



PHOTO FROM TURKEY DINNER OCTOBER 13, 2018

Northminster United

December 2018
Northminster.ca
Northminster United Church
Calgary, Alberta

Celebrate the Seasons at Home

Advent is a time of waiting, of holding our breath for what's waiting for us just around the corner. We're making preparations to celebrate Christmas Day, of course, but most importantly Christians spend this time preparing and waiting for Christ to be born again into a hurting, needing world.

We're not the first people who have longed for a different world. All through history, people have waited just as eagerly for peace, hope, joy, and love. The scriptures we read in this Advent are not just of people who sat around hoping the world would change. They are of people who acted on this hope, who lived differently because they heard God saying the world could be different.

At Christmas, we celebrate Jesus who came and made justice and peace real, giving us a sneak preview of how good a different world would be. We pray for a time when this becomes the whole story, when justice, peace, and righteousness – God's reign – become the way of the world. Until this sneak preview becomes the whole story, God still needs people to act with hope, and

during the Season after the Epiphany we read stories reminding us that God calls us to be these people.

What can you do to make the season more meaningful?

Advent Chain - Create a paper chain of activities to do during Advent. Cut 23 strip strips of paper (about 2 cm wide, by about 15 cm long); colored paper will make this more festive. Mark one side of each piece with a date of Advent, from December 2 through to December 24.

Let Creation Sing - Celebrate justice and peace for creation by using only locally available or found nature items to decorate your tree. Seed pods and cones, buds and blossoms, interesting stones and shells, seaweed and grasses can all be used as decorations

Boxing Day - Many countries observe "Boxing Day" on December 26. Numerous stories abound regarding the origins of the day and its name. Many assume that, whatever the origin, the point was to create another day of holiday! One tradition states that it was a day to "box up" leftover treats and

by Rev Nancy

goodies from Christmas and give these boxes to service people such as those who delivered the newspaper and/or mail, or to those who worked on the holiday. Consider giving some goodies away to folks who might not have received much, or who deserve a little extra appreciation.

WORSHIP THIS SEASON

This year is the 200th anniversary of the debut of "Silent Night, Holy Night." This hymn has become the best-loved worship moment of many Christians—even those who only come to church once a year. Something mystical occurs as we light our candles and sing the hope of "all is calm, all is bright"—peace and light for the world.

This worship series will help us celebrate through Advent and Christmas the carol's message and highlight its call for our lives that can guide us all year long. Come together as we find peace and hope in a world of fear and division.



Mission and Outreach

We are very excited to let you know that we are again going to partner up with North Central Resources to provide a fun Christmas experience for 20 of their client families in our neighborhood.



But this year it is going to look much different. North Central has decided that they would like to provide the families with a **"Good Old Fashioned Christmas Party"** that focuses on spending time together as a family and having a whole bunch of fun together. As a result there won't be gifts as in the past. This year they have a special "family" Christmas craft that they will be doing together. For entertainment there will be a face painter and balloon twister, lunch will be provided and of course Santa will be coming for a visit with the kids. This fun filled Party will

take place on **Saturday December 15 from 10-1** in the large gym. Northminster will be providing a goody bag that the kids will receive

from Santa and a Christmas card for each family that includes a \$50 Superstore Gift card to help with their Christmas Dinner.



How can you help?

We are going need some volunteers for the party. If you would like to assist with the craft that would be great. Some hospitality people would be good to assist with line ups for the entertainment and chat with the guests. Also we will need a few people in the kitchen and, of course, to assist with clean up at 1 pm. As well, if you would be able to help out with some cookies for lunch that would be much appreciated. A sign-up sheet will be on the bulletin board.

What's new this year?

