



Everyone get ready! The time is coming! But time for what?

Today we are in the season of Advent, a time to prepare for Christmas; a special time when we are preparing to receive Christ into our hearts and lives, even preparing for the time when Christ will come again.

Time is a theme that runs throughout this liturgical season, and this busy month.

This is a season when time seems short and obligations seem long.

Into this reality, our Advent Scriptures remind us that time belongs to God, especially this time leading up to the celebration of Christ's birth. We need to take care that our hearts are not dulled by the cares of the world – cares that cause us to use precious time on things that don't really matter.

Advent calls us to be open to use this time to increase our faith, and to enrich our love in every way.

Through our preparations during Advent and our celebration of the birth of Christ at Christmas, we are reminded of the fact that every year we have the opportunity to give thanks and praise to God who came into this world as a vulnerable child to show us the way.

At number 63 in Voices United, we find the following:

"God of stable, stars, and surprises, of light and hope and new life:

Open our eyes and hearts to your presence in our world,

forgive our obsession with property and possessions,

forgive our compromises and narrowness of vision.

Open us to your grace, that we might hear again the song of the angels,

and respond with a song in our hearts, and in our lives." Amen.

We can continue to prepare for that great day when every valley of despair will be lifted up and every winding path of confusion will be straightened and clarified so that all might walk on the pathway of peace.

The light of God's love breaks into our lives at Christmas time to shine on the pathway leading to a life filled with love and hope.

May the blessings of Christmas be with you and your loved ones this holy season,

Rev. Blair Lewis

Bathurst's Best Kept Historical Secret

(Written by Gary Branch for the October, 2017, edition of "The N. B. Scottish Journal")

"Our history begins before we are born. We represent the hereditary influences of our race and our ancestors virtually live in us". James Nasmyth, Scottish engineer and inventor, 1808 - 1890 St. Luke's "Old Scottish" Cemetery is Bathurst's best kept secret in that it is probably the least known cemetery in the area. To get to this cemetery you need to travel half way down Princess Drive, a one way street, to St. Luke's Court to the left, and proceed up a steep hill. At the end of this street you will find the secluded cemetery.

A cairn at the entrance to the cemetery was dedicated on September 24, 2000, with attendance by members of the NB Scottish Cultural Association, who were in Bathurst to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Association. Located on the site of the former church buildings, it honours the first Scottish settlers who came to the area in the early 1800's who "...through their perseverance, industry, foresight, and faith, they carved out a better life for themselves and in so doing contributed to the development of this area and of New Brunswick".

The first Scottish settlers to the area built St. Luke's Presbyterian Church at this site in 1827. The cemetery grew to surround the church building. According to Melynda Jarratt in a report she wrote about the cemetery, St. Luke's "Old Scottish" Cemetery "tells us that in the 19th and early 20th century this cemetery and the church beside it were at the center of a bustling Scottish immigrant community". Over fifty two different family surnames are represented in the cemetery. Two of these well respected surnames are Ferguson and Dunn - Senator John Ferguson (1814 - 1888) whose signature is inscribed on the "Proclamation for Uniting the Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick into One Dominion under the name of Canada" in 1867 and the parents of Sir James Dunn, a well know industrialist and benefactor.

The church was destroyed by fire in 1838, and the second St. Luke's Presbyterian Church was built on the same site. It, too, was destroyed by fire in 1915. A third St. Luke's was built in a different part of the city marking the beginning of the neglect to fall on the cemetery.

The Sir James Dunn Hospital which stood on an adjacent property was also later destroyed by fire and not rebuilt. As a result, St. Luke's Court, a once important community area, became a quiet residential area with a few houses.

When the West Bathurst Cemetery Committee of First United Church, became responsible for St. Luke's "Old Scottish" Cemetery around 2012, it had already suffered from years of neglect and vandalism. This was easy to overlook because of the isolation of the cemetery's location. In 2013 and 2014, the Cemetery Committee was fortunate in having a summer student through provincial government grants. As a result, truckloads of brush and trees which had overtaken the cemetery were cut down and removed with the help of the summer students and volunteers. The cemetery is now mowed regularly.

The work of repairing the toppled grave stones is ongoing with a number being repaired each year. Some of the larger stones will require the use of equipment for lifting and so money will have to be raised for this work. A load of topsoil is also needed and will have to be a budget item for fundraising.

In the fall of 2013 and the spring of 2014, a fundraising campaign to establish an "Endowment Fund" was conducted by the West Bathurst Cemetery Committee for the future maintenance of the West Bathurst and St. Luke's "Old Scottish" Cemeteries. To date the total money raised is - \$62,195 With the rising costs of grounds maintenance for the two cemeteries, committee members are grateful to everyone who continues to contribute to this fund. As a committee we feel we owe it to our ancestors to show the highest level of respect to their final resting place.



