Garden mums; Spider Plants; Dracaena; Ficus; Weeping fig; Peace lily; Boston fern; Snake plant /Mother-in-Law's Tongue; Bamboo palm; Aloe Vera; English Ivy; Devil's Ivy / Pothos; Philodendron and more

Plants to help reduce stress

Peppermint; Chamomile; Lavender; Jasmine; Aloe Vera; Chrysanthemum

Then too there is also the benefit of providing herbs and spices for your food. So, another way to improve life with plants indoors.

I certainly don't think they can harm us, although some are dangerous if eaten by animals or children so do check on that. Now if only I had a green thumb.

To read /learn more about this for yourself you can go to the library read the article(s) I took pieces from above

<https://greatist.com/connect/houseplants-that-clean-air#9-houseplants>

<https://youhadmeatgardening.com/indoor-plants-that-clean-the-air/>

<https://www.countryliving.com/uk/wellbeing/a668/houseplants-to-purify-house-air/>

[Sexsmith Solar Farm – producing more than sustainable energy](#)

Sexsmith Mayor Kate Potter says a full year of operation of the municipally run solar farm has provided more than just a reliable, sustainable source of energy, with the economic aspect of the project already paying off.

The operational report, released on Wednesday, states that in addition to reducing GHG emissions 466 tonnes/CO2E, the project has also netted the town a \$20,000 surplus within the last 12 months.

Read the full article at the link above.

**Editor's comment...when is Grande Prairie getting a solar farm or do we have one I don't know about?

The total number of plastic toothbrushes being produced, used, and thrown away each year has grown steadily since the first one was made in the 1930s.

In fact, every single toothbrush that has been made since the 1930s still exists on the planet. The USA alone throws away over one billion toothbrushes per year. (National Geographic June 14, 2019 – How your toothbrush became a part of the plastic crisis)

We might want to consider using bamboo toothbrushes and ask our dentist's offices to do the same?

One company in Vancouver making a difference ChopValue, is [recycling chopsticks](#) Please watch the video by Business Insider. It's just a six minute watch. Something to think of – if you don't use them don't take them home when you order out. Anybody want to open a franchise here??

Thanks Marge for that video. All welcome to forward items for this page each issue. There must be all sorts of things we can do to help save this beautiful world God entrusted to our keeping. ONE change a month? Adds up over a year.

Lord, Make Me a Channel of Disturbance: The "Reverse St. Francis Prayer"



parsoncarson

6 years ago

Lord, make me a channel of disturbance.
Where there is apathy, let me provoke;

Where there is compliance, let me bring questioning;

Where there is silence, may I be a voice.

Where there is too much comfort and too little
action, grant disruption;

Where there are doors closed and hearts locked,
Grant the willingness to listen.

When laws dictate and pain is overlooked...

When tradition speaks louder than need...

Grant that I may seek rather to do justice than to
talk about it;

Disturb us, O Lord.

To be with, as well as for, the alienated;

To love the unlovable as well as the lovely;

Lord, make me a channel of disturbance.

~ Author unknown

Waste time this year. Go for long, rambling walks. Write poems. Try a new recipe just because. Pray. Paint. Knit something. Read that big old book. Work on your novel. Our world is obsessed with productivity, but "unproductive" hours are the most soul-shaping parts of our lives.

A piece from Facebook, in which the unknown author wrote, "I invited a Buddhist monk to speak to my class. As he entered the room, he didn't say a word (that caught everyone's attention). He just walked to the board and wrote this: 'EVERYONE WANTS TO SAVE THE WORLD, BUT NO ONE WANTS TO HELP MOM DO THE DISHES.'

"We all laughed. But then he went on to say this to my students: 'Statistically, it's highly unlikely that any of you will ever have the opportunity to run into a burning orphanage and rescue an infant. But, in the smallest gesture of kindness -- a warm smile, holding the door for the person behind you, shoveling the driveway of the elderly person next door -- you have committed an act of immeasurable profundity, because to each of us, our life is our universe.