This year we have chosen an agency that we have not supported before. We would like to collect items for the



Aboriginal Friendship Centre. Our own Rachel Jordan Meyers is doing some practicum work there as well as volunteering and we thought it would be a great organization to support as they are family based and work hard to make that the focus. On **December 2** we will have the collection boxes out at both entrances where you will be able to put your donations. Some suggested items are new and unwrapped toys for children, Family games, hygiene items for kids, teens and adults and warm clothing for all ages. If you would prefer to donate gift cards, please give them to someone on the committee, or leave them in the office with Barb, so they don't get lost. We will be collecting items until Sunday, December 16 at which time Rachel will be making arrangements to deliver the items.

White Gift Sunday - December 9. The items brought in specifically for that Sunday will be added to the donations in the box for the Aboriginal Friendship Centre. On December 9 we will provide white bags for you at the entrances to put your item in and you can put it under the Christmas tree.

Your Mission and Outreach Committee - Lorie Haydu, Elsie Ross, Michelle Engel, Marcy Gwynne, Rachel Jordan Meyers and Sarah Hughes would like to thank you for your continued support to assist those in our community.

Northminster Team Updates

Michele Gole joined the team at Northminster in September as the Community Engagement Coordinator. Michele brings several years of experience in small business and team building from various different sectors. We look forward to working together in the areas of communication, community and congregational engagement.



LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME

- New Nursery Caregiver

In recent months, we have been putting a lot of effort into programming that interests families...such as Supper Church and Movie Nights. And while these events are successful, they do not translate into growing our Sunday morning worship attendance. Going forward, we will be transitioning advertising efforts toward Sunday worship being the major focus, and the primary draw and purpose for becoming a part of our community is to find a place to worship and belong. Saying we have child care for little ones in addition to child and youth programming will be a component of our advertising.

There can never be enough people to care for our children, and Northminster can become a valuable community for families and children to be able to rely on and belong to. Making a commitment to meeting parents where they are at is an important part of attracting families. As most know, parenting is hard work with very few breaks or opportunity for self-care. Providing reliable, consistent care for the toddlers within the congregation will reflect a commitment from Northminster for all to have the space to flourish. A staffed nursery will create opportunity for parents to be able to focus on their own spiritual nurture while their children are being cared for in a loving and intentional manner.

In previous years at Northminster, a schedule was created for volunteers in the nursery which did not provide consistent care, became another time and place that parents were expected to "do something". Parents are required to volunteer in many places in daily life - can church be the place where they can trust that others will care for their children so they can care for themselves?

And in all of this, we are reminded that children's ministry is family ministry; offering space for all ages of children at their own developmental level allows for

everyone in the family to participate fully in the spiritual nurture being offered.

We look forward to welcoming a nursery caregiver to Northminster in December

News From Rachel

Hello All,

My name is Rachel Myers-Jordan and I'm your student Diaconal Minister. I would like to thank you again for giving me the opportunity to work with Northminster United Church to complete my first field placement. Over the last 2 years I worked with you to fulfilling the requirements for Christian Education and Worship field placement for my education. I have completed my first of 4 Field placement requirements for my Course at the Centre for Christian Studies.

I have also started taking the external masters level university theology courses. So far, I have taken Women in Hebrew Scriptures, which counted as a Hebrew Scriptures Themed Credit, Intro to

Christian Scriptures, and the first part of Christian History. I plan to complete the second part of



Christian History this fall, which will leave me with 5 more masters level university courses to complete in the next 2 years.

I have completed 5 of the 12 circle course requirements for the Diaconal Ministry Program. I will be traveling to Winnipeg in March to complete 2 more circles, and will be trying the new online format this winter. The Online circle is called "Ministry as Listening", and the two intensive style circles in Winnipeg are called "Power and Privilege" and "Health, Pain, and Trauma."

This Fall I have started my second field placement for school. I will be volunteering with the Aboriginal Friendship Centre for my Social Justice

Field Placement. The Social Justice field placement gives me the opportunity to work in an organizational setting providing opportunity for involvement with a marginalized population outside of my own experiences. The Aboriginal Friendship Centre has partnerships with many other organizations and support networks throughout the city. They help and support the aboriginal community in our city to connect to, access, and navigate the social services and support programs available, as well as offering cultural and spiritual learning opportunities to help them express their authentic self.

