

## First Baptist Regina Weekly News

*For the Week of January 17th, 2021*

We've left the celebration of Christmas behind us and now face the winter months with ongoing restrictions. This year especially, it feels like a long way to the celebration of Easter and to our prairie spring. Our journey through life with Jesus often includes long periods when the way feels difficult.



I'm reminded today of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, by John Bunyan. It tells the journey of Christian from the city called "Destruction" to the "Celestial City" on Mount Zion. Christian said he was making his journey out of love for Jesus.

"I hope to see him alive that did hang dead on the cross; and there I hope to be rid of all those things that to this day are in me and annoyances to me; For to tell you truth, I love him because I was by him eased of my burden, and I am weary of my inward sickness; I would fain be where I shall die no more, and with the company that shall continually cry, 'Holy, holy, holy.'"

Through Christian finds the way difficult, there are places along the way where he finds rest and renewal. At one lodging, those who care for the travellers explain, "This house was built by the Lord of the hill, and he built it for the relief and security of pilgrims."

Although most of us could only gather virtually, I hope the Christmas services and concerts were a warm and safe lodging, and gave you refuge and renewal ahead of the coming months. We



We continue to share together prayer times, small groups, and Sunday worship.

May our church be like a house built by the Lord for the relief and security of all pilgrims.

With love,

Pastor Joel

## First Baptist Church Regina Update

First Baptist Church Regina continues to offer in-person worship services. According to provincial health guidelines, attendance is limited to 30 people. If you have access to the internet, a good alternative to attending in person is to join us on Zoom. Go to [our website](#) for the link.

## Our Condolences

We extend our condolences to the family and friends of Bob Gilmour, who passed away on Monday, January 4, 2021. The funeral was held on Sunday, January 10th. To view the service, follow this link: [Bob Gilmour Funeral](#). Bob and Lois have been a part of First Baptist for many years.

## Learning for Life – New Series Begins January 24th

Pastor Richard will lead this new series: “Jesus’ Earthly Ministry: Revealing the Heart of God.” This class will focus on the four Gospels, allowing them to shape the account of Jesus’ life and teachings, and discovering how Jesus revealed not only God’s heart toward humanity, but also how our hearts ought to be toward one another. For more information, visit [our website](#) or contact [Pastor Richard](#).

## Mitts and Toques Donation Appreciated

This past November, Winnie K collected mitts and toques from a number of individuals in our congregation who generously give of their time to knit or collect them for children who need them. We don’t hear back from every school we take them to, but we know they are appreciated. Albert Community School writes: “Thank you so much for the donation of homemade mittens.”

We have been making donations twice during the winter. If you have mitts and/or toques to donate, please contact Winnie, send an email to [the church](#), or call (306) 359-1450. Winnie will deliver them to the schools.



- Q. What do Snowmen call their kids?  
A. Chill-dren!
- Q. Where does a snowman keep his money?  
A. In a snow bank!
- Q. What do you call a snowman in the desert?  
A. A puddle!

## Spiritual Disciplines Series: Teaching/Preaching

The call to teach or preach is a biblical calling and one which leads to not only greater knowledge of God, but also calls into being all of the sections of spiritual formation: reasoning, reflecting, relating and restoring. Teaching, as understood biblically, is not just a job for pastors or educators, but for all of us. In Proverbs, we read of the teaching of parents to a child: “Hear, my son, your father’s instruction and do not forsake your mother’s teaching; indeed, they are a graceful wreath to your head and ornaments about your neck” (Proverbs 1:8-9). We may not think of our interactions with others as times of teaching, but whether our children or neighbours, our conversation with others can be, and often are, opportunities for teaching.

In Matthew 5:19 we find these powerful words of Jesus: “Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” There is a warning here to those who teach, to not only teach what is right, but to practice what they teach (or preach). As we go about our day-to-day activities, even when not speaking (being silent), our actions speak for us. So, whether in word or deed, we ought to be representing the gospel in our lives.

In Paul’s second letter to Timothy, we find these challenging yet encouraging words: “In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: Proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching.” (2 Timothy 4:1-2). The goal of such teaching is the formation (transformation) of others.

One of the paradigms I use for ministry (correlating with the words reason, reflect, relate, and restore) has education as its’ base. In ministry we are called to educate, exalt, encourage, and evangelize. It unpacks as follows:

**Educate** – Psalm 1; Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Timothy 3:16

One of the great tasks the church has been given, is to educate people about the transformative love of God in Christ. One of our greatest tools to use in this education, is the Bible!

**Exalt** – Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Psalm 34:1-3; Psalm 63:1-4; Romans 12:1

The Bible, however, is not a book merely to be learned in an academic sense – it is a book to be applied to one’s life. The first and greatest application comes in the response to “love God with all of our heart, mind, strength and soul.”

