



St. John's United Church, 75 Alma Street, Moncton, NB E1C 4Y3
T: 858-8289 E: sjuc@nb.aibn.com W: www.StJohnsMoncton.ca
FB: St. John's United Church, United Church of Canada
Office Hours: M-F, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

PASTORAL LETTER

January 5, 2024

Last August I arrived at Royal Court like I always do: early. Lois Weatherby always invited me for coffee in the common area before the chapel service on the sixth floor as she met me at the door. There were usually two women with her and sometimes a man; but, we all got to know each other over time. (One woman told me the story of being trapped in an apartment building elevator overnight with a man whom she thought had fallen asleep when he had actually died! "I can't believe I spent the night in an elevator with a dead body!") On this particular day, Lois and I skipped coffee when she met me at the door and we rode up the elevator together. I commented on the help button. As we were walking down the hall towards the chapel we could hear singing and Lois said to me, "Things have changed for me in July, Aaron." She was losing her balance a lot and dropping tea cups and plates. "I don't think I'll be able to go to church anymore." I held out my arm as she put her walker along the wall in what I always call a Royal Court Traffic Jam since there are so many walkers outside the chapel room.

Before the pandemic, Lois had moved to Royal Court in what turned out to be a very fortuitous decision. Her social life revolved around the residents and activities there. She was kept as safe as she could be from COVID. (In fact, Lois never got COVID until she caught it at the special care home she recently moved into.) She loved the life she had there and her daughters were so thankful but asked if she could carve a little time out for them as every time they called her she was off to some activity or visiting with friends. It was their shared humour. Lois's daughter Vicky lives in Ottawa and her daughter Kim lives in British Columbia. Lois's son, Ross, died from cancer several years ago and she was so faithful to go see him. I loved being Lois's tech support for Zoom Bible Studies.

One day I received a call that Lois was in the emergency room at the Moncton Hospital. I went to see her there as I heard things were not good, and her health was declining rapidly. As I approached the curtain I could hear her and her daughter Vicky talking quietly and I could tell that it was Ok to announce my presence. They welcomed me in and Vicky and I hugged as I had buried her father-in-law Ron Kay at McKees Mills just a few weeks before in August. (Vicky is married to the brother of my former uncle.)

I could see that things had really changed for Lois. She was her usual positive self and they were talking about Lois moving to a special care home. I remembered how much Lois loved Royal Court and I said to her, reflecting on her life as I had known it, that she always seemed to bloom where she was planted and that I knew she would make the most of her next move, too. The goal at the time was, though, to get her out of emergency to a room in a unit; however, the hospital was over capacity. On my way out I remember noticing that staff were coming out of the curtain in the area beside Lois in full protective gear and I remember thinking that the last thing she needed was whatever that person had.

Eventually, she did get a bed upstairs. I visited her after church one Sunday and she had just watched the church service on Facebook. I remarked to her that there was a time not so long ago that if you missed church, you missed church! Now, things are so much better as we can share worship in new ways. She was very grateful for it. At one point, Lois looked at me and said to me as a Matriarch can only say to a minister, "I'm so sorry we couldn't save the church for you, Aaron." With all of the faith that I could muster as her minister and as her friend I said, "God's not finished with us yet." To look a 92 year old woman in her teary eyes who has served the church with her whole being for most of her adult life is a sacred experience.

As our visit was winding down she said, "Aaron, I've been in touch with the people from MAID." For those unfamiliar with this acronym, it stands for "medical assistance in dying". In a very short time, Lois had gone from excellent health to poor health. She could no longer walk, and she only had a small use of one hand. We talked about it and she seemed to have a sense of relief around it. I said, "Lois, all I know is that we are not intended to suffer." A hug and a prayer later, I was on my way.

Thanks to her daughters, Lois found a placement at a new Shannex special care home in Moncton just up behind my house called Gordon and Ocean, in reference to the two wings. In an earlier letter I referred to it as Kensington Palace because of the sheer size of the place. It's new, brand new, which means that there were still some growing pains but Lois had a nice room and a large TV and a washroom but she was unable to do anything for herself. Determined as she was, she could still use her iPad. Complain as I might about technology from time to time, I was so thankful that Lois had this device that allows grandkids to Facetime and daughters to call and she could even ask Siri to open Facebook and play the church service. I later received a birthday card signed by Lois and I remember saying to my wife that it must have taken her a long time to write that message to me given that she could barely move her hand.

