

Highlights – Bathurst Pastoral Council
November 25, 2008

- ◆ As Council Chair, Hugh Ellis presided. Reporting for the Ad Hoc Search Committee, seeking a full-time minister, Hugh said the committee is actively engaged and is encouraged as it pursues leads and makes approaches.
- ◆ The Ministry and Personnel Team will be meeting with Rev. Austin Jagoe to negotiate supply consideration for 2009.
- ◆ The Welcome Pamphlet enclosed with this newsletter is a special project completed by the Pastoral Care Team. Keep it for future reference.
- ◆ December is Recruitment Month. The Nominations Team is asking one and all to sign up for the team or teams of their choice by December 19. The lists are posted in the narthex.
- ◆ A Blue Christmas Service will be held in the sanctuary on Thursday, December 11 at 7:00 pm to aid grieving people during the holiday season.
- ◆ To support our Christmas Benevolence Program, people are asked to place their donations of money by December 15 in the white envelopes hanging on the Christmas tree in the sanctuary. The children are asked to bring non-perishable food items, wrapped in white tissue, to the White Gift Service on Sunday, December 14.
- ◆ Bathurst Volunteer Centre is most thankful for the monthly soup and sandwich meal provided by our Community Outreach Sub-Team, it was reported.
- ◆ The senior choir and Rev. Austin Jagoe carried out a Christmas observance at the Foyer. A Carol/Hymn Sing is scheduled for Wednesday, December 10 at the new Union Street Residence.
- ◆ A dozen or more people have been attending the Tuesday afternoon Bible Study sessions, the Book of Revelation being the focus of attention and discussion. The study will continue in the New Year.
- ◆ Duncan MacDonald has donated a wood-carved Nativity Scene to the church in memory of Don Carson who had worked on it initially.

- ◆ Copies of the popular recipe book, 'Let's Break Bread Together', are available from the UCW. Also, members are involved in a letter-writing project with a class of children attending Terry Fox Elementary School. This is part of the District 15 Community School initiative.
- ◆ The congregation is asked to leave donations of cheese whiz or bought jam in the narthex in support of the ongoing Bathurst High School Breakfast Program. Peanut butter is still being collected for Bathurst Volunteer Centre.
- ◆ Sharon McKinnon and Cathy McLaughlin were thanked for decorating the sanctuary for Thanksgiving Sunday. Marie Oliver offered to decorate the church for Christmas and Nora McLean will continue changing the liturgical hangings in the sanctuary.
- ◆ Still needed are more volunteers for the food and fellowship time after the Sunday church service. Pick a Sunday and sign your name on the list posted in the Ruth Morrison Fellowship Room. The responsibilities are setting up and cleaning up only, the food being looked after otherwise.
- ◆ The pre-school operation has moved out of Donald Eddy Memorial Hall but the adult education class remains.
- ◆ The hits and visits to First United's website have been increasing steadily, there being 5,463 hits in October.
- ◆ Painting of the sanctuary has been completed as have all other rooms in the church. It has been 10 years since the new church opened.
- ◆ Heather Gildart, Nancy Thomas and Dorothy Gammon have been training as secretary substitutes for Wilma Dempsey, when required. Likewise, Sally White is receiving training as a substitute custodian.
- ◆ Donald Eddy Memorial Hall is available for the walking program on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 am until noon. Badminton is held in the auditorium/gymnasium on Tuesday and Thursday mornings beginning at 9 o'clock.
- ◆ Thanks were extended to First United's new treasurer, Dave Morison, for his good work and co-operation during the transition. It was stated that donors are notified when their pledges to the Donald Eddy Memorial Hall restoration are fulfilled.



A Brief History of Our New Church

Ten years already.....as several people have exclaimed to me during the past week. Yes, it was 10 years ago yesterday - November 15, 1998 - that this new church of ours was officially dedicated to the glory of God.

Where were you in 1998 and what were you doing? How time flies as we often say!

The decision to construct this new church building took a long time ~ at least two decades. During the 1970's any move in this direction didn't get beyond the study and planning stages. It was in 1981 that a new church building program was voted down, primarily due to the lack of solid financial support by the congregation in a time of financial deficits and high borrowing rates.

Then in 1992, the Official Board recognized the urgency to establish a Strategy/Long Range Planning Committee to consider how to meet future needs and challenges. Out of this planning committee a Task Force was formed early in 1995 and a study of existing facilities was carried out.

Recommended after much investigation and study was the need for a new church edifice attached to Donald Eddy Memorial Hall as opposed to renovating the existing church, built in wartime 1917, or just continuing to carry out necessary repairs on the aging structure.

By this time, the New Building Fund, (which was set up a dozen years previously), accumulated about \$400,000. Also, the congregation had responded enthusiastically to the Endowment Fund appeal aimed at youth training and education.

After careful deliberation, open dialogue and more support from the congregation, the decision was made to proceed towards a new church building. In doing so, First United was able to take advantage of the conditional Ruth Morrison bequest. The bequest, in excess of \$200,000 initially, was a significant source of capital funding for a new church.

