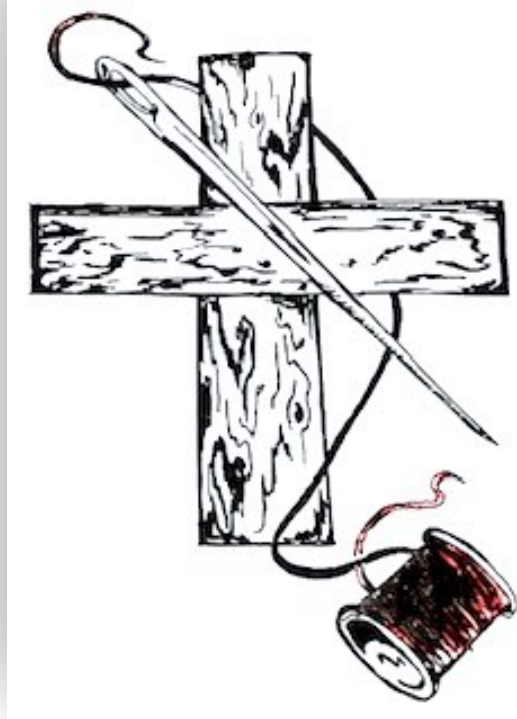


SILVER THREADS

Ecclesiastes 12:6-7 KJV

or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.



Good morning everyone and Happy New Year! This is the very first edition of “***Silver Threads***”, a monthly newsletter for seniors, and those who care for, minister to, love and support our wonderful “silver threads”. The “threads” that have been woven into the very fabric of our life in community, the threads that have given so much, sacrificed so much, and loved so much, to help create the rich tapestry that is our Anglican Church in the Diocese of Qu’Appelle.

Let me start by introducing myself - I am the Reverend Winna Martin, a Priest in the Diocese of Qu’Appelle and the newly appointed Diocesan Coordinator for Seniors Care Ministry. Since I began this position towards the end of the summer of 2022 my focus has been on bringing back Anglican Worship Services within the main care homes in Regina - the care homes that prior to COVID were receiving fairly regular worship services. Each of those services received the support and/or presence of an ordained cleric and volunteer(s) from the then 7 parishes

within the city. With the amalgamation of 5 of those parishes into one parish we are now left with three parishes in the city of Regina. Each of those three parishes, St. Paul's, St Mary's and Immanuel, are now being asked to support the ongoing care home ministry by providing volunteer help and clergy oversight and support. So far we have services happening in: Santa Maria, Parkside, Elmview, Sunset, William Booth and College Park - and of course Qu'Appelle House which has long standing appointed clergy working under the authority of the bishop's office. The services happen monthly and have been warmly received by care home residents and staff. But...we can only provide services if we have volunteers and the number of services we can provide depends on our volunteers. I have had requests from other smaller care home facilities and seniors residences to provide monthly services and I hope to be able to increase our number of services by increasing our volunteer base.

I have also received requests for home communion visits, especially at Christmas, for those seniors who are not affiliated with one of our three parishes but either identify as Anglican or would simply like sacramental ministry. The Deacon at St. Paul's Cathedral, Margaret Friesen, has indicated that she would like to be a resource for visits such as this and I am very grateful for her willingness to take that on.

We have barely scratched the surface in this ministry and there is a lot to do and a lot to put in place as we move forward.

This newsletter is, I hope, a way of keeping us connected. A way of keeping you informed and highlighting ways that you may feel called to serve. In each of our subsequent issues I plan on highlighting one of our care homes and giving you a brief snapshot into how we all can make a difference.

The newsletter will include a reflection, articles of interest, pictures, poems, prayers and give you some insight as to how important this ministry is as we look beyond our parish walls.

Finally, our logo was designed and drawn by a very talented young artist, my grandson **Andrew Curley**, and I am very grateful for his much appreciated contribution.

The Gift of Music...

Yesterday I had the pleasure, along with two of our remarkable volunteers, Diane Gingras and Bev Spencer, to bring worship to Sunset Extendicare home. One of the blessings I have received in this ministry is the gift of music so generously provided by two volunteers from Immanuel Parish - Diane Gingras and Sharon David. Music is something that no matter where we are on the journey can speak to us in so many ways beyond words. It touches us by allowing long forgotten memories to come forth, it soothes a hurting or troubled soul, it brings sudden clarity and even joy to a clouded mind and it takes us back, if only for a short while, to a different time and place.

I don't know about you but when I hear an old song I am back once more to a time and place that was a part of my journey and half forgotten. The picture on the side is of my mother and daughter dancing to the music of the Oak Ridge Boys on the kitchen radio! My mother, who I so often remember as a gracious and elegant lady and a lover of classical music, for some totally unknown reason began to embrace country music! She had a few favourites: Dolly Parton, Kenny Rodgers, Randy Travis and the Oak Ridge Boys. These seemed to be her back-up music when baking or cooking in the kitchen and the whir of the mixmaster was often accompanied by the twang and tear jerking, toe tapping melodies of country music.

I remember songs I fell in love to and songs I fell out of love to! Anne Murray was my comfort during my divorce and no I have no idea why and to this day my children tease me mercilessly about Anne Murray. Other songs can immediately transport me back to a time and place that bring a smile, laughter or even a few tears. Ghosts of much loved family members, friends and even pets are present in that musical moment. I would venture a guess that it is the same for you and it would be the same for our seniors now living in care homes.