The first time I visited Lois in her new home, she had COVID so all I could do was write her a little letter saying I'd be back. Her daughter Kim had arrived and she was in control of the situation. As soon as we had the all clear, I was in to see Lois. In early December, Vicky texted me to say that Lois had received confirmation for a date from the MAID people in early January. Strangely, or perhaps lovingly, we booked the first funeral at the church for 2024 for a few days after. All very wise, holy, and practical if you ask me. Thirteen years ago, Lois had gone to Fergusons Funeral Home to plan her funeral. She had chosen the readings and the hymns and she wanted the minister from St. John's United Church (of which she has been a member for seventy years) to do the service. She even wanted to make sure the reception was taken care of! The UCW have promised to do just that.

It speaks to her personality. Lois's job at Kraft allowed her to take one university course per year and, in the early 1970s Lois began working towards a degree from Mount Allison University where she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts. She loved her studies. But, what she loved most of all was being a mother. Life began again for Lois when she turned 60 and she found an apartment and bought new furniture and found new adventures. She was an essential part of her church women's group. She lugged food to so many events, and often said no to help. Eventually, she bought a KIA hatchback which allowed her to bring things to the church more easily for sales. She was highly involved with the Elizabeth Fry Society here in New Brunswick and did so much for the women there driving them to court and appointments all over the province.

I think that in order to know a person you have to start where they come from. She was from St. Stephen and at a young age took care of the household. She remembered one winter when her father was off to war and there wasn't enough wood for another winter because there weren't enough men around to cut it. Her childhood was cut short and she soon started caring for others at a very young age. That was something that never left Lois: she cared for others for the rest of her life. Which is why it made sense to those of us who deeply knew Lois that it was a terrible burden for her that others would have to care for her.

A member of the St. John's United Church Women contacted me and asked if it would be possible for us to have a communion service with Lois at her special care home, which happened to have a beautiful new chapel installed. (It also functions as a movie theatre where the room can be darkened!) The UCW all gathered with her on December 22nd and we shared the sacrament of Holy Communion. I wore my McSween tartan stole and we sang verses of "In the Bleak Midwinter" A Capella. A week before that when I had visited Lois she had indicated to me that she really wanted positive energy around her and that it was important for her that her final days be as good as they could be. I took my cue from her and I was upbeat and energetic whenever I was there. The same was true for that day so we posed for a group photo.



As a minister, I stood back and observed a lot on that occasion as Lois's sisters in the UCW all surrounded her with love and affection; smiles and warmth. They gave her a good day, which she needed. I told them that I had brought a communion cup that an artist from Orangedale, Cape Breton had made and given to me when I left there to come to Moncton. It's a green cup with a plate and a fish carved into the side, which was an early Christian

symbol that people would trace in the sand with their foot to identify other Christians when it was not safe to be one. During the service, I noticed that there was liquid in the cup. I didn't pour anything into it because we were using the disposable communion kits that we started using when COVID hit to keep each other safe from passing around plates to a church full of people as that's how germs are spread. I smiled because these spiritual elders took care of it and I was able to break bread and drink "wine" from the cup, except that when I did drink it I didn't taste grape juice, I tasted lemonade! (The women had brought fruit cake, short breads, and lemonade for the reception and it was all we had which makes it sacramental to me!) So, from now on, I think the blood of Christ is just as much present in the lemon as it is in the grape.

Because I think communion is very much a memorial feast, I often treat it with reverence. But, that day, it truly was a celebration. This was St. John's at its best. Lois had friends on either side of her to help her receive the sacrament and after the service was over I brought over my new stole to show her since she has loved my family reunion story. I took her hand and placed it on the stole so she could feel the material.

