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Office Hours: M-F, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

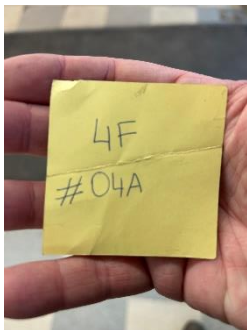
## PASTORAL LETTER

March 14, 2025

Last Sunday morning, Carolyn Beers picked me up to go to church since Lori-Ann had the car in Cape Breton for March Break. Carolyn and I always have nice talks and she lives close by and tells me never hesitate to call. It turns out that she drives Evelyn Pyke to church, too, so we stopped along the way to get her. Carolyn said, "I hope we're not going to be too late!" to which I replied, "It doesn't start without me!" When we arrived at Evelyn's, I helped her out the door and with a big smile she said she was so surprised to see me as she took my arm. As we drove away, I said to her, "Evelyn, tell Carolyn how many birds you used to have!" She laughed and said that at one time she and her husband had one hundred and twenty-five budgies! During the church service, the choir presented our musician Doris Sabeau with a bouquet of flowers as it was her last Sunday with us.

That night, I received a text from Dr. Michael MacQuarrie that his father, Bob, had been taken to hospital. He asked if I could go see him on Monday. My neighbour Joan MacLeod belongs to the United Church and when I've been stuck for a ride she has gracefully rescued me, as she did on Monday.

One of the things about walking down hospital corridors is the sense of déjà vu one gets. When I was at the Dumont on Monday, I remembered visiting church friends there over the years. I see them clearly in my mind. I remember them even if my heart hurts a bit. In fact, I hope that sting never goes away because it means they are still with me. A friend told me recently about going to a grief group where Rev. Doug MacEachern was quoted. Doug led these sessions for years and at the end he'd thank everyone for their tears because that meant they really loved. Powerful.



At the hospital, I asked at reception for the room number and the woman behind the glass told me to go a different way than I normally do, down a long hallway, turn right, turn left, left, right. I got lost. I asked another staff person how to get to the fourth floor and she said, "Follow me, Father!" (I was wearing a clerical collar) and she took me to the staff elevators. I thought, "Ah, this is what it's like to be a priest in a French Catholic hospital: they give you the short cuts!"

When I walked into Bob's room, he was sleeping, as he had been since they brought him in. The prognosis wasn't good. So I sat in the chair and watched him and his breathing. I noted the absence of any beeps and buzzers. I silently prayed for God's presence to be made known as I listened to the family in the next bed behind the curtain. I read a Psalm from my phone and texted Michael. I stood up and said, "We'll meet again, Bob." Before I left, I checked in with the family of the other patient and said a few words and left my card.



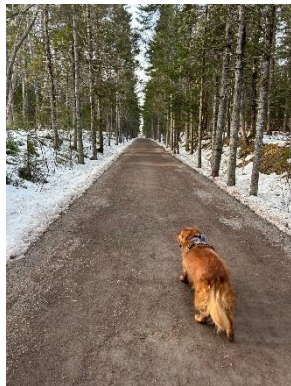
On my way home Michael texted me back to say thanks for visiting his father and by the time I got home I received another text that Bob had passed away. Michael wrote, "Just like mom did, he waited until you came and gave him permission and guidance, just before she let go too." I had forgotten that,

as she had passed away back in 2021. So I leaned against the kitchen counter and cried, but not just for Bob.



Before I had left to go to the Dumont a colleague had texted me to say that our Regional Minister, the Rev. Kendall Harrison (who has been on Conference and now Regional staff for over twenty years) had died suddenly that morning. I was shocked. To describe who he was for us, he was like a school vice principle. Kendall and I serve on a committee together. I've always observed that he was excellent at what he did even if many of us felt that he was overworked. If something happens to a minister or a church, Kendall was called in. He saw the church at its worst and yet he still hoped for the best. His Facebook profile says, "An optimist called to be with pessimists." Kendall was 61 years old. He loved craft beer and the United Church of Canada. He was a husband and father. I'm still in shock. He was one of our best.

