

First Baptist Regina Weekly News

For the Weeks of December 11 & 18, 2022

On Sunday the 4th, following communion, around 100 people gathered in the lower hall for our first Christmas meal together in three years. It was a good time with friends, family, and a few guests and visitors. Thank you so much to all those who planned and prepared it.



Our concert season is upon us with concerts on December 9th, 10th and 11th. Our church also recently hosted the University of Regina's choir. Musicians and singers have been here every night of the week practicing. By caring for our building and relationships, we have been able to support the people who keep music alive and growing in our city.

We continue to host the Saturday lunch program where free bag lunches are given out to folks in need. Churches of all kinds are already signing up to help through next June. There is a real joy and sense of camaraderie in working together to prepare and serve the lunch. I think the Holy Spirit rejoices in churches working together to take care of folks. Many of the people who come are believers themselves and they share their blessing with us.

Also, I think people from across the city are looking for any way to respond to the homelessness that has rapidly increased in our city in the past few years. As we walk outside into the bitter wind, it is shocking to think that some of our neighbours are sleeping outside overnight.

This week, our city council is debating if there is more they can do. The cost for the proposed project, as presented publicly, was very high, although still less than the cost of other past and future capital projects, such as Mosaic Stadium. However, charities, other municipalities, and the city's own budget all publicly report that the actual costs for the very programs proposed are much lower than what has been reported, and therefore, would not result in the enormous tax increase suggested in the news. It is hard to understand why there is such a difference. I'm happy to discuss this with anyone who wants to know more or wants to share what they've learned. There's time to call or write your city councillor with your concerns either way.

Please remember our city councillors in prayer this week as they debate the budget. Unfortunately, their discussions have been presented publicly as bitter disagreements, which can't make this time any easier.

Even more, remember those living among us who are homeless and hungry.

Thank you for being such warm and hospitable people. As scripture says, remember that by welcoming strangers, some have entertained angels without knowing it.

God bless you this Christmas.

With love,



Pastor Joel

Ladies Fellowship Breakfast – Saturday, December 17th

Time: 9:30 – 11:00 am

Place: First Baptist Church Library

The breakfast will be provided, so just come and enjoy. There will be an opportunity to do a Christmas craft as well as time to visit and relax. If you are able to come, please contact Julie Rich, Laurie McPherson, or Debby Nelson, [email the church](#), or call the church at (306) 359-1450, so that we know how many to prepare for.

Christmas Carolling Opportunity



Choir at the Renaissance, December 2021

On Saturday, December 17th at 2:00 pm, our choir has been invited to the Renaissance Retirement Residence to sing a few anthems for the residents, and also to join them for a time of carolling. We are looking for singers to add to our numbers for the carolling time. If you like to sing (you don't have to have a voice like John's!), we would love to have you join us. If interested, please contact Louise Krueger, [email the church](#), or call the church at (306) 359-1450.

Children's Ministry Update

During the Sunday morning services in December, the children are exploring the nativity story. To go along with this, an Advent calendar has been created. This calendar is your opportunity to go on an Advent Journey to discover the true meaning of Christmas. It is particularly geared to the children and families in our congregation, but is applicable to everyone. There are various activities to do through Advent until January 6th (Epiphany).



The idea of this calendar is to give families ways to incorporate faith into their homes. If you don't have a calendar yet but would like one, either for your family or to give to someone else, please contact Pastor Cheryl by email or by calling the church at (306) 359-1450.

Reaching out to our community – December 24th & 31st

On Saturday, December 24th, it will be our turn to host the Saturday lunch program in the lower hall. We need 8 to 10 volunteers, to help out from 10:00 am until 1:30 pm, or some portion of that time period. Your role would be to help make sandwiches, assemble bagged lunches, and help serve the lunch. We will prepare 200 lunches.



Volunteers will also be needed on December 31st, when the Saturday lunch committee will be hosting the lunch. If you are able to help out on either of these dates, or for more information, please contact Barb Ziolkowski, send [an email to the church](#), or call the church at (306) 359-1450.

Time to Clean Out Your Closets!

Has it been awhile since you cleaned out your closets? We are looking for certain items to give out to those who come to the Saturday lunch program on December 24th and 31st. Items needed are adult-size mitts, gloves (especially men's), toques, scarves, underwear (new only, please), and toiletries such as hand soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and deodorant.

Regina Christmas Wish List

Are you looking for a way to help the poor in our city? The Regina Christmas Wish List is a Christmas gift program for people living in poverty in Regina. On the [Regina Christmas Wish List website](#), you will find stories of individuals and families that are connected to several charities, including the Good News Chapel – an inner city ministry which many of us are familiar with. Please note that any gifts donated through this organization must be delivered by December 21st. See their website for details.

