



Christ is Risen!

Rejoice!

Easter greetings from Rev. Blair Lewis,

As I write this letter we are celebrating St. Patrick's Day and the TAB group is meeting in the Donald Eddy Hall where the members are working on all kinds of different craft projects. We are coming to the end of an old-fashioned winter here in Bathurst and we look forward to the changes that spring will bring.

Over the last few days I have been reading the study material from Seasons of the Spirit in preparation for this week's Bible study lesson. "*Finding refreshment*" is this week's subject for discussion and I think it touches on a foundational element of our journey of faith. We physically need water to maintain life and we need the living water of faith to nourish our spirits, not only during this season of Lent, but throughout the year.

In our world today we are searching for a meaningful direction forward in our community, our province, our country, and our world. We are very mindful of the struggles that are taking place in various countries. The people who are walking through the darkness of the night across our border are on a quest for hope.

A meaning-filled path forward is the message of Easter. Jesus came into this world to stand in solidarity with us as we live our lives and by doing so he shows us the way to the liberating power of God's love.

As we prepare for the sacrifice of Good Friday and the liberating resurrection of Easter Sunday morning we share of ourselves with God. In his life and ministry Jesus breaks down barriers that exist in society. God provides water for the thirsty.

Walter H Farquharson in the hymn "**Walls that Divide**" says:

"Walls that divide are broken down; Christ is our unity!

Chains that enslave are thrown aside; Christ is our liberty!

**The truth we seek in varied scheme, the life that we pursue,
unites us in a common quest of self and world made new."**

The love of Christ expressed at Easter is alive as our broken world seeks lasting health and vital unity.

Please join us for special services on Good Friday at 10 A.M. and Easter Sunday morning at 10 AM.

May the blessings of Easter be with you and your loved ones,

Rev. Blair Lewis



Good Friday Service - April 14 - 10am

Easter Sunday Service - April 16 - 10am



Our next Newsletter will be circulated in the fall, for Thanksgiving. Have something that you would like to be included that would be of interest to our church family? Send it to the office at firstadmin@nb.aibn.com. The cutoff time for submission is September 18st at noon.



Sunrise Breakfast - April 23 - 8:30-noon



Calling all Graduates: If you are a potential graduate of the class of 2017 for either BHS or ESN please advise the church office. The First United Church service honoring our graduates will be held on June 18, 2017.

The letters have been distributed for our Memorial Hymn sing to be held on April 30, 2017 at the 10am worship service. Be sure to mark this date on your calendar and plan to join with us as we honor our loved ones by singing many of our favorite selections. Special music will be provided by Emma Vickers as well as members of the Senior and Men's Choirs. Hymn selections and donations are requested to be submitted by April 7th.

PAR: Pre Authorized Remittance (PAR) is a convenient way to support the ongoing work of your church. Your monthly contributions are taken directly from your bank account or charged to a Major Credit Card. Currently we have 88 households using this method of support. Signing up for PAR takes only a few minutes and can be done for you at the church office. All that is required is a void cheque or your credit card number.

Did You Know: A couple of really good ways to keep updated on First United Church events are to check out our website www.firstunited-bathurst.ca or to follow us on Facebook. Here you will find upcoming events as well as cancellations if the need arises.

Newsletters: To date, there are 90 households receiving the newsletter online. This is a \$270.00 savings. We thank all who have requested to be part of our online distribution. If you wish to have your letters in the future sent directly to your email send your request to firstadmin@nb.aibn.com. Special envelopes for Easter contributions can be found in the Narthex.

Financial Report First United Church Local Givings 2017			
	Budget	Actual	+/-
Jan.	\$14,500.00	\$13,329.33	-\$1,170.67
Feb.	\$12,900.00	\$12,566.33	-\$ 333.67
Mar.	\$13,000.00	\$14,590.58	+\$1,590.58
			+\$ <u>86.24</u>
Projected Year End <u>Deficit</u>			\$7,338.00

*I lied on my Weight Watchers list.
I put down that I had 3 eggs...
but they were Cadbury chocolate eggs.
~Caroline Rhea~*

**The Bathurst Pastoral Council
Tuesday, March 21st, 2017.**

It was decided that the Facilities Rental Policy needed to be updated because it did not address the last minute cancellation of rental agreements and loss of income from this source. It was decided that a fifty dollar non-refundable charge would be instituted to address this problem. This amount will be deducted from the final amount owing.

Rev. Lewis reported that confirmation classes were underway & the church will be welcoming several people who are transferring their memberships to First United. Bible study classes continue. He also mentioned how pleased he is with the spirit of enthusiasm that he has noticed in the church.

Marie Oliver and Adrian Hazen have proposed to do an art display for the Donald Eddy Memorial Hall. This would include much history of the church and groups that have used the hall in the past. Council agreed to this proposal with the church paying for the supplies.

The Ways and Means Team continues to host suppers and breakfasts with good turnouts and financial success. They would like to thank everyone for their help.

