



The Script

SUNSET UNITED CHURCH Lent 2014

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Ministers: All of Us! With Kathy Platt and Michelle McConkey



In this issue:

Kathy's Springtime Reflection	1
Greetings to the Sunset United Church community	2
Walking towards Jerusalem: A Word from our Tour Guide: Heather Nelson	3
Our Walk towards Easter	4
Easter Services	6
Sunday School	7
Youth Group	8
Script Delivery by Mail	9
House Group Leaders Needed!!	9
Special Appeal Time	9
Sunset Children's Clothing and Toy Sale	10
Upcoming Events	10

Kathy's Springtime Reflection...

We have an 18 month old border collie/lab cross puppy whose name is Stella. I really should have a pedometer on her – we would make it to Jerusalem before supper each day! She is an incredibly busy little dog. She spends ½ her time with Arthur, and ½ her time with me. When she is here, we go for at least 2 walks a day, sometimes more. Although I have been known to whine a little bit about looking after her, one of the true gifts that she brings me is reminding me how much I love to walk. It is where my best thinking happens – out on the streets and walking paths in Regina! As I dream about all the different activities I want to initiate here at Sunset United, I bring to mind the people who I think could help make those activities happen. So the reality is, many of you have been out walking with me, even though you didn't know it! Once again, as we head into Lent, we have a wide variety of people who are coming forward to offer their support for various events – it is lovely to see people claiming their gifts, and offering to share those with the rest of our community. Our community is constantly on the move – some people find another path to walk which means moving away from us. Others discover that this is a community that they want to get to know better and so we start to see new faces on a Sunday morning. Grace is 6 years old and is one of the newer additions to our Sunday morning worship circle. This past week we stood to sing Halle, Halle and I loved watching her grin and clap her hands and dance away. There is something so contagious about watching a little girl dance! I am looking forward to this season of Lent – a time for

reflection, for learning from the Sunflowers about turning our faces to seek out the light of the Sun. Wherever you may find yourself in this six week walk towards Easter, may you remember that you have companions on the journey. Whether we are in wheelchairs or walkers, whether we are wearing running shoes, high heels, hiking boots or bedroom slippers – we are on this path together. Each one of us will be given the strength we need for the journey....

We are not lost, though wandering, for by your light we come,

And we are still God's people, the journey is our home.

(Hymn #421 – Lead On, O Cloud of Presence – Voices United)

Greetings to the Sunset United Church community!

My name is Aaron Orban and I am happy to have this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Chair of the Sunset United Church Board.

If you don't recognize my name from announcements I've made over the past few years, perhaps you'll recognize me as the flipper of burgers and cooker of hot dogs at many a Sunset barbeque event.



Our family (myself, my wife Lana, and our two girls Elise and Ava) have been members of SUC for the past 6 years or so. We were initially drawn to Sunset by its family friendly feel and, over the years, have come to appreciate not only the sense of family our church promotes but also the sense of community it supports.

For the last two years I have had the pleasure and privilege to serve SUC as Vice-Chair of the Board. This time has provided me a great opportunity to learn much about our Church community. In this time I have come to appreciate, at a new level, the efforts of our Ministry team, past and present Board members, Committee members, volunteers and our terrific congregation at keeping our Church running and our congregational life vibrant.

As a Church we've been through a lot of change in the past two years; we certainly can't be accused of sitting still. In much the same way, the membership of our Board and our Committees has been anything but static. New members come on-board as old members leave and sometimes past members return in new or different roles.

As our Board membership changes so too do the needs and desires of the groups they represent. Just as people change ideas and views as they learn, talk, and

grow more experienced, I believe an effective Board needs to be a dynamic, fluid group that brings new ideas to further a cause that it is passionate about.

That is what I hope to offer to the SUC community as your new Board Chair. I hope to continue to follow the excellent example that I have witnessed from the Board over the past two years.

I look forward to this opportunity.

