



He is Risen!!!

Rejoice!!!

When Isabel asked me to write this greeting, she was good enough to attach copies of the last four Rev. Blair had penned as examples. Last year, I noticed, he began by writing, "It's hard to believe that this coming Sunday will be the 4th Sunday of Lent..."

Well, we're a touch earlier than that as I write, but nonetheless, I can't believe we're in Lent either. For Jini and I, it's been quite a ride. Finishing our previous ministry at the end of January, and then, making our way across Canada and starting here ten days later does bring with it challenges. Mostly good, but challenges nonetheless. In many ways, reminiscent of what's about to happen soon in our church year.

The critical turning point for Mary Magdalene, in John's account of the Resurrection, after all, isn't accompanied by alleluias and/or loud claims of victory. It comes only in devotion to the painful truth that the one she loves and in whom she has placed her faith has been killed. As much as we might fill our Easter Celebration with great rejoicing, the model given to us by the gospels is one in which resurrection awareness emerges out of the womb of tears.

I suspect there were tears here when Rev. Blair retired. I suspect there still are. I know there were where we were. Both ours and theirs. But I know too, that sometimes, we have to die in order to live anew.

Mary doesn't recognize Jesus when she first sees him. With her eyes clouded by tears, it's simply too much for her. But when he calls her name, that changes everything.

My Friends in Christ, my hope and prayer is that we'll hear our names too. That we'll hear of the new ministry we're being called to here at First United. And then, I'll look forward to the journey—wherever it may take us—together. :o)

Happy Easter!!!

Rev. Neal

Highlights from Pastoral Council **March, 2019**

The Finance Team has completed the financial statement for 2018 and the budget is ready for 2019. Council accepted it for presentation at the Annual General Meeting. It was noted that \$9,000 sponsorship for meals served at First United was secured by Dave Brewster and the Team. This sponsorship by many donors is a big help to our financial success and much appreciated by all.

The Ways and Means Team has had several meetings and the next event is a Ham and Scallop dinner scheduled on Thursday, March 28th. We are hoping for good weather and a great crowd. Thank you to all who work and support the suppers in any way.

The UCW continues to struggle with numbers but still has had one meeting and has catered one funeral since the last report. Anyone wishing to join UCW or would like to help would be more than welcome.

The Nominations Team presented an almost complete slate of officers for presentation at the Annual General Meeting. A chairperson is still required for the Property Management Team and reps are required for the new Regional Council and for Hospitality and Friendship Team.

Several ideas were submitted at the Christian Development Team meeting. It was suggested that Rev. Jean Herman be asked to conduct the occasional children's time. The Passing of the Peace will continue as part of Sunday services. The children's hymn seems to be well received. A spring musical event may be held and Rev. Neal may be able to form a youth group.

At the Pastoral Care Team Meeting it was noted that Rev. Jean Herman was praised for his positive influence, quick wit and sense of humor during his temporary ministerial duties at First United.

Rev. Neal was given names of members residing in nursing or special care homes as well as many who are shut-in their own homes. Plans are underway for the upcoming Irish Tea and Music event scheduled for Thursday, March 21st from 1:00 to 3:30 pm.

The Community Outreach sub-team has also been very active.

The Hospitality and Friendship team continues to look after Sunday hospitality hour after church. Thanks, to all who take part. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the Ruth Morrison Room for anyone who would like to host or co-host a Sunday.

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 26, 2019, the "Endowment Fund" balance was \$ 64,800. We are thankful to everyone who continues to support this fund through PAR and donations. In 2018, donations of \$2,335 and investment income of \$2,650.98 were received.

Our committee will be meeting in April to plan the maintenance work required for the two cemeteries. We will also be looking for volunteers to help us with our annual "Spring Clean Up" of the two cemeteries and 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.