Rick Watling reported that we are still looking for a chairperson for the Hospitality & Friendship Team. Please call Rick or the office if you would like to volunteer for this or any other position.

We will celebrate Palm Sunday on April 9th with Confirmation and Transfer-in of new members at this time. Good Friday service will be held on Friday, April 14th and Communion will be served at the Easter Sunday service on April 16th.

The St. Patrick Day musical event was a great success.

A breakfast program is being held for the upgrading students attending class in the Donald Eddy Memorial Hall. It has been very well received.

Don Nelson reported that we will need a new snow blower for next winter. No quotes have been received for the church roof at this time.

The next meeting for Council will be held on May 30th, 2017 at 4:00 PM.

**West Bathurst Cemetery
Committee Report**

The West Bathurst Cemetery Committee is responsible for the West Bathurst Cemetery on St. Anne Street and the St. Luke's "Old Scottish" Cemetery on St. Luke's Court.

As of March 31, 2017, the "Endowment Fund" balance was \$ 60,885. We are thankful to everyone who continues to support this fund through PAR and donations.

Our committee will be meeting in April to hopefully renew our contract with "Shawn's Lawn and Maintenance" for the 2017 summer season. We will be looking for volunteers to help us with our annual "Spring Clean Up" of the two cemeteries. An announcement of the dates will be in the church bulletin. We are also in need of volunteers to help our committee with repair work for grave stones at St. Luke's "Old Scottish" Cemetery. Contact Gary Branch (546-9208) for more information.



Church School Update

The church school is back in session after a 6-week break. The students are busy preparing for the Easter season and look forward to participating in the Palm Sunday service. The older children are learning about Jesus' Lenten journey and the pre-schoolers are making crafts and enjoying bible stories. It is so wonderful to have all these young faces (and voices) back to worship with us!

*A rose can say "I love you",
orchids can enthrall,
but a weed bouquet in a chubby fist,
yes, that says it all.
~Author Unknown*

Easter Facts

Off to church we go...

- In the 19th century, ladies who attended Easter services at St. Patrick's Cathedral strolled up Fifth Avenue to show off their new Easter bonnets in what later became known as the Easter Parade.



- One of the most popular hymns sung at Easter Sunday services worldwide is "Christ the Lord is Risen Today".

- The most popular flower for decorating church altars at Easter? It's the white trumpet lily, symbolizing grace, purity and virtue.

Flowers for Easter



- In addition to decorating churches, lilies account for more than half of all Easter gift plants purchased for the holiday followed by azaleas, and african violets.
- Among fresh flower gift bouquets

purchased for the holiday, mixed flower arrangements head the list at 34%, followed by daffodils/iris/tulips at 15%, and roses at 9%.

- All told, Easter and Passover account for close to 15 percent of annual floral purchases made throughout the year.

Easter bunny trivia

- The Easter Bunny as a holiday deliverer of candy and eggs is thought to have started in Germany during the Middle Ages.
- Each year, candy manufacturers produce more than 90 million chocolate Easter bunnies for Easter. Meanwhile, research shows that solid chocolate bunnies are the most popular -- followed by hollow chocolate bunnies, and marshmallow chocolate bunnies.
- Studies also prove that 76% of Americans will eat the ears on chocolate bunnies first.
- 88% of American parents are expected to help out the Easter Bunny this year by carrying on the Easter tradition of creating Easter baskets for their kids.



Jelly beans, anyone?



- While Easter remains a movable feast, the official observance of National Jelly Bean Day takes place every year on April 22nd.

- Number of jelly beans produced in the US each year? 16 billion.

- The most popular jelly bean flavor among kids? Cherry.

All about Marshmallow Peeps

- Peeps are legion -- and manufactured in the US at a mind-boggling rate of five million *a day*.

- The best way to eat a Peep?

Connoisseurs swear by letting them breathe for a few days out in the open air to produced a crunchy outside and a chewy inside.

- Pity the poor Marshmallow Peep! It has has been subject to blending, microwaving, and bludgeoning all in the name of fun or weird science.

- For the record, Peeps get their day-glo look and gooey consistency from three simple ingredients: gelatin, corn syrup, and yellow dye #5.



The colorful Easter egg



- The Easter egg toss dates back to the medieval church where a hard-boiled egg was thrown from one choir boy to the next. When the priest called "time up" whoever held it got to keep the egg.

- Coloring eggs was brought to a high art when medieval English kings dispersed hundreds of decorated, gold-leafed eggs throughout the royal household at Easter.

- Another royal, Russian Czar Alexander, was later responsible in 1883 for commissioning the famous Fabergé eggs - from goldsmith Peter Carl Faberge - as an Easter gift for his wife, the Empress Marie.

- According to the Guinness Book of World Records the largest Easter egg ever made was unveiled in Cortenuova, Italy in 2011 weighing in at 8,968 lbs. of dark chocolate and marshmallow.

- True or false? Eggs contain nearly every nutrient known to be essential to humans. (True.)

- Which came first? The chicken or the egg? (That's a good question!)

Happy Easter!