While I was there, Trina Vautour introduced me to the RN, Peggy Carter, who was in charge of things. Trina and her mom Janice are UCW members and Trina works for Shannex. I had asked Lois's daughters Vicky and Kim if they thought it would be ok if I offered a Christmas Eve service there. They were delighted and said yes. I wanted Lois to have a Christmas Eve service. So Trina took me down a hall where Peggy was in her office. Peggy, a Pentecostal, was so happy to have the offer. She said, "I can't believe you'd come on Christmas Eve?" I said, "Lois is pretty special to us." Peggy assured me that everything would be put in place. She said, "In fact, we are going to have the service in the main area because the chapel will be too small." Perfect.

On Sunday morning, we drove to church and talked about the afternoon. My daughter, Allie, was going to play the piano. It was an electric baby grand and – more importantly – in tune, unlike the last two times she played for Christmas events. We had a great crowd for the Sunday service and by the time we left coffee hour there wasn't much time for lunch in order to get to the service at 2pm. When we arrived at Gordon and Ocean there was a nice crowd of people, including Lois and her daughter Kim. At the morning service, our Worship and Music Committee chairperson Sheri

Brooks asked if I needed any help at the afternoon service so I took her aside and asked, “Sheri, can you sing, *O Holy Night*?” We tried it in the Fellowship Room and she was wonderful.

Allie played songs as people gathered. I gave Lois a kiss and a hug and mingled. We found a man in a wheel chair off to the side whose last name was Anderson. He belonged to St. John’s years ago and was so happy to see us. Mary Stordy was there, too. We had carols, and I gave a reflection. When I do services like these, I don’t use notes; I just wander around and try to engage people. I asked if anyone had any memories of food at Christmas and a French Roman Catholic woman told us about her mother’s Poutine Râpée recipe that she would cook each Christmas. She would place a button in the potatoes and meat of one of the Rapee’s and whoever got that one got a special present. I commented that it was possible the special present might be meeting Jesus if the person choked! I was shocked when I started talking that not only were there people gathered round the piano for the service, the main area at the entrance was filled with people who I assume were just listening to the music.



When it came time for *O Holy Night*, I made sure my guitar was in tune and Allie started playing the piano. Sheri did a fabulous job and received a round of applause when she finished. I was so proud of the church at work. After the service was over, I thanked everyone and Allie started playing Christmas songs on the piano from the Reader’s Digest Christmas book and no one left. They all just stayed there. A staff member came to take one woman back to her room and she said, “I’m not leaving!” So Allie just kept playing. When Lois went back to her room I visited her there and wished her a Merry Christmas and said I’d be back.

We have a tradition that my wife and her mother Shirley make cabbage rolls for Christmas Eve and we take them to the church for the staff. It’s our little way of saying thank you to them. We told Patti the custodian and her husband, and Mel the organist to not make supper that night. As we were driving down to the church I wondered out loud to Lori-Ann if there would be many people that night as things have changed since COVID. In 2019, we had well over four hundred people attend the Christmas Eve service. Since then, it’s been much smaller. But, I have no control over that and I just had a goal of making Christmas “Christmas” for people.

About ten minutes before the service, I went into the sanctuary to find all of the people taking part. The students from Sistema were playing songs and the place was buzzing. I actually paused and took a look around and the church was...almost full? The buzz was high and I gave quiet thanks to God that things were starting to return. I had so many people pull me aside and people coming to talk to me that the service almost started late but that didn’t bother me much because it was Christmas Eve and everyone was so thrilled to be there. I secretly love it when there are so many in the balcony.



The Sistema students were amazing. One of my favourite moments of Christmas Eve is shaking hands at the door and so many people loved the music. Rev. Mel and the choir were so lovely, too. We really do have to be grateful for our choir as they are so faithful and so talented. As I stood outside, I saw a woman and her daughter helping an elderly woman out the door. She said, “This is my mother. We belong to another church but she wanted a traditional Christmas Eve service and we loved it. Thank you.” I replied, “I noticed you



during *Angels We Have Heard on High!* You were singing your heart out!” Several people commented that this was the first time they’d attended church in years.

