



# The Vine



## STRATHMORE UNITED CHURCH NEWSLETTER



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Ministers Musing	1/2
Finances	2
Property Team	3
Arts on 817	3
New Church Directory	3
Covenanting Service	3
How Can I Help	4
Guatemala Update	4
Thrift Sale Thank You	4
Pastoral Care Team	4
Office hours / contact	5
Upcoming events/Ongoing Events	5

### Ministers Musings—The Beginning and The Present

The celebration of Thanksgiving is within just a few days. We know in our hearts that giving thanks and feeling grateful for the gifts of life can't be limited to just one weekend. Yet, it is a great opportunity to have one day that focuses on blessings and gratitude.

If I look back to the past three months of my life, I am flooded with warm feelings and gratefulness. I am honored that I have found your community of faith, and that you accepted and appreciated me and what I can offer.

The sincere welcome and the support I received during those hot summertime months still warm my heart. I am very grateful for you and your community of faith. So I can say, our pastoral relationship has had a very positive and promising beginning.

However, in this Minister's musing, I wish to talk about something other than the beginning of my ministry in this congregation. I would like to ponder on the Beginning, with a capital B.

Those of you who attend worship services regularly probably noticed that since the first Sunday of September, Creation Time is observed through our hymns and liturgies. With this first writing to the church's newsletter, I would like to honor the Season of Creation, which is in fact celebrated each and every year.

It begins on *September 1<sup>st</sup>* and ends on *October 4<sup>th</sup>*, on the day of the Feast of St. Francis. Did you know that Crea-

tion Time's origins go back only to 1989? The beginning of this celebration was launched by a declaration of an Orthodox patriarch in that year, which was then adopted by an Anglican Church of Canada General Synod Resolution in 2019, and by Pope Francis in the same year.

The United Church of Canada introduced Creation Time in the Season of Pentecost somewhat earlier, in 2010.

With official terms, Creation Time provides an opportunity in the life of the church to focus on our common home and the theme of Creation. Why should we focus on these? Because through the Scriptures, our Creator encourages us to not take all the gifts and beauty of this planet for granted. Especially now, when our human carbon and plastic footprints cause fatal disturbances in almost every area of the natural world.

But let's go back to the original theme of this musing: The Beginning; as it is presented in Genesis 1:1-2:

**“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.”**

What stands out in these verses for me is that the Spirit of God was hovering over the formless, empty, and dark stage of this planet. God was there when nothing existed but emptiness and darkness.

And I believe that the Spirit of God has been hovering over this creation

Strathmore United Church would like to welcome Rev. Maria Szabone Berces as our incoming minister.





ever since. As John puts it in his Gospel: **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.”** (John 1:1; 3-4)

Through the continuous work of the Holy Trinity God – Creator, Son and Holy Spirit – the Almighty has been present with all creation, including us humans in every day, season, and era of our lives. This is the Present - and playing with words - it is also a Gift.

The Spirit of God has been still hovering over this earth. This world, where we can witness beauty and destruction; kindness and selfishness; generosity and greed; love and hatred; caring and terror; birth and death.

During my recent holiday, my family and I had a chance to visit Waterton National Park for the first time in our lives.

It’s hard to find the right words for the park’s beauty and majesty.

While we saw the signs of the 2017 wildfire, which devastated the forests surrounding that little mountain town gem, we also witnessed life conquering death. So, Anita took this picture at our tour of Red Rock Canyon.



I believe, the hovering of the Spirit of God can be experienced not just in nature at large, but in our own personal lives, too. The Spirit of God is hovering over our beginnings and ends; our happy and sad times; our victories and failures; in our health and in the pain of our bodies.

Creation Time reminds us to focus on the continued presence of God with us, and along with its encouragement, we are also reminded of our role and purpose in this creation. As the second story of creation puts it in Genesis 2: **“to work it and take care of it.”** (Genesis 2:15)

May we appreciate God’s unceasing presence in this creation, not just in the dedicated Season of Creation Time and during Thanksgiving, but each and every day of our lives.

