

THE GLORY OF EASTER

This year's Lenten journey feels extra-long. That might be because there's still so much snow on the ground, even though we've been enjoying wonderfully warm temperatures and sunny spring days. It might also be because Lent 2019 has been filled with global events that could make Easter feel a long, long way off.

At our Lenten Messy Church on Shrove Tuesday we talked about the effect of waiting for something that we really want or need. It's an increasingly strange concept in our society when almost everything can be obtained instantaneously. Want to own that song...just download it from iTunes. Want food...just order it from skip the dishes. Want to watch the whole season of that show so you know how it ends...just binge watch it. With so much easily accessible at our fingertips and on our devices, it's no wonder that our society has so much trouble with change that takes time.

If Lent is a period to help us prepare for Easter, that helps us take stock of what our priorities are and where we need to be investing our time, talent, and treasure - then this Lenten period has been particularly effective for me. The gross indulgence of companies that sees key safety features as an 'add on upgrade' has cost lives and hopefully the world will no longer accept this practice as morally and ethically appropriate. The level of hate between groups based on colour, race, religion, ability, identity, orientation, and affluence has been on global display. The manipulation of optics and concerns about meddling have reminded us about the challenges of politics and with each additional death, act of violence, and accusation of malfeasance the gap between our current reality and the kin-dom of God seems to be growing at same speed as that between the affluent and the poor.

All the evidence seems to be pointing to the fact that it might be time to throw in the towel, admit, name, and own that human society is so messed up that it is beyond redemption, even God's redemption, yet there are signs that things are changing. Governments didn't just ignore the crashes, even with the awareness of the huge financial costs grounding the aircraft would cause. New Zealanders embodied their thoughts and prayers by taking swift action to ban semi-automatic rifles and large capacity clips and support the families of those murdered. (Can you imagine the public pressure in other countries if the cost of funerals and long-term family support became public policy?) The scrutiny of our public leaders appears to be increasing so that they are held accountable for even the 'innocent' conversations.

Even the fact that we're talking about issues related to these events like: white supremacy, white privilege, phobias related to all religions, and the racism that undergirds it all - is a good thing. It's not an easy thing. These conversations are hard and frustrating and emotional, yet for those of us who seek to be Christ-followers, they are necessary.

If Lent is a time for reflection and creating some degree of separation within our everyday lives for reflection and discernment, then Easter for me is a reminder that God continues to reach down into the graves of our lives, even the ones we've created for ourselves, and pulls us up out of them so that we can experience new life. It doesn't matter what those graves are. They could be related to our health, our relationships, our financial circumstances - whatever the grave, God is there offering us a way back to wholeness and new life, back to community and reconciliation, back to balance and hope. There is no promise it will be instantaneous. Lent, after all demonstrates that, yet it can and will happen.

I've often been reminded that a caterpillar cannot become a butterfly without the struggle and time in the cocoon. Lent is like that. The challenges we face as a society are like that. The issues related to housing, safety, food, family development, mental health, loneliness, and isolation (to name only a few) are all like that. They serve as cocoons that as Christians we are called to struggle against until we, and others, can break free of their constraints and experience the wonders of Easter glory in the new life we discover for ourselves and for our community. Yes, the journey is hard. It's often demoralizing. It's often a process that shows us aspects of people we really don't like. It's a source of frustration, challenge, and outrage. All of that is true and just like the Lenten journey, those experiences pale in comparison to the glory of Easter. They pale in comparison to the new life experienced by those who overcome. They pale in comparison to the power of community that is engaged in the work of Easter and walking with others so that they too can experience what it's like.

Whatever Lent has been like for you, may Easter be a reminder of the glory of God revealed in all of creation and the call for each of us as Christ-followers to engage in the ministry of sharing both the struggles and the Easters of our lives to build a stronger more resilient and more adaptable community right here, right now, in Prince George.

Rev. Dr. Bob Fillier



OFFICIAL BOARD

May the dreams you hold dearest be those that come true, and the kindness you spread keep returning to you.

Irish Blessing

We hope that this time of rebirth and renewal will remind you of the cycles of life. As we put winter behind us, we will move onto new adventures and new dreams in the spring and summer.

The Official Board has been busy with its monthly meetings at Trinity Downtown. We are fortunate that everyone is able to stay on the board for 2019. We will be looking at changes in 2020 so anyone who is feeling called to take on an active leadership role in Trinity United is most welcome to talk to me or to the vice chair, Gabriele Slater.

The board has approved a plan to move towards being an Affirming Ministry. We are looking forward to hearing more from the task group that will take us through the steps required by the United Church of Canada.

We are also excited to bring you more information and to answer your questions about the Harmony House project and the potential lease of the three back lots at 3555 to the B.C. Housing Commission and to Phoenix Transition Society.

There is a plan in place that takes us from being a charity once a year to a partnership with community agencies. Thank you to Gabriele for meeting with the agencies that we support through Jack Frost gifts to ask them what they need and how we can provide for those needs on a year-round basis.

We appreciate the work done by the various committees and teams as well as the support of the staff at Trinity United. We are thankful that so many people are willing to step up and pitch in when help is needed. Your contribution may be serving communion, moving chairs, bussing tables or just saying hello to someone who is in need. We are the church.

Judy Addie
Board chair



“NETFLIX WITH HEART ❤️”:

Recommendations for shows about people being human. Minimal violence and easy to go to sleep after.

Won't You be My Neighbour? An award winning documentary about Mr Rogers. Mr Rogers had a long running children's TV show. It outlines his spiritual mission providing guidance to children and reinforcing the message they are loved and lovable.

Atypical: A comedy series about a family with a boy on the autism spectrum. Gently shows us how we are all somewhat obsessive in our own ways. Not just about the boy, but encompasses entire family's struggles.

Queer Eye: A makeover series lead by 5 quirky, kind, gays guys. Each episode opens the made-over recipient to a wider, more confident view of their lives. Several episodes deal with the ostracization of homosexuals by churches and how that fits in the message of Jesus.

Lion; A movie about a boy from the slums of India adopted by an Australian family and his later search for his biological mother. I cried when he finally found his mother.

And Breathe Normally: a movie about a single mother in Iceland who confronts her conscience about a refugee who helped her. A bit edgy, but good.

Dogs: 6 episodes from around the globe and people's relationships with their dogs. Interesting insight into the lives of others. Not just for animal lovers.

The Guernsey Literary and Potatoe Peel Pie Society: a romance in occupied Guernsey in WW2. Charming and shows how people kept their values, supported each other under pressure.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

A Couple of Things.

1. Spring cleanup will be on April 28 after church.
2. If you have duplicate tools we are looking for some tools for our tool room at the Church. Contact Bill and let him know what you have and if we need one we will take it off your hands.

That's it for now.

Bill Hudyma



UPCOMING EVENTS

- APRIL 14 – 10 am Palm Sunday Service**
Silent Auction after worship
- APRIL 19 – 10:30 am – Good Friday Service**
- APRIL 21 – 10 am - Easter Sunday Service**
Brunch by Donation after worship



DO YOU HAVE SOMEONE TO REMEMBER? Do you have someone who needs prayers or support? Do you have someone to honour? Please light a candle to remember that special person.

MISSION AND SERVICE

Thank you to all who voted to keep our M&S contribution the same as last year. