



The Script

SUNSET UNITED CHURCH

Fall 2013

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



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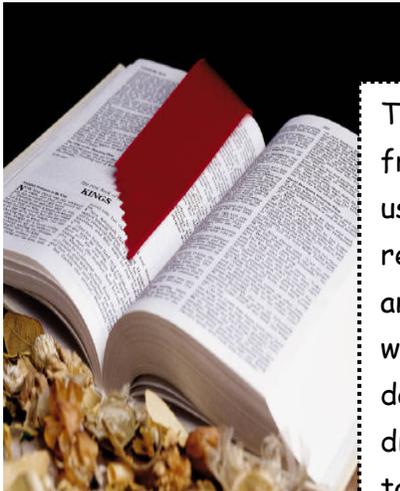
A Fall Reflection from Kathy Platt

Alan Morinis wrote a book entitled *Every Day, Holy Day*, which outlines the teachings and practices from the Jewish tradition of Mussar. As a Christian, I find it a helpful book in terms of provoking me to be more intentional about my own “spiritual practice”. The first inner trait which he discusses is “Gratitude”. The Hebrew term for gratitude translates as “recognizing the good”. People seem to be quick to recognize all the things that they are lacking in life. This particular spiritual practice invites us to be more intentional at noticing the good gifts that are certain to be present in our lives, even if, at the same time, there are many difficulties which surround us. So the practice is to say thank you to every person who does even the slightest thing that is helpful or beneficial to you. One of the side effects of this practice is that it becomes rather glaring how rarely we hear people say thank you! And how good it feels when someone does notice something that we have done and actually thanks us. However – I digress. It is not about what I want for other people to be doing – it really is meant to be about my own actions – each one of us as individuals – to do our best to notice what is happening around us and to say thank you. In that act of noticing, we can tune ourselves into the good gifts that surround us. And it is also very good modelling for how we want to be together in community. If gratitude can be at the centre of how we relate to one another, I think it will enable us to be a healthy and life-giving community. So as we move into this new season in the life of our church – thank you! Thank you for the people who sing, who teach our children, who build sheds, who make coffee, who serve at Rainbow Youth, who organize house groups, who wax our floors, who knit, who pray – we are an amazing and eclectic group who gather to worship together. Thanks be to God for drawing us into community!

Tell me more about the United Church of Canada...

I am going to offer 4 sessions to talk more about the United Church of Canada – how did we come to be a “United” church; how do decisions get made in our denomination; what are some of our theological stands on words like salvation or forgiveness; what are the “sacraments”; and other topics as agreed upon by the participants. The main purpose of these evenings is to have conversation – to learn from each other, and articulate a little bit more about what we believe. These sessions are for anyone who wants to be involved – it may be that you have gone to the church for a long time and you just want to have a bit of a “refresher” – it may be that you are brand new to the United Church and would like to know more. It is possible that you may decide to make your membership “official” at the end of the sessions, but there is no pressure or expectation about that – they really are meant to be evenings designed to help us talk about our own experience of the United Church in general, and our relationship with Sunset United church specifically. Please speak to Kathy if you are interested. The first evening will be **Tuesday, October 15th, 7:00 – 8:30**. The group will decide on the dates for the next 3 sessions.

Thursday morning Bible Study



There is a small group of us that meet on Thursday mornings from 9:30 - 11:00 for Bible Study and prayer. The book we are using right now is by Tom Wright, called *Luke for everyone*. We read a passage from Luke, we read the author's reflections on it, and then we talk about it from our own perspective. We worked with it quite a long time last year, and are now at Luke 11 - we don't move quickly through this book! It takes time, and the discussion is rich and fruitful. We then take some time to pray together, and that is very good for our community. Please - come and join us if you are able. You could speak to Susie Ross, Sharon Frei or Kathy for more information. So far it is all women - anyone who would like to join us would be very welcome. Plus we have tea and refreshments - always good to be fed! Our first session will be **Thursday, October 3rd**.