Each Christmas Eve I always take note that our Treasurer and Finance & Property Committee Chair stay late counting the offering. I make a mental note that when I’m leaving, they are still there. So, hats off to Kimberley and Marlene for being so faithful to the church when everyone else is home having Christmas with their friends and families. When I arrived home, I took the dog out for a walk and breathed in the Christmas Eve air and looked at the homes around me with Christmas lights and noticed the ones with no lights. It’s hard to come down from a service like Christmas Eve where so much is expected and there’s so much pressure to deliver the goods, to be honest. But, I have kids and they need Christmas too, so eventually Allie made her way to the piano bench and I grabbed my guitar and we sang and played and made merry.

The next day, Lori-Ann and Eli got up extra early and turned on the tree while it was still dark. When we all gathered in the living room, the carols were quietly playing and Shirley was making tea and dad arrived from his hotel. My brother Jason’s fiancée makes biscotti which is part of her Italian heritage and I dipped mine in my tea as the kids opened their stocking and our dog Halo sniffed through the presents for hers.

After our big breakfast, I got dressed and drove over to visit Lois Weatherby. They were having a turkey dinner that night and looking forward to it. I told Lois all about the crowd the night before and she said they were going to watch the service a little later. It was nice to be with her on Christmas Day. We chatted about Christmases past and current events, as Lois was always up to speed. Each time I was with her, I could see a slight change. Her pain was changing, too, and thanks to a nursing friend who advocated for her, Lois received the care she needed to manage her pain and she said each day that her pain was being managed, which was a gift.

Over the next few days I’d visit and we’d talk the talk of Maritimers: Family, friends, and faith. In the days before, I’d asked her daughter Kim if it would be ok for me to bring my guitar on New Year’s Eve and sing some songs that we do around the campfire. Kim said that it would be wonderful.

So, on New Year’s Eve, around 6pm, I brought my guitar to Lois’s room and we all chatted and enjoyed the moment. We didn’t say ‘Happy New Year’ because we were so grateful for the current one, to be honest. Living in the moment. A number of staff and residents stopped by outside the door to listen to this mini concert in a resident’s room.

For an hour, I played the Rankins, Stan Rogers, Ron Hynes, John Denver, The Beatles, the Barra MacNeils and a few more on the guitar. I played a few carols. And I ended with, *For Auld Lang Syne* which means “days gone by” or “times long past”. Before I left, Lois said that she looked forward to two things each night: the evening news and *Murder She Wrote!*

When Lois’s daughter Vicky arrived a few days later, I went to see them and they were in the hallway by the windows. The sky was a blueish purple that night and I remarked to Lois that New Brunswick skies are my favourite skies. We spoke of the day to come. As I looked at Vicky and Kim, I was so grateful that Lois could have such beautiful daughters so present with her. In those moments, there is only truth so I said to Lois that doing what she was doing, she was also giving permission for the people who know and love her to do what they needed to do, too. She was breaking ground still.

I have to say, in all of this, I regularly asked Lois if this was what she wanted, if this was truly what she wanted, and if this was still what she wanted, and each time she said and emphatic, “Yes.” She called it “Freedom Day”. She said that, at 92, she had lived her life and now it was time to go. I followed her lead. To lose your independence and your ability to do the smallest things for yourself is very hard. By making her decision, Lois re-asserted herself and took back the one thing she had lost during the loss of health: her agency.

The night before the day, we all gathered in her room. Lillian MacMellon had been so good at delivering meals. Many had come to share their love. Facetime videos with family were so frequent. After our conversation, I said that it would be good if we could all pray the Lord's Prayer together. Lois and I had prayed together a lot by that point so I figured it would be better to share the prayer of Jesus. We all agreed that the words "on earth as it is in heaven" were as beautiful as any other. Lois spent her life in the work of social justice. As we sat and laughed and talked, I gave thanks to God for this family. They cried a lot with their mother. Just as much as they cared for her and granted her every wish.

I didn't sleep that next night. Not because I was sad for Lois but because I think I was sad for us. All through this, Lois has been resolute. I later learned that she didn't engage this process sooner because she didn't want to ruin Christmas for her family. Imagine. She endured her suffering for the people she loved to make their lives better. Typical Lois. But, I will say, that spending Christmas and New Year's with Lois refocused my understanding of the meaning of such days.