So far, I have been helping with two different women's programs and a Cree Language Class. Each month they offer different programs and learning opportunities, providing me with a variety of places to volunteer and experience Social Justice Ministry. I'm really excited about what I'm going to learn and experience this year!

Many Blessings, Rachel M-J

Seasons Greetings from Pastoral Care

As we approach the end of the year and begin the season of Advent, the Pastoral Care committee thanks all the dedicated volunteers who offer their time and care to this ministry. You visit seniors and those in ill health. You phone a friend or church member, send a card, offer a prayer, give Home Communion, bring someone to church, share a smile. You give the most important gift and that is, "your presence". We are grateful to all of you.

A special thank you to the UCW for arranging and making the Christmas baskets for our seniors and to the volunteers who deliver them.

We wish everyone a wonderful Christmas Season with God's Blessings of Hope, Joy, Peace & Love

The Pastoral Care committee: Shirley Dallman, Carol Akins, Darlene Melusi, Jane Borbridge

Gifts with Vision

Give meaningful gifts that make a difference with Gifts with Vision! Each year's gift catalogue gives a glimpse of the breadth of our Mission & Service ministries and programs.

Gifts with Vision has gift ideas to suit every interest, budget, and person. It's a great way to celebrate special occasions and honour loved ones!

The gift catalogue is at Northminster and is also available online.

To order gifts or learn more, visit GiftswithVision.ca today!

Soul Sisters Women's Retreat

February 1-3, 2018



Join other women from Northminster for a weekend retreat at the beautiful King's Fold Retreat Centre just west of Cochrane. Through the weekend there will be morning worship, optional program time, and plenty of free time to make the weekend fit your needs...for reading or relaxing by a fireplace, walking, or crafting (bring your scrapbooking, quilting, etc. if you'd enjoy that). Invite friends to join you. Three meals Saturday, two meals Sunday, linens, and program fee are included in the cost: \$250. Please contact Northminster's office to register soon!



Faith & Family Night 2018

Affirming Ministry Journey

Next Steps for Northminster

Affirming Ministries are congregations, presbyteries, Conferences, educational institutions, and other ministries within the United Church that publicly declare their commitment to inclusion and justice for people. Although Affirming Ministries makes an explicit statement about issues of sexuality and gender, their commitment to justice is far broader. It works to eliminate barriers to full participation in the church by challenging bias and discrimination based on appearance, culture, age, financial abilities, and by increasing accessibility (physical, sight, hearing, etc).

Affirming Ministries seeks work for justice and inclusion for all people. The goal is to grow and change as we seek to live more fully into God's way of welcome, love, and justice for all creation.

The Board learned a few things from asking other local United Churches how the process was for them. They said it needs to be a grassroots project, led by folks in the congregation. While the Board has blessed the initiation of the process, it will not guide the process. We also learned not to rush; it is best if discussions and learning opportunities happen over an extended period. There will be many opportunities to allow for collective participation for those with varying opinions, concerns, and feelings – the process is not just for those who are in favour. We want to encourage the collective participation of everyone.

Why do we need to be affirming? Can't we just say we are welcoming? Good questions!!! The process allows us to explore this!

Now that the Board has blessed the process, we encourage a core group of interested folks to meet, review the resources from Affirm United, talk to other congregations, and plan a variety of opportunities for the congregation to participate in...conversations, learning events, movie nights, and guest speakers around various topics of what it means

to be fully inclusive – eliminating all barriers to full participation in the church (age, physical ability, sexuality, gender, cultural background, financial ability, etc).

Down the road, if it feels as if becoming Affirming is the wish of the congregation, there will be other steps such as a vision statement, an action plan, an inclusive marriage policy (which we already have), a congregational vote, and a celebratory worship service.

