

WE CAN CONNECT

VOL. 2, ISSUE 3



JANUARY 22, 2021

Sermon Series on Abundance

The current Sermon Series is on Abundance and this series will continue until Lent. What does abundance look like? How do we live abundantly? What is the source of abundance?



Join the Community on Sunday mornings to explore this engaging subject.



Please Pray For:

- Chinese (EM) United Church
- Donna Smith-Bronson while she recovers from a fall from her horse
- Joyce Loucks who fell and broke her wrist

KID'S KORNER:

KID'S MINISTRY MEETS FOR A ZOOM SUNDAY SCHOOL FOLLOWING OUR MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE. WE START AT 11:30.

YOUTH GROUP WILL MEET EVERY SECOND FRIDAY BY ZOOM. WE START AT 6:30.

FOR LINKS TO THE MEETINGS AND DETAILED HAPPENINGS ON SPECIFIC DATES, PLEASE CONTACT CANDICE AT CNDCSUTTON@GMAIL.COM





Okotoks United Church Annual General Meeting February 21, 2021

Due to COVID-19 restrictions on public gatherings, the United Church of Canada's General Council has made the following amendments, in effect until June 30, 2021:

In short, Governing Boards may

- make urgent pastoral relations decisions,
- suspend the requirement to hold an Annual General Meeting,
- and make a decision on their annual draft budget.

Okotoks United Church, however, will be holding an Annual General Meeting on Feb. 21 at 11:15 via Zoom immediately following the morning Worship Service. There will be no in-person option to attend. We realize that this will be more difficult but we encourage you to attend by computer or by phone because we need your input and approval on a few important matters that will affect our church for the coming year. Please refer to the Annual Report for details.

Voting will be by show-of-hands or, if you are on the phone, the Chair will poll you directly. This may take a little extra time but we think it is doable. Everyone will be muted except the speaker. If you wish to speak to a motion you will be asked to raise your hand and unmute your microphone when acknowledged by the Chair.

We think that the simplest way to monitor votes will be to ask for those opposed and those who wish to abstain. All others will be assumed to be in favour.

An important item of New Business will be the proposed partnership between the Okotoks/DeWinton Pastoral Charge and the Diamond Valley Pastoral Charge. Please come prepared to vote on this issue.

Please call Karen Pryznyk if you have any questions or concerns.

**Okotoks United Church
Annual General Meeting
Will be held on Zoom only
Feb. 21 from 11:15 to 12:15**

It will immediately follow the morning Worship Service



A Partnership Proposal between Okotoks/De Winton Pastoral Charge and the Diamond Valley Pastoral Charge (Turner Valley)



As you are aware, we have had an informal relationship with the United Church in Turner Valley for many years – supporting each other's events and bible studies and getting to know each other better because of that. It was a natural progression, then, for the Boards of the three churches to get together several times, starting in the Fall of 2019, to continue the conversation about ways we could work together for the benefit of all three churches.

Rev. Julia Kimmett has been Diamond Valley Student Minister Matthew Heesing's Educational Supervisor for two years and, in the past, has been the Pastoral Charge Supervisor for Diamond Valley. (Matthew will be ordained in 2021) They have exchanged pulpits on some Sundays and, starting in March 2020 they began to prepare and record the Daily FAITH videos, further introducing Matthew to the Okotoks and De Winton communities of faith.

In February 2020 the Boards of all three communities of faith were presented with a proposal by Rev. Julia and Matthew to formalize a more collaborative ministry and share two ministries between the three churches.

What would that look like?