NOT EVERYTHING IS CANCELLED...

sunshine is not cancelled
love is not cancelled
relationships are not cancelled
reading is not cancelled
naps are not cancelled
going for a walk is not cancelled
kindness is not cancelled
imagination is not cancelled
conversations are not cancelled
HOPE is not cancelled

Plan in decades.
Think in years.
Work in months.
Live in days.

THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

ENLIGHTENMENT THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Here is a quote from Parker Palmer that was in a devotional book I am using, and I think it really goes with the newsletter theme of being called by God. (It really resonated with me when I read it.) I think the title could be "Called to be you" and it could apply to each of us as individuals and also to us as a congregation.

Vocation does not come from a voice "out there" calling me to become something I am not. It comes from a voice "in here" calling me to be the person I was born to be, to fulfill the original selfhood given me at birth by God.

It is a strange gift, this birthright of self. Accepting it turns out to be even more demanding than attempting to become someone else! I have sometimes responded to that demand by ignoring the gift, or hiding it, or fleeing from it, or squandering it – and I think I am not alone. There is a Hasidic tale that reveals, with amazing brevity, both the universal tendency to want to be something else and the ultimate importance of becoming one's self: Rabbi Zusya, when he was an old man, said, "In the coming world, they will not ask me: 'Why were you not Moses?' They will ask me; 'Why were you not Zusya?'"

Parker J. Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak: Listening to the Voice of Vocation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 10-11.

Naomi Isaac

Sometimes all that's needed to shift our reality is a little wisdom, spoken to us with gentleness and a pure heart. I came across this powerful Lakota prayer a few days ago and wanted to share it with you. I hope it helps you on your path. I know it did for me.

Lakota Prayer

*Great Mystery,
teach me how to trust
my heart,
my mind,
my intuition,
my inner knowing,
the senses of my body,
the blessings of my spirit.
Teach me to trust these things
so that I may enter my Sacred Space
and love beyond my fear,
and thus Walk in Balance
with the passing of each glorious Sun.*



According to certain traditions, the *Sacred Space* is the space between exhalation and inhalation. To *Walk in Balance* is to have Heaven (spirituality) and Earth (physicality) in harmony.

At the core of this timeless wisdom is the word "trust". When did we stop trusting ourselves? When did we start giving that trust, that power, away?

In many ways the healing path is a process of re-establishing that trust with the infinite that resides within us, just waiting to be activated.

Rachel Haines

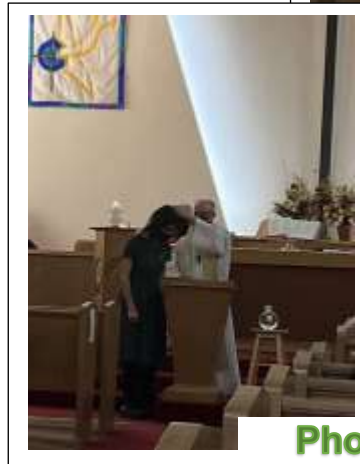


Christmas Season 2021

Advent 1 – Choir was back, Memory Tree and Christmas tree were decorated and it was wonderful



**Dec. 12, 2021 – Baptism
Elizabeth Chambers**



**Phoibe Hanchar's
Baptism, Jan. 23rd, 2022**

Around St Paul's



A few of us attended a screening of this hour and a half video "[The Making of the Witness Blanket](#)" and a ZOOM discussion about the travelling exhibition that is at the Kelowna Art Gallery until April 10, 2022. If you are going that way it will be well worth a visit. I hope Grande Prairie books it to come here some time. Apparently they are currently booking into 2024.

The Witness Blanket is a powerful art installation (at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg, Manitoba) created by master carver Carey Newman to recognize the atrocities of the residential school era, honour the children and symbolize ongoing reconciliation.

Inspired by a woven blanket, this cedar-framed artwork is made of hundreds of items from Indian residential schools, Survivors, churches, governments and other cultural sites across Canada. Each item tells a story of loss, strength, resilience and pride.

The Witness Blanket is currently undergoing conservation at the CMHR. A true-to-scale reproduction has been created for offer to other venues, allowing its Stories and messages to continue being shared. In this wood-framed reproduction, direct-printed wood panels take the place of the original artifacts and interior frames.



