

▶ **Spring 2011**

Brookfield Pastoral Charge

Knox United Church—Middle Stewiacke United Church

Message from the Minister

The newsletter has a lot of information about what is going on in our two churches in this Pastoral Charge. Some of the information is about exciting and new things happening. Some of the information is about normal activity in our church. All of these things together spell ministry for us. The events themselves, the changes themselves, the services themselves are not that significant. It is how the Holy Spirit touches these things that make them stand out as being special. It is certainly my prayer that whatever we do will come about by the good spirit in us that comes from God's world.

We are into the season of Lent and Easter. It is a special time and I hope the services on a Sunday morning and during Holy Week reflect the special nature of this time. Lent is a time for self reflection to look at where we are and where we want to go. Holy Week is about viewing what was done for us from God's point of view. It is God giving us opportunities to grow because we do not need to carry burdens with us as we live our lives. Easter is about the new life that this relationship with God and God's spirit has put in place for us. It is Jesus' rising to new life which means we can as well.

I invite all of you to be a part of this special time. This is the foundation upon which we build our lives.

Yours in Christ,

Larry

Holy Week Services

Maundy Thursday, April 21, 7:00 p.m. - Knox United Church

Good Friday, April 22, 11:00 a.m. - Middle Stewiacke United Church

EASTER SERVICES, SUNDAY, APRIL 24

Early Morning Service at Brown's Hill, Middle Stewiacke - 8:00 a.m.

Worship Service at Knox United Church - 9:45 a.m.

Worship Service at Middle Stewiacke United Church - 11:15 a.m.



Knox Council

In February 2011, Knox United restructured their Council to be more effective for our church. Our Council's structure includes table officers, seven Committee Coordinators and Chair of the Trustees. Each Committee consists of a number of teams which are encouraged to creatively contribute to the life of Knox United, without the individuals having to be a formal member of a permanent committee.

We are encouraging anyone who wishes to run an activity or event, or contribute to any part of our ministry is encouraged to do so. The role of the Coordinator is to be the support to their teams and to liaise with the Church Council. If anyone in the congregation has a new idea, we encourage them to talk to any member of Council. We are hoping this new structure will encourage new and innovative activities, as well as long-established traditions to occur.

At least twice a year in the spring and fall, we will have congregational meetings; all members of the congregation will be invited to attend. The purpose of these meetings will be two-fold: a) for the larger decisions that have to be made, and; b) to keep the congregation better informed.

Below is a short description of each committee:

Worship Committee – Coordinator: Lori Nielsen (673-2281) loritish@hotmail.com

The main purpose of the worship committee is to look after all matters that pertain to regular Sunday worship, Sunday School as well as any special services. Currently, we offer traditional and contemporary style of worship services. There are five teams in this Committee – Technical, Service, Liturgical Arts, Music, and Sunday School.

Finance Committee – Coordinator: Rod Nielsen (673-2881) responder.rod@gmail.com

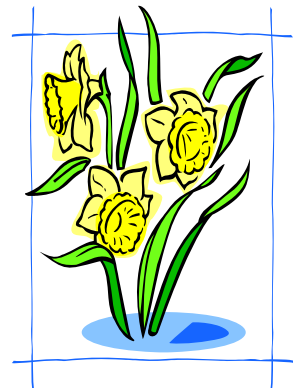
This committee will ensure good recording and reporting of all our finances. Promotion of the Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR) program will be enhanced. There are two teams in this Committee – Finance and Fund-raising.

Continuing Education Committee – Coordinator: Bev Hiltz (673-2981) minihaha51@hotmail.com

The role of this committee is to enhance both our youth and adults Christian learning. Many new and innovative ideas have been brought forward for this committee to consider. This committee has two teams – Youth Education and Adult Education.

Pastoral Care Committee – Coordinator: Jan Peck (673-2561) janispeck@bellaliant.net

The Pastoral Care Committee focuses on looking after our church family, from birth to death. Welcome packages are being developed for new families. Accurate records of membership status and contact information will be maintained. After-church fellowships are still very important to us therefore are part of the role of this committee of one team - Membership and Pastoral Care.



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Knox has a new website – check us out at knoxunitedbrookfield.ca

Knox Council . . . Cont.

Mission Committee – Coordinator: Anitra Whidden (673-2458) anitrawhidden@gmail.com

Unfortunately, we hear more and more about natural and manmade disasters around the world today and we have an improved awareness of global needs. At the same time, efforts will be made to creatively address more local needs. There are two teams under the Mission Committee – Mission and Local Community Outreach.