You just never know what's going to take you, do you? I remembered the small service I had last week for a 52 year old man who had Cerebral Palsy and fell out of his wheel chair and died last Christmas Eve. He loved two things: Christmas and coleslaw. A few years ago, he and his mother moved from Riverview to British Columbia to be close to family but he wanted to move home because there were too many bears. "I feel like meals on wheels!" he told his aunt. I hadn't laughed that hard in a while. I always find that one of the ways to lift my spirits is to go visit people so I did that for the next few days.



When Lori-Ann arrived home from Cape Breton after a good dose of family, we took Halo for a big walk in Irishtown Park. A jogger went quickly by and patted a shocked Halo on the head. Lori-Ann left bird seed for the birds on the railings over bridges. We caught up on her visit to Cape Breton and I told her about my days. She'd stopped in to



Sackville to see our daughter Allie. It was Eli's birthday that day even though his party was the next weekend. We were amazed that our little guy turned 14.

A few months ago, I had scheduled a time to be with a family whose mother had died. She had been a cook for years at the Drew and so my United Church self was pleased to be there and I said so. Her daughter and family had flown in from Ontario. When I had spoken to the daughter previously I learned that her son, Matthew, had died suddenly a few months before on December 22nd while he was studying farming at university after cleaning a lab. She'd sent me a few of his videos because he was so passionate about farming and he had traveled to parts of the world to learn techniques. I have to say that as I watched the video I found it inspiring to see a group of young people traveling to Brazil to learn about farming and methods. In the video, they were all so passionate and found hope in how those in agriculture share knowledge. In Matthew's memory they sponsored a scholarship to send students across the world for agricultural studies.

At the gathering, I told the story I'd once heard of a Roman Catholic Sister named Dorothy Stang who worked with migrant farmers in the Amazon Basin. She'd helped them as they farmed land and she carried seeds in her pockets to give to people. To this day people have plants still growing from seeds she had given them. Because of the way government works, power brokers wanted the migrant farmers off of the land so that corporations could own more of it and





use it how they wished, not with the traditional knowledge that you leave the soil more fertile than the previous seasons. To intimidate the farmers, men were sent to kill Sister Dorothy Stang and when they approached she opened her Bible and began to read the Beatitudes as they shot and killed her. At her funeral, one of her Sisters said that Dorothy isn't buried: she's planted. Sister Dorothy has been called a martyr of the Amazon.

I had offered that story about death and life for the family's mother (the cook) and for their son (the farmer). Afterwards, I was talking to people when Matthew's father approached me and said, "You couldn't know this but we are philanthropists and one of the things we fund is a medical mission in the Amazon Basin. We helped fund a boat that brings medical supplies." I had no idea. I was shocked and he said, "Thank you, Aaron" as he shook my hand. Matthew and his grandmother were planted, too.



When I arrived back at the church I saw a man lying in front of the church office door though this time it wasn't because he was high; it was because he was putting on weather stripping. I told him how good the doors looked and how bright they were with the windows. I could tell he was really trying to get his work done so I didn't linger. He was working on the new back doors too.

There were

people at the church for the Friendship Group that afternoon and that evening the women's group, "Wings Revisited" were meeting. I love it when the church is buzzing with activity.



This afternoon I wrote a letter to a colleague and took it to the Post Office.

It was empty as I stood and looked at the coins and the special stamps. I find that kind of thing soothing. The staff were behind the counter and they were all talking. When I approached I said, "Ah, the Post Office! A sea of calm in a world of chaos!" The woman laughed. I said that I was trying to save Canada Post one letter at a time. Another staff person said, "You'd better start sending 80,000 letters a year then." I smiled and said that heroes don't always wear capes. I bought some stamps and made my way.



When I went back to the church, I stopped in to talk with Shelley Arsenault, our new organist. She's a lovely person and extremely talented. I told her that I hoped she would be able to enjoy the position because we really just wanted to hear the organ and let the choir sing. She was excited and looking forward to Sunday.

