

DAYSPRING DAYBOOK

Monthly Newsletter of Dayspring Presbyterian Church, 11445-40 Ave, Edmonton, AB, CAN, T6J 0R4

April 2023

The Rev. Mary Fontaine - official Nominee as Moderator of the 2023 General Assembly

Mary Fontaine is Nehiyaw (Cree) from Mistawasis Nehiywak, Saskatchewan, where she grew up attending the Mistawasis Memorial Presbyterian Church with her family.

Mary has a B.A. in Native Studies from the University of Alberta (1995) and an M.Div. from the Vancouver School of Theology (2003). She was on the Executive Committee of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (2010–2017).

She convenes the National Indigenous Ministries Council of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and serves on the Special Committee re. Listening, Confession and Associations.

Mary's mother trusted in Jesus Christ and was grateful for the culture and language he gave to her people. Her father made her aware of the suffering of Indigenous people and urged her to get an education to seek healing for them. The revelation of Indigenous history in Canada through her Native Studies degree was heartbreaking but the truth brought understanding and healing.

Mary's grandfather (a pipe carrier) modelled what it meant to be a humble follower of the Circle. He taught that the main purpose of life was to learn how to love. Her spiritual parents taught Mary spiritual discernment, and spiritual and emotional healing through prayer and the Word of God. She learned to facilitate healing circles through an integrated program developed by a team of Cree elders and psychologists.

Mary is the founding director of Hummingbird Ministries (2005), an Indigenous-led healing and reconciliation ministry. Through healing circles and the performing arts, Hummingbird Ministries educates the public and raises the profile of Indigenous people, especially Indigenous children. Mary writes plays and narrated stories which are expressed through dance performances by the children. Hummingbird Ministries' annual events provide opportunities for reconciliation by bringing many cultures, faiths and classes of people together with Indigenous people. Mary preaches at local churches and special occasions, such as the 2019 General Assembly.

In spite of legislation which tried to extinguish Indigenous ways, Mary was given an honour song and her Indigenous name, Hummingbird. The Holy Spirit found a way to give her a drum song of thanksgiving, for the gifts of prayer, song and dance and the gifts of the hummingbird. The song and the name changed Mary's life, leading her to the Vancouver School of Theology's Native Ministries program, and eventually to founding Hummingbird Ministries.

Mary discerns the Spirit at work in Indigenous wisdom and spirituality and sees how this can enhance the church she loves, in various ways, including relationship-building and care of the earth. She hopes in the Indigenous vision (similar to that of Revelation), that one day, the nations will gather beneath the tree of peace and learn to love and live in harmony with one another.



In the end, reconciliation is a spiritual process, which requires more than just a legal framework. It has to happen in the hearts and minds of people.

- Nelson Mandela

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Becoming a Moderator

In the PCC, the person who chairs meetings of Session, Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies is called a “Moderator.” A congregation’s minister is Moderator of Session. Moderators of Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assembly are elected, usually for a one-year period. These moderators may be either a minister or an Elder. Presbyteries and Synods comprise all of the Ministers in the area covered by the Presbytery or Synod along with an equal number of Elders.

General Assembly is in charge of all the congregations across Canada plus one congregation in Bermuda. It meets annually the first week of June, with the location moving back and forth across the country, and comprises one-sixth of the ministers in the various Presbyteries, along with an equal number of Elders from those Presbyteries. Most Presbyteries appoint different Ministers and Elders each year on a rotational basis,

Here are the steps by which a person becomes Moderator of General Assembly. In the fall of each year, Presbyteries have the option of nominating one of their members or a member of any other Presbytery, for the position of Moderator.

Nominations close at the end of November. In January, ballots are sent out to all the Presbyteries with the names of all candidates who received at least two nominations. The members of the Presbyteries cast their vote in January-February and the person elected becomes the “official nominee” for Moderator. They still have to be elected by General Assembly at the beginning of the first day of meeting, but that has become a “pro forma” process.

This year, there were three candidates for the position of official nominee as Moderator: a male minister, a female minister, and a male elder. You have already read the final result of the process on page 1. One thing that isn’t mentioned is that the Rev. Mary Fontane became a candidate for the ministry with the guidance of one of the ministers of the Presbytery of Edmonton.



Earth Week is celebrated, this year from 14 to 22 April. The theme is “Take action. Be part of the green revolution.”

Why is Earth Week important?

It is an annual celebration that honors the achievements of the environmental movement and raises awareness of the need to protect Earth's natural resources for future generations.

We don't need to take radical action to enact the values of Earth Week, which draws attention to the environment and promotes conservation and sustainability. Each year on 22 April, around 1 billion individuals across more than 190 countries take action to raise awareness of the climate crisis and bring about behavioural change to protect the environment

Earth Day was the brainchild of US Senator Gaylord Nelson, inspired by the protests of the 1960s, Earth Day began as a “national teach-in on the environment” and was held on April 22 to maximize the number of students that could be reached on university campuses.

If you're planning your Earth Week outfits, linen, hemp, and organic cotton are some materials that are eco-friendly and sustainable. Not only do these fabrics have a lower impact on the environment, but they are also comfortable to wear and easy to care for. The usual colors to represent awareness of the importance of caring for the Earth are green or blue. Green represents the grass, trees, bushes, leaves, etc. Blue represents the water in our world.