The all-inclusive cost of the new building was \$1.4 million and it was kept within budget. The initial mortgage required was in the amount of \$115,000. Taking into consideration the congregation pledges and potential memorial donations, the debt-free expectation date was June, 2002. The sod-turning had taken place in June, 1997. But with a much more positive response than anticipated, the burning of the mortgage was held on November 26, 2000, 1½ years earlier than projected. Thus, this mortgage burning took place only two years after the official opening in 1998.

The \$1.4 million figure included all the required facilities as well as the complete refurbishing and rebuilding of the Casavant pipe organ, the dismantling, cleaning and re-assembling of six stained glass windows as well as the refinishing of most of the oak pews. All of these items were recovered from the former church as were memorials and other furnishings. So this new church home, of which we are extremely proud, is a clever combination of the old and the new.

The building is wheelchair accessible, has a computerized climate-controlled system involving heat recovery and air exchange and has a built-in sound system with devices for the hearing impaired. Extremely important is its close proximity to Donald Eddy Memorial Hall. The office and other rooms are well-equipped.

The sanctuary has a seating capacity of 263 which is not much greater than what was in the former church; however, another 100 seats or so can be accommodated in the overflow sections as required.

Among the projects since carried out on the property are landscaping, paving of the parking lot and erection of the flagpole, spotlights and the church bell from the former church.

We are indebted indeed to all those who played a part in planning and carrying out this major church building undertaking. Also, we are humbled that our support helped to create this beautiful house of worship to the glory of God.

But not **too** much emphasis should be placed on the physical aspect and associated costs of the project. Furthermore, as was stated at the official opening 10 years ago, the church is not a place for satisfied and comfortable parishioners. Instead, the church should be a launching pad to meet the needs of the entire community.

This new church home was an affirmation of the faith and vision of members and adherents, a faith that is incorporated in our Mission Statement which reads thus: "First United Church is a Christian community committed to reaching out in friendship and concern to people of all ages and to meeting their personal and spiritual needs through worship and music, fellowship and service, faith development and pastoral care.

We are living in an ever-changing world in which we strive to be a visible sign of God's presence and love."

God Bless This House.

Submitted by Isabel MacLaggan

Financial Update

The topic of conversation around the world is money; it is no different with the Financial Management Team.

As of October 31, 2008 our net income was \$7,508.25. Our local givings for the months January to May were very strong. Since that time, there has been a significant decrease.

The Financial Management Team sincerely thanks the UCW, Ways & Means and Memorial Hymn Sing for contributing almost \$24,000 to our revenue. Their hard work and dedication is very much appreciated. Revenue for January-October 2008 was \$166,943.75, versus \$174,571.00 for the same period in 2007 but our expenses were down. Our positive financial position can be explained by the absence of a full-time minister. Our obligations for the housing allowance, pension, car allowance, group insurance, etc. have diminished by \$9,818.16.

In 2009, First United should be welcoming a new full-time minister. Our challenges will be to increase our revenue to cover the significant one-time cost for moving expenses, possible increase in the housing allowance and salary obligations.

With First United's strong faith and commitments, it will meet these challenges as the rest of the world will.

In faith,



Cathy McLaughlin
Financial Management Team

Year to date net income at October 31, 2008 \$7,508.25

	<u>Year to date</u>		<u>Budget</u>
	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
	<u>43 Sundays</u>	<u>43 Sundays</u>	<u>43 Sundays</u>
Local givings	\$ 108,970	\$ 112,747	\$ 121,520
Other revenues	57,973	61,824	60,080
Total revenues	166,943	174,571	181,600
Total expenses	(165,458)	(180,187)	(189,398)
	1,485	(5,616)	(7,798)
Income from Endowment Fund	6,023	6,027	6,050
Net income (loss) for the period	7,508	410	(1,748)

Christmas Message (John 1: 1-14)

For several weeks we have been saying to each other "*Christmas is Coming; Christmas is Coming.*" Then all of a sudden it is here and we will be involved in the yearly exercise of giving and receiving gifts.

The significance of the word from John can be summed up in three words – *Creation, Incarnation and Salvation*. If we repackage the three concepts into three gifts that God gives us through the Word, the three gifts are these – *the gift of life, the gift of God's presence and the gift of salvation*. These three gifts contain much of what the Gospel/Christian faith is all about. May these wonderful gifts be yours this Christmas.

Merry Christmas and God Bless.

Rev. Austin Jagoe

Calendar of Events

Thursday, December 11	7:00 pm	Blue Christmas Service
Friday, December 12		Deadline for Poinsettia Fund Donations
Sunday, December 14	10:00 am	Advent III – White Gift Service of Worship
Monday, December 15		Deadline for Christmas Benevolence Program Donations
Sunday, December 21	10:00 am	Advent IV – Service of Word and Table
Christmas Eve, December 24	4:00 pm	Children's Service
	7:30 pm	Family Service
	11:15 pm	Service of Word and Table
2009		
Tuesday, January 6	9:30 am	Do-Drop-In Resumes
Wednesday, January 7	9:00 am	Take A Break Resumes
Sunday, January 11	10:00 am	Regular Church School Classes Resume
Thursday, January 29	5:00 pm	Jiggs Dinner
Friday, February 13	11:30 am	UCW Valentine Luncheon
Thursday, February 26	5:00 pm	Ham & Scallop Supper
Thursday, March 26	5:00 pm	Roast Pork Supper