Gary Branch, West Bathurst Cemetery Committee; and Isabel (Archibald) MacLaggan; and Joyce (Moody) Neuburg, both of whom are direct descendants of people buried in St. Luke's cemetery.

Highlights from Pastoral Council November Meeting

A thank you note was received from Rev. Lewis for the flowers for his mother's funeral.

Ian Oliver reported on the financial statement. We are close to budget at this time. He also reported that our repair budget has been depleted because of the roof renovations. This will need to be addressed.

The recent Turkey Dinner was a great success.

Rev. Lewis reported the possibility of First United Church receiving funding to support the initiation of a pilot project of adding a worship service conducted in French to address the needs of French-speaking families in our community. The worship services would be held at a time other than our regular Sunday morning English services. Council will study this possibility.

Rev. Lewis also gave an update on the restructuring of the church. The date of implementation is January 1st, 2019. The conferences and presbyteries will cease to exist and the congregations will be dealing with a new Regional Council. Congregations will be faced with a new national allocation formula (financial). There is also the possibility of a 2nd allocation assigned by the regional councils. More information will be shared in the new year as it becomes available.

UCW will have a luncheon meeting in December and no meetings in January and February. The poinsettia fund will be organized again this year.

Don Nelson will not continue as chairperson of the Property Management Team. The Nominations Team will be looking for someone to replace him. Don has held this position for many years and will be missed.

The Christian Development Team is presently trying to research the history of the church organ. The Team thanked custodian, Alan Wilcox, for the lovely Thanksgiving displays.

Martha Vickers and the Choir will present a musical event on Dec. 20th. Ruth Lewis and the Hospitality Committee will look after the reception afterwards. Food will be supplied by the choir members.

For Christmas Eve, which is on a Sunday, Communion will be held at the morning service following the coming-forward format. The 4 pm Family service will be held, as well as the 7pm service. This service will be comprised of carols and readings, recounting the Nativity as it relates to present day. There will be no late service this year.

The Pastoral Care Team would like members to know about the small lending library in the Fellowship Room. It seems that people are not taking advantage of this service.

The Breakfast Program for the adult students is well received and the students are looking after the kitchen. The Community Outreach Team would like to thank the church family for their donations to this very successful program and Bev Murphy for her work. The Community Outreach Pantry is also a success with Alan Wilcox looking after this project.

Minutes of the Property Management Team listed many projects which have been completed and also those which are on the "to do" list.

Brenda Parrott will look into a grant for a summer student for the church.

Submitted by
Judy Losier

*Volunteers
wear working boots
but leave a trail
of angel footsteps.
~Terri Guillemets~*



10:00am

4:00pm

7:00pm

2018 Schedule for
First United Church Events
Hosted by Ways and Means Sub-Team

Thursday, January 25	Roast Pork Dinner
Sunday, February 18	Sunrise Breakfast
Thursday, March 22	Ham and Scallop
Sunday, April 22	Sunrise Breakfast
Thursday, September 27	Beef BBQ
Thursday, November 29	Turkey Supper

All Dates and Events are subject to change.



The annual Christmas Hymn Sing will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 20th, (storm date Dec. 21th), 7pm at First United. Come join with us as we celebrate the Christmas season with familiar carols as well as new selections you are sure to enjoy. The choir will be joined by Emma Vickers, Amanda Godin, Suzanne Cyr (cello), Leslie Wilbur (violin), Linda Knowles MacPherson (piano), as well as Take Note, and the BHS Choir. Cost \$10 Adults \$5 Youth. Tickets are available from choir members and the church office 546-3532.

Check Us Out: www.firstunited-bathurst.ca. You can also follow us on Facebook. Here you will find upcoming events as well as cancellations if the need arises.



Poinsettia Fund: Once again this year we are hoping to have the beauty of our sanctuary enhanced with poinsettias for the Christmas season. Those wishing to contribute to the annual poinsettia fund may place an envelope in the offering plate on Sunday morning. Please mark clearly on the face of the envelope – Poinsettia Fund with your name, PAR or envelope number. List the names that you wish to have printed in the Christmas bulletin insert. Donations will also be received in the church office – deadline is December 14, 2017.

Some gift ideas for the Christmas season:

Available at the office (for a donation) we have 4 CDs featuring the piano and organ music of Linda Knowles MacPherson - "**Notes From the Bay**", "**Christmas on the Bay**", "**Reflections on the Bay**" and her newest release, "**Melodies on the Bay**".

The UCW have for sale the "**Lets Break Bread Together**" cookbooks. The cost is \$15.00 and available at the office.

Church envelopes for the coming year are currently available. If you haven't had contribution envelopes in the past and wish to have them for 2018, please advise the church office. Another way of making contributions is through PAR.

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 91 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.

Annual Christmas Benevolence Program: For those interested in supporting this benevolence program, donation envelopes are available on the Christmas tree located at the entrance to the sanctuary. Any personal cheque may be made payable to First United Church. Donations to this fund will be used to support the volunteer center as well as those people in our congregation who find it difficult, financially, throughout the year.