2014 United Church Calendars have been ordered and will be available in the office later in the year at a cost of \$5.00.



The New Look



For several years, the idea of a multi-purpose raised platform in the Sanctuary has been kicking around. I can now tell you that the Board, Music and Property committees and others have been busy studying different arrangements on paper. In addition, the chairs for the Choir have been finding themselves in various arrangements to test new looks for the Sanctuary.

We have been working with a Regina Architect on concepts and hope to present plans for the *New Look* to the congregation later this fall. We anticipate that the platform will be approximately 14 inches/ 21 cm high with a ramp for wheelchairs and walkers. It is also possible that the piano will be on the platform.

Watch for more details in the near future.

David Millar

Board Chair



Youth Leadership at Sunset United.....

I am Michelle McConkey, the newest staff member at Sunset: the Youth and Young Adult Coordinator! I am still relatively new to Sunset but am meeting people and kids every week! I hope to be able to put names to faces soon and remember who enjoys doing what so that I can plan accordingly. It is very exciting planning activities for Sunday School, we are currently using the story of Abraham and Sarah and we have already made dioramas of a desert camp and each child or family made their own interpretation of what that might be: some are more literal while others invoke what they might be. I know that all the kids are star-worthy and will shine bright! The Youth Group is gearing up for a fun-filled year with possible activities including a corn maze excursion, canoe and kayaking, volunteering at various locations, making s'mores and just having fun together! We will be building our community and hope to show our church family all the amazing ways that we can grow in faith and in fun! My favourite time so far has been spending the day at Lumsden Beach Camp doing crafts and playing games. I met wonderful kids and families and I am showing some of the crafts made on the bulletin board next to my office. If anyone has any ideas or wants to help out with Sunday School or Youth Group, contact me at sunsetunited.michelle@gmail.com or by calling the office! See you all soon!

Sunday School

Welcome back to another fun filled season of Sunday School. We had an exciting kick off on the 15th of September with a fun filled carnival and picnic. It was a great turn out and a chance for families to catch up.



We are fortunate to have our new Youth Coordinator, Michelle, with many creative and exciting new ideas. Michelle has done a lot of work researching the upcoming stories and arranging crafts that are age appropriate. Michelle will have everything ready for each Sunday- no preparation required! Most Sundays we will be splitting the kids into two groups. We are aiming at 2 parent or congregational member volunteers for each Sunday. The opening piece as well as instruction for the activities will be given by Michelle or Lana....the parent's role will simply be to be there to help it all happen!

Sunday school has officially started with the story of Abraham and Sara. Below is an outline with the lessons for October 6 - November 10th. Look at the lists below and sign up to help with the activities that would interest you and or your child. Please contact me at aleorban@hotmail.com if you are interested in assisting on a particular Sunday.

Sunday School Themes (October 6 to November 10).

October 6: Patience

-Activities will be Wrinkled Apple Faces (younger kids and any older kids who don't want to do old age make-up) and Old Age Makeup (older kids)

October 13: Thanksgiving Sunday

-No leaders required, whisper tables will be set up at back of church for children

October 20: Love-Activities will be Coat of Many Colours

October 27: Listening/Understanding

-Activity will be Decorate pillow cases (all children)

November 3: Overcoming Obstacles/Trust

-Activity will be Crushing Experiences (involves Oreos!!)

November 10: Remembrance Day Sunday

-No leaders required, whisper table in church or Michelle will run activity about peace



Sunset Ladies Fellowship

Sunset Ladies Fellowship is open to all women of the church. Those of us who belong find a real way that we can be supportive of our church with an obvious role as hostesses for many events such as the funeral lunches. We participate in the card and prayer shawl ministries and offer support to many worthwhile agencies beyond our walls. Most will be most familiar with our fund raising events.

A huge thank you to all who participated in the Garage Sale. Thanks to your efforts it was once again a great success. We appreciate the participation of members of the congregation who are willing to assist us at special events.