- Julia and Matthew would each work a .8 position giving them the work-life balance they desire.
- Each pastoral charge would call their current minister and each church's budget would remain independent.
- Julia and Matthew would equally share the preaching and congregational care between all congregations. Okotoks would take on a .9 FTE position share, De Winton, .2 FTE and Turner Valley .5 FTE for a total of 1.6 FTE positions shared between the three churches. Currently Okotoks and De Winton share a 1.0 FTE with approximately .2 being supported by the De Winton contribution. Under the new arrangement the two churches in our charge will therefore share a 1.1 FTE (.2 + .9) giving us a slight increase in services and a resulting slight increase in our budget – approximately \$3000 per year. The exact amount will be determined after the calls are negotiated by the two ministers and their respective Pastoral Charge.
- Every church would have a Sunday Service just as they do now and the offices would be staffed as they are now with some days covered by Julia and some by Matthew. (Julia and Matthew would split their worship leadership equally between Okotoks/De Winton and Turner Valley)
- The partnership would begin in August 2021 if approved by the respective communities of faith.



A Partnership Proposal between Okotoks/De Winton Pastoral Charge and the Diamond Valley Pastoral Charge (Turner Valley) continued

What are the benefits?

- Both ministers can remain in the communities they love and wish to serve in. Both pastoral charges continue ministry with a faith leader they are familiar with and trust.
- Because each minister would have to prepare only two sermons a month, Julia and Matthew expect this would improve the quality of their preaching.
- Less time on sermon preparation leaves more time for other ministries such as teaching, congregational care and other programs.
- The churches would benefit from the varied gifts of two ministers.
- A natural collaboration would develop between the three churches leading to a larger impact in our area.
- We would be an example to other churches as an innovative way to combine strengths and talents and efficiently share resources and coordinate efforts.
- Julia and Matthew will benefit from having a colleague in a team-ministry with all the support, collaboration and creativity that such collegiality brings.

What is next?

- All three Boards have approved this arrangement in principle.
- A Memorandum of Understanding is being prepared by the Boards to formalize the agreement.
- The 2021 budgets of each church being presented at their respective AGMs will reflect the financial impact of this arrangement.
- A motion to approve the collaborative ministry will be presented at the AGM.
- Formal Approval of the Memorandum of Understanding by Chinook Winds Region.
- Terms of the call for each minister to be finalized.

Your part: Please...

- Contact either Rev. Julia or Karen Pryznyk if you have any questions or comments.
- Take the time to review the Budget for 2021 when it is released.
- **Be prepared to attend the 2021 AGM planned for February 21 at 11:15 on Zoom and vote on this matter.**



GREETINGS FROM ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH

Written by P. Marie Wedderburn



Another birthday drive-by happened on Friday's sunny afternoon as thirteen vehicles gathered at the DeWinton Community Hall (we gathered there because of all the snow piled up at the church parking lot). Little did we know that as we left around 3:45 and drove down to the lights at Dunbow Road and Highway 2A that this was also the time when many school buses were also desiring to cross the highway. Anyway, we all made it across safely (it took two traffic light changes). And so we drove to the birthday celebrant's home where the celebrant's family was at their gate waving as we honked our horns and waved back. After this drive-by, three more vehicles joined us, including the birthday celebrant and family, for a surprise drive-by for someone who had celebrated a birthday earlier in the month. This was indeed a surprise to this celebrant as it was kept a secret until we arrived at this birthday celebrant's gate. Anyway, two drive-bys in one day with both being along Dunbow Road.

And now for a friendly reminder. For our 2020 annual report, Brent has asked if people from the community of faith could write about one or more of the special events that occurred throughout the pandemic and what these events/happenings meant for them personally. Please send your write-ups, poems, songs, perspectives to Brent by ***this Friday, January 22nd***.

And now I ask: do you remember gathering for worship at St. Andrew's United at 9 a.m.? Well, our Annual General Meeting will be held via Zoom on Sunday, February 14th beginning at 9 a.m. Hopefully, everyone will be able to join us for this important community of faith meeting.



Don't ask for Patience!

Have you heard the old trope, "Don't ask for patience or you will be given ample opportunity to practice it?" That is certainly true of our technology these days. Just last week I was so frustrated with a piece of technology that I literally threw it on the floor with the intention of stomping it to pieces. Fortunately I came to my senses just before I lifted my foot to give the gadget a good crushing. I get it. It also goes to show how on edge we sometimes find ourselves these days. I'm not proud of my behaviour but I'm not the only one experiencing it.