**Encourage** – Leviticus 19:18; John 13:34-35; 1 John 4:7-21

Our second response to the transformative love of God in Christ is to “love one another.” It is in loving one another that we display our knowledge of God in human relationship.

**Evangelize** – Exodus 19:6; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:8

It is in understanding the fact that we are loved by God (education) – even though we did nothing to warrant such love – and responding to such love by loving God (exaltation), and loving one another (encouragement), that we become witnesses (evangelism) to the transformative love of God in Christ.

May our Lord teach us and guide us in this lifestyle of teaching/preaching!

—Pastor Richard

## **New Renovaré Online Course**

Renovaré Canada is offering a new, online course, taught by Pastor Richard Hovey, from February 9th to March 23rd: “[Loneliness: The Enduring Pandemic.](#)”

Since March 2020, our lives have been affected in many different ways by the COVID-19 pandemic, and has received much attention in the media. A much quieter pandemic that has affected lives around the world for generations, and from which, our generation has not been spared, is that of loneliness – made even greater, perhaps, during this COVID pandemic.

In this course, we will explore the reality of loneliness in our times, looking at causes and potential cures, as well as lessons to be learned in seasons of loneliness. The course outline is as follows:

- Facing Reality: A Culture of Loneliness
- Defining Loneliness: Pain with a Purpose?
- Toward a Christian Understanding: Spirituality and Suffering
- Care Versus Cure: A Ministry Unto Loneliness
- The Gift of Solitude: The Importance of Being Alone
- Together but Separate: An Unavoidable Distinction
- Loneliness and Hope: Living with Longing

The course runs on Tuesdays at two time options: 10 am or 8 pm. Cost is \$120. For more information or to register, contact [Pastor Richard](#) or go to [Renovaré Canada](#).

Renovaré also offers an [Online Renewal Group](#). This small group focuses on spiritual formation into Christlikeness. The core components include daily devotional readings, supplemental readings on the spiritual life, online conversation via written posts, and live video chats. The group meets on Zoom. For more information, or for a schedule of meetings/readings, please contact [Pastor Richard](#), or leave a message at (306) 359-1450.

Renovaré Canada is an organization that exists to teach, model, and inspire genuine Christian experience in Canada by way of the disciplines of the spiritual life. These disciplines are a means of responding to the grace of God and partnering with the work of the Holy Spirit to bring about much needed renewal in each of our lives, both individually and collectively. For more information, visit the [Renovaré](#) website.

Pastor Richard’s part time position with us allows him to continue to lead [Renovaré Canada](#).

## What's happening at First?

### Morning Prayer

Join us each morning, Monday to Friday at 7:15 am to begin your day with scripture and prayer, via Zoom. Visit our [website](#) for the link.

### Children

Here is what our children are learning about from now until the beginning of Lent:

Godly Play (ages 4-6) – The Life of Jesus

Oasis (ages 7-11) – Shalom Around the World

For more information or for the Zoom link, please contact [Pastor Kayely](#).

### Youth

Pastor Chris: “Last Friday the youth met for the first time since we took a break over Christmas and the New Year. It was good to see everyone over Zoom and to hear an update on how each of them has been doing recently. Each time we meet, we have a similar routine: Share how we are doing, play a game, have a devotional, spend time journaling, and then pray.

“I have found that it is often difficult to generate discussions or the comfort level to share prayer requests. This can be tough at the best of times. Please continue to keep the youth in your prayers as I know that many are finding the isolation, shift in school routine, and change of social patterns very difficult.” For more information, please contact [Pastor Chris](#).

### Adults

**Learning for Life:** Ron P is leading a mini-course on January 10th and 17th: “Satan and the Christian.” This course is an overview of the Bible’s teaching on Satan, or, the evil one. In week one, we looked at how the Bible describes Satan, and related questions such as: Where did Satan come from? In week two, we will look at how we Christians can fight this foe.

**Reading through the Old Testament:** The group meets weekly, via Zoom. Day and time are to be announced. For more information, please visit [our website](#) or contact [Pastor Richard](#).

**Gospel of John small group study:** Pastor Richard is leading a small group online that is looking at the Gospel of John. This group is meeting, via Zoom, on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 7 pm, and the 2nd and 4th Friday of each month at 10 am. For more information, please visit [our website](#) or contact [Pastor Richard](#).



## Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Every year, Christians around the world are invited to celebrate a Week of Prayer for the unity of all Christians, to reflect on scripture together, to participate in jointly-organized ecumenical services, and to share fellowship.

The theme for Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2021 is “Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit” (John 15:5-9). This theme is developed through a series of reflections extending over eight days. Each day will be led by a different denominational leader.

Daily Bible Studies are being led by and for the churches of Regina. *First Baptist is leading Tuesday’s Bible study.* The Zoom link will be provided closer to the event.

