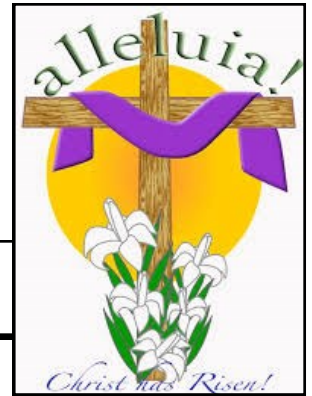




St. James Visitor



Easter 2021

EASTER GREETINGS FROM OUR CLERGY

SUSAN SHEPPARD, DLM

Easter greetings from my home to yours! I'm sitting in my home office looking out at a beautiful sunny, if windy, March afternoon. It is the kind of day you would just love to go somewhere with friends and enjoy nature together. You know where this is going! Instead, I walked a lonely two kilometers back and forth my driveway, thinking about a meditation for Holy week.

It is nearly a year since we had to close our church doors because of the COVID-19 virus, and while we did have a few months of 'normal' worship in the building, we have for the most part been separated for a year now. The first year was kind of exciting, working out how to lead worship online and continue study groups. Then came Pancake day a few weeks ago and the realization that it had been our last social gathering as a congregation before the lockdown. Now we have to start the whole cycle again.

This is not supposed to be some dreary rehash of last year so let's move on to some of the hope and joy of Easter. Where do you see stories of hope and resurrection in our world today?

In the fall I planted hundreds of flower bulbs in the hope of a sea of colour in my garden when the snow melts this year. Writing this I am reminded that it's March and I should tap my maple trees to gather sap for syrup. When I had hens they would start laying eggs around this time of year as the days lengthened. These are some of nature's signs of hope and resurrection.

This year, the approval and administration of vaccines is a sign of hope and new life for all of us. While we pine to return to 'normal', I believe that our walk through the COVID-19 wilderness has changed us personally and as a society. I hope the change will be for the better as we remember the pain of socially isolating and physically distancing, the risks and courage of those who work frontline jobs (from grocery store workers, first responders, teachers, medical and hospital staff to delivery people, cab drivers, truck drivers and cable repair people) which allowed everyone else to do what needed to be done to stop the virus' spread.

That first Easter, Jesus' followers began to recover from their fear and the pain of losing their friend and teacher. They remembered how he had changed them and their world for the better. This Easter let us remember that our world too has changed; there has been much fear and death, but just maybe along the way we were reminded about sharing with and caring for our neighbours in the way that Jesus taught his followers 2000 years ago.

Have a joyous Easter of hope, and remember to keep following the public health directives: wear your masks and get your vaccine to protect you and others.





REV. JIM VON RIESEN

To say that 2020 was an unusual and unnerving year is at the very least an understatement. In the blink of an eye, our lives were changed and the group and community activities that fed our social needs were gone or severely limited. And just when we thought life was settling down into a new normal, a new wave of COVID-19 crested and we were once again locked down.

Through all of this, as much as possible, we have supported one another by the various means available to us. After all, that is what community and friendship is about – supporting, encouraging and lifting spirits. We, as a community of St. James United Church, have been acting as the body of Christ in our time and place.

While we have adjusted and learned to cope with the restrictions placed on our lives and living, there still remains the anxiety of uncertainty with its many unanswered questions.

As I began to think about what I would write for this Easter Visitor, the words of Psalm 91 as expressed in Voices United #808 kept coming to mind.

“And I will raise you up on eagle’s wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of my hand.”

I find those images very comforting. Each image speaks to me of the unfailing love and support of God.

However, one phrase really stands out for me and it is my favourite phrase in the whole of Voices United -- “bear you on the breath of dawn.” The breath of dawn, that time of night when, even before we see the first glimmer of dawn’s light, we feel the change in the air that signals light is on its way. God reassures us that there is light at the end of the tunnel and it is not a mirage. The sun will shine and we will shine with it, bringing light to those who still struggle with the dark.

And, of course, through it all, we are held in the palm of God’s hand, cared for by the source of light and love.

As the symbolic darkness of Lent deepens, we know that the dawn of new light and life brought by that first Easter will triumph. Easter 2021 carries with it the certainty that we will emerge from the darkness of the pandemic into new life.

