



Minister's Message

"Truly this man was the son of God!" (Matthew 27:54)

Here we find ourselves in March, with Spring around the corner and Easter around the bend. Easter is a key celebration in our walk as Christians. And, yet, before we get to this big day and happy season, we will be invited to travel with Jesus through the events of Holy Week and even to the foot of the cross. In the gospel of Matthew, all of these events culminate in a Roman soldier who, witnessing the crucifixion and death of Jesus, pronounces, "Truly this man was the son of God!" (Matthew 27:54). In fear and terror, he proclaimed Jesus as God's Son.

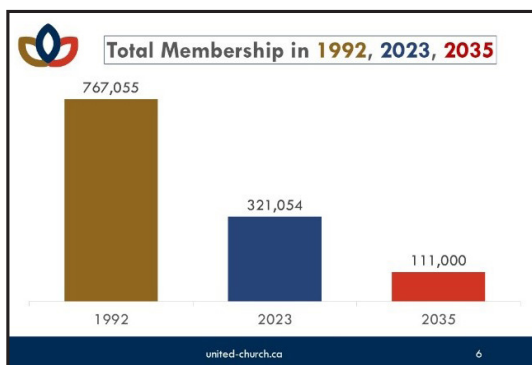
I wonder what would it take for us and our generation to be so convinced that Jesus was utterly and completely of God, that we couldn't help but listen to him and follow his way? Would it take fear and terror? Or are there softer, gentler ways to convince us? In many ways that convincing is the work of the Church—that's you and me! Our work is to point to Christ alive in the world and to support and encourage that presence.

Where is Christ present in today's world? Is he present in the handshake that you give and receive as you come into
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Lunch and Learn: Toward 2035

Please plan to stay after church on Sunday, March 22nd. Our national church has asked us to consider some predicted data for the United Church of Canada. Our Congregational Life Team will provide a yummy lunch and then we will meet for about an

hour to explore the data and discuss future plans for church development as the United Church of Canada. Don't worry, it is not all numbers and it is not all doom and gloom! Come to be challenged and inspired.



What's Going On...

MARCH

Monday, March 16th
4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Chili Cook-Off

Friday, March 20th
10:00 a.m.

Crafters meeting

Sunday, March 22nd
after worship

Lunch and Learn:
Toward 2035

APRIL

Sunday, April 19th
7:00 p.m.

Acoustic Blvd Concert

Saturday, April 25th
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Kids' Clothing Swap

MAY

Sunday, May 10th

Infant Baptism

JUNE

Saturday, June 6th

Yard, Plant and Bake Sale

Thursday, June 18th

Salad Supper (watch for details!)

Lent... a time to reflect and pray

Throughout the season of Lent, the sanctuary has been open each Wednesday for silent reflection. During the same time, a prayer labyrinth has been laid out in the hall.

A labyrinth is a sacred pattern that is used as a walking meditation. Unlike a maze, the labyrinth has only one path. There are no tricks to it and no dead ends. The labyrinth is designed to be a safe place that takes you along a single path to the centre of the design. The journey of the labyrinth can mean many things. Some understand the walking meditation as a journey into their deepest selves. Others understand it as a journey into the very heart of God or into the presence of Jesus Christ. Labyrinths are very ancient and can be found in the floors of older Christian



cathedrals such as Chartres Cathedral in France.

It is not too late to take in this experience! Sanctuary reflection and the labyrinth will be available Wednesday, March 18th and 25th and April 1st, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Holy Week Worship and Reflection

**Sunday, March 29th,
10:30 a.m.**

Palm Sunday, communion

**Wednesday, April 1st,
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.,**
*Sanctuary open for silent
reflection with prayer
labyrinth in church hall*

**Friday, April 3rd,
10:30 a.m.**

Good Friday Service

**Sunday, April 5th,
7:00 a.m.**

*Easter Sunrise Service,
Bond Head Beach*

10:30 a.m.

Easter Sunday Service

Getting to know our women's ministry: the UCW

UCW stands for United Church Women and our mission is to love God; foster Christian commitment, faithfulness, and spirituality; and promote respect and love for all God's creation. Any woman "willing to contribute her prayers, gifts, and services for the work of the Church" is very welcome to join the UCW.

Newcastle UCW meets the second Monday of each month at 1:30 p.m. Responsibilities for leadership of the meetings and tea time are shared amongst the members, with a team of 2 signing up for each meeting. Each meeting includes a devotion and a time to connect as friends.

Did you know that your UCW collects all kinds of items to send back out to the world as

something new and useful again? We collect:

- Outer Milk bags (clean and folded flat)
- Eyeglasses (no cases please)
- Stamps (trimmed)
- Pop Tabs
- Hearing Aids
- Jack Frost items (socks, mitts, hats, and lap blankets, collected in the fall and donated to women's and men's shelters and nursing homes)

Collection boxes for these items are located at the back of the church in the narthex.

Also: we love to support our church! Please save the date of Thursday, June 18th, when we will be hosting a delicious Salad Supper. Watch for details in the church bulletin and website.

Acoustic Blvd is ready to rock our spring concert!

Sunday, April 19th at 7:00 p.m.

