

# Connections - Starting in October this newsletter will be published the 1st and 3rd week of each month

## Prayers

- ♦ Foremost United Church
- ♦ Ev Stange - for health and healing
- ♦ Treena Duncan - for health and healing
- ♦ Albertans struggling with restrictions
- ♦ People who have had their surgery postponed
- ♦ Medical professionals who are working so hard
- ♦ People struggling to make the decision to get vaccinated



## Midweek Worship



### Mid-Week Worship:

Come and find the quiet centre.  
Come catch your breath and pause.  
Come be reminded of God's presence.

### **Come and join us for Mid-Week Worship:**

a short contemplative service  
of song, Scripture, silence, and prayer  
**every Wednesday morning,  
from 10:15-10:45AM**

in the Okotoks United Church Sanctuary.

We hope to see you there!



We live in a polarized world, with the gaps between different groups growing ever wider. It's so easy to take a "side," to stand on either part of a social divide, to participate in "us vs. them" kinds of thinking.

But what might it mean to *stand* in the gap?

Join Julia and Matthew as they explore why "*standing in the gap*" is a crucial part of the Christian journey—and what it might require to do exactly that.

How do we stand in the gap?  
Let's find out together each Sunday  
through to Oct 10<sup>th</sup>!

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### **Social Justice Group**

What is *social justice* and how do we practice it?

Social justice, however defined, usually seeks to promote fairness and equity for all people across many aspects of society: economic, political, access to services, workplace, education, physical access, racial, gender, etc.

Anyone practicing social justice seeks to open the doors of access and opportunity to all people, especially for those in greatest need.

The United Church of Canada is known for its extensive work in the area of social justice and many in our congregations have shown an interest in this area of late.

Please join Julia on **Tuesday, October 5<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 – 8:00 in the Conference Room (upstairs at Okotoks Church)**

for a discussion of social justice and the possibility of enhancing and advancing the work of social justice in our Communities of Faith. Collectively we can do more.

The purpose of the group will be education, promotion and activism as we see opportunity. Subjects may include but are not limited to: Indigenous/Residential School issues; Sexuality/Gender (LGBTQ2s+); Affordable Housing; Poverty; Environment/Climate Change.

At this time we will assess interest in social justice and how we would like to address some of the questions and actions around these areas.

### **AV Support People Needed**

We are looking for a few individuals to help operate the sound booth for funerals, weddings, and other special services. Just a little training needed—no technical expertise required! Individuals would receive a \$25/hr honorarium per service. If you would be willing to help us out in this way, please leave your name with Diane at the office.

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**St. Andrew's De Winton 9:00 a.m.**

**Okotoks United 10:45 a.m.  
(please enter via the East Foyer doors)**

Protocols for Sunday Worship Service:

- **Physical distancing will now be mandatory.**
- You will be asked to sanitize your hands when you come in and leave.
- Masks must be worn at all times when in the building including during singing.
- Please use the hand sanitizer provided when entered and leaving the building.
- The offering plate will not be passed. Place your offering in the plate at the back of the Sanctuary.
- Any food and drink will be prohibited in the building at this time. We will however continue to socialize together after the service - in the foyer. Masks must remain on.
- **Visiting only while seated in the Sanctuary. No touching of any kind at this time (hugging or shaking hands).**
- Please follow the protocols posted on the washroom door.

**De Winton will be continuing with in-person services. As previously mandated by the Board, we will keep requiring sanitizing, masking, no refreshments, and no physical contact. Seating will also now be blocked off to ensure social distancing between households. Attendees are asked to either visit from their designated seat or outside after the service. Those uncomfortable attending in-person are still invited to join Okotoks United Church's 10:45AM worship service through Zoom.**

Zoom services will also continue to be an option for those who would prefer to wait a little longer.

We encourage everyone to get their vaccinations if possible.

**Please do not attend if you any Covid like symptoms.**

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# Jacket Racket



**Winter Clothing Give-Away**  
Everyone welcome!  
Drop off gently-used winter clothing at:

**Sobeys  
Okotoks Public Library  
Foothills Cleaners  
Better Than Home Laundry  
Pason Centennial Gold Arena  
Okotoks United Church  
Main Street Market & More  
Okotoks Fire Hall on Milligan  
THANK YOU!**

**Okotoks United Church**  
**43 Riverside Drive**

**Tuesday evenings:**  
**Oct. 19, Oct. 26, Nov. 2**  
**6:00 to 8:30 p.m.**

**Saturday mornings:**  
**Oct. 23, Oct 30, Nov 6,**  
**10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

## **COVID-19** **PROTOCOLS IN EFFECT**

**We want you to come**  
**and we want you to be safe.**

**Masks are mandatory.**

**Hand sanitizer will be provided.**

**Maintain physical distancing from other shoppers**

**Plan ahead.** Knowing who you are buying for and what sizes you need minimizes the time spent in the building.



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## **NEWS FROM ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH**

*Written by P. Marie Wedderburn*



On Sunday, fourteen people gathered with Matthew at St. Andrew's United once again physically distanced and wearing masks after sanitizing our hands as we entered the building. In his message Matthew continued the sermon series entitled "Standing in the Gap" this week speaking of a "strong back." We are enabled to stand in the gap with a strong back metaphorically by remembering that as "God's chosen ones, holy and loved, [we] clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience" (Colossians 3:12 – NRSV). As we risk standing in the gap with a strong back as God's chosen ones, I continue to ponder how I am clothed with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience in my daily activities and endeavours.

A few people from our community of faith continue to join the Zoom worship service from Okotoks United at 10:45 where they heard Matthew speak of standing in the gap with a strong back.

And now a friendly reminder of a couple of things: first, the box to donate winter clothing for the Okotoks United's annual Jacket Racket will be at St. Andrew's United beginning this Sunday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>. And second, if at all possible, let us as a community of faith gather outside the church on Monday, October 4<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m. to honour our beloved retired organist Audrey. (Please refer to the e-mail about this gathering that was sent out previously where we are asked to maintain physical distances of 2 meters and encouraged to wear our masks.)



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## Ministers on Call

There is a **new on call phone number** for phoning or texting a minister for *urgent* pastoral emergencies. Julia and Matthew will share one phone for this purpose and will alternate carrying the phone. This means that when you call or text this number you may get either Matthew or Julia. Please use this number for urgent church-related calls. Otherwise, you may call them during regular office hours for any other church-related concerns.

The new **Minister's On Call number** is: **403-807-9432**

Please keep this number handy for future reference!

**\*Please note that neither Julia nor Matthew are available for appointments between 8-10 as this time will be dedicated to focused preparation.**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
OKUC	Matthew: 8-3 Julia: 8-11	Matthew: 8-3	Julia: 8-3 Matthew: 8-11	Julia: 8-3
UCV		Julia: 8-3		Matthew: 8-3

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

To contact **Julia** email her at [okjulia@telus.net](mailto:okjulia@telus.net). To contact **Matthew** email him at [matthew.heesing@gmail.com](mailto:matthew.heesing@gmail.com). Both can be reached at the church office phone number listed below during their regular hours.

**The office is open at this time Monday to Friday 9:00 - 2:00. Please contact Diane at [okunited@telus.net](mailto:okunited@telus.net) or 403-938-4357.**

**Congregational Care Team** invites you to reach out for confidential spiritual and compassionate care by email at: [okcongregationalcare@telus.net](mailto:okcongregationalcare@telus.net)

Please refer to our website [www.okunited.ca](http://www.okunited.ca) for updated information and links to the newsletter.