“In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone!”

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

The **United Communities of Faith** Holy Week services will take place online and can all be viewed on the First Dawn Eastern Edge Region YouTube channel and St. James social media. The services on Monday and Tuesday will go live at 7:30 pm, and the Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday Services are taped and will be available to you starting at 8 am each day. The Maundy Thursday service will have communion and foot washing, so make sure to have supplies on hand.

Your Hosts:

Monday, March 29:	First United Church
Tuesday, March 30:	Wesley United Church
Wednesday, March 31:	Bell Island - Portugal Cove/St. James
Thursday, April 1:	Cowan Heights United Church (Communion and Foot Washing)
Friday, April 2:	Cochrane Street United Church



GREETINGS FROM REV. MARION DAVIS

An uncle of mine, when he was in his mid-eighties, said to me “You’ve got to have plans.” That statement was made as the result of his no longer being able to do so many things that he thoroughly enjoyed. That included being able to drive his car, skipper his yacht or climb a ladder. (My uncle was a very quiet man of few words so I was surprised and pleased that he was so open about how he was feeling.)

In this past year we have been restricted from many activities which we would normally have enjoyed, and with no definite time of release we can really only focus on the day in which we find ourselves. That is not to say that we don’t think about when we will be able to easily and safely resume many aspects of life. As my uncle suggested, we have to have plans. Right now, we can plan each evening how we will spend the next day. We might wake up wondering if it is Thursday or “Blurzday” but what is important is to have a plan. And as we step into spring, and then, the glory of Easter, Jesus invites us to receive the gift of new life as we celebrate his resurrection. We can count on it!

May blessings abound!



EASTER BLESSINGS AND GREETINGS FROM THE UNITED CHURCH WOMEN (UCW)

This has been a most unusual year - for the world, our country and our UCW. Needless to say, our regular meetings came to an abrupt halt following our meeting on March 9, 2020. In spite of having to curtail the activities of UCW, the light did not go completely out. We kept a little but powerful flicker going, due to the interest and efforts of several of our members.

Vera Marshall, convener of the **Ladies Friendship Group**, under the umbrella of the UCW, reported that they have regularly kept in touch with each other. One of the members said recently that of all her outings, the Friendship Group is the one she misses most. Vera also called each woman with good wishes on her birthday. Barbara Butt, convener of the **Visitation Committee**, said the pandemic created fear and apprehension in our home members. She reported that her team visitors stepped up to let them know we were thinking of them, calling the members often. During the year, several of our members experienced sickness or loss and we also think about them and keep them in our prayers.

Sylvia Cole and Barbara Adams served on the Planning Committee for the World Day of Prayer. On March 6, just before Level 5 isolation began, the service was held at Wesley United Church and was attended by several of our members.

In October, the provincial Gathering of UCWs was hosted by the St. John's Area executive and held online via Zoom. Several of our members attended the meeting via this new technology. That same month, the Gathering Place put out an urgent request for masks and Gloria Le Feuvre suggested our UCW could contribute to the cause. Many of our members made or bought masks or contributed by giving a donation to help cover the cost of the materials needed. At the end of the month, Gloria and Donna Downey delivered 390 masks to the Gathering Place!

We have missed the camaraderie of being with our fellow UCW members. When church resumed in the fall, it was good to see some of our members again. We could have brief masked and distanced visits in the parking lot ... as good as it gets! It is worth mentioning that two of our most senior members have attended every Sunday – Joan Barbour and Shirley Burse! What an inspiration they are.

—Barbara Adams and Sylvia Cole with contributions from others



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Easter greetings! There is no question that the events of the past year have left us grappling with the “new normal.” Though physical distancing and various health and safety restrictions may have led to an absence of in-person activities for CE, we still managed to reach out and stay active in our faith community. Rather than gearing up for the pancake supper, our Good Friday walk, or preparing for the Easter Sunday breakfast, we found ourselves looking for new ways of doing things. In preparation for Easter, we proudly launched our first CE Lenten newsletter entitled “Faith: Some Assembly Required” offering inspiration and activities to encourage people on their faith journey. Moving to a digital platform, for example, we continue to offer our Bible study group and our book club safely via Zoom. This has the added bonus of meeting in spite of the weather!