For more information, or to participate in the core group, please contact our office!

Changes to our United Church Structure

Since its birth in 1925, the United Church has functioned using a four court governance model: congregations, presbyteries, conferences and general council. But after a lengthy review, congregations voting on a remit, and the approval at this past summer's General Council, we are moving to a three court model starting in January 2019.

The changes you will see:

- Congregations will be called Communities of Faith
- Presbyteries and Conferences will be eliminated and replaced with 15 Regions
- General Council is now known as the Denominational Council.

- Northminster is now part of Region 3 – named Chinook Winds – and this area covers southern Alberta from Ponoka south to the US border. A regional office location will soon be selected in the Calgary area, and the executive will be hiring a Personnel Minister to assist with congregational needs such as needs assessments, calling and appointing clergy, and low level conflict resolution. An administrative assistant will also be hired. Our region will be overseen by an Executive Minister who also oversees the BC region – this is currently Rev Doug Goodwin in Vancouver.

Other changes you will see?

- Oversight of clergy, formation of individuals seeking to become clergy, and formal reviews will be done at the national level of the church under the Office of Vocation.

- Financial assessments of congregations will be carried out by the Denominational Council using one consistent formula nationally (income from all sources like rent and offerings, minus what we raise to give away for outreach, M&S, and other special ministry projects). No longer will a percentage of M&S givings go towards the staffing and ministry of the national level of the church. We are fortunate that our congregation's assessment is going down substantially, however there will still be another small assessment from the Region to help pay for the programs and supports for congregations in our area.

- The first general meeting of the Chinook Winds region will take place in Lethbridge June 7 and 8.

- Northminster is working locally and informally to cluster with other United Churches in north Calgary to share ideas and resources. This is a grassroots initiative that says we value our neighbouring churches.



Craft Fair 2018

Craft Fair 2018

Once again on Nov. 17, 2018 we held a successful Craft Fair. We send a big Thank You to all those who so generously shared their time and talents. This sharing included many hours crafting throughout the year, baking and then sharing all the jobs leading up to and including the actual day. We would not have been successful without your contributions. This year we were able to show a profit of \$14,018.93. Thank you again,

Claire Goodson and Mary Glessing, Co Convenors



DECEMBER 2018 DATES

Monday December 3rd at 7 pm

Caroling Night – Huntington Hills Manor
Join us at Huntington Hills Manor to sing some favourite carols with the residents and dear Northminster friends who live there.

Sunday December 16th at 10:30 am

Children's No Practice Pageant

All children and youth are invited to join in our pageant. Arrive at 9:30 to choose your costume and be part of the story!

Friday December 21st at 6 pm

Supper Church

Gather for a meal, by donation. RSVP.

Friday December 21st at 7pm

Merry and Bright Caroling Night

Gather in the warmth of our sanctuary to sing your favourite Christmas carols. Hot chocolate and cookies provided.

Monday December 24th at 7 pm

Christmas Eve Service

Stories and Carols, a family friendly celebration

Monday December 24th at 8:30 pm

Christmas Eve Service

Candles and Communion, a quiet and reflective worship.

Please sign up to receive our weekly events bulletin by email throughout the year.

SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENTS

Movie Matinee & Pizza

Sunday, February 3rd 12:30 PM “Won’t You Be My Neighbor”

From Academy Award-winning filmmaker Morgan Neville (20 Feet from Stardom), Won’t You Be My Neighbor? is a documentary that takes an intimate look at America’s favorite neighbor: Mister Fred Rogers. A portrait of a man whom we all think we know, this emotional and moving film takes us beyond the zip-up cardigans and the land of make-believe, and into the heart of a creative genius who inspired generations of children with compassion and limitless imagination. Rated PG-13 for some thematic topics. Adults and youth would enjoy this movie. A movie for children will be shown in a separate space. Let us know if you plan to stay so we can order enough pizza (suggested donation \$5).

