

CENTENNIAL HOTSPOT

Centennial Presbyterian Church

103 Pinetown Place NE, Calgary, AB T1Y 5J1 403-285-7144

Volume 1, Issue 4 April 2020

IN THIS ISSUE

Minister's Musings
Notes from the Loft
Upcoming Events
On the Lighter Side
Worship Committee
Pastoral Care Team
Did You Know
Mission
Session
Pews News
From the Office
Sunday School
Prayer Calendar

Minister's Musings

Holy waiting

1 I'm not a very patient person. What about you? We are not
2 a patient culture in Canada. We tend to be a watch-watching,
2 short-cutting, fast food, express lane, FedEx-ing, horn-
honking, quick-responding, instant-serving, emailing culture.
2 Louis Smeads, Late Professor of Ethics at Fuller Seminary,
2 says that waiting is the hardest work human beings will ever
3 do. Waiting is our destiny as creatures who cannot by them-
selves bring about the thing they hope for. We wait in fear
2 for a happy ending we cannot write. We wait for a "not yet"
3 that feels like a "not ever."
3 In the world of the coronavirus, we are also waiting. "For
3 what?" is hard to answer. For it to be over. For those who are
3 sick to recover. For a magically resurrected economy. For
3 school to start and the multiplex to open. For baseball. For a
4 paycheck once again. Waiting to get back to where we
4 were—which for many of us wasn't a good place to begin
with.

But waiting, like hoping, demands an object. We are waiting for a solution to the inexplicable. We are waiting for deliverance from our vulnerability to nature, of course—and from death—but even more from our vulnerability to the self-interest, lying, hoarding, and venality that make the pandemic even worse. Which is to say, we want to be delivered from ourselves.

Psalms 40 says, "I waited on the Lord." In Psalm 46:10, the psalmist writes "Be still and know that I am God." Waiting does not mean doing nothing. It is not fatalistic resignation. It means going about our assigned tasks, confident that God will provide the meaning and conclusions. It means a confident alert expectation that God will do what he said, and he will do. It is imagination put in the harness of faith. It is a willingness to let him do it his way and in his time.

The scriptures are repetitive in their invitation for us to wait. What is God doing in our prayerful wait? God inclines to us. God literally stoops down and bows down to us to hear what we are trying to say. God comes to us while we wait. God hears our cry. God does not ignore us. God draws us out of the dark place, the desolate pit, the miry bog. God sets our feet upon solid ground and gives us sure steps to follow in the midst of our wait. God puts a new song in our hearts while we wait. God is very present in the waiting process, and God is moving us to change our pattern and our disposition on life. We should not get bogged down in the dark place while we wait.

Things change while we wait if we wait in the presence of God. Yes, God does answer prayer, but God changes us while we wait. So, in the meantime, don't be mean as you pass the time. Mean what you say and say what you mean and find meaning in the meantime. Discover the means of waiting patiently; overcome the temptation of thinking that waiting is meaningless. I pray that God abides with you in this time of stillness, that our waiting may be a time of "holy waiting" where we wait with purpose as our God uses us to heal the world. May the Lord Jesus Christ help us to become gracious, prayerful waiters on the goodness of God. Amen.



NOTES FROM THE LOFT

Well, there's not too much to share here!

We have an unexpected break from our usual routine and maybe it's a time for us to relax, recharge and renew.



Growing up, after church on Sunday, mom would make lunch, Dad would sit in "his chair" in the living room and read the paper, and on the stereo were gospel records. One of my favourite memories is of Tennessee Ernie Ford. His rich voice would fill our home the entire afternoon. True to tradition at the time, we weren't allowed to do much on a Sunday, so it reminds me of a lazy, relaxing time. Here is a link to some of his recordings <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zqwjtDsdp0> . For those a bit younger and not familiar with him, here is a link to a collection of more contemporary artists <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZjzLN8uYCig> .

Carla Zacharias, Music Team Leader

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 10	Good Friday
April 12	Easter Sunday

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Announcement in the church bulletin for a National PRAYER & FASTING conference:
"The cost for attending the Fasting and Prayer conference includes meals."

WORSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS

The catchphrase in this season of uncertainty is "new normal". Among other things we need to adjust to the reality of not gathering for worship on Sundays. As of this writing we are considering ways to have the fullest possible worship experience presented to you online. More details will be coming as the situation unfolds day by day.

Worship is not just what we do on a Sunday morning. Worship is how we conduct our lives day by day. In a quote attributed (perhaps incorrectly) to St. Francis of Assisi we find, "Preach the Gospel at all times. When necessary, use words." Perhaps we could steal that, change it and say, "Worship at all times. When gathering is necessary go to church." We should always be living in a way that reflects that we are followers of the Great King. This doesn't mean that we should be pious, walking around all the time with our heads bowed in prayer, but it does mean that we should live in such a way that may cause non-believers to raise questions as to our motivation. Especially in these days, when we do acts of kindness for those who are more severely impacted by the current crisis, let our motivation be the One who lowered Himself to become one of us. This, will be our worship.