Good Friday Service - April 19 - 10am
Easter Sunday Service - April 21 - 10am



Sunrise Breakfast - April 28: 8:30-noon

The Ways and Means team would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped this year with our Suppers and Breakfasts. -

A special thank you to our generous sponsors

- The Hatheway Automotive Group
- Kenny's Trucking
- Shine House
(Division of Stothart Automotive)
- Kent and White Insurance
- Mac Donald's Restaurant
- Catherine and Company
- Elm Tree Resources
- Colin Brewster
(Assante Wealth Management)
- Websolutions.ca
- Jean Coutu (Beresford)
- Bayside Automotive Group

Volunteers are always welcome. If you wish to assist in anyway with our fundraisers you can leave your name with the church office.

Calling all Graduates: If you are a potential graduate of the class of 2019 for either BHS or ESN please advise the church office. The First United Church service honoring our graduates will be held on June 16, 2019.

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.

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 96 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.

Newsletters 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.



Save the Date!

Gospel Hymn Sing at First United Church. Sunday, June 2, 2019 at 2pm

Come join us for a relaxed time of gospel music, old favorites and some new. You will have a chance to sing along to some gospel favorites, or just sit back and enjoy!

Special guests will include Emma Vickers, Kurt Hadley, Alysa Collins, Take Note and The Treble Makers. If you are interested in joining the choir for this event, we'd love to have you! Practices will start May 8 at 6:30pm for 4 weeks. The more the merrier and it's a great chance to try out a choir seat! Admission is adults \$10, youth \$5.



Flowers for Mother's Day. We will be having flowers placed in our sanctuary in honor of Mother's day. Those wishing to contribute to the Mother's Day flower fund may place an envelope in the offering plate on Sunday morning. Please mark clearly on the face of the envelope – Mother's Day Flowers with your name, PAR or envelope number. Donations can also be dropped in at the office. An insert will be included in the bulletin on Mother's Day, May 12th with your dedications. Please have your dedications in by Monday, May 6.th

*Mother,
the ribbons of your love
are woven around my heart.
~Author Unknown*

Paint Chip Easter Garland



Have you done a lot of DIY projects around the home?

Maybe you've collected a lot of those paint chips from the hardware stores—the ones that show you color samples.

If you have a stack of these colorful cards, you can put them to festive use this Easter by turning them into an Easter egg garland.

The idea is really simple; you just cut them all into Easter egg shapes, punch holes in them, and string them up.

They look really fantastic!

Who would think that you could up-cycle these cards in such a creative way?

*Bunnies are cuddly
The large and the small
But I like chocolate ones
The best of them all.*

~Author Unknown

Chocolate-Covered Candy Eggs



Ingredients

3/4 stick butter

1 brick cream cheese

1 lb. confectioners' sugar (5 1/4 cups)

1/2 tsp. almond extract

1/2 c. almonds, toasted

2 c. semisweet chocolate chips

1 tbsp. Vegetable shortening

Decorations: tubes of pastel-colored decorating icing, each fitted with a round piping tip; tiny candy bunnies and chicks; and candy dots (sequins)

Directions

Line 2 rimmed baking sheets with wax paper. Beat butter and cream cheese in a medium bowl with mixer on medium speed until blended. Gradually add confectioners' sugar, extract and almonds, beating until blended (mixture will be stiff).

For each egg, fill a measuring tablespoon with the sugar dough. With fingers, push from spoon onto 1 of the lined sheets. Dipping fingers in confectioners' sugar, shape into an egg. Freeze 1 hour until cold and firm.

Melt chocolate as package directs in a deep bowl or saucepan; stir in shortening. Let stand at room temperature 5 minutes, or until lukewarm.

Place 1 egg at a time on a fork, hold over chocolate and spoon chocolate over egg to coat. Tap fork handle on edge of bowl to shake off excess chocolate. Gently, with spatula, push egg off fork onto other baking sheet. Repeat with remaining eggs, reheating chocolate if it thickens and refrigerating eggs if they soften.

To decorate: Pipe designs on eggs with decorating icing. Use remaining melted chocolate or decorating frosting and a toothpick to glue candies onto eggs.

Yields: 35