



In the lectionary readings for Thanksgiving Sunday, the gospel lesson is Matthew 6:25 – 33. In this passage of scripture, we are encouraged not to worry and to go forward in life with a sense of confidence.

“Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly father feeds them.” As I write my letter to you on this mid-September Saturday afternoon, I don’t think I could find a passage of scripture more appropriate for Thanksgiving than this one. Jesus teaches us to be thankful for what we do have in life rather than being consumed with regret over what we don’t have.

I think back to nine years ago when Ruth and I began an amazing journey from Halifax to Bathurst. We didn’t know what to expect but we both felt the spirit of enthusiasm as we moved forward in life from the known of the present moment to the unknown dimensions of the future. Looking back, we feel thankful that we have had the privilege to get to know and become friends with a remarkable group of people here at First United Church and in the wider community of Bathurst. Over that nine-year period all of us have known good times and challenging times. We have seen new life born here in our community and we’ve also said goodbye to loved ones. Through it all Jesus teaches us to move forward in life with vision, hope and love. He challenges us to look at the world around us and see the miraculous life that exists in every day living. He teaches us to live with Faith and believe that God has a role and a purpose in life for each and every one of us.

As I write this letter to you I am aware that we are in the final weeks of my ministry here at First United. Actually, by the time you read this I will be retired. I will miss my ministry here with you and at the same time I look forward with a sense of anticipation to my retirement and what that new chapter in our lives is going to be like.

The native peoples of the Americas held ceremonies and festivals to celebrate the completion and bounty of the harvest long before European explorers and settlers arrived in what is now Canada. Early European thanksgivings were held to give thanks for some special fortune. An early example is the ceremony the explorer Martin Frobisher held in 1578 after he had survived the long journey in his quest to find a northern passage from Europe to Asia. When we look back over the years we can find many examples of people intentionally pausing in the routines of their lives to offer thanks to God for the blessings of this life. This year as we celebrate Thanksgiving we offer thanks to God for our loved ones and the opportunities that we have to live in the spirit of love and freedom.

Happy Thanksgiving,

Rev. Blair Lewis

Highlights – Bathurst Pastoral Council September 25, 2018

Council held its first meeting of the fall with Sandra Boone presiding. Other members attending were Judy Losier, Wayne Lord, Brenda Parrott, Ruth Lewis, Anne Brooks, Patricia Brown and Isabel MacLaggan.

Also present were Dave Morison as church treasurer, Rev. Jean Heman and Rev. Blair Lewis. Rev. Herman was welcomed to his first Council meeting. Rev. Lewis, having retired a week ago, is being succeeded by Rev. Herman as acting minister for the next three months. He will be working on a part time basis at 13 hours a week.

Prior to his opening prayer, Rev. Lewis commented on the level of commitment by the people of First United which he first noticed upon taking up his duties here nine years ago. He said it was "a good nine years".

A letter was read from the teachers of classes held downstairs in Donald Eddy Memorial Hall. They thanked the church for the pantry food items provided, a gesture they hoped would continue.

Anne Brooks reported that the UCW had catered to four funeral receptions since the spring and also helped with First United's 20th anniversary luncheon. Also, a palliative care reception was organized at the Elhatton chapel.

Dave Morison reported that the General Fund loss for the year to date was \$10,773 compared to a budget loss of \$24,586 for a net difference of \$13,813. The total revenue was \$431 above budget and expenses were \$13,382 below budget. He said this was "very encouraging right now".

He said there were "major reasons" for the brighter picture, local givings not being one of them. Local givings over the eight-month period showed a drop of \$2907 compared to what was budgeted. He said local givings "continue to be a challenge".

The good news included a \$4000 unexpected donation from the UCW, a larger profit for the Ways and Means committee, and an expense saving of \$8,100 resulting from the custodian's disability absence.

To questions, Dave said local givings through PAR (Pre-authorized remittance) amount to \$8,000 a month which is helpful in planning for the day-to-day demands. Donations towards the new church roof totalled at least \$5,000 at the time it was undertaken.