Property Committee – Coordinator: Russell Bradley (673-3448) pier209@nncweb.ca

The Property Committee looks after our physical plant including the grounds, and works closely with our Trustees. We have become more aware of our environment and have created a 'Green' Team, we have a Garden Team and a Property Team that fall under the umbrella of the Property Committee.

Communication Committee – Coordinator: Vacant

Communication is very important to Knox so we have established this committee to make sure that we communicate important information as effectively as possible. Under this committee we have two teams – Communication and Newsletter.

With any governance change, it does take time for everyone to adjust, so some questions may occur. If anyone has any questions, please contact Krista McMullin (673-2285) krista.mcmullin@hotmail.com

Mark your Calendars!

Knox's Meet and Greet - April 10 after church
An opportunity for our new families to meet our 'seasoned' families.
Come and enjoy the fellowship.



Roast Beef Dinner—Knox United Church, May 14, 2011

'Wanted: Young Voices'



Cherub Choir

When: Every Sunday

Time: 10:45 to 11:15

Ages: ages 3 to Grade 3

Contact for more information: Joanne Hatfield - 673-2227



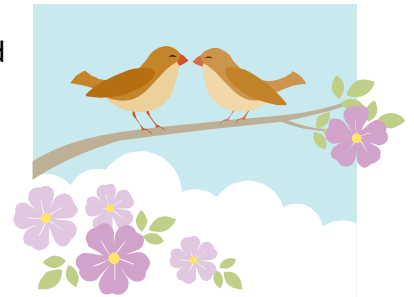
Easter 2011

There is a legend that says that the early church adopted the festival of a goddess of spring called Eostre, and it became the Christian festival of Easter. This legend says that the goddess was associated with the hare (or rabbit), and that was the start of the Easter bunny. Whether any of this is true, all religions celebrate the return of spring, and many of our symbols...flowers, eggs, and new clothes... are associated with new life, and of course, with the resurrection.

During Lent, the six weeks leading up to Easter Sunday, we take time to reflect on our lives and the mission of the church. The theme of our reflections this year is "Vision," our vision for ourselves, for others, the world, the church, and God and God's will. The candle lighters are going on a "vision quest," a First Nations custom. When native young people reach puberty, they are sent on a vision quest to look for guidance on what their lives are to be, and when Jesus was about to start his ministry, he withdrew into the wilderness to seek God's will for his life.

All of this leads to the dramatic events of Holy Week, and then the great celebration of Easter Sunday, when we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord, and sing the great hymns that proclaim Jesus risen, "hallelujah!" (Custom says that we do not sing hallelujah during Lent.) We take down the purple hangings of Lent which symbolize reflection and repentance, and dress the church in the white and gold of celebration.

Spring is really here after the long winter. "The winter is over, the rains are past and gone, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land." Christ is risen! Hallelujah!



Insert from the United Church of Canada Wondercafe.ca . . .

Reflection:

Rising with the Morning Star invites us to move out of the depths of ashes to the heights of Easter, where we can experience the heart and wholeness of all. In this journey, we travel with and toward Christ, the Morning Star, and so participate in God's abundant healing of soul, community, and creation."

"Let me take it upon myself to speak to God, I who am but dust and ashes." Genesis 18:27

This opening reflection from Rising with the Morning Star reminds us that the ashes of Ash Wednesday are symbolic of "our body's material connection with the earth, that we are both body and spirit." Both are required for our health. Traditionally Lent represents this wholeness by being both a time to give up a sensual pleasure (body), as well as a season to create space for prayer, study, and reflection (spirit).

Reflection Question: What is the most urgent need for healing within yourself (or your community of faith) this Lent?

From Middle Stewiacke . . .

Report from the Elevator Feasibility Committee

The folks in Middle Stewiacke are busy these days, preparing for the elevator installation project beginning in the early summer. Fund raiser luncheons are underway, sponsored by the UCW, and committee members find themselves meeting every few days to discuss items that need attention.

At the AGM, some items were brought forward and an aura of optimism was apparent. Three more people volunteered to expand the committee membership and help out with hands-on work throughout the active stage of the renovations. Grant applications have been submitted, and membership of the congregation is being notified that we are accepting their varied contributions.

Looks like all is in place for fulfillment of this dream that everyone should be able to take part in the worship and fellowship of our church.

Stay tuned for the Fall Newsletter where, hopefully, we can report that it has been a completed project.