The cancellation of a physical gathering for worship will not last forever. Accordingly the need for having two A/V operators at each service is not going away. We will need at least five volunteers to make this work efficiently. So far, we've had no response to this call for volunteers. If you are interested in operation of Powerpoint and/or audio or if there is a younger member of your household (that's not in Sunday School), please let us know. Office@centennialchurch.ca or broad2well@shaw.ca

On a similar and personal note, my recent illness has made me come to the realization that I won't be around forever to prepare the PowerPoint presentations. To date, Reuben Flim has been an excellent backup for this, but it would be great if there were more volunteers prepared to step in when necessary. If you would like to be part of the preparation team, please use the same contact information as above.

Please remember our upcoming services:

1. Sundays in Lent, March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, and April 5 – cancelled
2. Maundy Thursday April 9, Good Friday April 10, Easter Sunday April 12 – unlikely
3. Anniversary May 25 – we pray we are able
4. Stampede July 12 – Yahoo?

Stay tuned for some changes to our worship services, probably coming in the fall. As a result, now is a great time to let us know what you might like to see. If you have any comments or issues about the Worship Service, please let us know. We appreciate all comments, good or bad (but especially the good) and consider them all. You can email us, accost us after church or come to a meeting to express your views.

If you would like to receive the newsletter via email, please ensure the office has your email address. You can send your address to office@centennialchurch.ca.

May Newsletter submission deadline is April 29.

THE MISSION TEAM

Ojulu and Abuya have a new baby girl and are settling in well. Ojulu has been actively job hunting and has had a few call backs but the only job offer so far which involved moving to BC.

Funds raised for the refugee program to date are \$23,006 and expenditures are \$12,345 including a damage deposit of \$1550. There will be an additional \$1550 for rent this month but this should be the last payment as increases in government programs should cover future costs.

We have been informed that it is most likely the second family's arrival will be delayed due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

FROM THE SESSION:

The online Worship Service is increasing in scope every Sunday and improvements are being looked at constantly. The church now has a ZOOM account which means teams will be able to hold online meetings with no time limit. Our Session meeting was held this way last evening and was functional. This costs \$20 per month (free Zoom has a 45 min. time limit) and we committed to pay for this until the end of June and then re-assess. Any team at the church can use the account to hold meetings, Bible studies or even fellowship time.

Members of the Board and Session are looking into possible governments supports we may be able to access and for ways to allow people to get their offerings to the Church. We are currently looking at several different methods including: interact transfers, a donation portal on the website and mailing in cheques to Centennial –attention: Envelope Secretary. More info will follow shortly via email or telephone.

A team has been put together to review and update the covenant with the Anyuak Mission.

Doug Bonar, Clerk of Session

PASTORAL CARE TEAM

During this time of self isolation and protective measures, we want to ensure the congregation is aware of the Pastoral Care Team and how they can help.

If you are unable, or concerned about going out for medications, or groceries, please email the address below, call the church (403-285-7144) or Carla Zacharias at home (403-285-9516) to request help. If you need someone to pray with, our prayer team can help and give you a call. During this time, we would also ask that the members of the congregation call each other and check in, just even a quick hello, we're thinking of you and want to make sure you're ok kind of call.

Carla Zacharias, Pastoral Care Team Leader centpastoralcareteam@gmail.com

PEWS NEWS

Please keep the following in your prayers: Steve Rajan and family; Michael and Belinda Ngedi and family with their son Benjamin who remains in hospital, as it is the safest place for him.

Happy birthday to those celebrating birthdays this month:
Ainsley Fusianka-a, Nyagoyni and Nyajab Changach,
Bernadette Fonmedig and Rameses Rivera

We celebrate with Sam & Christian Kiplagat who had a baby boy, Kyrie on Friday, March 13, Ojulu and Abuya Ogwok welcomed a new baby girl, Bunglingo, on March 17, and with Julius and Adalberta Ajeagah on their new baby boy.

FROM THE OFFICE

While lots of work is being done remotely, phone and email messages are being checked several times a week, and mail is being picked up and sorted once a week.

As we continue to improve our communication and our delivery of the worship service, your announcements are very welcome! If your team is planning to hold a zoom meeting, that can still go in a calendar for the newsletter and weekly service announcements.

If you have upcoming birthdays and anniversaries you would like us to celebrate as we do every Sunday, please send the dates to office@centennialchurch.ca or call Carla Zacharias and we will get them in for celebrating.

We will be sending out regular emails with service information each week. Go to our website, centennialchurch.ca and check out our newsletters, services, and other updates. The COVID19 tab is your one stop shop for all the news at the moment!

SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sunday School teachers have worked on a way to keep the learning going! As part of the Newsletter email, another file is attached with the Sunday School lesson for this week. As we move forward, colouring pages will be included.

Look here for more exciting Sunday School news!

Christian Education Committee

PRAYER CALENDAR

The prayer calendar that is normally handed out for the first of each month will now come out as an attachment to the newsletter email.

Please continue to pray for each of our members on the calendar, and in general as we learn about our new normal.

If you have any prayer concerns that arise, please contact the office and we can include these in our prayer chain. If you would like to be part of our prayer chain, please contact the office and have your name added to the list. Updates will be given via text or email as is suitable for you.

Dry Bones SUNDAY SCHOOL