WALKING TOWARDS JERUSALEM-

A WORD FROM OUR TOUR GUIDE: HEATHER NELSON

Going into the Lenten season we generally give up something we like, such as certain foods or fun activities. My understanding is that this would give us a small understanding of the suffering that Jesus endured during this time period.

We have decided to change it up. We are going on vacation. As a congregation we are going to go to Winnipeg, maybe take in a Jets game? Next we hit Quebec City, who doesn't want to see old Quebec? Then we are going to Halifax and get our first breath of salty sea air. Then we are making the leap across the big pond and going to Lisbon, Portugal. Next we are going to Algiers, Algeria, then the beautiful island nation of Malta. Our final stop is going to be Jerusalem, Israel. We should get there at Easter time. Now comes the Lenten suffering part: we are going to walk.

It is 10,048.7 km from Regina to Jerusalem. That is the equivalent of 13,264,284 steps. Starting March 2 we handed out pedometers. Since 10:30 this morning my son Carter Nelson has put on over 20,000 steps. Now I know we are not all going to get in that many steps per day but every little bit counts. Each week we are going to add up the number of steps the congregation took and move us forward on our virtual holiday. We are asking for a \$10 donation, this will cover the cost of the pedometers and the rest of which is going to the Mission and Service fund. If you have your own pedometer please feel free to use your own or if you know how far you went we can measure it by distance as well.



Imagine a whole congregation walking together towards the same goal! Although virtually going to Jerusalem is not the same as actually being there we will have a lot of fun along the way.

Either bring your number of steps to church each week or email me at: hnelson@accesscomm.ca.

'I would rather walk with a friend in the dark, than alone in the light.' ... Helen Keller

Our Walk Towards Easter

As we contemplate the theme of “walking towards Jerusalem”, I wanted to offer a variety of ways to think about how we walk our faith. So there are three opportunities where you could come and walk with us....

1) **Saturday, March 15th: 7 – 8:30 p.m.**



For three years we offered a spiritual retreat by hiking together in the Rocky Mountains. This is an opportunity for a “**virtual hike**” – a Rocky Mountain experience within the walls of Sunset United Church! We will forge a stream, breathe in the healing aroma of the evergreens, listen to the song of the birds, experience the challenge of a “scramble”, and test out the climb carrying our loaded back pack. You may want to do the walk yourself – you may want to simply watch others and then be part of the conversation about the walk. The evening will end with hot chocolate by the light of our lantern, and a slide show of the actual hikes that we did.

2) **Saturday, March 22nd: 1:30 – 3:00**

There are many of us who have been care-givers at some point in our lives – providing care for children, care for parents, care for friends. Sometimes it can be a lonely journey. Sometimes we can get a little consumed with the “should have/would have/could have’s” – and guilt can begin to weigh us down. Sometimes it can be hard to balance time for self-care, and time for care for the “other”. Sometimes the gift of giving care to others can be heart-warming and very rewarding. Wherever you may fit in that spectrum, we want to offer time for us to talk about the “walk of the caregiver”. Trina Hodgson and Kathy will facilitate the conversation. There will be some resource sharing, some story-telling, and hopefully lots of room for the conversation to unfold as it will. Part of the hope for the evening is that we will begin to articulate how care-giving is very much connected to our spirituality – to the living out of our faith in our daily reality.



3) **Sunday, March 23rd: shortly after church – a walk with Kathy & Scott**

A Lenten Walk n Talk....

Hello Friends. I thought that the Lenten season may lend itself well to reflection. I have loved reading *The Pastrix*, which you can find on-line as an e-book or at Chapters. As a theologian, Nadia Bolz-Weber, is extremely popular right now. *Pastrix* was a sarcastic, mocking epithet given to females who dared preach the Gospel. Nadia Bolz-Weber chose the title, *Pastrix*, as a way of (re)claiming of female Christian leadership; she is a strong feminist. *The Pastrix* is her story woven through with scripture, and she is quite the figure. She describes in detail her recovery from alcoholism, and her failed career as a stand-up comic. She is married to another Lutheran Pastor, and, together they have two children....and, she is covered in tattoos. Just a

friendly warning, if you dislike 'colourful language' this is not the book for you. Since the book is a narrative, I found it engaging, but not an overly difficult read.