Earlier in the day, representatives from nearly fifteen churches from our area gathered at St. John's to plan the 100th anniversary service of the United Church of Canada this June. St. John's will host the morning service which will feature a variety of speakers and special music as we celebrate the church. It's a great group of people and everyone is so enthusiastic! Advertising, busses, honoured guests, a reception, and many, many other details are being discussed as we put in motion this great event. I had pointed out to everyone that the window in front of us was from the former Lakeburn United Church and everyone was so happy to see it. There was a spirit of cooperation around that table that I haven't felt in years. I couldn't help but thinking that Kendall Harrison would be pleased to see us all at the same table knowing that there's hope for us all yet.

Thank you for joining me on this little journey of my days. Ministry is a challenging call and we each have our own ministry to live out as well as the one collectively called the church. I thank God for you all. On Friday morning, we will celebrate the life of Bob MacQuarrie, one more member of the St. John's choir now in heaven. I know he was welcomed home with song, into the sweet embrace of his beloved wife Edie. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

*The Rev. Aaron Billard, Minister*



The bulletin and pastoral letter are dedicated  
 in Loving Memory of  
**Manning Jay who passed away on March 24, 2016**  
 by Kathryn and Family

**MEMORIAL**

A donation has been made to St. John's United Church in loving memory of  
**husband, Donald MacFarlane**  
 by Elizabeth

A donation has been made to St. John's Organ Repair Fund in memory of  
**Robert "Bob" MacQuarrie**  
 (father of Les, Dr. Michael, Brent and Donald MacQuarrie)  
 by St. John's Choir

The Church extends its deepest sympathies and condolences to the  
 family and friends of **Robert "Bob" MacQuarrie**  
 who died on March 10, 2025







The Church also extends its deepest sympathies and condolences to the  
 family and friends of **the Rev. Kendall Harrison**  
 who died on March 10, 2025.

Kendall was the Regional Minister of Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Regional Council and  
 the Conference Personnel Minister of the former Maritime Conference. Many of you will have  
 special memories of your relationship with Kendall and he will be missed by so many.

**NOTICES, UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS**

Check our website at [www.stjohnsmoncton.ca](http://www.stjohnsmoncton.ca)  
 for Sunday online Worship links, calendar, and more.

Mar. 16	Sun.	11:00 a.m.	<b>WORSHIP</b> and <b>Sunday School</b> - 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent	LEN 
Mar. 16	Sun.	12:30 p.m.	<b>Worship &amp; Music Committee</b> (Norman Sinclair Room)	
Mar. 17	Mon.			
Mar. 17	Mon.	4:00 p.m.	The <b>Senior Centre 1010</b> will be discussed at the upcoming Moncton City Council meeting. <i>Rev. Aaron Billard will be speaking on this initiative.</i>	
Mar. 18	Tues.	2:00 p.m.	<b>Pastoral Care Committee</b> (Owen Fraser Hall)	
Mar. 18	Tues.	7:00 p.m.	<b>Finance &amp; Property Management Committee</b> (monthly-Owen Fraser Hall)	
Mar. 19	Wed.	6:15 p.m.	Sparks, Girl Guides of Canada (weekly-Owen Fraser Hall)	
Mar. 19	Wed.	7:00 p.m.	<b>Choir</b> – day change (weekly-Choir Loft/Fellowship Room)	
Mar. 20	Thur.	5:30 p.m.	Choeur Louisbourg - Rehearsal	
Mar. 20	Thur.	7:15 p.m.	Pathfinders, Girl Guides of Canada (weekly-Social Hall)	