WE WANT TO :

Name the Room
formerly known as the Nursery

Please look over these names and/or Suggest one or two of your own by sending them to Carla during the week of Feb 7th-11th

We will put all the names in the Friday e-blast and the following week we will accept your votes for your favourite...either by ballot or email or call to Carla.

Kids Corner	The Spirit Room
The Sharing Room	The Gathering Room
The Learning Room	The Creative Room
The Crayon Room (due to all the bright colours)	Advent-ure Room
The Rainbow Room	Lilly Pop Room
Discovery Room or Centre	
Happy Centre	
Sunshine Room	

When the council meets on Monday Feb. 21st
IF there is a tie we will vote to break the tie or
decide what the next step will be.



The Broadview e-blast had an interesting article that caught my attention as another aspect of affirming that congregations also need to consider ... when they are trying to affirm all voices.

Hello, dear *Broadview* readers,

It probably comes as no shock to you that Western society is obsessed with youth. We read the articles about YouTubers and TikTok influencers. We see advertisers cater to millennials and Gen Z ad-nauseam. And we see our governments fail seniors in their long-term care policies.

But, as journalist and author Ralph Milton [argues in his new column for *Broadview*](#), the world — and the church — need elder seniors, those who are 80 and up.

“People aged 80 and older represent about four percent of the national population, according to a 2021 Statistics Canada study,” notes Milton. “And we punch above our weight class: StatCan also shows that my age group gives 12 percent of all charitable donations.”

But, Milton notes, “Society in general, including many people in the church, seem to think of us as an amorphous assembly of grey-haired sponges soaking up your health-care dollars. The COVID-19 pandemic mostly reinforced this stereotype.” [Read his full column here.](#)

What do you think of his observation about elder seniors? Does it ring true to you? If you consider yourself a senior, have you experienced ageism in your church and in society in general?

Feel free to reach out to me at c.tejada@broadview.org and your email may be included in future newsletters.

Here’s another blog from another long time UC statesman, David Guiliano that might fit in with our theme of “Called by God”

https://davidgiuliano.ca.wordpress.com/home/blog/?fbclid=IwAR22li3i3COyq4HlaJJzA8sWcp_wtYT9LPkYn-BZBZ9hy4-ACiopd8SwpE8



Have you checked out the [onsite](#) programs to see if you might want to register?

There are also a lot of [online programs](#) you may want to try.

With 23+ acres of beautiful land – there is something for everyone.



Call for nominations! Who are the leaders, thinkers, and doers that can guide the church following General Council? Nominations are now open for members of the General Council Executive, Nominations Committee, and Anti-Racism Common Table. [Watch for more opportunities](#) coming soon.

“Get Out of My Face” For Black History Month, Yvonne Wright writes that we need to be ready to challenge racist attitudes and actions.

Moderator Richard Bott and the Rev. Dr. Kyongia (Kay) Cho will be hosting a special [Korea Peace Appeal Ten Thousand Signature Campaign information session](#) on Thursday, February 24, at 2:00 p.m. ET to encourage and support uptake of this campaign. Use [this link](#) to register and find out more.

As well, there is a [special opportunity](#) for young adults ages 18–30 to participate in Korea Peace Encounter with young adults from Korea, the United States, and Canada. The deadline to apply is February 9.

More interesting viewpoints and blogs for Black History Month on the United Church of Canada website https://united-church.ca/search/all?search_api_fulltext=black+history+month

[Have a Heart Day for First Nations Children](#) - Also check out the [official home page](#).

From the Affirming Team



“Called by Godto be kind, respectful and tolerant” –

Submitted by Karen Scott

“I have called you by your name, you are mine; I have gifted you and ask you now to shine. I will not abandon you; all my promises are true. You are gifted, called, and chosen; you are mine.

... I have given you a name, it is mine; I have given you my Spirit as a sign. With my wonder in your soul, make my wounded children whole; go and tell my precious people they are mine.”

Words by Daniel Charles Damon, More Voices (MV) #161.