An Advent Reflection

“Secular society knows a little something about Christmas but virtually nothing about Advent. The danger for the Church is to end up going in this same direction. In our rush to get to the manger, we are tempted to downplay—or completely ignore—the Advent themes that the Church has long believed are necessary so that we can come to the cradle of Christ in the right way.” (From *Calvin Theological Seminary* website)



Dan Clendenin: “Praying to God for mighty acts of deliverance is an entirely human and genuinely Christian response to the pain and suffering of the world, of our neighbours, and of our own lives. I intend never to stop praying for God’s miraculous intervention; such prayers remain a staple of my morning runs. But the season of Advent that we now enter adds an important qualification. God is not a Cosmic Concierge. Human experience gives the lie to the delusion, so deeply embedded in the American psyche, that every problem has a solution and that every question has an answer. Sometimes we must wait.” (<http://www.journeywithjesus.net/Essays/20051121JJ.shtml>)

Lamin Sanneh who teaches missions and world Christianity and history at Yale Divinity School says “God has staked the divine honour on the project to redeem and sanctify...God’s word [is] powerful; it places God at the center of our ventures, as the first and final surety. Christians, therefore, wait for the feast to come with grateful hearts even though in the interim their minds are set on unresolved troubles and unreachable horizons. Advent is quality time, not because of its [noisy] and crowded demands, but because it provides a time for us to receive God’s word and to collaborate in its fulfillment by being the connecting rod between vision and action.” (<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=922>)

As a latecomer to Advent-celebrating churches, I found myself woefully ignorant of its tradition and practises. The idea of spending time in lament and even despair for several weeks prior to the excitement of the celebration of Christ’s birth was originally abhorrent to me, in all my ignorance of the Advent season. And yet it made sense of my hitherto unexplained sadness, all through my adult life, in the weeks preceding Christmas. Since the time of my recognition of Christ as the way to God, I knew something had changed in my emotional response prior to the annual Christmas celebration, a kind of darkness in my thoughts and feelings, but I had no explanation for it. Finally I discovered the season of Advent. Indeed it is a time for introspection, for admission that my life is not all it should be; a time to examine the darkness surrounding a world of political upheaval, wars, economic crises and violence; a time to admit that neither I nor the most experienced of world leaders have answers that will ultimately rescue the world around us; a time to face the darkness and despair around the globe and the accompanying feeling of hopelessness.

Participating deliberately in the Advent season is giving me new hope in the deliverance the birth of Jesus Christ is bringing not only to me but to all the suffering world. The truth that Jesus Christ is indeed The Answer is even more meaningful as I now deliberately allow myself to feel, during the Advent weeks, deep sadness for the misery of our world, to contemplate my own personal failures and distresses, to begin to grasp the reality of a Christ-less existence. At Christmas I now more fully realize and experience the joy of a better understanding of the impact of Jesus' birth upon the world; an overwhelming joy to see how his existence as Lord of Lords moves us all toward the ultimate deliverance from despair: the return of Jesus Christ as the Ruler and King of all creation. As we wait here in the darkness of Advent, we have hope. The hope is Jesus Christ...the true light of the world.

—Sue Bornowsky

Worship and Fellowship Opportunities in December

A Service of Comfort & Hope – December 15th, 7:00 pm

On Thursday, December 15th, we will be having a Blue Christmas Service. It will be in person at the church sanctuary and over Zoom. In this service, we will take time to recognize that Christmas can be a difficult time of year. We will remember the loss of loved ones but other kinds of losses as well.

This service is also a service of comfort and hope—the hope of the coming of Christ and the comfort of Immanuel, God with us. The service will give us an opportunity to face our losses together with others through scripture, prayer, and song.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service – December 24th, 6:00 pm

This is one of the most beautiful and meaningful services of the year. We will celebrate the Incarnation with scripture lessons and carols. The service will be in person and on Zoom.



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- Q. What is the best possible Christmas present?
A. A broken drum—you just can't beat it!
- Q. What did the bald man say when he got a comb for Christmas?
A. I'll never part with it!"
- Q. How do Christmas trees get ready for a night out?
A. They spruce up!
- Q. What do you get when you mix a Christmas tree and an iPad?
A. A pineapple!
- Q. What did the stamp say to the Christmas card?
A. Stick with me, and we'll go places!
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Coming this January: In Case You Were Wondering...

Some of you have had questions about the worship service at First Baptist Regina. The structure, the hymns, the repetition – they drive some of us crazy while others really enjoy and appreciate them. For many who are new to this church, it can take some getting used to. We aren't just "doing what we've always done" because we don't like change. Actually, our services weren't always quite as structured as they are at present.

Furthermore, we aren't alone in going this way. There are young, growing evangelical congregations across North America that are choosing to change to a more structured service. Starting in January, we will take just a few minutes at the start of *A Time for Friends* to see if we can make any sense of it. Each Sunday, we'll pick one aspect of this topic and chat about it briefly. For some, this might result in the services have more of an impact on them. For others, it might be helpful to understand a bit more about the "whys."

Spiritual Formation Small Group Beginning in January

When: Tuesday evenings from January 10th to April 4th (no meeting February 21st)

Time: 7:30 – 9:00 pm

Location: At the church, in person

The book, *Sensible Shoes*, by Sharon Garlough Brown, follows the stories of four women as they are drawn into a spiritual formation journey. The reader is invited to join with them. "The sacred journey is a pilgrimage for those who are thirsty for more of God. This journey is for all those who are dissatisfied with living on the surface and who want to travel deeper into God's heart. We invite you to come and explore spiritual disciplines as we seek to create sacred space for God." (p. 34).