The National Geographic Society tells us about how to explain Earth Day to a child. It can be as simple as teaching them how and what to recycle, replacing plastic bags with reusable tote bags, or only using reusable water bottles. Every time you do something that helps the Earth, involve them and explain exactly what you're doing

Earth is our home. We rely upon it for our existence in many different ways. Its resources feed us and provide the materials of our way of life. Even modest changes to Earth's systems have had profound influences on human societies and the course of civilization..

FROM OUR MINISTER

Earth Day: Unsurprisingly, the earth is not entirely as it should be. Over time, we have polluted the environment around us and damaged ourselves in the process. We have plastic in the water, spilled oil, medical waste in drinking water and more.

But this needs to be corrected. And while corporations and governments tend to make the most extensive problems, individuals can still play an essential part in caring for the earth. Psalm 24:1 says, "The earth is the Lord's, everything in it, the world, and all who live there. This is an echo of Genesis 2:15, where God put the living soul in charge of its care in God's place. The humans in Eden were to treat it as God would, and we have often failed as his representatives.

As stewards of God's creation and caretakers of the world around us, we do this for ourselves and future generations. Our "dominion" is not about exploitation or domination but instead supporting the divine and flourishing view of nature presented to us in the Holy Scriptures.

Interconnectedness is the word of the day. What happens in nature which damages some eventually damages all. And furthermore, some are hurt more than others. In reality, it is often the world's most vulnerable and marginalized communities hit hardest by climate disasters.

As Christians, it is our responsibility to be mindful of our planet and neighbours for the glory of God and his creation. This earth day, April 22, please take a few moments to consider how you relate to your environment and a few simple ways you can improve.

If we are going to be His caretakers, we better be ready to get some dirt on us.

Brad



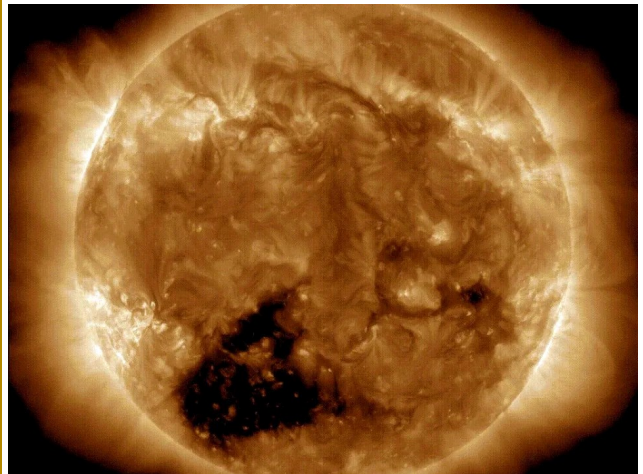
SEEKING ECOJUSTICE

On April 22, 1970, a crowd gathered by the polluted Detroit River in Windsor, Ontario, to protest environmental catastrophes. They sang "give Earth a chance."

That was the first Earth Day. We have now reached the 53rd anniversary of that event and, thanks to the efforts of many Canadians, a great deal of progress has been made.

Environmental Protection legislation is in place and many initiatives have been taken to stabilize the economy as the sources of pollution are addressed.

However, the fallout of our abuse of Earth, which God has entrusted to our stewardship, is that many people have been experiencing floods, fires, and tornadoes/hurricanes at an unprecedented level.



For example, a second giant coronal hole has recently been spotted on the surface of the sun (black in the above image). These "holes" result in generation of 1.8 million mph solar winds heading towards earth. They are expected to reach Earth by the end of Earth Week 2023.

When the high-speed wind reaches Earth, the particles and the magnetic field it carries will interact with Earth's magnetic field, effectively rattling it or like ringing a bell.

More powerful magnetic fields, like from a coronal mass ejection, could cause electrical blackouts or disrupt communication technology. But coronal holes — even large ones like this — are far less violent. So the main effect to look forward to this week is a more vibrant aurora borealis.

GEOTHERMAL HEAT PUMPS

Geothermal (ground-source or water-source) heat pumps achieve high efficiencies by transferring heat between your house and the ground or a nearby water source. Although they cost more to install, geothermal heat pumps have low operating costs because they take advantage of relatively constant ground or water temperatures.

Geothermal (or ground source) heat pumps have some major advantages. They can reduce energy use by 30%-60%, control humidity, are sturdy and reliable, and fit in a wide variety of homes. Whether a geothermal heat pump is appropriate for you will depend on the size of lot, the subsoil, and the landscape. Ground-source or water-source heat pumps can be used in more extreme climates than air-source heat pumps, and customer satisfaction with the systems is very high.

Geothermal and other types of heat pumps, such as Air-Source Heat Pumps, are affordable and effective ways of heating or cooling homes (or churches) for many Canadians - either as a component of new construction projects (like Westmount Presbyterian Church and the several housing units for New Canadians on the Westmount property) or as a retrofit of existing buildings.

The articles in this issue that focus on Earth Week and other environmental concerns are intended to give us food-for-thought - about how we can be responsible stewards of the world (s) God has entrusted to us (Psalm 8)

Various internet sources have been used, along with the personal knowledge base of the editors, in creating this issue.



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DayBook Deadlines

3rd Sunday of the month

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