**Day 1** – Monday, January 18th: Called by God: “You did not choose me but I chose you” (John 15:16a)

**Day 2** – Tuesday, January 19th: Maturing Internally: “Abide in me as I abide in you” (John 15:4)

**Day 3** – Wednesday, January 20th: Forming One Body: “Love one another as I have loved you” (John 15:12b)

**Day 4** – Thursday, January 21st: Praying Together: “I do not call you servants any longer...but I have called you friends” (John 15:15)

**Day 5** – Friday, January 22nd: Letting Oneself Be Transformed by the Word: “You have already been pruned by the word...” (John 15:3)

**Day 6** – Saturday, January 23rd: Welcoming Others: “Go and bear fruit, fruit that will last” (John 15:16b)

**Day 7** – Sunday, January 24th: Growing in Unity: “I am the vine, you are the branches” (John 15:5a)

**Day 8** – Monday, January 25th: Reconciling with all Creation: “So that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete” (John 15:11)

For more information, please visit [our website](#), call the church at (306) 359-1450, or send an email to [the church](#).

## Sermon Audio by Phone

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our church and affected many of us in different ways. Those of us without the devices, computers, and knowledge to connect to the Internet are feeling even more isolated. To help address this, First Baptist Church has implemented a service called “Dial-the-Sermon”.

A recent sermon is available to listen to on your phone—any landline or cell phone—by dialing (306) 992-1912 (toll-free within the Regina area). This is an easy way for anyone who is limited to a telephone for communication, to hear the sermon from a recent worship service. This number takes you straight to the sermon recording. If you know someone who might like to use this service, please pass this information on to them.

**Dial-the-Sermon (306) 992-1912**

## The Beginning of the Good News

Pastor Joel's sermon from Sunday, January 10, 2021 (A summary)

Scripture: Mark 1:1-11

If we think in terms of cause and effect, "the beginning" can be the first of a series of events, like the first domino that falls and sends all the others cascading forward. We also have "the beginning" of a river, that is to say, its source.

Imagine following the Nile River where it flows into the Mediterranean Sea, through to Lake Victoria, and from there along the Kagera River, to its source in Rwanda and Burundi.

Imagine everything you would see if you travelled the entire 7000 kilometres of the Nile. At the Nile delta in the Mediterranean, sediment pours into the sea and an abundance of microorganisms flourish. This allows a manifold ecosystem of animals and plants to thrive. Up through the delta, the mix of brackish and fresh water encourages a whole new diversity of life.

As you move inland, you would pass villages, towns, and large cities, established because the Nile provides the water for drinking, cleaning, fishing, hunting, energy, industry, and transportation. You would see farms sustained by the rich soil from flooding, sediment, and irrigation.

As you continue to travel, you would see animals in the river, wading, flying above it, and swimming, coming to bathe, eat, and drink. You would see forests and grasslands spreading out.

You can follow the Nile through eight nations, seeing all of this diversity and abundance of life. If you kept following it back to the springs in Rwanda and Burundi, you would arrive at the source of all of this life, and you would say, "This is the beginning of all that I've seen. This is its source."

What is the source, what is the beginning of the Gospel? Of the good news?

Mark's gospel starts with a roar, like we hear in verse 3, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness." Mark's first words are an exclamation: "The beginning of the good news for humanity and for all of creation is Jesus the Anointed One, the Son of God!"

"Prepare the way! And make straight the paths for him."

You might think that this road was to help us travel to that beginning, to Jesus, like 19th century explorers, searching through remote and wild places, back to the Nile's source.

But that's not it at all.

We prepare this road so that the source of all life, so that the ruler of all things, can come to us. We are preparing the way for God, who will descend to us. John the Baptist calls to us, "Prepare!" because "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh will see it together." (Isaiah 40:3-53)

John tells us to prepare, to repent and to be baptized, because "Someone Powerful" is coming. I'm just using plain old, everyday water to baptize you but the powerful one who is coming, is going to baptize you with the Holy Spirit. (See Mark 1:7-8)

Someone powerful is coming. And it happened: "In those days, Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John." (1:9)

As Jesus appears, I wonder how you imagine him? Often, the picture I get is of a serene man, a very calm and composed man, almost floating through life.

In Mark's Gospel, Jesus is anything but that: he's active, powerful, forceful, strong, firm, courageous. This is evident right away. As Jesus ascended from the waters, Mark says, "the heavens were torn open and the Spirit descended." (1:10)

This kind of opening is like a father who hears their child in trouble on the other side of a locked door. The father isn't patiently knocking and calmly opening the door – no! The father bursts the door open to save his child.

Here the heavens are torn open, like the temple curtain was torn when our Lord was crucified, and like the graves were burst open when our Lord died. The heavens were torn open and the Spirit descended to earth.

