

**BATHURST PASTORAL CHARGE**  
**First United Church - South Tetagouche United Church**  
**Spring/Easter Newsletter**

**Highlights – Bathurst Pastoral Council**

**March 27, 2007**

- Hugh Ellis chaired Tuesday night's meeting, the first Council meeting since the Bathurst Pastoral Charge annual meeting held February 18.
- Among those present were the three new team chairs: George Robertson (Ministry & Personnel), Nora McLean (Worship) and Margaret Demmings (Education & Program Development).
- The Nominations Team, with Shirley Sealy as chair, reported that Pamela Hamilton is the Church School coordinator.
- In a move to save \$200. or more a month, Council decided to purchase an all-inclusive telephone system rather than renting the hardware required. The new system embraces fire alert, security, fax and many other features currently in use.
- Hugh Ellis will represent First United Church at the city's Volunteer Meet and Greet on April 19.
- Reporting on the triennial visit, two representatives from Miramichi Presbytery found Bathurst Pastoral Charge to be "strong and vital," the minister to have "a strong affection for and call to the charge" and the people to be well satisfied with the pastoral relationship. They suggested the charge should consider being an internship site for ministers in training, which could provide an opportunity for Keith Adams to broaden his experience in ministry.
- Due to the increase in workload, the secretary's hours will return to five days a week from four days, commencing April 1.
- It was reported that the minister has been granted a \$2,000. bursary through Pine Hill Divinity Hall to assist with continuing education endeavours.
- President, Emma MacKay reported that the UCW realized \$2,000. from the Valentine luncheon. The interdenominational *World Day of Prayer* service was well received with Cindy and Alan Doucet giving a general overview of life in Ethiopia, a highlight being their adoption of twin girls from that country.
- The Community Outreach Sub-team, with Shari Smith-Ellis as chairperson, voted \$250. to provide identified needs at four Bathurst schools.
- Shirley Gammon, who chairs the Hospitality and Friendship Team, said the team will provide a reception following the ecumenical *Service of Hope* on April 29 as Cancer Month concludes. Helen M. Knowles will speak as a caregiver of a family member.
- The new brass communion ware has arrived. The dedication of this memorial gift will be held on Easter Sunday when the Sacrament of Word and Table will be administered. For this time only, permission to serve communion has been given to persons who are not full members of the United Church of Canada.
- An information session on Pandemic Awareness will be led by a public health nurse following the Sunday service April 15. We are told it's not "if" but "when" the health crisis will hit this part of the world. The congregation is encouraged to bring a bag lunch. Beverages will be provided.
- Don Nelson, chair of the Property Management Team, reported snow removal was within budget and a fan was donated for the downstairs kitchen to remove steam at church supper take-outs.
- Upon motion, it was declared that, until Phase One of the Donald Eddy Memorial Hall restoration is paid off, there will be no further expenditures, as was directed previously by the congregation and Council. Any available monies will go towards reducing the remaining \$41,000. hall debt to save some interest charges.
- To fulfill a requirement by the United Church of Canada for adequate property and liability insurance, the Board of Trustees is proceeding with an updated appraisal of the building and contents. The policy is written on an *All Risk and Replacement Cost* basis with no depreciation involved. John Moerman is chair of the six-member board.
- As chair of the Financial Management Team, Cathy McLaughlin reviewed the financial statement for January and February, as prepared by Alberta Buttimer, church treasurer. Cathy said expenditures are under control and local and mission and service givings are showing an increase over 2006.
- The Ways and Means report from Haines Scott showed a net income of \$2,652. from the pork dinner. The Education and Program Development Team's spaghetti supper raised almost \$1,000. for youth work.
- At the suggestion of Hugh Ellis, the executive committee of Council will consider forming an Ad Hoc team to address the challenge of visioning for the future. The "Ministry in Changing Times" program is ongoing across the Maritime Conference of the Church.
- Council members agreed the annual meeting and annual report format should be revisited. Privacy laws and the deletion of repetitive reports as a money-saving measure resulted in fewer pages this year. Even though the comprehensive financial reports were transparent, Council expected questions would have been asked at the meeting.
- Nancy McKay, Policy and Planning chair, said several policies would be ready for scrutiny at the next regular meeting of Council May 29.
- Despite a vacation leave of two weeks, the Clergy Activity Report for January and February showed 158 responsibilities attended to, including 122 hospital visits.