This Easter may be a quiet one; some will be with family and some will be alone. It will be a time for reflection, a time for hope and above all, a time for faith. We look forward to the day when we can once again gather in person to celebrate faith and fellowship. In the meantime, we will continue to utilize the tools at our disposal to keep in touch in the safest way possible.

Until we meet again, Pamela Norman, Chair, CE Committee



UPDATE ON FULL-TIME MINISTER SEARCH COMMITTEE

The Full-Time Minister Search Committee for St. James was formed last fall. The committee is tasked with hiring a new full-time Minister in accordance with the vision and objectives of the Mission Articulation Plan (MAP). This document was created by the MAP group and reviewed by the congregation early last summer.

The Search Committee consists of the following members:

Glenda Winsor

Pamela Norman

Heather Hickman

Shane Seal

Jean Thompson

Trevor Bartlett, Chair

Rev. Grant Stuckless provides oversight and guidance from the First Dawn Eastern Edge Region.

The committee advertised the full-time position on the United Church of Canada's new "Church Hub" system in January. We are pleased by the level of response and by the calibre of the applicants. Though challenges continue to be presented by the pandemic, the group has maintained the original schedule proposed late last year. The congregation will be notified of a meeting once a candidate has been selected and an offer accepted.



CHURCH COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2021

Chair of Council:	Marilyn Adams
Vice Chair:	Michelle Skinner
Secretary:	Abena Owusua Amponsah
Christian Education:	Pam Norman
Ministry & Personnel:	Vacant
Stewardship:	Robin Bartlett
Admin & Communications:	Sarah Norman
Finance Committee:	Vacant
Worship & Sacraments:	Paul Walsh
Building Maintenance:	Bill Legge
Youth Representative:	Vacant
Young Adult Representative:	Kaitlyn Mayo
Diversity:	Hannah Sheppard
AOTS:	Clyde Flight
UCW:	Ruth Baker
Regional Reps:	Ruth Baker/Hannah Sheppard
Treasurer:	Jean Thompson
Minister of Youth and CE:	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Full Time Minister:	Vacant
Chair, Board of Trustees	Les Dean

Christian Education

Pamela Norman, Chair
 Gloria Le Feuvre
 Susan Sheppard, DLM
 Hannah Sheppard
 Chelsea Masterson
 Sarah Norman
 Christopher Penney
 Rev. Ettie Gordon-Murray
 Karen Brown

Ministry and Personnel

Clyde Flight, Past Chair
 Heather Hickman
 David Adams
 Barry Robbins

Stewardship

Robin Bartlett, Chair
 Susan Sheppard, DLM
 Paul Walsh
 Jean Thompson
 Pamela Norman
 Sarah Norman
 Christopher Penney
 Karen Brown
 Hannah Sheppard

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**CHURCH COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2021** (continued from page 5)**Administration & Communications**

Chair, Sarah Norman
Jennifer Adams
Karen Brown
Robin Bartlett
Linda Babstock
Noah Morritt, Archivist
Jake Thompson, Technician
Glenda Winsor, Website Admin
Jan Winsor
Rev. Ettie Gordon-Murray
Office Administrator, ex-officio member

Finance Committee

Chair, Vacant
Jean Thompson, Treasurer
Barry Cutler
Linda Babstock
Vern Whelan
Aubrey Hill
David Fogwill
Karen Brown (UCW rep)

Worship and Sacraments

Paul Walsh, Chair
Susan Sheppard, DLM
Susan Pike, Clerk of Session
Karen Brown
Ruth Baker
Marina Adams
Marilyn Adams

Building Maintenance

Bill Legge, Chair
Oliver Wellon
Bruce Winsor, ex-officio

Diversity Committee

Hannah Sheppard, Chair
Paul Walsh
Barbara Adams
Rev. Ettie Gordon Murray
Susan Sheppard, DLM
Kennedy Collins
Amy Dalziel

Board of Trustees

Les Dean, Chair
Bruce Hunt
Vera Marshall
Susan Sheppard, DLM



And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. (2 Corinthians 9:8)

GREETINGS FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Hello to you all! Our committee hopes you have been doing as well as you can during this past winter and this second pandemic lock-down – both shorter than last year’s. We know the isolation of these months is difficult for everyone and hope that the sunshine and warmer temperatures remind you of a promise of brighter days which spring brings to our hearts every year.

