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# JUDYS' JOURNAL

## Spring at Jacob Bear Church

### Winter's Retreat

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Our winter snow stayed and refused to go away. We knew the seasons were getting mixed up as huge bear prints greeted us one Sunday morning, tramping up to each of our three entrances. Managing to climb onto the built-in deck bench!

### Low Attendance

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Church attendance normally rises as we get to the end of hockey season. Before pow-wows and ball season take off our "shoulder" season numbers can rise to 40-60. This year we have often struggled to get to 30. We are not sure why...please be in prayer!

### Difficult Season

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Since Christmas, Ochapowace and Kahkewistahaw have experienced an extremely high number of deaths. They have each exceeded their annual average and we still have 8 months to go! Brig & Chris have had many opportunities to share with our friends as we walk through these valleys together.



Mother's Day always represents a welcome change at our Sunday Service. We meet downstairs (Kitchen, Fellowship Hall) and I'm encouraged as different men stroll in an hour or more before the brunch begins. The two men on the left cooked the meat, the hash browns and the eggs. The two on the right fixed up the fruit, the toast and we all set up the tables, decorated with carnations for each one of the ladies attending the brunch. As people are finishing up their food, we begin to sing and share about our Mom's and the Lord. The beauty of this time is laced by the simplicity of the service, the informality of meeting downstairs amid all the food and laughter and cramped spaces, God is honoured and praised.





## Joys of Serving in Baja California

Spring began with snow on the ground and great joy in our hearts, as four young men (17-20) returned from their two-week adventure. Each one spoke at church and in their own way shared about the things they had learned, prayers that had been answered and the friends they had made. The congregation was animated and encouraged by the boy's testimonies. After the boys shared, a Mexi-Cree luncheon was served to the delight of all.



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## The Sweet Toned Bell

Twenty-six years after Treaty 4 was signed, the leadership of Kahkewistahaw built a church on their land (1900). For eighty years an old bell hung in the steeple until a grass fire burning out of control destroyed the church and knocked the bell from its perch. For forty years the old bell sat outside, beside the "new" church (Jacob Bear Church), largely ignored by all except the ants and snakes that lived under the protective dome. When Mr. Woods died (1993) the call went out to raise that ole bell. On May 23, 2019 that ole bell was raised from the earth to the heavens. Under the guidance of a local indigenous craftsman and the generosity of a Vermont Church and local Jacob Bear Church folks (about \$4000 raised) the bell has recovered some of its former glory and has a dignified home beside the church. The rock (lower left) has to be placed under the bell and the plaque attached. Perhaps a little fence to protect the base and we hope to celebrate one of this area's oldest relics in the Fall with a dedication with local chiefs, councils, elders, and friends from Ochapowace & Kahkewistahaw. The faithful members of Jacob Bear have been waiting for this day for a long, long time and this is indeed a sweet moment in the history of this place.

