



Olds Sundre Pastoral Charge - Autumn 2016

Minister's Message

So where did September go? After time away recovering from knee surgery, it has been so good to get back into the routines of fall, however time seems to be flying by!

I cannot write one more word without saying a huge THANK YOU to all who offered prayers, and the prayer shawl, cards, wonderful food and visits following my surgery. This is indeed a pastoral charge that knows how to care for one another, and to be on the receiving end of that care was a blessing. As we approach Thanksgiving, know that I give thanks often for the blessing of being in ministry here in this pastoral charge.

Another thing I regularly give thanks for is the rich variety of things I get to be a part of because of my vocation. From the opportunities to connect with people spiritually as they journey through the joys and challenges of life, to the celebrations of worship and community as we gather each week, to the connections with our ecumenical neighbours in this region, to being part of the wider United Church, no day in my life is ever the same. The richness of that is a gift.

One of the exciting things on the horizon is that Red Deer Presbytery is being proactive in addressing the many forms of transition that our congregations are finding themselves in. I was able to attend a gathering of the churches in the northern half of our presbytery on September 27. This gathering was part of a process with outside consultants, Rev. Joel DenHaan and Mark Nicol, that started with the Bentley-Blackfalds Pastoral Charge as they sought wisdom around the transition that came with the closure of Bentley United Church and with the financial realities the pastoral charge was facing. They were able to engage the consultants with grant money from Red Deer Presbytery. After some study of the community, the Joel and Mark realized that the conversation needed to be broadened to include other neighbouring United Churches – and needed to look at how resources could better be shared. The energy and hope of that conversation was exciting, and this is just a beginning. Further work will be done, and new ministry initiatives may grow out of this.

I attended that gathering as there is a need for similar conversations here in the south end of Red Deer Presbytery. It was good to see the seeds of hope being planted. We did have similar conversations with the Exploring Our Island group that meet over a few years, and out of which grew our joint summer services, shared Good Friday worship each year, and the new relationship we enjoy as a two point pastoral charge in Olds and Sundre. Exploring Our Island's work evolved and came to an end. As our congregations in this end of the presbytery also evolve and change, it is time to look again at how ways to move into the future, and explore possibilities for new or renewed mission.

For some, the prospect of those conversations and changes sound like hard work, and that is certainly true; yet what I found as I gathered with folks from the north end of the presbytery was a real commitment to the work and to seeking ways to be active and vital participants in the wider community. I find hope in that commitment. The Spirit was definitely present among us at that gathering, and am excited about the possibilities that lie before us in our end of the presbytery!

Informally, the Rev. Janice Walls (Knox Didsbury) and the Rev. Beth Brehaut (Carstairs-Bancroft) look forward to getting together this month to talk about some of the ways we can share resources this fall and winter. I'll keep you informed as things move ahead!

Blessings for the season of thanksgiving!

Tammy



Our gifts support the mission and ministry of our church...

Did you know that some church members give by PAR. No... that has nothing to do with golf, sorry. It stands for "pre-authorized giving. In both Olds and Sundre we have cards available that say "I give through PAR" which some folks use to place on the offering plate, as a means of educating others on this way of giving. It also helps those of us who were raised with that idea that one can't let the plate go by without contributing. Those cards are on the shelf in the Narthex in Olds and on the shelf at the back of the sanctuary in Sundre.

Also, Sundre United Church has decided to try something new. Effective in November, instead of passing the offering plate during worship, it will be placed at the back of the sanctuary, where folks can place their gifts as they enter the sanctuary. At offering time, the usher will bring the offerings forward to be blessed, as usual. We are a smaller community of faith in Sundre, and this less formal approach is something we thought we'd try. Other churches of similar size find this way of sharing our gifts takes the focus away from who puts what into the plate and back on the idea that our gifts are about not just our dollars but about ourselves as gifts to one another, and our response to the call to be agents of love and justice in the world.



A Stewardship Message from Sundre United Church...

"In lieu of the Turkey Supper & Silent Auction"

During this past year, our core event and Board members have continued to experience significant and prolonged family or person illness and therefore, we cannot organize a significant event like the past.

In lieu of the former \$5,000.00 that was usually raised at this event to cover regular operational costs, we are requesting that everyone considers donating financially the equivalent of the cost of the dinner tickets, baking/cooking or silent auction items. A large thermometer will be displayed in the church with a goal of \$5,000.00.

Thank you in advance for your financial support.

Joyce



Book study...

Last spring's book study was appreciated by those who participated. We thought we'd start a book club, and read a book every 6 weeks or so, and then gather to discuss it. The plan is that we'll gather as a group and choose a book each time we meet. For our first gathering, we'll be discussing "An Altar in the World" by Barbara Brown Taylor. It is available for download onto your favourite e-reader, as well as through Amazon and Chapters, both online and in stores, and through the library system. Here's a little summary of the book from the people at Amazon:

"With the honesty of Elizabeth Gilbert (*Eat, Pray, Love*) and the spiritual depth of Anne Lamott (*Grace, Eventually*), Taylor shares how she learned to find God beyond the church walls by embracing the sacred as a natural part of everyday life. In *An Altar in the World*, Taylor shows us how to discover altars everywhere we go and in nearly everything we do as we learn to live with purpose, pay attention, slow down, and revere the world we live in."

Mark your calendars for **Tuesday November 1st at 7:00 pm. At Olds United Church**; and bring ideas for other books you'd like to read and share in community.

Upcoming Events...

Olds...

12	1:30 p.m. – Stitches
15	9:00 a.m. – Men's Breakfast (Lutheran Church)
15	1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. – Plaster Paint Workshop
16	10:00 a.m. – Worship
17	6:30 p.m. – Sparks & Brownies
18	7:00 p.m. – Council Meeting
19	10:00-11:30 a.m. – UCW Coffee & Muffins
20	10:00 a.m. – Worship & Christian Life
20	1:00 p.m. – Variety Night Practice
21	7:00 p.m. – Olds United Church Variety Show
23	10:00 a.m. – Worship

23	1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. - Baby Shower
24	6:30 p.m. – Sparks & Brownies
25	5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. – Pario Place (Upper Hall)
26	1:30 p.m. – Stitches
30	10:00 a.m. – Worship
31	6:30 p.m. – Sparks & Brownies

Sundre...

Oct. 12 – 2:00 pm – Please join us for coffee at the lodge in the Family dining room

Nov. 6 – 3:00 pm at the Lodge – Foothills Lodge Service

Nov. 9 – 10:00 am – Sundre United Church Board Meeting

Dec. 8 – 7:00 pm – Community Choir & Handbells concert (hopefully with a bake sale to follow)

Dec. 10 – 2:00 pm - Community Choir & Handbells concert

Dec. 18 – 3:00 pm at the Lodge – Foothills Lodge Service

Dec. 24 – 5:00 pm Christmas Eve Candle Light Service

Dec. 25 – Please note there will be **NO** service in Sundre