The Christian Development Team, with Brenda Parrott as chair, met September 20 to organize the fall program. Rev. Jean Herman was welcomed to the meeting.

World Wide Communion will be held on Thanksgiving Sunday, October 7. Remembrance Day being on a Sunday this year, the service at First United will be held on November 4 to avoid conflict with Legion observances.

Sunday School teachers and children will be returning for a 10 – week block of classes beginning Oct 21. The White Gift services will be on Sunday, December 9.

Nora McLean and Patricia Brown have volunteered to help decorate the sanctuary for Thanksgiving.

The Property Management Team is following up on a replacement for the position of church custodian. Alan Wilcox is retiring after many years of efficient and faithful service.

Reporting for the Ways and Means Sub-team, Wayne Lord said about \$500 was the income from catering to the Miramichi Presbytery meal in early September. He stressed the need for volunteers to help with the clean-up following the fundraising dinners. He said it is their "biggest challenge".

Sandra Boone invited Council members and their spouses to a potluck meal at her home in October in honour of Rev. Blair and Ruth Lewis.

As chair of Hospitality and Friendship, Ruth reported that hostesses for the after-service fellowship gatherings were in place until mid-December.

The next Council meeting will be on November 27.

Isabel MacLaggan

*Individual commitment
to a group effort –
that is what makes
a team work,
a company work,
a society work,
a civilization work.
~Vince Lombardi*

Search Committee Update

Our Search Committee has been appointed and approved by Presbytery. Brenda Parrott and I have agreed to co-chair the committee. The other committee members are Cindy Doucet, Cheryl Brewster, Jennifer Oliver, Katie Brewster and two representatives of Miramichi Presbytery: Rev. Sue White and Diane Ellis. The vacancy has now been posted on both the Maritime Conference and National Church websites.

Our Committee has had their first meeting. At that time, we discussed the mandate of the committee in general and also ways to attract potential candidates in addition to the website postings. We are now working to develop interview styles and questions and are ready to accept applications.

In the interim, Rev. Jean Herman has been approached to fill in for potentially three months, beginning on October 1st as we conduct our search for a replacement for Rev. Lewis. Our request was sent to Presbytery and we have received approval.

If anyone has any questions or concerns I invite you to contact either me or Brenda Parrott to discuss your concerns.

Sandra Boone

Co-Chair, Search Committee

*Your work
is going to fill a large
part of your life,
and the only way to be truly satisfied
is to do what you believe
is great work.
And the only way to do great work
is to love what you do.
~Steve Jobs~*

West Bathurst Cemetery Committee Report

The West Bathurst Cemetery Committee members include: Heidi Jansson, Robert Willis, Byron McLean, Terrance Spence, Robert Branch, chairperson, and Gary Branch, secretary. The committee, which is responsible for the upkeep of St. Luke's "Old Scottish" Cemetery and West Bathurst Cemetery, met on May 8, 2018. It organized the spring clean-up of both cemeteries and approved the hiring of Shawn's Lawn and Property Maintenance. This company did another excellent job of mowing and trimming both cemeteries. Additional maintenance (repairing damaged stones, trimming, weeding, etc.) was carried out by committee members. The cemetery records were also updated. Appreciation is expressed to everyone who supports this committee with its work as well as to everyone who supports the cemeteries' "Endowment Fund" with their donations. The fund to date has a balance of \$62,725.

Community Outreach

The Community Outreach team continues to offer support to those within the community who are in need. We often receive request for food and would like to thank the congregation for their generous contributions to our Outreach Pantry. 465 jars of peanut butter have been collected for the Volunteer Center to date. Our goal is 900 units for the year. The Volunteer Center supplies for to approximately 500 households monthly. A Breakfast Program is in place for the students attending the Adult Learning program which is held in the Donald Eddy Memorial Hall. Hot and cold cereals, milk, juice and fruit is available for the students.