Lyda Fisher

Lyda was born August 7, 1919, at Lower Debert, daughter of Gordon and Elizabeth Wyllie. Lyda went to a one-room school in Lower Debert, attended Colchester Academy for Grade 12 and received her Teacher's License at the Normal College, Truro. She taught at the Otter Brook School for two years, 1938-40. It was during that time she met and in 1940, married John Fisher, moved to Halfway Brook where she lived for 65 years.



Two sons, Ray and Maxwell were born before John went overseas during the Second World War. Two daughters, Kaye and Brenda joined the family after his return. Lyda did some substitute teaching and also worked with John at the Upper Stewiacke Post Office for over 20 years.

Lyda joined the Order of Eastern Star, Elm Chapter #48, Upper Stewiacke in 1953 and is the only Charter Member living. She is a Past Matron and was made a Life Member after 45 years as secretary.

Lyda was a member of the Halfway Brook Ladies Aid until the UCW was formed in 1962. She is a Charter Member and Life Member of the UCW. A member of the former Otter Brook Women's Institute and the Stewiacke Valley Historical Society. She is always interested in activities in the community; she enjoyed quilting, crafts, and exercise class.

Lyda liked to travel, traveling with the John Fisher Choir to many churches in the Maritimes. She has made several trips to New Zealand, one time staying for three months.

Lyda was elected an Elder of the Middle Stewiacke United Church in 1986 and was made an Honorary Elder on June 19, 2005.

Lyda now lives at Elk Court, Brookfield, where she takes part in all the activities.

A Tribute . . . Garth Densmore (July 7, 1938—March 19, 2011)



Where does one begin when you talk about Garth Densmore and Knox United together. Music was a very important part of Garth's life and he sang in our church choir for 56 years. Garth was an accomplished bass singer and his repertoire included many solos, duets, and quartets. Garth was a member of Knox Council since its inception in the 1980's and before that he was a member of the Boards of Stewards, Session, and Trustees for many years. Knox Church was very important in Garth's life and he could be seen always helping with no expectations – he worked at the suppers, took part in auctions, attending meetings, grading the driveway, flipping pancakes, acting in plays, competing for Brookfield Idol, counting the collection every Sunday and the list goes on. No matter what the task, Garth gave it his all and wasn't afraid to try anything.

We will miss Garth's laughter, his singing, his helping and even his jokes but we will carry his memory in our hearts, remembering a man who has made our work a little bit easier by being a true disciple.

Well done, good and faithful servant. Matthew 25:21

Sometimes we wonder, "What did I do to deserve this?" or "Why did God have to do this to me?" Here is a wonderful explanation! A daughter is telling her Mother how everything is going wrong, she's failing algebra, her boyfriend broke up with her and her best friend is moving away.

Meanwhile, her Mother is baking a cake and asks her daughter if she would like a snack, and the daughter says, "Absolutely Mom, I love your cake"

"Here, have some cooking oil," her Mother offers. "Yuck" says her daughter. "How about a couple raw eggs?" "Gross, Mom!" "Would you like some flour then? Or maybe baking soda?" "Mom, those are all yucky!"

To which the mother replies: "Yes, all those things seem bad all by themselves. But when they are put together in the right way, they make a wonderfully delicious cake!

God works the same way. Many times we wonder why He would let us go through such bad and difficult times. But God knows that when He puts these things all in His order, they always work for good! We just have to trust Him and, eventually, they will all make something wonderful!

God is crazy about you. He sends you flowers every spring and a sunrise every morning.

Whenever you want to talk, He'll listen. He can live anywhere in the universe, and He chose your heart..



Earth Day . . . Friday, April 22, 2011



It's called Earth Day, but perhaps Life Day might be a better name.

One reason the planet is in such peril and humanity with it lies in our tendency to separate ourselves from the earth. It is as if the two are different things it and us.

Nothing could be further from truth, of course; we are the earth just as it is us. The most we can hope for may be that Earth Day serves to remind us of that connection, a connection essential not simply to our well-being, but to our very existence.

Not that there's anything wrong with planting trees and the like; indeed, few activities have more positive effects than tree-planting. And few activities are better at promoting the sort of long-term thinking that's in drastically short supply.

Government and business have come to be dominated by the short-term, quarterly approach to decision-making that fails to take the future into account. Unfortunately, the idea that nothing matters beyond the next few months has had disastrous consequences.

Like it or not, we're here for the long haul, forever in fact; there are no alternatives. There's nowhere to run, nowhere to hide. Our bed has been made, and now we must learn to lie in it.