Mar. 22	Sat.	8:30-9:30 pm.	
Mar. 23	Sun.	11:00 a.m.	<b>WORSHIP and Sunday School</b> - 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent 
Mar. 24	Mon.	5:30 p.m.	7pm - Choeur Louisbourg - Concert
Mar. 25	Tues.	7:00 p.m.	<b>Council</b> (monthly-Owen Fraser Hall)
Mar. 30	Sun.	11:00 a.m.	<b>WORSHIP and Sunday School</b> - 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent - Grocery Sunday (see note) 
Mar. 30	Sun.		<b>Deadline for Broadview subscriptions and renewals.</b> (see note) 
Mar. 31	Mon.	2:00 p.m.	<b>UCW</b> (monthly-Fellowship Room)
Apr. 1	Tues.		<b>Deadline for Broadview special 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary issue.</b> (see note)
Apr. 3 & 4	Thurs. & Fri.		<b>Silent Auction &amp; Dessert Extravaganza</b> (see note) (Owen Fraser Hall & Fellowship Room)  

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.*



**EASTER OFFERING ENVELOPES** are located at each of the church entrances. If you use SJUC box offering envelopes, an Easter envelope is in your box. If you use PAR, an Easter envelope is in your PAR envelope packet.

**GROCERY SUNDAY FOR KARING KITCHEN**  
(Mar. 30 – last Sunday of the month)

The Outreach Committee would like to bring your attention to the Karing Kitchen’s need for these groceries: cream of chicken soup, cream of celery soup, sugar, cornstarch and evaporated milk.



The Karing Kitchen has a continual need for plastic shopping & grocery bags and appreciates any extras that you bring to them. You may drop them off at the Karing Kitchen or at the Church Office. *White baskets will be at the main entrance for your donations.* Thank you.



**BROADVIEW MAGAZINE** - Now is the time to **ORDER OR RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION.** *Broadview* is an independent Canadian magazine featuring award-winning coverage of spirituality, justice and ethical living. Through compelling stories and engaging images, *Broadview* challenges and inspires readers seeking to live a purpose-filled life.

To order or renew your subscription, place **\$30.00** payment in an envelope with your name and address in the church offering box, church mail slot, send an e-transfer, send by postal mail or contact the Church Office. **Deadline is March 30, 2025.**

**BROADVIEW helps people.** It connects them to the larger church community. It helps people understand their faith, their lives and their world.

**100<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY BROADVIEW KEEPSAKE ISSUE**





The June issue of *Broadview* will be a historic keepsake edition celebrating the United Church’s 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary — a once-in-a-lifetime issue filled with powerful stories, pivotal moments and reflections on the past, present and future of the church.

All current *Broadview* subscribers will receive this issue.

If you are NOT a subscriber and would like to purchase a copy of this keepsake edition for \$7:00, contact the church office. Deadline to order is April 1, 2025.

**SILENT AUCTION & DESSERT EXTRAVAGANZA**

<b><i>Come, and bring a friend!</i></b>		<b><u>Silent Auction</u></b>	<b><u>Dessert Extravaganza</u></b>
		Choose from hundreds of items to bid on. Bids opened Friday evening and winners notified.	Eat-in or Take-Out \$7.50/serving (Includes tea/coffee.) 
	Thur., <b>April 3</b>	10:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.	2:00 - 4:00 & 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Fri., <b>April 4</b>	10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	2:00 - 4:00 p.m.	



We appreciate your donation of any items - in good/working condition - that will attract bidders - i.e. hand-crafted items, needlework, paintings, china, furniture, lamps, household items, dishes, antiques, silver, brass, copper, paintings, pictures, puzzles, collectibles, etc.

UCW ladies will be looking for **help on Monday, Mar. 31**, to bring the boxes upstairs for the Silent Auction. Please let Brenda McFarlane (506-852-3550) know if you are able to assist.

**Articles may be dropped off at the Church until April 2 on weekdays, 9am-1pm and on Sunday when you come to Worship.**



**EASTER PLANTS** – Again this Easter, plants will be placed in the Sanctuary on Easter Sunday. If you wish to help us with our plant order, you may make a memorial in memory of a loved one. All memorials will be listed in the bulletin on April 20.

Cost is \$15.00 each. The deadline to have your memorial form/payment to the Church Office is Sunday, April 13. Order forms are located at the Church main entrances.