Christmas has just passed and some of you may still be banishing those cheerful and colourful trappings in your homes. Music is so much a part of Christmas isn't it? Christmas carols and songs begin to play in stores and malls before we have disposed of the Halloween pumpkins! Our care homes and seniors residences offer a great variety of musical events at Christmas from church and secular choirs to toe tapping fiddles and accordions. The wonderful recreation facilitators make sure that Christmas cheer is present for everyone and they know that Music is the key to that.

Yesterday at Sunset we had a smaller than usual gathering and the simple morning prayer service did not seem to be touching or reaching those in attendance. A few of the "wordy" parts struck a chord especially the Lords Prayer but....it was in the music that heads lifted and smiles appeared on weary and pain lined faces...it was in the music that arthritic fingers began to tap out the rhythm and tired eyes began to twinkle. A few folks who had not attended the beginning of worship began to trickle in - drawn by the music and a familiar hymn. The priest, me, played second fiddle to the piano player, Diane, and that was just fine. God was present in the music, not in the words. God was present in the loving and gentle touch of our other volunteer Bev who made a point of asking each and every one their name and helped them find their place and always let them know they were not alone by touching their arm or shoulder and pointing out where we were in the service booklets.

At the end of the service Diane went around asking if folks had favourite hymns they would like to hear next time. A few new arrivals took the opportunity of encouraging her to play some of those then and there. And so an impromptu sing-along was born! Diane took requests and we celebrated God's presence completely "off script" and in the comforting, uplifting and never forgotten words of old familiar hymns. Thanks be to God!

Care Home Team Ministry...

Below I have listed the current teams we have in place.

Because I was attached to Immanuel Parish and know the folks who had previously volunteered when they were five individual parishes, the bulk of our volunteers are from Immanuel. However, I know of many other amazing and potential volunteers at both St Paul's and St Mary's and with the warm support of Dean Mike Sinclair and Canon Claude Schroeder I will be tapping on a few more shoulders. The old saying "***it takes a village***" couldn't be truer when applied to Seniors Ministry. If you are feeling called to this amazing and uplifting ministry and wondering how you might get involved please give me a call or send me a text or email.

Unless you are taking responsibility for presiding at a reserved sacrament service or taking the sacraments to residents, there is no special requirements involved beyond a caring and willing heart. You do however have to obtain a **police check for working with vulnerable persons** and this is an easy and simple thing to do. You will always be working in groups of 2 or 3's and will have either a Priest, Deacon or Diocesan Reader as the lead. Your prime role will be to interact with the residents, guide them if and when necessary through the service and take a turn reading or offering the prayers of the people.

Elmview Extendicare *(Third Tuesday of the month)*

Rev. Anne Marie MacNeil or Bob Erickson (Team Lead)
Bette-Lou Paragg
Sharon David (pianist)

Parkside Extendicare *(Second Thursday of the month)*

Rev. Winna Martin (Team Lead)
Diane Gingras (pianist)

Sunset Extendicare *(Third Thursday of the month)*

Rev. Winna Martin (Team Lead)
Bev Spencer
Diane Gingras (pianist)

Santa Maria Care Home *(Fourth Thursday of the month)*

Deacon Canon Susan Page (Team Lead)

Pat Kohli

Sharon David (pianist)

****William Booth** is looked after by Rev. Anne Marie MacNeil and **College Park** is primarily looked after by Dean Mike Sinclair. **Qu'Appelle House** has Rev. Anne Marie MacNeil and Cheryl Johnson as priests and Rita Brann as Deacon.*

I've been thinking about the way, when
you walk down a crowded aisle, people pull
in their legs to let you by. Or how
strangers still say "bless you" when
someone sneezes, a leftover from the
Bubonic plague. "Don't die," we are saying.
And sometimes, when you spill lemons from
your grocery bag, someone else will help
you pick them up. Mostly, we don't want to
harm each other. We want to be handed our
cup of coffee hot, and to say thank you to
the person handing it. To smile at them
and for them to smile back. For the
waitress to call us honey when she sets
down the bowl of clam chowder, and for the
driver in the red pick-up truck to let us
pass. We have so little of each other, now.
So far from tribe and fire. Only these
brief moments of exchange. What if they
are the true dwelling of the holy, these
fleeting temples we make together when we
say, "Here, have my seat," "Go ahead – you
first," "I like your hat."

Danusha Laméris

wordables.

*Lord God,
we pray for our world, for all its cares and concerns.
We pray for our Diocese and the parishes that we
serve and those who lead and guide us.
We lift to you especially today all who live, work and
visit in our care homes.
That staff may have the physical and emotional re-
sources they need to protect and cherish the vulnera-
ble older people in their care,
That those who provide spiritual care and nourish-
ment be strengthened in this task and enriched by this
ministry; that care teams may be resilient and united
in surviving the relentless pressures they are exposed
to,
That residents living in care homes may know that
they are loved by relatives and friends who they may
not see regularly,
and that families will be comforted in the pain of not
seeing their relatives on a regular basis.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*I take full responsibility for the content of this news-
letter. I encourage you to submit articles, pictures,
jokes, or prayers and reserve the right to publish as I
see fit. For further information, comments or con-
cerns please contact:
The Reverend Winna Martin at martinwinna@gmail.-
com.*

And our last word for this month.

For those of us who are not slaves to housework and who value time doing what we truly love to do....