Blessings  
Rev. Maria Szabone Berces

**STEWARDSHIP Report Jan 1 - Sept 30/24**

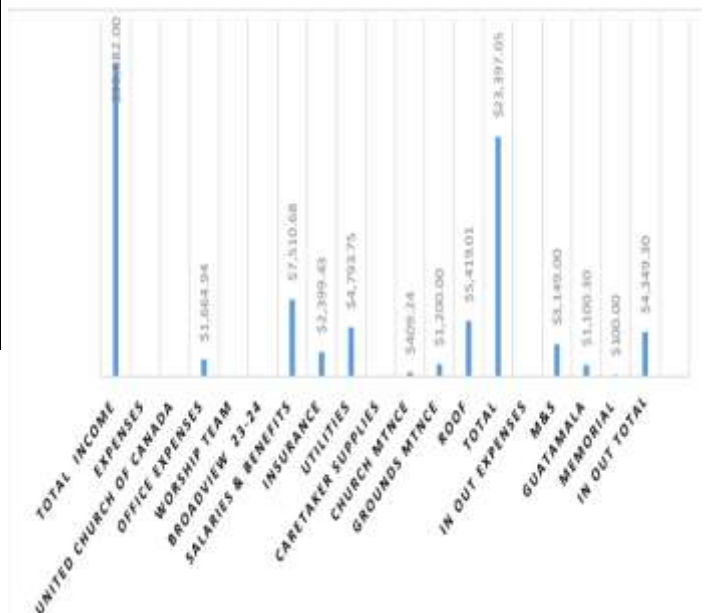
	Local	M&S	Monthly BUDGET
Budgeted	\$ 15,319.42	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 16,819.42
Received	\$ 12,172.25	\$ 1,163.00	\$ 13,335.25
Shortfall	<b>-\$ 3,147.17</b>	<b>-\$ 337.00</b>	<b>-\$ 3,484.17</b>

**YEAR TO DATE STEWARDSHIP REPORT**

	Local	M&S	Total Budget
Budgeted	\$ 137,874.75	\$ 13,500.00	\$ 151,374.75
Received	\$ 90,714.77	\$ 9,497.00	\$ 100,211.77
Shortfall	<b>-\$ 47,159.99</b>	<b>-\$ 4,003.00</b>	<b>-\$ 51,162.98</b>

**This includes Beat the Budget of \$9224 plus \$5000 matching**

The above chart is based on the amount that was budgeted with a full time minister, below are actual Numbers





**Property Team News**

The Property Team has been working on completing projects on the to do list. We have realigned the parking blocks and graded and moved the gravel piles back onto the parking lot and filled in the potholes. We also had a yard clean up and trimmed and remove the dead tree on the East side of the church. Those tasks were done in May and June so no formal meet was conducted. We had a meeting August 17, 2024.

We have not completed the office window replacement as yet waiting for Tims Glass to come and install. The fire alarm panel is still on hold waiting for more information on cause and what is needed to repair or upgrade. We still have not progressed any further on the Wheelchair accessible sidewalk approaches still have not cost them out for material and need to discuss weather we should tackle the job ourselves or contract it out. The entrance door has a regular door stop installed. The kitchen sink taps on the East side kitchen sink have been repaired and the bathroom sink in the main foyer has been repaired with new set of taps. We will get the folding partition wall from the Christmas hamper group for free as they do not need. We will use them in the basement SW corner room. We reviewed the Property Team Policy and did not find any real concern for duty changes. We also discussed Church Rental Policy and noted that it is identified what fees are charged for renting church basement. No notice of what fees are charged for the Sanctuary.