I have been pondering the care we take when choosing names for our children, and the care transgender and non-binary teens and adults take when choosing to change their names. There is something sacred about names given and received. Sharing our names and pronouns, can be a steppingstone or a stumbling block, in our efforts to connect and get to know each other. Our ability to live a healthy, authentic life is impacted positively when our name and pronouns are respected and valued. This is especially important for transgender and non-binary persons. Our affirmation and use of their chosen names and pronouns may literally save their life! We all flourish when we are supported by allies and our names and pronouns are honoured. I have listened to stories shared by trans folks, who have been mis-gendered, or dead-named. I have heard their pain. When chosen names and pronouns are disrespected or devalued the impact is beyond negative, sometimes with devastating results.

Some folks have asked me: ‘well, what’s so important about a name or pronouns anyway?’ A reasonable question and one that Shakespeare’s Juliet asked so eloquently: *“What’s in a name? That which we call a rose, by any other name would smell as sweet”*. But despite Juliet’s optimism, the divide between the lovers’ surnames and their families’ intolerance, ultimately triggered their untimely deaths.

Since the 1980’s, the United Church has worked towards the use of more inclusive language. There has been progress to include and embrace feminine imagery of the Divine and more inclusive language and theology. Using the “women’s lectionary” this year is revealing some scripture passages and imagery not previously shared from St Paul’s pulpit. As I work towards being more affirming of LGBT2SQ persons, I’m becoming aware of the limitations of gendered binary language. ‘What is that?’, you ask.

Most of us have grown up in a culture that has focussed on a binary vision of the universe: light and dark, day and night, male and female, land and sea, birds of the air, fish of the sea. We continue to organize our world into binary pairs, even as we acknowledge and experience the varied spectrum that is evident between each element in those binary pairs.

For example, we recognize and savour the beauty of pre-dawn sunrise and dusk sunset skies – not just day and night. We appreciate the environmental importance and beauty of the wetlands: marsh and estuary which are both-and-neither land and sea. We enjoy the contradiction of penguins...birds that don’t fly but do swim, and land-bound kiwi and ostriches. We puzzle and marvel over delightful in-between creatures, for example: the axolotl, and platypus. These creatures are unexpected and defy simplistic categorization. As Judith Snowdon wrote: (MV# 27): *“In ev’ry flow’r and ev’ry tree, we see your great diversity, yet greater still we see your love, expressed in our humanity.”*

So, I ask you to consider the continuum of diversity present in nature, when you are asked to respect and share your pronouns, and to use the chosen pronouns of others. There are many marvels in

From the Affirming Team

nature which cannot be defined or described by a simplistic binary definition. In the same way, our typical binary pronouns (“he” and “she”) don’t fit every person. The past few years, thanks to the affirming ministry team, I have been working at getting more comfortable in using “they/them” when these are the pronouns requested. You can too!

For those of you flummoxed by the grammatical contradiction of using the plural pronouns “they/ them” for a single person, you may be surprised, and hopefully relieved to discover that current dictionaries, such as Merriam-Webster, Oxford English, Collins and even the official APA manual for writing university level manuscripts, ALL endorse the use of they/them pronouns for single persons when gender is non-binary or ambiguous. Of course, the matching verb tense is used: (e.g. “They are amazing.”, “They work at ...”). When looking into this use of they/them, I found more than one reference showing that for centuries, respected English language authors including Jane Austen and William Shakespeare have used they/them pronouns in this way.

Many of our hymns reflect the importance of names for describing our experience of the Eternal for example: Brian Wren’s hymns in Voices United (VU) #268 *“Bring many names... strong mother God... warm father God... old aching God... young growing God... great living God...”*; and VU # 484 *“God the All-Holy, Maker and Mother”*. I love the imagery and message of John Ylvisaker’s VU #644: *“I was there to hear your borning cry, I’ll be there when you are old. I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.”*



I feel we are called to respectfully use names whether chosen at birth by parents or embraced by teens or adults later in life. It is one way we can support individuals as they explore and grow into living as the authentic person they were created to be. My sister Dianne decided to be called by her “second”, given name after high school. While my mom struggled for many years to remember to call my sister by her chosen name, Mom did work at using it. I was impressed that even when dementia had stolen so many of Mom’s memories, she always asked if I was Dianne or Karen, up until just a few weeks before her passing. I hope to do as well in remembering to call my friends and acquaintances by their chosen names and pronouns!