From the point of view of the individual, this can be understandably hard to grasp. After all, what difference can the actions of a single person make? And yet, the fact is that every act by every one of us is crucial. In their totality, those acts add up to a critical mass of behaviour that is destroying the planet.

So where does change begin if not with the individual?

The decision to toss an empty plastic water bottle onto the sidewalk will not by itself ruin the environment, but one discarded bottle leads to another and another and another. The phenomenon has long been recognized; some cities require building owners to fix broken windows and remove graffiti from their walls immediately for precisely this reason. One act of vandalism leads to another.

The argument that individuals and societies can't change also turns out to be false. Consider how attitudes to smoking and drinking and driving have been so profoundly altered in recent years. There was a time when people smoked literally everywhere at work, home, the movies, even on airplanes. Today that would be unthinkable. The change wasn't accomplished without much shouting and screaming, but who's complaining now?

Those same plastic water bottles that are found in even the most far-flung parts of the planet the desert, the Arctic, the middle of the Pacific Ocean barely existed just a couple of decades ago. Indeed, the very idea of spending money on water would have seemed laughable, especially here in Canada, a country blessed with vast quantities of fresh H₂O.

Yet now we find ourselves buying, consuming and discarding hundreds of millions of water bottles annually. The industry would tell you the choice isn't theirs to make, that they are simply giving the market what it wants. And that isn't water; it's convenience.

Sad to say, but the message of the 21st century can only be that there's nothing less convenient than convenience. It is an illusion, and like so many others will be rejected in time.

What's the point of planting trees when we show up in an SUV with paper coffee cup and plastic-wrapped sandwich in hand?

We can no longer afford that sort of disconnect. Undoing this behaviour won't be easy when leaders don't lead, business doesn't look beyond the end of next week and advertisers endlessly tell us consumerist excess is perfectly okay.

That's why the meaning of Earth Day must be to remind us that the moment has come. The time is now. Regardless of what we call it, every day is Earth Day.

Earth Day Canada strives to make every day Earth Day!

We need your help to make a difference!

Check out www.earthday.ca

Spring is Coming, Let's all Bike!

Bicycles are as good for the air we breathe as they are for our bodies; and have other environmental benefits too!

The bicycle is one of the greatest environmental discoveries ever invented. In the early days, bicycles actually helped ease a pollution problem that most of us have forgotten about: city streets clogged with horse droppings. Today, they improve the environment in numerous ways. Riding a bicycle does more than clear the air.. For instance:

1. On a bicycle you take up little space, burn no gasoline and produce no waste.
2. Between 70 and 100 bicycles can be built with the resources required to build one car.
3. In a Canadian urban environment, people living up to 12 kilometres from their workplace can commute by bike in less than one hour (some, a lot less!)

A roadway can carry about three times as many cyclists as people in cars.

Bicycling can make a measurable, tangible difference to our community, our environment and our personal health. Here are some facts about bicycling:

1. The average person loses 13 pounds their first year of commuting by bicycle.
2. 3 hours of cycling per week can reduce your risk of heart attack or stroke by 50%.

In 1964, 50% of kids rode to school and the obesity rate was 12%. In 2004, 3% rode to school and the obesity rate was 45%.

Wouldn't be great if Knox United could install a bike rack in front of our Church to encourage the people in Brookfield to bike more for their health. and for the health of our Earth.



Clear Plastic Garbage Bags

Colchester County Council is considering switching to clear bags for garbage collection in an effort to promote better sorting procedures.

Knox United has been working hard to encourage recycling and composting. Everyone has been helping to make our Church a leader in Waste Management. With the help of Johnny Matheson fixing up our odd mistakes, we are doing a great job! Now it is time to take another step forward.

Waste Reduction Manager, Darlene Proctor, told County Council that Colchester County has the third highest garbage disposal rate in Nova Scotia!

Clear Bag Program Benefits:

- Decrease in residential garbage with documented results as high as a 41%.
- People become more aware of the items they are placing in their garbage.

I believe using clear garbage bags is a great idea. We have been using clear garbage bags during our summer stay in Cumberland County for many, many years. It really does encourage good composting and recycling. You can still put your small white kitchen catcher garbage bags in the clear bags so it is not that difficult to make it work.

If you would like to encourage better recycling and composting practices in Colchester County contact Gerry Buott and let him know.

Gerry Buott

673-2773

Email: councillordistrict3@colchester.ca