Cannabis Information Night

Wednesday, January 23rd at 7 PM.

With the legalization of cannabis, do you often wonder what this means for our neighborhood and people around us? What are the rules? Where can someone use cannabis? When should we be concerned about someone’s safety? How safe is it? What should we do if we have concerns? What implications might cannabis have on individuals? A Community Resource Officer from Calgary Police will be with us to share this helpful information.

Baptism & Membership Sunday

Celebrate that you belong! If you are interested in baptism or membership for yourself or a wee one in your life, please speak with Rev. Nancy. We currently have December 9th available but other dates are an option in the new year.

Turkey Dinner 2018



Results of Commune-I-Care Survey October 2018

Total Surveys 72

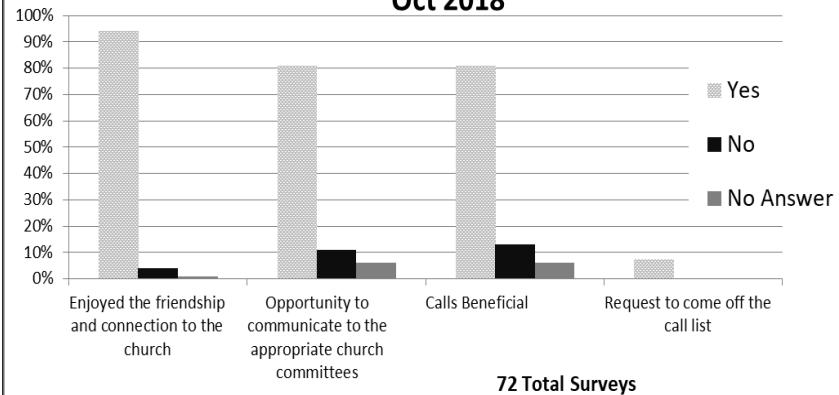
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|---|--------------|
| 1. Enjoyed the friendship and connection to the church | Yes 94% |
| | No 4% |
| | No answer 1% |
| 2. Opportunity to communicate to the appropriate church committee | Yes 81% |
| | No 11% |
| | No answer 6% |
| 3. Calls beneficial | Yes 81% |
| | No 13% |
| | No answer 6% |
| Requests to come off the call list | 7% |

4. Church information received through the following:

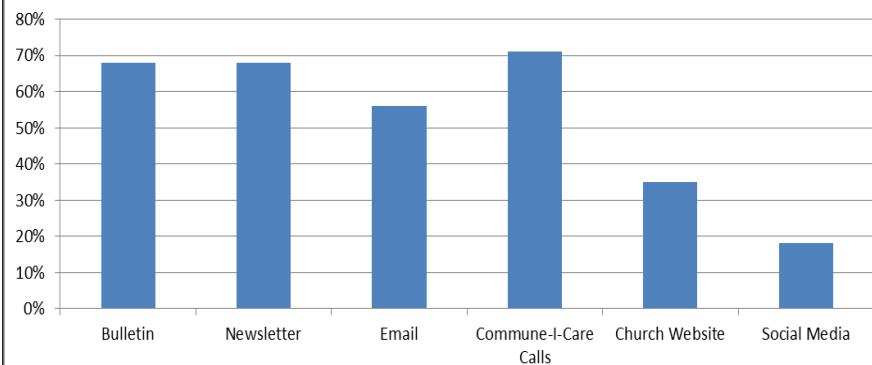
Bulletin	68%
Newsletter	68%
Email	56%
Commune-I-Care calls	71%
Church Web site	35%
Social media	18%

The Pastoral Care Committee would like to thank all the Commune-I-Care callers and those who participated in the survey. Your feedback will help us move forward in making plans for this ministry.

Results of Commune-I-Care Survey Oct 2018



Church Information Received through the following:



Christmas Week at

DEC 18th to DEC 24th

3311 Centre Street North
For information: 403.277.0322

Welcoming - Celebrating - Becoming - www.northminster.ca