The night before, Victoria and Kim sent out an email to the friends of Lois who would be present the next day called, "Being with Lois on Thursday." We were invited to be with Lois at 1:30pm. Early that morning, a nurse arrived to prepare Lois for the afternoon. Because Lois loved Cora's restaurant, they ordered waffles with extra whipped cream and syrup. She had the best day, by all accounts.

I arrived at 1:40pm to find all of Lois's friends gathered with her. After a few moments talking to Lois, I noticed that they all had left the room, leaving me with her. If I am to be honest, I felt my blood pressure go up, and my face turn rosy red, as it does. I looked at Lois, so pretty in her black shirt with red flowers and her pearls. She was wearing her glasses and her hair was done. I teared up and said, "I love you." She said she loved me too. I asked her how today was and she smiled and said that she Facetimed with her grandchildren, and she completely understood when one found it too hard. I told her that I walked around downtown with my dog and dropped my family off at the library and how libraries are now community hubs where bakers often leave bread for the homeless who get warm there and Lois loved that because she gave so much of her life in service of others. The rest of our conversation is private.

When her family and friends came back in the room we formed a half moon of chairs around her bed and told stories and laughed. A nurse arrived to make sure that everything was good. This nurse was wonderful. She set us all at ease. When the doctor arrived, he confirmed with Lois her wishes. She said that she was ready. Her daughters sitting beside her each went and gave her a kiss and told her they loved her. Then her friends present did the same each offering her a blessing of love. I walked over to her and smiled with tears and said, "We'll meet again."

The doctor and nurse told Lois what would happen and how it would happen. She would be given medication that would make her fall to sleep and then she would fall into a deeper sleep. They assured her that this had to be done right and would be done right. The nurse said, "It's ok if you snore!" at which point Kim said, "Mom never snores!"

So we all sat there, witnessing to Lois's life, as the doctor was with her. Lois was looking directly at me and I realized I was wearing a mask so I took it off because I didn't want her last visual being me staring at her but me smiling at her. Her eye lids grew heavy and she did start snoring, which caused us all to have a quiet laugh.

As the doctor and the nurse performed their solemn duty, all of us sat there prayed and wept and even rejoiced that our dear, dear friend was finally being released from her reality into the open arms of God. At the end, the nurse gave the doctor the stethoscope and he pressed it against Lois's chest in a few spots and then her neck and then he looked at her daughter's and said, "She's gone."

I walked to her bedside and placed my hand on her head and prayed the words, "Rest eternal grant her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. May her soul, and the souls of all the departed, in Your mercy, rest in peace."

This process took about fifteen minutes. Lois didn't flinch nor did she indicate any kind of pain from the moment she fell asleep. Her suffering was over. And watching her suffer was over too.

As an observer of all things human, I was curious as to this whole process. As much as this was an emotional experience, it was a practical one, too. The nurse opened a black briefcase in which there were many syringes, each of which had their purpose. They were labelled. When the process was finished, the doctor and nurse gave us time to be with Lois.

For the next half hour, we told stories, laughed, and cried. We sat beside our friend and made sure that she was on the path to the saints who had gone before her, including her younger sister who had died the week before in the United States. In fact, one person in the room had said that Lois had been mentioned in sermons as a saint. I told the congregation that Lois was our only saint so that the rest of them could relax. Lois loved that story.

We were invited to a room with coffee and tea and we all walked down the hall. When we were in the room there was so much love for Lois. After a bit, we stood outside as the funeral home directors from Fergusons brought Lois's body from her room down the hall covered by the quilt she had made. The staff at the home formed an honour guard and the family walked behind Lois, with her friends, as they brought her to the door. Ian Ferguson and Myke Byers took Lois to the hearse as we all dispersed as Lois's daughters thanked the staff from the bottom of their hearts.

Lillian MacMellon drove me home and I thanked her for being so good in the moment. I told her to go do something nice for herself. I took my dog out for a walk and a neighbour came by to chat. There was a wall holding back my tears as we talked about his family history in Cape Breton as his grandfather was a ventriloquist who performed on the opening night of the Lyceum in Sydney.