*Nothing is really work
unless you would rather
be doing something else.
~James Matthew Barrie~*

Up-Coming Events at First United

Oct. 7 - Thanksgiving

Nov. 4 – Remembrance Sunday

Nov. 29 – Turkey Supper

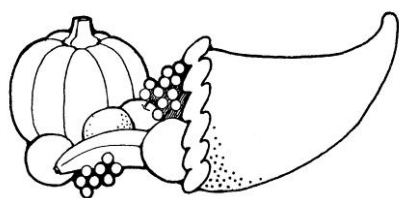


Christmas Concert 2018

The choir of First United will be hosting its annual Christmas concert in December. Plan to join us for a peaceful evening of music of the season.. Announcement will follow with the date of the event and the participants.

Observer

Would you like to receive the Observer, a United Church of Canada publication? For a new subscription, please contact the church office at 546-3532 before Monday, Oct 1, 2018. The annual subscription rate is \$25 (Tax included) Renewals are also payable at the office.



Thanksgiving Service

10am - October. 7, 2018

Anyone wishing to contribute items to decorate the church are encouraged to bring them in by 4pm Wednesday Oct. 3rd

Newsletters: Over 100 households receive their newsletter online. 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 fristadmin@nb.aibn.com. Special envelopes for Thanksgiving contributions can be found in the Narthex.



Church School will be beginning for the fall season on October 21st This semester will run for 10 weeks. The White Gift service will be held on Dec. 9th. We are looking forward to having the children and youth back with us.



Do you enjoy singing? Play an instrument?

Looking for people who enjoy music- old favorites as well as new contemporary selections.

Please consider joining us:

- ~ Senior Choir. Practice Wednesday evenings
- ~ Men's Choir. Practice Sunday Morning last Sunday of the month.
- ~ Instrumentalists- youth and adults

Please contact Martha for further details: 548-3282
martha.vickers@rogers.com.



Annual Remembrance Service

Each year, on the Sunday immediately prior to Remembrance Day, we honour our war veterans as well as those who lost their lives in war. Our Remembrance Service will be held Sunday, November 4. Those wishing to place memorial crosses in the sanctuary are reminded to contact the Legion office directly.

Church envelopes for the coming year will soon be available. If you haven't had contribution envelopes in the past and wish to have them for 2019, 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 94 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 information.

Interested in Playing Badminton?

Badminton in the Donald Eddy Memorial Hall gymnasium has resumed for the fall. Mondays and Wednesdays each week from 9:00-11:00 am. It is a 'pay as you play' arrangement. For more information contact Joyce Daley 546-3764.

Take A Break (TAB) meets every Wednesday morning from 9am-12 in Rms 1,2&3 of the Donald Eddy Hall. A group of over 20 women come together to share their talents of knitting, crocheting, cross stitch and quilting. A morning of laughter and storytelling is enjoyed by all who attend. We are always looking for new people to come and join us.

*Youth is like spring,
an over praised season
more remarkable for biting winds
than genial breezes.*

*Autumn
is the mellow season,
and what we lose in flowers
we more than gain in fruits.*

Samuel Butler



Sweetened Condensed Milk Pumpkin Pie

(or Four Ingredient Pumpkin Pie)

- 9-inch graham cracker crust, baked and cooled
- 1 15-oz can pumpkin puree (approx 1 3/4 cups)
- 1 14-oz can sweetened condensed milk
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 2 tsp pumpkin pie spice
- 2 tsp vanilla extract (optional)

Preheat oven to 400F.

In a large bowl, whisk together pumpkin puree, sweetened condensed milk, eggs and pumpkin pie spice. Add in vanilla, if using. Pour into prepared graham cracker crust.

Turn the oven down to 350F and bake for 45-50 minutes, or until the pie filling is set and jiggles only slightly when the pan is jiggled.

Allow pie to cool completely before slicing and serving.

Pie should be stored in the refrigerator.

Summer Garden Party 2018



The weather cooperated and a great time of food and fellowship was had by all at our annual garden party held at Judy & Bob Losiers.

We were also joined by Archdeacon & Mrs. Tom Crowther.