

October 2020

My Friends,

I have been reading about gratitude in all the seasons of life. It seems that for many of us, in the “summer “experiences, gratefulness can be spontaneous and truly joyful. In the Autumn, with the energy of the harvest balanced by the leaves falling, and in the Winter season of short days and few flowers, gratitude needs to be more intentional for us. It is an increasingly important part of our spiritual expression in these seasons of change and concern. It is suggested that we take time each day to breathe deeply and bring to mind three things for which we are truly grateful. I am very grateful to work here with such a wonderful team of volunteers and staff helping us in Covid’s season.

Thank you for reading this stewardship material, and for choosing to *give to* and *through* our church. The list below shows some of the accomplishments in each of those categories:

- Temporarily switching to online services exclusively and upgrading some of the underlying technology
- Holding socially distanced and outdoor Sunday school here and our annual congregational camp at Camp Pringle
- Increasing congregant care calling and prayer support
- Supporting the North Park Neighbourhood Association weekly hamper program
- Providing practice space for Music Bursary students as these spaces remain closed or severely restricted in post-secondary institutions

As well in 2020, when many other organizations have either laid off staff or used government support to keep staff on, First Met has been able to keep all of its staff employed and bring in a coop student without increasing its draws on the Foundation.

None of these activities could take place without your contributions of caring, talent and treasure. The pandemic has taught us that staying connected with each other is critical. Part of that connection is through our online worship so, in addition to this year’s pledge goal of \$190,000, we will have a stretch goal of an extra \$10,000 to upgrade both the technology and the expertise needed in our Livestream system.

Gifts to this church help us keep the lights on, *gifts through* this church help us share the light of Christ’s compassionate love and justice in our community. Gifts to the Mission and Service Fund are another example of “*Gifts Through*.” We have been sharing “M & S” project updates recently, and are glad they have been well received.

Please take some time to think about why you give then please fill out and return the enclosed confidential pledge card which can be mailed, dropped off in the Finance Office or phoned into the Finance Office. The information helps us plan our ministry and support God’s mission in our congregation and beyond. “*To and Through!*”

We understand that, for various reasons, you may not be able to pledge for 2021. Financial gifts are accepted any time in the office, in the mail or through canadahelps.org. Gifts of time are always welcome! Volunteering can be discussed with any member of the Board or staff. Prayers for the health and safety of all and a brighter future are always appreciated.

I hope you are doing as well as possible in this season of many upheavals. While so much has changed, underneath is the constant steadfast love of our God. This is our source of energy and hope, isn’t it? *God’s love to and through us* helps shape our days and our lives, and influences the communities around us. May it continue to be so.

Blessings,



Reverend Shelagh MacKinnon