I've never met anyone who looked death in the eye and said, "I'm not afraid." It reminds me of the song I learned in chapel services at L'Arche, "Be not afraid, I go before you always. Come, follow me, and I will give you rest." Lois Weatherby, you are a legend among us and your name will be honoured.

Ernest Hemingway wrote in the book, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* that, "Today is only one day in all the days that will ever be. But what will happen in all the other days that ever come can depend on what you do today." That's how Lois lived and I'll still take my cues from her.

Before I end this letter, I want you to know that I have permission from Lois's daughters Vicky and Kim to share this story with you, and from Lois herself. She was a big fan of these letters and I wanted this one to be about her because she loved all of us so much.

John Donne was a powerful writer and a deliverer of sermons. He wrote near the end of his life, "Never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

Bless you all.

The Rev. Aaron Billard
Minister



*The bulletin and pastoral letter are dedicated
in Loving Memory of
Lois Weatherby
by the Family*

*The Church extends its deepest sympathies and condolences to the family and friends of **Lois Weatherby** who died on January 4, 2024*

MEMORIAL

Donations have been made to St. John's United Church in memory of

Dr. Joan Donald
by Hugh Donald.

Lois Weatherby
(mother of Vicky Kay and Kim Weatherby)
by Pat & Denis Arsenault and Shirley & Walter Brown

NOTICES, UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

Check our website at www.stjohnsmoncton.ca for on-line Worship, calendar, and more.

Jan. 7	Sun.	11:00 a.m.	WORSHIP and Sunday School – in-person and online - Epiphany Sunday - Communion	
Jan. 9	Tues.	2:00 p.m.	Friendship Group – Join us for coffee and conversation. (monthly-Fellowship Room)	
Jan. 10	Wed.	7:00 p.m.	CD Committee (Owen Fraser Hall)	
Jan. 11	Thur.	7:00 p.m.	Choir (weekly-Choir Loft/Fellowship Room)	
Jan. 11	Thur.	7:00 p.m.	Pathfinders, Girl Guides of Canada (weekly-Social Hall)	
Jan. 12	Fri.	10:30 a.m. 11:15 a.m.	Worship with the Rev. Aaron Billard at: Royal Court Chapel , 6 th Floor, Coverdale Rd., Riverview Monarch Hall , Great Room, 1 st Floor, Coverdale Rd., Riverview If you are a resident there, we ask you to help us spread the word to members of the congregation who live there.	
Jan. 14	Sun.	11:00 a.m.	WORSHIP and Sunday School – in-person and online	
Jan. 14	Sun.	12:15 p.m.	Worship & Music Committee (Norman Sinclair Room)	
Feb. 12	Mon.		Deadline for submissions to the 2023 Annual Report	

Announcements from other United Churches, Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Region 14 and the community are shown on the TV in the Owen Fraser Hall and also located on the bulletin boards located at the Alma St. entrance and outside the Church Office.

SOBEYS & SUPERSTORE GIFT CARDS are sold each Sunday in the Sanctuary before and after Worship and at the Church Office M-F, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

We make 4% on every card sold. Your support is needed and appreciated.



COFFEE & CONVERSATION

Looking to get out of the house for an hour or so? To catch up with old friends? Interested in making new ones? Please join us on **Tuesday, Jan. 9 at 2:00 p.m.** for a cup of tea/coffee, a muffin and a bit of conversation. Why not bring along a friend! Everyone welcome. At that time of day, limited parking will be available in the church parking lot, as well as on the side of the church building. Street meters are also available. Hope to see you!



CHURCH DONATIONS

You may donate to the church in a variety of ways:

- PAR (pre-authorized remittance) – form available on our website – pamphlet located at church entrances and outside church office; PAR cards are available to put in the offering box on Sundays
- e-transfer (use sjuc@nb.aibn.com - no password needed)
- box offering envelopes – contact church office
- Canada Helps - online
- cash or cheque - identified with giver's name/address (for income tax purposes).

Blank offering envelopes are located at both church entrances for donation purposes. Write your name with middle initial/address to identify your donation in order for an official receipt to be prepared for income tax purposes. If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

UNUSED OFFERING ENVELOPES - If you have any unused offering envelopes, please feel free to return them to the church. We recycle them as general purpose envelopes.