I admit it may feel awkward at first to use they/them pronouns for a person you used to refer to as ‘he’ or ‘she’, or to shift to use the opposite gender for transgender folks. It will require some effort to remember to use their new chosen name. You will likely make mistakes, but just carry on, doing the best you can. Why? Well, the affirmation that you are giving, by recognizing and using their chosen name and pronouns, will make a huge difference in their life. I feel it is the least we can do. I hope you will take up this challenge to honour and respect each person’s name.

LOOKING AHEAD Save the Date – Monday, March 14th
National Affirming / PIE Day

π (3.14)

Why PIE? PIE = Public. Intentional. Explicit. Those are the standards we hold ourselves and our welcome to when we seek to live into being Affirming, Welcoming, or Inclusive people and communities.

This years theme is "Everyone Gets A Slice!"

We are hoping to have “Pizza Pie”

<https://pieday.ca/>



Family Day



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We are very lucky to live in Canada where we are free to worship as we choose, for the most part free of persecution or fear. On a Facebook group I'm part of for those of us that went to school together in India this was posted at the start of 2022. "Most violent year for Christians' in India: Persecution watchdog. Take time to give thanks for our religious freedoms.

If I only did one good thing this year... *By Jim Taylor Saturday January 1, 2022*

Long ago, I read an article about doing a year-end review. It said that if you could look back over the last year and find three good things to celebrate, you've had a good year.

As I recall, that had not been a particularly good year. I felt more inclined to focus on all the things that had gone badly. No need to go into details.

But I took the challenge. I found three good things about the year. And then three more...

Every year since then, I have deliberately and consciously made the effort to list the good things that made the year memorable.

This year, one good thing particularly stands out for me. I became a plasma donor.

You can read the rest of the article [here](#)

Editor's Comment....Are we getting big enough to be able to get Blood Donor services here in Grande Prairie ? How / Should we advocate for that?

I had an email from a gentleman named Kevin C. Neece at work this week...are there any "Trekkies" out there that might want to check this out?

Producer/Host of [The Gospel According to Star Trek Podcast](#)

Author of [The Gospel According to Star Trek: The Original Crew](#)

Available Now from Cascade Books

<https://www.cityofgp.com/economic-development/key-sectors/agriculture-food-production/growing-right-here-home>

Did you know New Horizon Co-op is growing their greens locally now? You want fresh produce you may want to check out "[Growing Right Here at Home](#)" article on investgrandprairie.com/

Local podcast launching to focus on infamous 1918 Grande Prairie murders if history / unsolved crimes are of interest to you – you may want to track it down. [Here](#) is what Everything GP had to say about it back on Jan. 22, 2022. Here's a link to their Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/bloodontheprairie>

[Grande Prairie region receives funding from the province for various infrastructure projects](#)

It's Heart Month – a time when the Heart and Stroke Foundation raise funds nationwide to fight heart disease because every beat counts. **This year, as we focus on the devastating impact of heart failure on people in every community in Canada, support from our donors has never been more needed or appreciated.**

Canadian Pacific (CP) will DOUBLE your donation up to \$200,000* to help beat the devastating effects of heart failure.

P.S. Every five minutes, someone in Canada dies from heart disease and stroke – a statistic that's only been exacerbated by the pandemic

My going out clothes have missed me so much. I put them on and they hugged me so tightly, I could barely breathe.

We Remember



Betty Birse
1924 – November 13, 2021

Betty Birse, beloved matriarch of the Birse and Lough clans, died peacefully November 13, 2021 on National Kindness Day, at Michener Extendicare, Red Deer, AB, with family by her side.

Betty is remembered by family and friends in Alberta, BC, across Canada and in the United States and the United Kingdom for her unconditional love, kindness, acceptance, and generosity; her home-baked brown bread as Birthday gifts; her much anticipated Christmas letters with inspirational speech balloons; and her triple batches of cinnamon buns for homesick young nursing students in Lamont.