What is Stewardship?

“We are all stewards” or managers who “have the moral duty and obligation to responsibly plan and manage that which has been entrusted to them.”

(An excerpt from Stewardship’s plan presentation to Council on March 8, 2020)

The Bible teaches us that a steward must be someone that can be trusted to care for things that are important or dear to their master. Stewardship includes wise management of treasure, time and talents so that we can use these things in the service of the Lord for the benefit of others by focusing on making the world better and taking care of the people and things which are important to them.

The roles of the Stewardship Committee are:

- 1) to raise money; and
- 2) to reach out and serve the congregation and the greater community.

Our committee evolved from a concerned, passionate grassroots group of volunteers who in 2018 recognized the potential of St. James and shared a vision of what we could achieve as a more open and inclusive community who engages more of our congregation, reaches out to the larger community and attracts members new and old for fellowship and faith. We brainstormed new ideas and activities to appeal to and to engage various segments of our congregational community and to attract others from outside. And we worked together with other volunteers to achieve results, but little did we know then that our work was actually that of stewardship!

In the fall of 2019 Ross Wiseman became our Chairperson, and he led us in our research, development of a situational analysis and a five-year Stewardship Plan which was approved by our Council last March. It will be presented to the congregation soon.

In October 2020 I became Chairperson of the Stewardship Committee. We are continuing to work on our Stewardship Plan. Due to the pandemic, we have had to push all of our plans and timelines ahead by a year. We are working on the details of activities and fundraising ideas we can achieve with the restrictions.

In the coming weeks many of you can expect a telephone call or an email from a committee member to say “hello” and check in on you; to have a short chat; to see if there is anything you need or if there is any way we can help you; to hear your suggestions and to share any news. In the meantime, we wish you all a healthy happy Easter and a happy spring!

Robin Bartlett, Chairperson



WORSHIP SCHEDULE April to June, 2021

Date	Time	Details	Clergy
Saturday, April 3	4:30 pm	Contemporary Service	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Sunday, April 4	11:00 am	EASTER SUNDAY Communion	Rev. Jim Von Riesen
Saturday, April 10	4:30 pm	Contemporary Service	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Sunday, April 11	11:00 am	2 nd Sunday of Easter	Rev. Marion Davis
Saturday, April 17	4:30 pm	Contemporary Service	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Sunday, April 18	11:00 am	3 rd Sunday of Easter	Rev. Jim Von Riesen
Saturday, April 24	4:30 pm	Contemporary Service	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Sunday, April 25	11:00 am	4 th Sunday of Easter	Rev. Marion Davis
Saturday, May 1	4:30 pm	Contemporary Service	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Sunday, May 2	11:00 am	5 th Sunday of Easter	Rev. Jim Von Riesen
Saturday, May 8	4:30 pm	Contemporary Service	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Sunday, May 9	11:00 am	6 th Christian Family Sunday	Rev. Marion Davis
Saturday, May 15	4:30 pm	Contemporary Service	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Sunday, May 16	11:00 am	7 th Sunday of Easter	Rev. Jim Von Riesen
Saturday, May 22	4:30 pm	Contemporary Service	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Sunday, May 23	11:00 am	Day of Pentecost Sunday	Rev. Marion Davis
Saturday, May 29	4:30 pm	Contemporary Service	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Sunday, May 30	11:00 am	Trinity Sunday	Rev. Jim Von Riesen
Saturday, June 5	4:30 pm	Contemporary Service	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Sunday, June 6	11:00 am	2 nd Sunday after Pentecost	Rev. Marion Davis
Saturday, June 12	4:30 pm	Contemporary Service	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Sunday, June 13	11:00 am	3 rd Sunday after Pentecost	Rev. Jim Von Riesen
Saturday, June 19	4:30 pm	Contemporary Service	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Sunday, June 20	11:00 am	4 th Sunday after Pentecost	Rev. Marion Davis
Saturday, June 26	4:30 pm	Contemporary Service	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Sunday, June 27	11:00 am	5 th Sunday after Pentecost	Rev. Jim Von Riesen

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