SUNDAY SCHOOL ENVELOPES - Did you know that your child can use offering envelopes for their weekly Sunday School offering? It's very easy. Blank offering envelopes are located at our church entrances; record your family envelope number or name on the envelope and make note that the offering is for "Sunday School" in the "Other" section. Then, have your child give their offering in the usual manner during Sunday School.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Pastoral Care and Membership Committee needs two more volunteers to phone and/or visit our shut-ins. If this is something you would like to do - or to find out more - please contact Valerie Roy at 506-866-8102 or valerieroy1952@gmail.com

JOIN A COMMITTEE

You can support your church by becoming involved and bringing you skills and talents to one of our various committees. For more information and how you can make a difference, speak to Rev. Billard or email the church office.

KARING KITCHEN

A bit of time on your hands? Looking to give back to your community? The Karing Kitchen is looking for volunteers, Monday - Friday, 11am - 1pm, to assist in serving lunch to the less fortunate. Please give Bruce a call at 506 854-3837.



SCRIPTURE READERS NEEDED – We need a reader for Jan. 14 and onward. If you would like to read scripture on Sunday mornings, please contact Karen at the church office and add your name and date available to our scripture reader list. This will help us to plan Worship and to have more people participate. Thank you so much for helping with this ministry!



DEDICATE THE BULLETIN/PASTORAL LETTER in memory of a loved one(s). The cost is \$50.00. Upcoming date available: Feb. 4, 2024. If you dedicated last year, you will be contacted before your date to see if you want to dedicate again.

KEEP YOUR VALUABLES WITH YOU - If you don't keep your coat with you during Worship, please ensure you do not leave keys, phones, or any valuables in your pockets. Please keep all valuables with you. Do not leave any electronics unattended.

HEARING LOOP - The church offers a hearing loop system for anyone who would like to enhance their listening experience during the Sunday morning service. Please feel free to speak to one of the volunteers on the sound board on Sunday morning

ILLNESS SELF-ASSESSMENT

To ensure the continued safety of our families and communities, any person attending an in-person Church activity should complete an Illness Self-Assessment. This list has been aligned with current public health recommendations. People who feel unwell, or answer 'Yes' to any of the below symptoms, should stay home.

- Fever/Chills
- Cough (unrelated to seasonal allergies)
- Difficulty breathing/Shortness of breath
- Runny nose (unrelated to seasonal allergies)
- Loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat/Difficulty swallowing
- Not feeling well, headache, muscle aches, or unexplained rashes
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain
- Does your public health unit recommend that you self-isolate?

If you answered YES to any of the above symptoms:

Please self-isolate and **DO NOT** come to the Church until:

- 1) the symptoms are resolved, and
- 2) you are feeling well, and
- 3) you are not subject to any public health self-isolation requirements.



FRAGRANCE FREE AND TREE NUT/ PEANUT FREE ENVIRONMENT -St. John's United Church realizes an increasing number of people have developed sensitivities and allergies to certain chemicals and foods. It is our mission to limit the exposure of staff, volunteers and visitors to chemical substances and tree nut/peanut products. Our church supports the creation of a fragrance and tree nut/peanut free environment. We would ask that you please refrain from using, wearing, bringing scented products and tree nut/peanut products, into St. John's United Church. Only our 100% cooperation will give those with sensitivities and allergies a healthier place to work, volunteer and worship. Thank you.

HEALTH & SAFETY - We have a wheelchair here at St. John's and it is located on a permanent basis in the unused entrance way at the back of the Sanctuary (corner of Alma and Victoria Streets). We also have an AED - automated external defibrillator. It is wall mounted and located right outside the Church Office.

LIBRARY – Did you know that we have a library of books for you to enjoy? They are located in the hutch cabinet in the Fellowship Room. There is no sign-out for these; they are loaned to you on the honour system that you will return the books when you've finished reading them.