## **Confirmation Classes**

An opportunity to explore faith questions and/or to prepare for full membership in the United Church of Canada will be given during a program of instruction Friday evening and Saturday until 4:30 p.m., April 20-21. Registration forms, available at the church, are to be completed and returned immediately. Confirmation Sunday is May 13 for those wishing to be received into full membership based on the prescribed instruction.

Candidates seeking confirmation will have reached an age of understanding which is the only requirement of the United Church of Canada apart from the necessary instruction. Actually, the weekend program in April is open to anyone interested in exploring the nature and structure of the United Church and in using the resources of our faith to give direction to daily life.

## **A Revealing Analogy**

One of the daily readings in the current March-April Upper Room made an impression on me. An Ohio girl, about to meet her boyfriend's parents for the first time, was experiencing "a spinning stomach, dry mouth and sweaty palms" as they approached the house. She was worried that she wouldn't be the wife they felt their son deserved. Her fiancé's presence beside her represented the hope she hung onto that his family would love her simply because he did.

Her fears were soon calmed as his father welcomed her at the curb with a big smile, a kiss on her cheek and a comforting hug. She was accepted on the basis of her relationship with his son. The Ohio writer went on to say that God send HIS son to bring us home. "Our welcome at heaven's gates rests solely on the strength of our relationship with God's son, Jesus Christ," she wrote. So the thought given for that March 1 day was "those who love God's son are joyously welcomed by God".

As we journey through Holy Week to Easter Day's resurrection, this revealing story gives us food for thought.

## **Jewellery Hunt**

Have you begun to sort through your costume jewellery for September's display and second-hand sale being held by 'The Friends of the Donald Eddy Memorial Hall'? Spring cleaning should produce some nice donations, with costume jewellery being a fashion these days. This is a fundraising project to help pay the amount owing on the loan for the Donald Eddy Memorial Hall renovations. Of course, more valuable jewellery will be acceptable as well.

## **Cancer Relay for Life!**

Volunteers will team up for a fifth year to represent Bathurst Pastoral Charge in the annual Relay at Coronation Park, Friday evening, June 8. Registration sign-up sheets in the narthex at the church are looking for more names of participants. Pledge sheets are available and registration fees can be paid at the church office.

In support of the team, the fun card party on March 10 drew a good crowd. The second card party, also being held at Big River Rec. Centre, is slated for Saturday evening, April 14. Please contact team members or Wayne Clowater at 547-1884 for tickets. If unable to be a team member, you can support the cause in this and other ways. More information in this regard is available or will be forthcoming from Team Captain Wayne.

## **Free for the Walking**

The Education and Program Development Team is establishing a walking group for all ages. Being proposed are three days weekly – Monday, Wednesday and Friday – from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon for the months of April and May. This activity will commence Wednesday, April 4 in the Donald Eddy Memorial Hall. To protect the gym floor, indoor gym shoes must be worn. Please, *no black soles* as these make skid marks that are difficult to remove. Be health smart and join us!

## **Information Request**

It is an *ongoing objective* of the Communications Sub-team to maintain a current and comprehensive registry for members and adherents of our faith community. Hence, they invite each member and adherent to complete the *Information Request Form* included with this mailing. *Simply omit historical dates if unknown.* In addition, for those who have completed a form within the past year, please provide updated information only.

## **Church Bulletin Announcements**

.....(A bit of humour)

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 p.m. – prayer and medication to follow.

The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the congregation would send him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday.