Two such events are in the offing. On Oct.18 & 19 Ladies Fellowship will be holding a sale of crafts at the Victoria Square Mall. Tickets will soon be on sale for "A Catered Supper" featuring the culinary talents of the ladies from Sedley. This will be a turkey supper with all the trimmings so plan now to come and enjoy!!! It will be held on Friday, November 1 from 5:30 to 6:30. See the announcement at the back of the Script as to where and when to get tickets!



Our next meeting will be October 7 at 1:30 when our guest will be Michelle McConkey our new Youth and Young Adult Program Coordinator. This will be an opportunity for us to meet Michelle and hear about her new role.

Submitted by Harriet (Susie) Ross



Property Report

The two furnaces which heated the sanctuary for over three decades were replaced this summer by two much more efficient new furnaces. In addition, the wall thermostats were replaced with controls which we trust will be simpler for all to use in regulating the temperatures. The work was overseen by our resident master of all trades, Bob McLeod.



Also replaced was the old utility shed which housed garden hoses and tools as well as the riding mower. The shed was too small to accommodate everything and the floor had given out. Not mention the door opening was too small for the mower. With generosity of the Ladies Fellowship a building kit was purchased. And with combined efforts of Joe Scarfe, Larry Edwards along with his faithful companion, Duff and Keith Schneider the shed was put together. Bob and Oliver McLeod roofed and painted the shed which is now in use.

So we need to dispose of the old existing shed. With the exception of the door and floor, the roof and three walls are in good shape. So anyone needing a fixer-upper utility shed, is free to take it away. A small donation is always greatly appreciated.

Many may have noticed the yard light next to sheds is no longer leaning to the point of falling over. Bob and Oliver not only fixed the light standard but replaced light element so it is now upright and lighting the walkway.

Our caretaker, Christian, has stripped and waxed the floors throughout the church and they are now ready for all the activities of a busy church year.

Sunset Property Committee



Access Congregational Database Update



We are fortunate to have a database of all our members in order to be able to make sure we can keep in contact with everyone as well as update changes in everyone's lives. Over the years, as with anything, people's lives change (moves, changes in phone numbers, change in email address') and sometimes these changes are not reflected in our database.

In order to ensure that we are as up to date as we can be, in the near future, we will be sending out an update form requesting information from you so that we may verify and update any new or changed information that you provide us.

The form will be made available in an online form as well as paper form.....select whichever one is easiest and most convenient for you to fill out! Thanks in advance for taking the time to help us keep up to date!

Sunset United Church Office.

How long can you wait?

In January 2008, we six women began the process of applying to be sponsors for the Beshir-Hussan family, a refugee family of two parents and eight children (the brother of Zebiba and Safiya). We are now five years older and still waiting. In 2008 we undertook this sponsorship as a Group of Five (actually 6 of us) because at that time the United Church of Canada was only accepting Government of Canada Joint Assistance Sponsorships (JAS). By 2009 the UC had returned to our practice of supporting family sponsorships as well as JAS but we had already begun the process under the Group of Five sponsorship option.

In 2009 we six set aside \$25,000 in a term deposit to meet our financial obligation to help support the family for their first year in Canada. In November 2010 the Canadian High Commission in Nairobi confirmed acceptance of our application. Over the past three years we have met with our local MP, corresponded with Citizenship and Immigration Canada, and waited. Our wait was relatively easy, but for the Beshir-Hussan family it was much more difficulty waiting. As Somalis living as refugees in Ethiopia and unable to return to their country because of war, they are constantly vulnerable.

Nothing seemed to be happening with our sponsorship application then in January 2013 we received news that the family should go to Addis Ababa for their interviews. Their interviews were successful and we were all excited about the possibility of the family arriving in Regina in the spring of 2013. Usually the medical and security checks happen within two weeks of the interviews but some of the paper work from Nairobi was missing so the process was delayed. In July the family successfully completed their medical and security checks, but then there was a rotating strike of Canadian Visa officers. So again they waited. In mid-September the Beshir-Hussan family were told their flights to Regina were booked but they have not yet been informed as to the date and times of the flight. So again we all wait.