**BAPTISM, CONFIRMATION & TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP**

The Pastoral Care & Membership Committee, as part of its mandate, is to seek those congregants who wish baptism, to be confirmed or transfer their church membership to St. John’s. If you are interested, phone or email Rev. Billard or Karen at the Church Office (506-858-8289 or [sjuc@nb.aibn.com](mailto:sjuc@nb.aibn.com)). We will be receiving new members on **Easter Sunday, April 20.**

**THE "BAKELESS BAKE SALE"** has become an annual event of the St. John’s UCW. This is a very popular and highly successful project. Our little rhyme explains how it works, and we hope you will give it your support.

We appreciate any amount you may wish to donate. Please have all donations in by the end of June. Envelopes are located at the church entrance. If you use SJUC box offering envelopes, an envelope is in your box. If you use PAR, an envelope is in your PAR envelope packet. Place your donation in the offering box on a Sunday morning, mail, drop off in the mail slot or use e-transfer.

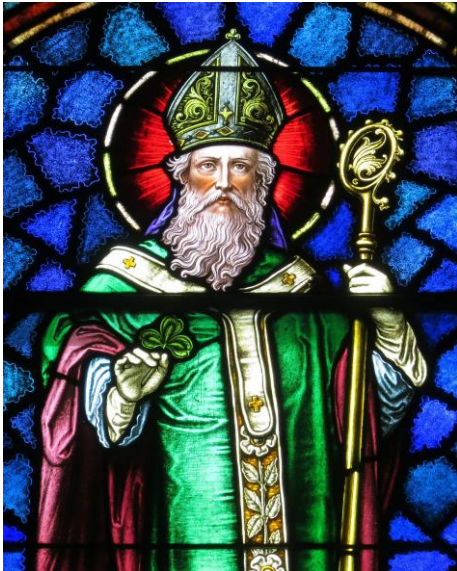


*A lot of news we have to-day  
 A Bakeless Bake Sale is on the way.  
 In these busy days, who wants to bake  
 Pies and cookies - or even a cake?  
 You'd be surprised if you counted the cost  
 Of materials, heat and time you have lost.  
 Cooking for a sale is extra work  
 Yet nobody really wishes to shirk.  
 So we've thought of a plan that's really grand  
 And feel quite sure you will understand.  
 In this little envelope - just for our sake -  
 Please place the donation that you wish to make  
 Without fuss or bother, you've done your part  
 We're sure you'll give with a willing heart.  
 This is the end of our little tale -  
 Please wish us success with our Bakeless Bake Sale.*



**STEWARDSHIP SECOND** – It is not easy to be generous, to care for creation, and to love your neighbour when everything around you teaches greed and individualism, but stand firm.

**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](mailto:sjucrev@gmail.com)



Happy St. Patrick's Day,  
 March 17, 2025





*Easter Memorial  
Flowers*

## MEMORIAL DEDICATION FORM

Easter plants will be placed in the Sanctuary on Easter Sunday. If you wish to help us with our plant order, you may make a memorial in memory of a loved one; below are ways to reach us:

- complete this form with payment and place in the offering box
- complete this form with payment and drop off in the mail slot on the Victoria St. church entrance
- complete this form with payment and mail to the church at 75 Alma St., Moncton, NB E1C 4Y3
- complete this form or provide the same details in an email to the office at [sjuc@nb.aibn.com](mailto:sjuc@nb.aibn.com) and pay by either an e-transfer, mail a cheque or drop off a cheque/cash in the church mail slot on the Victoria St. door

The cost is \$15.00 each (tax receiptable). The deadline to have your form/payment to the Church Office is Sunday, **April 13, 2025**. All memorials will be listed in the bulletin on April 20.

The Easter plants will decorate the Sanctuary on Easter Sunday and will then be delivered to our shut-ins (those on our church pastoral care shut-in list) after the service.

(Any extra proceeds go to the Chancel Fund to help cover costs associated with the Sanctuary.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Dedicated by: \_\_\_\_\_

(use back of form for additional dedications)