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

5 April	7:00 p.m.	Maundy Thursday Service of Word and Table
6 April	7:00 p.m.	Good Friday Service
8 April	10:00 a.m.	Easter Sunday Service of Word and Table Memorial Dedication of Communion Ware
15 April	11:15 a.m.	Public Health Presentation 'Pandemic Awareness'
20, 21 April		Confirmation Instruction Weekend
26 April	5:00-6:30 p.m. 4:30-6:00 p.m.	Ham and Scallop Supper (Takeouts)
29 April	3:00 p.m.	Ecumenical Service of Hope
4 May	1:00-8:00 p.m.	Spring Quilt Show and Bake Sale
5 May	10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.	
12 May	8:00 a.m.	Yard Sale – D.E.M.H.
13 May	10:00 a.m.	Christian Family Sunday Service of Confirmation
26 May	7:00 p.m.	An Evening of Music Hosted by the Ways & Means Sub-Team
1,2,3 June		Annual Meeting Maritime Conference United Church of Canada
3 June	10:00 a.m.	Last Day of Church School Classes
8 June		Annual Relay for Life Coronation Park

### ***FRIENDS OF THE DONALD EDDY MEMORIAL HALL NORTH STAR QUILT GUILD***

PRESENT A

SPRING QUILT SHOW

FRIDAY, MAY 4<sup>TH</sup> 1 P.M. – 8 P.M.

SATURDAY, MAY 5<sup>TH</sup> 10 A.M. – 4 P.M.

BAKE TABLE

QUILTERS' MARKET

A MERCHANT MALL OF QUILTING SUPPLIES

COFFEE, TEA AND SWEETS WILL BE SERVED

TICKETS \$5.00

AVAILABLE FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE AS WELL AS GUILD MEMBERS

DONATIONS OF BAKING FOR THE BAKE TABLE WOULD GREATLY BE APPRECIATED

People are funny; they want the front of the bus,  
the middle of the road, and the back of the  
church.

God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage.

---

## An Easter Message

For many, Easter is a time to celebrate with *plush bunnies* and *chocolate coated eggs*. Yet, for others, it is also a time to reflect upon the legacy of Jesus, the Christ. It is a time to reflect upon One -whose life and death calls us to *ponder* our *day-to-day* commitment to love.

We must remember always that Jesus chose the horror of crucifixion. He could have saved himself. Yet, he did not. He chose *the way of the cross* to reveal to humankind the essence of *self-giving love* -and *this love* is what Easter is all about. It is a love that looks beyond our own *wants and desires* to respond, instead, to the needs of others. We know also from Jesus' experience that *self-giving love* may not be the easiest road to choose -yet, such love nurtures a deeper, richer quality of life for all.

Understandably, the cross *alone* shattered dreams. For the followers of Jesus, the cross destroyed a bright future. However, on Easter morning, with an empty grave, new life emerged and hope was restored to those who felt despair and helplessness.

In a recent documentary film, director Simcha Jacobovici and producer James Cameron claim the discovery of the ossuary and bone fragments of Jesus of Nazareth -in a family tomb in the Jerusalem suburb of Talpiyot. I am personally wary of such a claim without clear scientific basis or support. The cultural history and archaeology of Jerusalem in the first century are far too complex to circumvent the usual academic process of analysis, discourse and interpretation. Hence, while I remain interested in the evolving reaction by the scholars of early Judaism and Christianity -as well as the archaeologists- I remain unmoved. Regardless of the Talpiyot claim, for Christians around the world, the Easter event remains the central mystery of our faith -a mystery that holds a much deeper reality and significance than archeological suggestion.

For, with certainty, the Easter event changed the course of world history. Out of an empty tomb came a new reality - death and darkness will never claim the final word *in a world that chooses self-giving love*.

Amidst plush bunnies and chocolate covered eggs, may each one of us *pause* to reconsider our commitment to *self-giving love*. And, may we understand the difference that such love can make in the world around us.

Blessings