Details: After the church service and coffee time on March 23, I propose this Walk n' Talk. Weather permitting, we will meet at the steps of the Leg(islature) and walk clockwise around the lake. If Old Man Winter is (still) against us, we will stay in church and have an indoor talk. I will bring some granola bars so we are not hungry on the walk, as we will not have had our lunch. If you could bring snacks as well, that would be grand! Otherwise, we may decide to go for lunch afterwards at a local restaurant.



Book: Nadia Bolz-Weber (2013). *The Pastrix: The Cranky Beautiful Faith of a Sinner & Saint*. Jericho Books: New York

Questions, Quotes, Ponderings for Discussion...

1. **Chapter 1: The Rowing Team.** On p. 5 Nadia Bolz-Weber talks about leaving her stint as a stand-up comic because she *“became healthier and just wasn’t that funny anymore. Less miserable = less funny. In the process of becoming sober and trying to rely on God and be honest about my shortcomings, I became willing to show my vulnerabilities”*. It has been suggested that in the performing arts, but perhaps most notably in stand-up comedy, that pain is a necessary ingredient for its creation. But I think what Nadia alludes to here is that even when pain is heavily disguised as wit, God (or spirit or goodness) is still there. At the end and start of it all God is there. Somehow this is a comforting thought for me. God is always with us, not as observer/enforcer, but as an ever-ready comforter/supporter.

2. **Chapter 3: Albion Babylon.** *“We had started out caring about each other, but in the end none of us knew how to care for each other. But this experience taught me that a community based on the idea that everyone hates rules is, in the end, just as disappointing and oppressive as a community based on the ability to follow rules.”* (p. 30). “Community” seems like one of those words/concepts that contains within it a veto on any criticism. Perhaps, community is not always a good thing. I confess that it is easier for me to belong in a community where people think as I do, or more accurately, that I think they think, as I do. When forced to be in community with those whose views are vastly different from my own, maybe that is where one focuses not on belief, but the actions of the community.

3. **Chapter 5: Thanks ELCA.** I really love Nadia Bolz-Weber’s take on grace. I found that reasoning simply too circular...God creates humans, knows we will “sin,” we “sin,” sends himself/Jesus down to forgive what s/he already knows we will do, creates more humans, knows they will “sin”, etc. Even as a non-literalist, to me this logic seems illogical. To me Bolz-Weber smashes through this unending loop:

*“God’s grace to me is that my brokenness is not the final word. My selfishness is not the end-all...instead, it’s that God makes beautiful things out of even my own s***. Grace isn’t about God creating humans as flawed beings and then acting inevitably*

hurt when we fail and then stepping in like the hero to grant us grace—like saying ‘Oh it’s OK, I’ll be a good guy and forgive you’. It’s God saying ‘I love the world too much to let your sin define you and be the final word. I am a God who makes all things new.’” (p. 50).

4. Chapter 7: I Didn’t Call You for This Truth Bulls*.** *“There’s a popular misconception that religion, Christianity specifically, is about knowing the difference between good and evil so that we can choose the good. But being good has never set me free the way truth has”* (p. 73). The thing about truth is, I think we know it when we hear it or experience it. Truth, to me, can be stripped of religion, but not its essence: truth is the right thing to do. Truth to me is not something that one *should* do, it is something one *must* do. Truth is the deepest compassion. Truth is not slave to appearance. In some ways, truth to me is the bottom line. How does truth operate in your belief system (which may or may not include God/Spirit)?

5. Chapter 8: Clinical Pastoral Education. *“I often found myself on the ER trauma room watching life going in and out of the patients on the table—the doctors and nurses violently attempting to resuscitate them. And in that messy chaos, my job was just to stand there and be aware of God’s presence in the room. Kind of a weird job description, but there it was, and in those moments I felt strangely qualified.”* (p. 81). There can be comfort in witnessing. There can comfort in being there—being there, most particularly, without strings. Comfort, I think both for the observer and the observed; although our roles may simply be that of perspective: am I the observer or the observed? Am I both?