*Gifts of time and love
are surely the basic ingredients
of a truly merry Christmas.
~Peg Bracken~*

Newsletters: Our number of Newsletters sent via email continues to grow. We have 95 households currently receiving their newsletters via email. Thank you to all you have signed up. Please consider adding your name to the list. Send your request to firstadmin@nb.aibn.com. Special envelopes for Christmas contributions can be found in the Narthex. Approximately 350 members of our church family receive three letters yearly at the cost of around \$1.00/letter.

The Twelve Days of Christmas

When Oliver Cromwell came to power in England, Catholics were not permitted to practice their faith openly. Tradition holds that Catholic parents developed "The Twelve Days of Christmas" to teach children their beliefs.

The partridge in a pear tree represents Jesus (the partridge will sacrifice its life to save its young).

Two turtle doves: The Old and New Testaments

Three French hens: Faith, hope, and charity,

Four calling birds: The four Evangelists—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John

Five golden rings: The first five books of the Old Testament

Six geese a-laying: The six days of creation described in Genesis

Seven swans a-swimming: The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord)

Eight maids a-milking: The eight Beatitudes

Nine ladies dancing: The nine fruits of the Holy Spirit (love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, patience, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control).

Ten lords a-leaping: The Ten Commandments

Eleven pipers piping: The eleven faithful Apostles

Twelve drummers drumming: The twelve points of belief in the Apostles' Creed

*One of the most
glorious messes in the world
is the mess created in the living room
on Christmas day.
Don't clean it up too quickly.
~Andy Rooney~*

Cracker Candy

Here's what you need:

1 tube of saltines (~ 40 crackers +)
1 cup (2 sticks) butter (either salted or unsalted; do not use margarine)
1 cup + 2 Tbsp. firmly packed brown sugar
1 bag chocolate chips
1/2 to 3/4 cup toasted chopped pecans/almonds
(optional)

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Line cookie sheet with foil & spray with non-stick cooking spray. Line crackers end to end on sheet, breaking crackers to fit the end if necessary. In a saucepan, melt butter on low heat. Once melted, add brown sugar and turn heat to medium. Continue stirring until boiling – then boil for 3 minutes (set timer). Pour over crackers, spread evenly working quickly. Put sheet into oven – bake for 5 minutes. Remove – pour chocolate chips over top – place a sheet of foil over and let melt for ~3 minutes. Spread melted chocolate over the top evenly. Add nuts to top – replace foil and refrigerate until set (can be frozen)

Advent Calendar Origins

Advent calendars typically don't follow the period of Advent described above. Instead, they begin on December 1 and mark the 24 days before Christmas. Today, most Advent calendars include paper doors that open to reveal an image, Bible verse, or piece of chocolate. The tradition dates to the mid-19th century, when German Protestants made chalk marks on doors or lit candles to count the days leading up to Christmas

Who were these Scrooges?

Our Pilgrim forefathers. Although today's commercialized Christmas is considered distinctly American, the festival was banned in the nation's earliest days. New England's Puritan leaders considered it a pagan or papist abomination, and any citizen found celebrating around Dec. 25 would be sternly reprimanded. But when Christmas celebrations became legal in the 1680s, gift giving boomed. Rural Americans carved wooden toys and made pieces of needlework in the agricultural offseason to give to family members and neighbors. The Industrial Revolution saw those handmade items replaced with mass-manufactured trinkets and toys. By 1867, the holiday present industry was healthy enough for Macy's in New York City to keep its doors open until midnight on Christmas Eve for the first time.

Christmas Word Search

Level 4



G L E T W C R S T O C K I N G
Y I P I D A E R B R E G N I G
A C O V T R P Y A E C E F F U
R E A S L E Q I X O C T A P Z
E M I R Y H A U D P S A J O N
S E A P O B E T H L E H E M I
N R U L O L D O N T F O S P U
A R L S L E I G H A A S U D O
M Y N O K L T T O Y S I S H R
W C E N E M E S I W F E T A N
O B M K A J L O Z Y E G V M A
N E R N O L U H M G O T E L M
S O G I E O Y D N A C X O N E
V E R B I J O T H U W B K A N
R E E D N I E R Q C A E E R T
L O O C H R I S T M A S T I



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|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Bells | 9. Holly | 17. Sleigh |
| 2. Bethlehem | 10. Jesus | 18. Snowman |
| 3. Candy | 11. Manger | 19. Star |
| 4. Carol | 12. Merry | 20. Stocking |
| 5. Christmas | 13. Ornament | 21. Toys |
| 6. Elves | 14. Peace | 22. Tree |
| 7. Gifts | 15. Reindeer | 23. Wisemen |
| 8. Gingerbread | 16. Santa | 24. Yuletide |