Betty was a life-long storyteller, much to the delight of her great-grandchildren. At her memorial service in the spring of 2022 at First United Church in Wetaskiwin, we will be sharing some of her best-told and favourite stories. We would love to learn of yours. Service details will be posted on the web-site of Baker Funeral Chapel, <https://www.womboldfuneralhomes.com/baker>.

To read the full obituary you can go here
<https://www.womboldfuneralhomes.com/obituary/Betty-Birse>

At St Paul's



Mother Nature's Snow sculptures

From Marge Riley
From Brenda Stouffer
From Karen Scott



Snow rolls formed by the wind
In St Petersburg Russia
Posted on [Design by Nature](#)



Someone kept busy
enjoying some winter
fun indoors.
Hope you had a good time Pearl!



**Read Amanda Gorman's New Year's Poem
'New Day's Lyric' in Full**

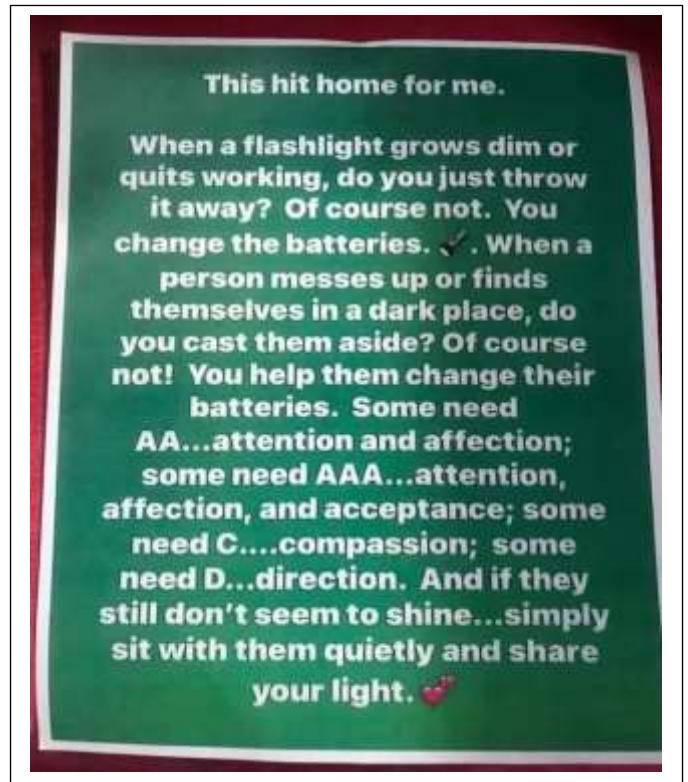
May this be the day
We come together.
Mourning, we come to mend,
Withered, we come to weather,
Torn, we come to tend,
Battered, we come to better.
Tethered by this year of yearning,
We are learning
That though we weren't ready for this,
We have been readied by it.
We steadily vow that no matter
How we are weighed down,
We must always pave a way forward.
This hope is our door, our portal.
Even if we never get back to normal,
Someday we can venture beyond it,
To leave the known and take the first steps.
So let us not return to what was normal,
But reach toward what is next.

What was cursed, we will cure.
What was plagued, we will prove pure.
Where we tend to argue, we will try to agree,
Those fortunes we forswore, now the future we foresee,
Where we weren't aware, we're now awake;
Those moments we missed
Are now these moments we make,
The moments we meet,
And our hearts, once all together beaten,
Now all together beat.
Come, look up with kindness yet,
For even solace can be sourced from sorrow.
We remember, not just for the sake of
yesterday,
But to take on tomorrow.
We heed this old spirit,
In a new day's lyric,
In our hearts, we hear it:
For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne.
Be bold, sang Time this year,
Be bold, sang Time,
For when you honor yesterday,
Tomorrow ye will find.
Know what we've fought

Need not be forgotten nor for none.
It defines us, binds us as one,
Come over, join this day just begun.
For wherever we come together,
We will forever overcome.

Here is the video of Gorman reciting the poem
in an empty theater.