Perhaps, witnessing, or holding God’s presence, is the ultimate break-down of boundaries. Cause and effect are no longer valid, no longer issues. I am therefore not compelled to “say the right words” or act with any strategy other than being there. Indeed, to act with any intent is to have an agenda, is *not* to witness, but to attempt to repair, to fix, to mend. To simply be may be powerful, to simply be in the presence with others, more so. What do you think?

Scott Anthony Thompson

Easter Services

Palm Sunday: April 13, 2014

Our hope is that we will have walked enough steps as a congregation that we will actually have arrived in Jerusalem by this Sunday! Michelle and Kathy, with the involvement of the youth and Sunday school, will both show (with props and video clips) & tell the whole of the Easter Story. Even though this is a story that is very familiar to most of us, our hope is to bring it to life in a new way using some video clips to connect it ever more closely with our reality here in the City of Regina.



Maundy Thursday: April 17, 2014: 6 – 8 p.m.

The scripture tells us that on the night before he was crucified, Jesus gathered with his friends and disciples in the Upper Room for the Last Supper. We are truly hoping that this is not our Last Supper together! However, I believe that the Last Supper was very much about gaining strength from the gathered community by sharing in a meal that nourished both body and soul. We invite you to join us for a pot-luck supper (organized by Wendy Wushke and Peg Atymichuk) at 6:00. As we share in a meal together, our expectation is that we will get to know the others at our table a little better because there will be more time for conversation than we normally have on a Sunday morning. Following the meal, we will have communion as a way to close off our evening.

Good Friday Service : 10:30 a.m.

A service including music with our choir and readings for reflection, followed by Hot Cross Buns and coffee.

Sunday, April 20th: Easter Morning Sunrise service: 5:30 AM!

Michelle McConkey is very excited that we do a Sunrise Service here at Sunset United! She is going to join the team of Ruth Blaser, Vikki May and Lana Orban (which likely means the Orban family!). We will meet here at the church around Ruth's fire bowl, we will sing, and we will discover ways to greet the new day in style! And then we will come into the church for breakfast together. I have heard a rumor of cinnamon buns appearing...



Sunday, April 20th: Easter Morning Service – 10:30 a.m.

Come and celebrate with us – we made it through the deep freeze of January through March and the sun is getting stronger every day. Out of death, God brings new life! We are a people where Hope springs eternal – so come - let's let the Hallelujah's ring out!! Michelle will have a creative activity for any children who are here for this service.

Sunday School

It is hard to believe that it is already the start of Lent! This year, I will be using the five weeks up to Palm Sunday to explore various symbols relating to a part of the Easter story. I will be building over those five weeks so that on Palm Sunday, the children will know the story when Kathy and I do the Holy Week walk-through in church. There will be activities for children on Easter Sunday to celebrate that Jesus



Christ is risen! Here is the breakdown of what we will be doing during Lent and Easter:

-March 9 Palm Parade –making palm branches and noise makers for Palm Sunday

-March 16 Last Supper – using food to tell a story of Sunset United Church

-March 23 Peter’s Denial – creating token to wear together to remind us to have the strength to stand up for what we believe in

-March 30 Cross – making a cross together to take away our fears and worries

-April 6 The Tomb – baking Resurrection Buns to show the miracle that occurred

-April 13 Palm Sunday – children and Michelle will remain in church to participate in the Holy Week walk-through with Kathy

-April 20 Easter Sunday – making lilies to celebrate that Jesus Christ is risen

I hope that after Easter, the weather will be nice enough to have some Sundays outside! We will just have to see what happens.

Youth Group

Continuing with the same vein as last year, I have planned one activity per month for our youth group! We had fun in January with our sleep-over and took a break in February as we were all too busy but are gearing up again for the next 4 months. Some activities do not have a firm date as of yet but they are on our radar and we are all excited for them, especially those that hark of warm weather to come!