Many people have emailed, texted or spoken to me about the glitches in technology or transmission when we are worshipping together. I understand your frustration. We would all prefer that things run well when we are in the middle of something meaningful. I know that it hinders our experience when the service is interrupted or things get out of sync. I wish I could ensure a smooth experience for everyone. Regretfully I can't. For many reasons, some of which are: the hosting platform is not perfect (Zoom); the devices we use are of varying ages; the internet connections we have to our homes are not all the same speed (some are faster than others); the traffic on the internet at the time of the service, and probably many other factors.

Dealing with our frustration may simply be a case of accepting what we cannot change. If we can accept it, perhaps we can find ways to be more mindful of ourselves and our responses when things don't work as we want them to. If we are getting frustrated, perhaps it is time to breath and smile and give thanks for what we do have – the ability to connect. If we are getting angry, stop and look at what frustrates us and let it go. If some elements of the service aren't working or out of sync, turn the sound off, look at all the people who are at the service and pray for them.

We may not be able to change the circumstances but we can change our response to them. I so look forward to seeing all of you at the service and regardless of what happens, it is good for us to gather and be the community of God in the midst of challenging times.

Stay safe, breath and may the faith be with you.

Julia

Donations

If you would like offering envelopes, to sign up for PAR (Pre Authorized Remittance) or donate by e-transfer please get in touch with Diane by email, okunited@telus.net or call 403-938-4357.

Thank you all so much for supporting your Community of Faith!

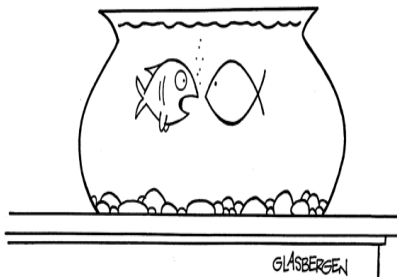


Books, Board Games and Puzzle Exchange

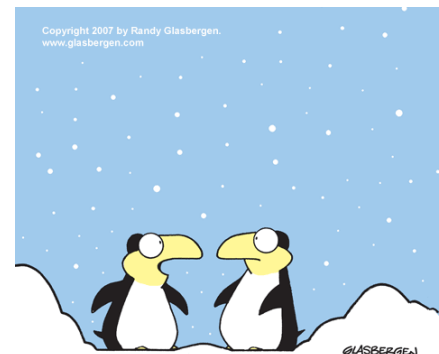
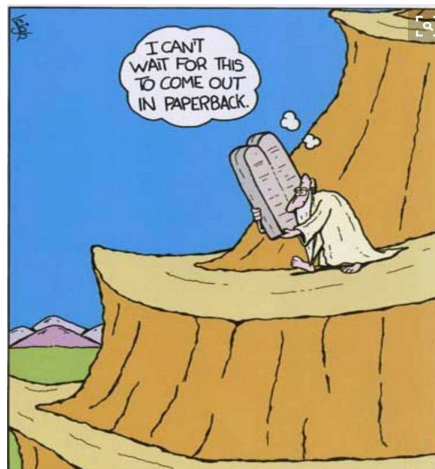
Do you have books, games or puzzles that you'd like to swap out with different ones? If so we will be happy to help you out. Gather your used books, board games and puzzles, clean them up and drop them off in the assigned bins in our foyer, Monday - Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. We'll sort through them and then put them out on tables in the foyer so you can come in and pick them up.



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"Can't we talk about something besides religion for a change?"



"Faith means believing in things you've never seen...like your feet!"

Okotoks United Church Office - We're here for you!

The office continues to remain open at this time Monday to Friday 9:00 - 2:00. Please contact Diane at okunited@telus.net or 403-938-4357 for church related news.

Please contact Julia at okjulia@telus.net or 403-702-2249 (cell) at any time.

Congregational Care Team invites you to reach out for confidential spiritual and compassionate care by email at: okcongregationalcare@telus.net

Please refer to our website www.okunited.ca for updated information and links to the newsletter.