<https://www.newsweek.com/read-amanda-gorman-new-years-poem-new-days-lyric-full-1664343>



MINI CALENDAR

FEBRUARY – is Black History Month
 Sun., Feb 13th – General Council 44 - begins
 Mon., Feb 14th – Valentine’s Day
 Tue., Feb 15th – Canada Flag Day (first raised 1965)
 Mon., Feb 21st – Family Day
 Wed., Feb 23rd – Pink Shirt Day – Anti- Bullying Day

MARCH

Wed., Mar 2nd – Ash Wednesday
 Fri., Mar 4th – World Day of Prayer
 Sun., Mar 6th – Communion Sunday –Lent 1
 Sun., Mar 13th – :Lent 2 (Daylight Savings Time begins)
 Mon., Mar 14th – National Affirming / PIE Day (watch for more news)
 Thu., Mar 17th – St Patrick’s Day
 Sun., Mar 20th – Lent 3 (First Day of Spring)
 Sun., Mar 27th – Lent 4

APRIL

Sun., Apr 3rd – Lent 5
 Sun., Apr 10th – Palm Sunday
 Thu., Apr 14th – Maundy Thursday
 Fri., Apr 15th – Good Friday
 Sun., Apr 17th – Easter Sunday
 Fri., Apr 22nd Earth Day
 Wed., Apr 27th – Administrative Professionals Day



Keep an eye on the [Regional Snow and Ice Competition](#) and join us in brightening up our little corner downtown, or brighten up the corner where you live for your neighbours.

Theme is Love Your Neighbour

RECURRING:

10:00 am Sun Worship – in person and livestreamed
 5:00 pm Mon Junior Bells (starting in January)
 7:00 pm Mon Senior Bells
 1:00 pm Tue Prayer time on Facebook
 6:00 pm Wed...Virtual Coffee Chat on ZOOM
 1:00 pm Thu Prayer time on Facebook
 7:45 pm Thu Choir practice

[Check out the new look to our calendar on the St Paul’s website](#)

Dawson, Shillington to receive honorary degrees

On the recommendation of the Honorary Degree Committee, the Academic Committee of St. Andrew’s College has selected Terry Shillington of Lethbridge, AB, and Martha Dawson of Grande Prairie, AB, to receive Doctor of Divinity *honoris causa* degrees at the college’s spring convocation.

Convocation will take place Friday, May 7, 2022, at St. John’s Anglican Cathedral, Saskatoon, SK, as we join with our partners, the College of Emmanuel & St. Chad (Anglican) and the Lutheran Theological Seminary. This event will be held only if COVID-19 restrictions allow for large gatherings.

Terry Shillington

Terry Shillington is being honoured for his leadership in congregational life, in presbyteries, and in conference affairs.

He is a retired ordained minister in The United Church of Canada from Lethbridge, AB. He received a Bachelor of Divinity degree from St. Andrew’s College and was ordained in 1967. He also received a Master of Sacred Theology Degree from St. Andrew’s in 1970. He served congregations in Germany, Govan, SK, Winnipeg, MB, Brandon, MB, and Lethbridge, AB, before retiring in 2008. After retirement he served at Fort McMurray, AB, Foremost, AB,



and is presently an honorary associate at McKillip United Church in Lethbridge.

As stated in his nomination, “His gifts to the wider church in stewardship have opened the conversation for church leaders. From being part of the organizing committee for the Kananaskis Stewardship Conference to national gatherings for stewardship education, Terry has brought his ‘no guilt’ way of encouraging people to look at how we are stewards of creation both in the church and society.”

Martha Dawson

Martha Dawson is being honoured for her lay leadership in the church. She served as Secretary of Northern Lights Presbytery for 25 years, served a term on the Conference Staff Committee in the mid-1990s, served as an educational supervisor, and has also chaired the M&P Committee of her local congregation.

She has also worked with St. Paul’s Refugee committees, both in preparation for the family’s arrival in, and adaption to, life in Grande Prairie.

As stated in her nomination, “In all her work Martha seems to embody everything United Church.”



NEWS that came out after the last newsletter CONGRATULATIONS – to Martha and Terry !