PARKING LOT REMINDER

As a reminder, the church rents out 12 parking spots in the parking lot, Monday-Friday, 7:00am-6:00pm. These spots are not available for church use during this period. Other spots are designated for staff as shown in the chart below. Should you need a parking spot while visiting the church, there are two spaces available - spaces 21 & 22, as per the chart below:

St. John's United Church
Parking Lot – Rentals

Space		Space	
24	Rental	12	Rental
23	Rental	11	Rental
22*		10	Rental
21*		9	Rental
20	KK – 8am - 1pm	8	Rental
19	KK – 8am - 1pm	7	Rental
18	KK – 8am - 1pm	6	Rental
17	KK – 8am - 1pm	5	Rental
16	KK – 8am - 1pm	4	Rental
15	KK – 8am - 1pm	3	Rental
14	Minister	2	Office Admin
13	Music Director	1	Custodian

Entrance to Lot
Alma Street

Rental Space Staff Parking

* During the winter these spots may be occupied by renters #12 & #24

BROADVIEW (formerly The Observer) MAGAZINE – A copy of the most recent issue can be found on a table in the Owen Fraser Hall. This is there for your enjoyment, but please don't remove it from the premises so that others can enjoy it as well.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES - The Pastoral Care & Membership Committee mandate is to send **birthday** greetings to all those within our congregation who are 85 and 90 years old, then annually. **Wedding anniversary** cards are sent out to those celebrating 50, 60, and every year thereafter. If you have not received a card, please advise the church office so we can update our records.

PASTORAL LETTER AND BULLETIN – Stay up-to-date on all the happenings at SJUC with Rev. Billard's weekly pastoral letter and online bulletin. They are posted on Facebook, the church website and emailed to those who have signed up to receive by email. If you wish to receive the pastoral letter and bulletin by email, contact the church office to be added to our email list. Printed copies of recent Worship bulletins and pastoral letters are located at our main entrances.

SERMON - Printed copies of Rev. Billard's recent sermons are located at our main entrances. Sermons are also emailed to those who have signed up to receive by email. If you wish to receive sermons by email, contact the church office to be added to the sermon email list.

ADVISE THE CHURCH OFFICE at sjuc@nb.aibn.com or 506-858-8289, if your email, mailing address, residence or telephone number changes. Also, advise of your birthday and anniversary dates.

CHURCH SNOW STORM POLICY – In the event of a snow storm on a Sunday morning, the decision to cancel will be made by **9 am** by the Minister, the Chair of Worship & Music, and the Council Chair. Check the following places to see if the church is closed:

1. Church office telephone – listen to the message
2. Church Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/16465565858>
3. Local radio stations
4. CBC storm centre at <http://www.cbc.ca/stormcentre/nb/cancellations-moncton.html> or search "Moncton Cancellations"



STEWARDSHIP SECOND – How can we be light in the world, shining in the shadows and offering our gifts to the world?

ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH CARES... To notify the Minister of personal concerns, anxieties, illnesses, hospitalizations or deaths, or to pass along a prayer request, contact Rev. Aaron Billard at 506-858-8289 or sjucrev@gmail.com

CHURCH MINISTRY PERSONNEL AND STAFF



Rev. Aaron Billard, *Minister*
sjucrev@gmail.com



Karen Geldart
Office Administrator
sjuc@nb.aibn.com



Rev. Dr. Douglas MacEachern
Minister Emeritus
douglasimaceachern@gmail.com



Rev. Melvin G. Fawcett
Music Director
melvinfawcett7@gmail.com



Pat Arsenault, *Custodian*

Church Council

Chair: Roland Gallant
Secretary: Karen Teed
Treasurer: Kimberley Buck de Jesus
Board of Trustees: Graham McCrea
Christian Development: Nancy Black; Sunday School: Sonja Webster
Finance & Property Management: Marlene Godfrey
Fundy-St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Region reps.: Rev. Aaron Billard,
Kimberley Buck de Jesus and Karen Teed
Ministry & Personnel: Kimberley Buck de Jesus
Nominating: Karen Teed
Outreach: Rev. Aaron Billard (acting Chair)
Pastoral Care & Membership: Valerie Roy
UCW: Brenda McFarlane
Worship & Music: Sheri Brooks