

## STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY – October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2021

– Betty Bennett

- In the beginning of my own spiritual growth, I followed the habit established by my own family's habit of putting loose change in the collection plate only when attending Church. When I began to attend at Sundre United together with my young sons, I continued to give them change for the collection plate, while adding a somewhat more substantial amount in dollar bills on behalf of my family.
- Once my attendance became known to be somewhat regular, it was suggested to me by one of the "elders" of that time, that I should use numbered envelopes so a record and tax receipt could be issued. I received a box with a goodly number, 52 perhaps? So, I tried to empty that box during the year, however though making more regular contributions, that box did not empty. At the time I had a growing family with all its attendant financial concerns and the amount in the envelope varied with my home circumstances.
- I then was nominated for and accepted a Board position and became more involved and educated in the life of this Church and its congregation. By this time I felt the Church to be a part of my home, therefore its financial welfare was also on my radar. Now I had two homes that needed financial care! However, the "elders" would calm me and thank me for sharing my talents as part of my own stewardship. And with a healthy and eager Congregation, fundraising became part of this family life.
- As time inevitably moves on, my sons grew up and when attending with me at Christmas, would put their own loose change or a few dollars in the plate. But now I was aware that the cost of a building and pastoral care in dollars and cents couldn't be sustainable on sporadic attendance and loose change. However, the only person you can truly change is yourself and then lead by example as an "elder" now in this home, God's house.
- So my Intentional Spiritual Growth is now Regular generosity and intentional stewardship. I have re-examined my financial giving's now in the knowledge of changing demands with a dwindling congregation. Many times it has been noted that a congregation and its Church should not have to fundraise to exist. Membership does have costs with any family, and each member should be aware of their contributions to the welfare of the Church's ministry.

Even Jesus and his Disciples had to rely on the giving's of others during his Ministry. We are just continuing this giving for Jesus and His message. Sundre United Church's Ministry starts with Believing and Caring, then Sharing. Let us share this stewardship together.