Over 12 weeks, we will have times of guided discussion and will practice the spiritual disciplines for ourselves. Join us on a collective journey of spiritual practice, mutual support and personal revelation. Questions? Ask [Pastor Cheryl](#) or [Pastor Kayely](#) or call the church at (306) 359-1450. Sign-up form coming soon (Please indicate if you require childcare).

Offering Envelopes

If you have used offering envelopes in the past year, your 2023 envelopes have been printed and are in your mail slot. If you did not use offering envelopes last year, but would like to start using them, please leave a message with the church office by calling (306) 359-1450 or by sending [an email to the church](#). Please note that you do not need envelopes to receive a charitable donation receipt for your offerings. Regardless of your method of giving, you will receive a tax receipt for it, as long as your name is indicated on your donation.

What's happening at First?

Children's Ministry

We have two classes that take place during the Sunday morning worship service, for children aged 3 to grade 6—Godly Play for the younger ones and Oasis for the older group. We also provide nursery supervision for babies and toddlers. For more information, please contact Pastor Cheryl [by email](#) or by calling the church at (306) 359-1450.

Youth Ministry

The youth meet weekly for various activities. For more information about our youth program, please contact [Pastor Chris](#).

Adult Ministries

Morning Prayer: Join us Monday to Thursday at 7:15 am to begin your day with scripture and prayer, via Zoom. For more information, visit [our website](#). [Join morning prayer](#).

Reading through the Bible: This group is taking a break over Christmas and will resume on January 11, 2023. For more information, call Norma Holtslander at (306) 529-9414, [email the church](#), or call the church at (306) 359-1450.

Noon Prayer: Join others every Wednesday at 12:30 pm for a short time of scripture and prayer. In person, in the main office, or over Zoom. If coming in person, please use the Lorne Street entryway. For more information, visit [our website](#), or contact [Pastor Joel](#). [Join Wednesday noon prayer](#).

Voice: A small group for women who like to read and enjoy lively conversation. This group is taking a break over Christmas and will resume early in the new year. For more information, contact Bonnie Austring-Winter or Laureen Snook, visit [our website](#), [email the church](#), or call the church at (306) 359-1450.

Learning for Life – Sunday Mornings, 9:30-10:30: Beginning Sunday, November 27th Annabel Robinson is leading a class on the Gospel of Luke. This class is in person and on Zoom. For more information, contact Annabel, email [Pastor Kayely](#), go to [our website](#), or call the church at (306) 359-1450. [Join "Gospel of Luke"](#).

Dial-the-Sermon – (306) 992-1912



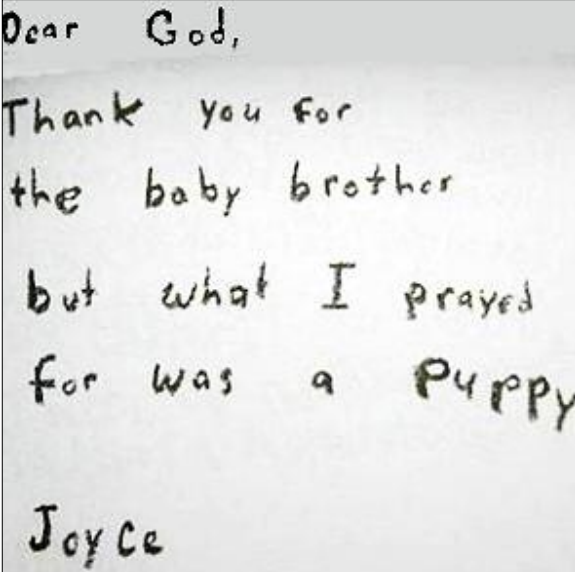
Know of someone with no computer and/or internet access and cannot come to church in person? Please let them know that there is an easy way to listen to a recent Sunday's sermon. Simply dial (306) 992-1912 (toll-free within the Regina area) on a landline phone or cell phone. This number takes you straight to the sermon recording.

Tithes and Offerings

Whether you are attending Sunday services in person or online, there are several methods that you can use to give your 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 a credit or debit card to make a donation from our website. (*The church is charged a small processing fee for each donation.*)
 - Use **Interac e-Transfer** to donate from your phone or computer to 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*)
 - Use a credit card or PayPal via **CanadaHelps** (*a 3.5% fee 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 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 for further details.



Dear God,
Thank you for
the baby brother
but what I prayed
for was a puppy
Joyce

Did you hear about the young boy who was doing his fill-in-the-blank homework? For the one that said "At Christmas, we exchange gifts with _____," he wrote "Receipts."

And then there was the preacher who was not known for his brevity. Just as he began the homily for the Christmas Eve service, the electricity in the church failed. He and the ushers found some candles and placed them around the sanctuary. Then he re-entered the pulpit, shuffled his notes, and muttered, "Now, where was I?" A tired voice was heard, "Right near the end!"