Thank you to the congregation and the Community Services Committee of Sunset United, and the Catholic Women's League of St. Martin's Parish for assisting us with providing household goods to help the family begin a home here in Regina. Thank you to everyone who has already signed the donation lists. There are still some items we are seeking. Please check the donation lists to see if you might be able to provide an item.

We hope the family will arrive before winter, but whenever they arrive we will welcome them warmly and hope you might join us for a welcoming shower after they have had a bit of time to acclimatize themselves.

Brenda MacLauchlan for

Jean MacKay, Shirley McKay, Donna Brunskill, Dolores Fehr, Zebiba Beshir

Remembering Africa

by Brian Stubbings

September 2013

This past June, I was sitting with faculty on the new stage of Luther College High School, celebrating the graduation of its Grade XII students. As in all of these kinds of gatherings at Luther, prayer and praise began and later ended the celebration with the idea being that in all things, we do it solely to the glory of God – ‘Soli Deo Gloria’. Before the graduates crossed the stage to receive their diplomas and awards, the Luther Choir sang two or three pieces, one of which was a South African Zulu song, ‘One By One’, accompanied by drums and hand clapping. The auditorium came alive: eyes looked up, some relatives and friends began to clap or sway with the choir, smiles were everywhere, and one teacher on sabbatical danced at the back of the gym. I, on the other hand, suppressed tears and strong emotions, because this music from Africa brought back many good memories from the ten and half years I taught in Zambia and Malawi in Central Africa; memories of choirs I had directed there, the joy of singing, the joy of worship, the impact of music on students and adults. I had the same feelings when I heard my daughter sing similar songs in the Campbell Collegiate Choir and Kokepelli Choir in Edmonton.

In October 1971, two days after arriving at Kafue Secondary, a boys’ school under the auspices of the United Church of Zambia, I went for worship in the school’s Bainbridge Chapel. Five hundred students and staff were crammed into a space that would more comfortably have seated three hundred. The sweltering heat and humidity, the sweating mass of humanity, and tight quarters gave off a pungent smell that I soon got used to. The choir, made up of thirty or so students, led the singing. We used a hymnal called ‘Africa Praise’ which consisted mostly of British hymn tunes, but a considerable number of songs originating in various parts of Africa. Fittingly in Zambia where the mood was Africa for Africans, indigenous music and words were replacing the music introduced by the colonialists and foreign missionaries. Kafue Mission had been established by British Primitive Methodists in 1916, while other mission stations were founded by the Church of Scotland, Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Swiss Protestants, Adventists, The Salvation Army and others. Eventually, the Methodists, Presbyterians, the Swiss and Congregationalists formed the United Church of Zambia in 1965.

One of the hymns we sang at that first service at Kafue Secondary School (one of many I attended over the next seven years) was ‘O Praise the Name of Jesus’, or ‘Muchindi Kani Yesu’ in the original Tumbuka. I was flabbergasted by the singing. It’s almost indescribable hearing 500 people singing lustily in the typical call-response pattern of African singing:

O praise the name of Jesus
O praise the name of Jesus our King!
He calls you all to hear Him
He calls you all to hear Him our King!

O turn your hearts unto Him
O turn your hearts unto Him our King!
Then bring your burdens to Him
Then bring your burdens to Him our King! Etc.

I had a sense on hearing this music that it was the most beautiful, certainly the most impactful music I had ever heard. I thought it was heavenly! Little did I know that within a week the headmaster would tell me that I would be the new choirmaster, thus beginning an almost seven year adventure with worship and singing in Zambia?