Tickets: \$20

The Stewards invite you and all your friends to a fun evening of excellent music, refreshments and even a silent auction for pie!

The band Acoustic Blvd performs classic acoustic rock songs from the 60's and 70's to present day. Musicians Terry Crawford, Rick Johnson and Roger Watson conjure up the spirits of artists like Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, Gordon Lightfoot, The Band, Bruce Springsteen, and The Eagles. Terry Crawford is even a two-time JUNO nominee!



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Come enjoy their magical vocal blend and join them as they travel down the Acoustic Blvd. Tickets can be purchased in advance from a Steward, the church office or at the door.

Calling all chili enthusiasts!

The Stewards are sponsoring a delicious chili supper on Monday, March 16th, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. To add to the fun, you will be invited to vote for your favourite chili! \$10 a bowl or 3 tasters for \$10. \$5 for kids 5-12. Kids 4 and under eat free. Garlic bread and a sundae for dessert are also included. Cash at the door. The winner will be announced at 6:30 p.m.!



Caring for your Spirit, Deepening your Faith

During the season of Lent, we are encouraged to explore our walk of faith a little more deeply. Of course, we are called to this exploration all year round! With this in mind, a weekly Bible Study has been meeting for many years in our congregation. Every Wednesday morning, from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m., we gather at the church to discuss the scriptures for the coming Sunday worship service. Spirited discussion and new insights are often shared around the table. All are welcome!

This year we have also piloted a couple of new approaches that we plan to launch in a more formal way this fall. The first program is looking at acknowledging and celebrating the gifts

that getting older brings. The challenges of ageing cannot be ignored, but being called to be elders in our community, mentoring younger generations, and caring for all of creation is a wonderful responsibility.

The second program, which is happening on Thursday evenings during Lent, is a series called "Being With". This is a program that explores the basics of Christianity in an open and relational way. The plan is to offer this series online in the fall.



Kids' Clothing Swap - Saturday, April 25th

Spread the word! We are hosting a kids' clothing swap on Saturday, April 25th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the church hall. All clothing is free - shoppers just need to bring their own bags!

Of course, for the swap to be a success we need donations of clothing. We are accepting infant and kids' clothes (newborn up to sizes 14-16) in clear bags or boxes, clean, free of rips and stains, with working zippers. It would be a great help if your bag/box is labelled with the clothing size.

The official drop-off for clothing donations is Friday, April 24th. An alternate drop-off time can be arranged by calling the church office 905-987-4515.



Please join Faith in Motion in "The Kindness Project"

Have you noticed the beautiful banner in the church hall? Our Faith in Motion kids have taken on a kindness project for the season of Lent. They are inspiring us to make acts of kindness an everyday way of being. From holding a door, letting someone go in front of you, helping to carry some-

thing, paying a compliment, giving encouragement, calling a friend, listening, or sharing a simple smile, it all makes a difference! We can do these kindnesses for family members and friends - most of us probably already do! - but we can also do them for complete strangers. So many little things we can do every day add up and they help us to carry out Jesus' work, showing our love for all.

You are welcome to colour a kindness page to add to the banner and we encourage you to write down a suggested act of kindness to the provided sticky notes and add them to the banner as well.

May the banner we create together be a reminder to keep colouring the world with love and kindness every day!



Sacrament of Infant Baptism

The sacrament of infant baptism will be celebrated on Christian Family Sunday, May 10th. Please speak to Elaine or contact the church office by Sunday, May 3rd, if you have an infant or child whom you wish to have baptized. A baptism preparation session will be held on Thursday, May 7th, at 7:00 p.m.



A craft group is forming in our congregation! The Crafters are having an initial meeting on Friday, March 20th, at 10:00 a.m., to discuss ideas for the bazaar. Bring your ideas, your samples, and your imagination. If you can't make it send your ideas along to Marion Hillyard.



Yard, Plant and Bake Sale Saturday, June 6th

Mark your calendars for Saturday, June 6th! With spring clean-up just around the corner, the Stewards would appreciate your setting aside tools, household items, and jewelry for our June sale. And once you can find your garden again, don't forget to divide some plants to share. Of course, also give some thought to what you might like to bake for the bake sale! All your support is greatly appreciated.

Minister's Message

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church? Is he present when we take the time to welcome someone new to church, or bend down and speak to a little child. Yes! Is he in the welcome that greets a neighbour who arrives on the steps of the East Clarington Food Bank? Is he present in the smiling face across the serving table at a crockpot dinner? Yes!

These are all simple actions and yet it is so important that we take the time to recognize and to welcome the presence of Christ in our midst. When we name our encounters with one another as holy, as Christ-filled, then our actions take on a whole new meaning. Each encounter becomes God at work in the world, and we become a part of God's work and mission. Will others notice? As the old campfire song reminds us: yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love. Only then will others outside the church begin to notice the living body of Christ (the church!) and even proclaim that "Truly this man was the son of God!"

May you experience Christ alive in the world, this coming Easter and always.

In Christ,
Rev. Elaine

Contact Us

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9:00 a.m. to noon*

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*Office hours: Tuesday & Thursday
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Church Organist/Choir Director: Donna Barber

Choir practice: Thursdays, 3:00 p.m.



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