**Submitted by, Don J**

**Covenanting Service**

On Sunday, Oct 20<sup>th</sup> we will be hold as special Covenanting Service to officially welcome Rev. Maria Szabone Berces as our full-time minister. Rev. Karen Medland will be officiating. A hot pot luck luncheon will be held following the service. We invite everyone to attend, bring a favorite item to add to the menu. We invite anyone willing to help to set up or clean up to sign up on the list at the church. Thank You

**Heavenly Humour**

Its important for your health to have an attitude of gratitude. When you get up in the morning, do you say, "Good Lord, morning!?" Or do you say, "Good morning, Lord!?" - George Goldtrap

**ARTS ON 817**

Arts on 817 are back with an exciting group of four concerts featuring:

- Dec 7<sup>th</sup> The Heebie-jeebee's**
- Jan 18<sup>th</sup> The Calgary Burns Club Singers and Guests**
- Feb 8<sup>th</sup> ReMix: Powered by REV52**
- Mar 15<sup>th</sup> Steve Pineo with Horns**

Season tickets cover all 4 concerts and cost \$120.00 (\$30.00/concert). They are now available on line at:

[smoreuc.com](http://smoreuc.com) at The Vault Or by calling Donald L. at 403-934-5871

Individual Tickets are \$35.00 / Show available 1 month prior to the show

We look forward to our concert season and reconnecting with all of you.



**NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY**

The church counsel has decided it is time to update our current directory. We are producing a pictorial directory to help us acquaint ourselves with one another and strengthen the bond of our faith community. The directory will be free to anyone having their picture taken. Appointments must be booked in advance. The dates booked for photo sessions are:

- Thursday, November 14 from 1:00 to 7:00 pm**
  - Friday, November 15 from 9:30 am to 3:00 pm**
  - Saturday, November 16 from 9:30 am to 3:00 pm**
- You may order pictures, and they will arrive prior to Christmas.

If you have any questions, please contact Donald L. at 403-934-5871 or cell 403-934-8749

We would like everyone to book an appointment. You can begin booking your appointment after church on Sunday, Oct 13<sup>th</sup>.



## How Can I Help?

Think about the last time someone was kind to you. Kindness is one of the most powerful forces on earth, and serving other people can transform someone's life for good.

All of us have the ability to do good for someone, and God has gifted each of us with special abilities and talents that can be used to serve other people in our lives. Whether it's a spiritual gift or a learned skill, you have unique opportunities to show kindness to those in need.

Paul, the writer of the letter to the Galatians, is careful to note that we won't always have the opportunity to do good for others. We cannot know how many days we have left on earth, and we certainly don't know how long certain people will be in our lives. That's why we should use every opportunity to encourage and help others.

Serving and helping others is a form of love. When we take the time to help someone, we allow them to experience Jesus's love through us. Doing good for someone opens the door to conversations about the love that Jesus has for them.

Paul also says that we should help those who are believers. That is because those who are believers are our spiritual family. Just as we ought to care for our relatives, we should also look for opportunities to love those who are part of the Church.

How has God gifted you with talents and abilities to serve others?

Take some time to think about a few people in your life that you can help. Maybe it's letting someone know you're thinking of them, or perhaps it's helping someone with a need they have. In any case, be on the lookout for ways to do good to all people as you go about your day.

Copyright (c) 2013 Jared Verdi  
Original Concept by Matt D. Smith

**Submitted by Laura J.**

### Gentle Reminder:

**If you have a complement, concern, or complaint can you please make sure that you put it in writing, and sign the note so that it can be addressed and you can be contacted with results. Thank You**

## Guatemala Mission Update:

Rosa and her staff continue in their mission and vision of Women in Solidarity. The yearly cost of the LPN training Program at the Health Clinic is almost \$13,000 per year. Annually the clinic receives a \$9,000 grant. The shortfall of funding comes from other charitable donations such as the United Church of Strathmore.