From this beginning, Mark is like a fast moving river. Jesus is always on the move.

Mark also gives us a straightforward outline of his story in verse one. Mark gives Jesus two royal titles as a way of claiming that God's authority, the rule of God, the rule of heaven, the kingdom had come to earth in Jesus.

Mark calls Jesus "Christ" and "Son of God."

"Christ" is a Greek word which, in Hebrew, is "Messiah". In English, both these words mean "Anointed One." "Anointed One" (or Christ) and "Son of God" are titles for Hebrew kings, going back to King David.

Mark's gospel divides neatly into two parts following those two titles. From the source, from this beginning, we move very quickly with Jesus as he heals and teaches, as he performs exorcisms, as he commands nature, and feeds multitudes. From chapters 1 to 9, everything take place in and around Galilee.



All of that action culminates in chapters 8 and 9, when Peter exclaims, “You are the Anointed One! You are the Christ, the Messiah, God’s chosen ruler on earth.” Immediately, Jesus ascends the Mount of transfiguration and reveals his glory to his disciples.

When they come down from the mountain, Jesus then turns to Jerusalem. From chapters 9 to 15, Jesus intentionally walks to his death. Jesus is crowned and “enthroned” in Jerusalem in a way that, to this day, we struggle to make sense of: on a cross. But this is how God's authority on earth comes about.

As Jesus is enthroned on the cross, at the climax of the entire story, the gentile centurion exclaims, “Truly this was the Son of God!” (15:39)

The source of the good news for creation is God's authority come to earth in Jesus Christ. This is where Mark begins. The King is coming! Get ready!

And it happened.

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## **Give & Take**

For some time now, we have had a “Give & Take” section on our bulletin board where First Baptist folks can list items they would like to give away or items that they need. However, since very few have the opportunity to see the bulletin board these days, we will now include this information in the newsletter. Here are some items that folks would like to give away:

1. Hide-a-bed (Contact person: Pearl B)
2. Printer – Samsung ML-1710, Black & white, needs cartridge  
Coffee maker & filters – Sunbeam, 6 cups  
Ironing Board  
(Contact person: Enosh L)
3. Winter coat – full length with hood, fur trim; wool/cashmere, dark plum, size 6  
(Contact person: Diane)
4. Two Metronomes – 1 wooden, 1 plastic cover  
Picture frames – many sizes, colors, materials  
(Contact person: Marilyn P)

Items needed:

1. Desk – only if in very good condition please, approximately 54 in, preferably metal.  
(Contact person: Esther G)

If you can use or supply any of these items, please call the church at (306) 359-1450 or send an email to [the church](#), and we will notify the contact person. Or, if you have items either to “Give” or “Take” (something you need), please contact us and we will list your items here.

## Tithing during the pandemic

With the COVID-19 crisis limiting contact with others and restricting meetings of groups, please do not neglect the financial needs of our church.

We have several ways to provide your regular tithes and donations to the church:

1. Mail your gifts to the church or call and leave a message at (306) 359-1450 to arrange for an in-person pick-up. Please place your cheque in your regular offering envelope (or any envelope marked "Offering"), and seal that inside another envelope addressed to: First Baptist Church, 2241 Victoria Ave, Regina, SK S4P 0S4.
2. Establish a **Pre-authorized Remittance (PAR) Plan**. This will automatically transfer funds from your account into the FBC Regina account on a regular basis. Please email the church or contact the Treasurer if you would like to set up PAR, or change your commitment.
3. Make an online donation:
  - Use **Interac e-Transfer** to donate from your phone or computer to [FBCRegina@gmail.com](mailto:FBCRegina@gmail.com) (*no fee or cost to the church*)
  - Use a credit card with a PayPal account via the **PayPal Giving Fund** (*no fee or cost to the church... 100% of your donation reaches us and contributes to our mission*)
  - Use a credit card or PayPal via **CanadaHelps** (*a fee of 4% is deducted from the donation*)
  - Use a credit or debit card via **FBC ChurchTrac** (*the church is charged a fee of approximately 3% for each donation*)

**PLEASE** refer to our website at [firstbaptistregina.ca](http://firstbaptistregina.ca) for more specific information on these contribution methods. You may also contact the treasurer at (306) 775-1497 or email the church at [main\\_fbcregina@sasktel.net](mailto:main_fbcregina@sasktel.net) for further details.



*Kids say the darndest things...*

- The Bible is full of interesting caricatures. In the first book of the Bible, Guinnessis, Adam and Eve were created from an apple tree. One of their children, Cain, asked "Am I my brother's son?"
- When Mary heard she was the mother of Jesus, she sang the "Magna Carta."
- One of the oppossums was St. Matthew who was also a taximan.
- Solomom had three hundred wives and seven hundred porcupines.