I took over a choir that sang acapella, didn't read music and was accompanied by drums, rattles and other African instruments. Traditionally people clapped hands when they sang, but not in the typical way we would clap but with cupped hands which were used in traditional ceremonies when approaching the ancestral spirits. Whether the hymns were traditional Western tunes or Zambian ones, everyone joined in singing. It was as if some unseen spirits were released when as one and in strong voice, people let their hearts sing out! It was as if a heavenly host of witnesses (as Paul called them) were listening to the Faithful. Sometimes the exuberance would be celebrated by ululations, high pitched sounds extracted by moved the tongue side to side quickly. Often in the rural churches where I sometimes preached, this joy in worship took the form of dance. It was beautiful seeing the women of the Church either in the black, red and white uniforms of the Sisterhood or traditional 'chitenje' dresses and head gear, dancing gracefully towards the altar with offerings of money, bread and wine on Communion Sundays.

As my interest in both traditional music(especially of the Tonga tribe) and Zambian church music evolved, my understanding of the music deepened and I came to believe that some of the music I had been privileged to hear was as complex as some Western composers and certainly as spiritual. Travelling to remote villages with students, I eventually recorded over 500 traditional Tonga songs in 35 genres. Some tunes were used by a composers' club I started whose purpose was to compose new Christian songs of worship. As our choir's notoriety increased we received invitations from churches and other schools to sing at their services. Twice we sang in the Anglican Cathedral in Lusaka, Zambia's capital. We recorded programs for radio and TV. We were honoured to sing in Kafue town celebrating Zambia's tenth anniversary of independence. But our greatest thrill and honour was singing in Independence Stadium at the All Africa Conference of Churches in front of delegates from across Africa and Zambia's president, Kenneth Kaunda, himself educated at a Church of Scotland Mission Station in northern Zambia

Last Sunday at Sunset, we sang the hymn, 'How Can I Keep From Singing?'. As I reflect on my years in Central Africa, and the tremendous experiences I've had in choirs here in Regina, my answer to the question is, 'I can't'!!

Martin Luther and other Reformers had a passion to involve the entire people of God in singing God's praise. He said,

"In summary, next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world. Music controls our thoughts, minds, hearts and spirits. The precious gift of music has

been given to us(humans) alone that we might, thereby, remind ourselves that God has created us for the express purpose of praising and extolling God.”

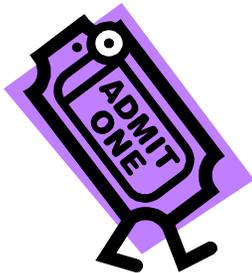
“When we sing,” Luther proclaimed, “we pray twice...”¹

And so we keep on singing, joining our voices with others around the world in praise of our God; singing in good times and bad, on mountain trails, in the shower, for the cause of freedom and justice, to support a team, to put a child to sleep. Thank God for the gift of music.

Brian Stubbings and Els Wilms served as overseas personnel for the United Church of Canada in Zambia in association with the United Church of Zambia(1971-78) and in Malawi with the Anglican Diocese of Southern Malawi(1981-85).

¹ David Snyder, Luther and Congregational Singing, 2003

Upcoming Events and Groups you might be interested in attending....



Sunset Ladies Fall Turkey Supper, catered by the Sedley ladies, is being held on Friday, November 1 from 5:30 to 6:30. The cost of tickets is \$20.00 per person, children 6 and under are \$8.00. Tickets can be purchased at the church office or from Jean Fraser at 306-584-2972. Tickets will also be sold after church on October 13 and 20. The deadline for purchasing the tickets is October 23, 2013.

*Join Kathy and the **Tassimo Tea and Tots** that meet once a month. It is an invitation to families who have children who are under the age of 4, and who find our Sunday mornings rather difficult to attend, both because of busy babies, and because of children’s morning schedules. We have had 10 families, and about a dozen little people. It is a very casual evening with laughing and visiting. Please come and get to know some of the youngest members of our congregation. Bring along a snack and be ready to chat and to enjoy the wonderful tots in our congregation.*

