

Sundre United Church Spring 2019

Minister's Message

Greetings friends in the Sundre congregation,

As I put fingers to type writer keys, the sun is shining, and the sky is a bright blue - so nice after our long, cold winter! It will be just a matter of time before the grass greens, trees with leaf buds flourish, and life emerges from the earth. Already, as you drive through the countryside you can see calves and kids, and signs of spring's arrival.



All those signs are reminders to me of the hope of resurrection, the new life promised in Christ. Easter is the most significant celebration in the life of the church – a time I look forward to as I serve you in ministry. As we continue to journey through Lent, remembering the stories of Jesus' life and ministry, planning ahead has already brought me into times of reflection on the passion story and the joy of resurrection. Please plan on joining us each week as we worship and follow the remainder of our Lenten path, then plan on spending Good Friday with us here in Sundre, and celebrate Easter with us as well.

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In addition to inviting you to join us for the Lenten and Easter seasons, I would like to invite you to be a part of something else. As some of you know, I will be taking sabbatical from August 1 to November 30 of this year. That time is to be equally shared between spiritual nurture, study and learning, and rest and renewal. I have started to make plans, and particularly around the study and learning piece, would like to ask for your involvement. I want to do some learning around something that will be applicable to our context – looking at what keeps congregations strong and vibrate; best practices around that, and looking at what other rural congregations are doing in that regard. I have connected with The Flourishing Congregations Institute, based in Calgary at Ambrose College. This institute is doing studies specifically aligned with my study plans, and it would be helpful for our congregations, Olds and Sundre, to participate in their on-going study. The Olds Leadership Team has agreed to have me invite the Olds congregation into this process, and I'd hope that you would join the process as well.

The Flourishing Congregations Institute's purpose: Our purpose is to conduct and share Canadian and tradition-specific research on congregations that are flourishing.

And their mission statement: Our mission is to bring together academics and practitioners to research the factors surrounding flourishing congregations in Canada, develop tools and resources to help congregations to flourish, and share our research findings with congregations that wish to flourish.

To take part in the study, you just need to fill out a survey, which takes 20 to 30 minutes. If you do not have access to a computer, I'd be happy to set you up at the church to complete the survey, at a mutually convenient time. I have completed the clergy survey, and it took just 20 minutes. We will receive a summary report which I believe may be quite helpful in our ministry, and would certainly inform the work I hope to do while on sabbatical.

To complete the survey, you need to go to this web address: <http://tinyurl.com/fc207c>

Your participation in this would be greatly appreciated!

With appreciation,

Tammy

Upcoming Services and Events

Mark your calendars for the following:

Palm Sunday Worship with Communion April 14, 1:30 pm.

Good Friday Worship with our neighbouring United Churches April 19, at 10:00 am.

Easter Sunday Worship April 21, 1:30 pm.

Events

Coffee Party at the Lodge April 10, 2:00 pm