Saturday, March 1, 2014: Visited Boomers Air Park in Emerald Park for an afternoon of trampoline-ing! Had a blast even though it was freezing outside!!

Saturday, April 12, 2014: Volunteering at the Regina Food Bank for a few hours following our Lent Food Drive in church! We hope to have gathered some food to donate for our visit. It will surely be an eye and mind opening experience for those involved. We will have a small discussion at the church following the visit.

May TBD: Amazing Race Regina! We will spend an afternoon hunting down different locations in our fair city. Fun times to be had! More information to come!

June TBD: Canoe/Kayak wrap-up Party! To finish up the year of activities, we will have a canoe/kayak wrap-up party! We will be outside, finally enjoying some nice weather; a great way to end the year.

Delivery of The Script by Mail

We have a delivery system for the south part of Regina. Currently, people who live outside our delivery routes either pick up The Script at church, or receive it by mail. As you are likely aware, on April 1 there will be a dramatic increase in the cost of mailing - from \$.63 to \$.85. Because of this, we propose that we start to deliver the Script by email to those of you who are **NOT** now part of a Sunset delivery routes. However, for those of you outside the delivery zones who are not on email, or who wish us to continue to mail The Script to you, we will happily do so. Please call the office (306 586-3613) if you currently receive your Script by Canada Post, and you wish to continue to do so.

We regret having to make this change, but I am sure that you understand the reasons. Thank you!

While I am saying thank you's, I want to thank the 20 people who faithfully deliver the Script and other Sunset communications. Most of those folk have been doing it for years - as much as 25 years!!

Jean Cameron
Coordinator



House Group Leaders Needed!!

Sunset United Church worship services are supported, on a month by month basis, by the House Groups that we have in place. Currently, there are two house groups that are in need of **house group leaders**. Bev Hui, who is looking after all the house groups, has been gracious enough to look after those house groups that do not have leaders at this point. But it is a lot of additional work for her, in addition to overseeing all the groups.

So if you are energetic, organized and are interested in working with people, please consider becoming a house group leader! As we have 11 groups, your duties would only arise every 11 months, for one month.

Please consider taking on this role!! If you are interested in helping as a house group leader or just want more information about the role, contact the office at 306-586-3613 and we will get you the information you need and in contact with Bev. Thanks.

Special Appeal Time

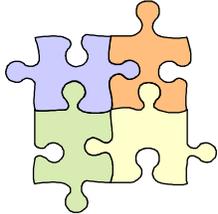
The Sunset United Church Community Service Committee works at coordinating projects for a number of agencies during the year. In some cases our best contribution is time and energy, and in some cases our best effort is to provide funding to agencies that are mission and service oriented through our annual "Special Appeal".



This year our Appeal will be directed towards three important causes:

- Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry
- Carmichael Outreach Inc.
- Rainbow Youth Centre

You will notice the Special Appeals envelope **in this edition of *The Script*** requesting that you consider making a donation. The committee thanks everyone in advance for any and all support that you are able to provide these agencies.



Sunset SEASONAL CHILDREN'S CLOTHING & TOY CONSIGNMENT SALE

WHEN: Saturday, March 29, 2014

TIME: 1 to 3 p.m.

WHERE: Sunset United Church at 177 Sunset Drive

WHAT: A huge selection of spring and summer clothing, outerwear, toys, books, games and baby gear.

SPECIAL OFFER: Pre-sale for New Parents. Get a pass for you and a guest at publicity.sunset@live.com

TO VOLUNTEER: Email sunset.volunteers@gmail.com

TO CONSIGN: Email clothingsale@live.com

For more info call 306-359-1575 or email publicity.sunset@live.com

UPCOMING EVENTS.....

- **Ladies Fellowship Meetings:** The next meetings are scheduled for March 10, April 14, and May 12. All women in the congregation are welcome to attend!!
- **Sunset Bridge Tournament.....**May 3.....details to follow....