A 23 year old nursing student, who graduated from the LPN nursing program, experienced another reality. She was able to care for an older adult who was abandoned, had anemia and was emotionally sad. This motivated her to be more in solidarity, offering health, spiritual, and emotional support. And as nurses they offer the best medical attention to both older women and men. The young nurse provides attention to personal hygiene, helps dress the person, brings them food, cleans wounds, gives injections, gives emotional support, and listens to their stories.

This graduate nurse says " Thanks for this opportunity given me through Women of Solidarity, I now have a stable job. Besides people look for me in the community where I live so that I can provide injections, give medicine, change IV bags, give information about methods of family planning, take blood pressure, and test blood sugar."

Thank you for your generosity, for your coins, you are supporting the LPN clinic which educates a young woman who goes out to support and educate her community.

God Bless

**Submitted by Linda D.**

### Pastoral Care Team

If you are aware of anyone who would appreciate a visit, please let us know. Please email or phone Donald. gledene1@telus.net or ph 403-934-5871.

**Well, another successful Thrift Sale has come and gone and it would not have been possible without all of you wonderful people who have volunteered your time and talents. We, at Strathmore United Church are so grateful for all your help during that extremely busy week. A heartfelt thanks goes out to all of you. Cheers and Happy Thanksgiving. Arlene W.**

**Vision Statement**  
**Strathmore United Church lives out our faith through worship, music, fellowship and outreach.**

**S T R A T H M O R E  
 U N I T E D C H U R C H**

410—Fourth Street, Strathmore,  
 Alberta T1P 1B4

Phone: 403-934-3025

Fax: 403-934-3081

Website: [www.smoreuc.com](http://www.smoreuc.com)

E-mail: Office

[smoreuc@gmail.com](mailto:smoreuc@gmail.com)

**Office Hours**

The church office is open 9am to—12 noon Wednesdays and Thursdays. Feel free to drop in or contact Susan B. during that time.



If you have questions, concerns or wish to contribute to The Vine please contact Karen W. at 403-934-3579 or email at [ckwilkie@shaw.ca](mailto:ckwilkie@shaw.ca)

**Upcoming Events**



- ◆ Although we are no longer required to wear masks, feel free to if you wish. Please remember if you are not feeling well to please stay home as COVID and the flu is definitely in the air!!
- ◆ October 10th—10 am Bible Study at the church. Please read Genesis 1 & 2 Prior to attending
- ◆ Oct 20—Covenanting service for Rev. Maria Szabone Berces, Rev. Karen Medland Officiating. Hot Pot luck to follow. Please join us.
- ◆ Watch for Meals to Go Early in November.
- ◆ The Nov 24th join us for some old time music before church and a Soup and Bun lunch after.
- ◆ Purdy's Chocolate Fundraiser -Deadline for orders November 23, 2024. Delivery/Pickup December 2-5 th Order forms & books will be available at Church or order on line. / [www.fundraising.purdys.com](http://www.fundraising.purdys.com)

**Our Mission Statement**

Strathmore United Church is a community of faith, striving to make a difference for Christ.

◆ If you wish to sign up for Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR) or to receive envelopes, please contact Susan in the church office—403-934-3025 or Karen— 403-934-3579

◆ Watch for a Guess Who's coming to Dinner early in the new year.



**Ongoing Events**



- \* Quilting group—Will meet Wed. 10-2.
- \* Book Club—Oct. 7, 2024—1:00 in the church library.
- \* Agape Group—Meet Oct. 8, 2024 7:30 pm in the church Library.
- \* Council Meet—Next meeting October 22/24—7:00
- \* Property Team Meet—3rd Saturday at 10am
- \* The Mary Martha UCW group meet from September to June. All women of the congregation are welcome. Contact Peggy at 403 934 3197 for information and location
- \* Food Bank—Donations are gratefully accepted in the bin in the foyer.
- \* Ongoing Bottle drive—There is a bag in the foyer to put all refundable beverage containers. All proceeds are given to the Guatemala Project.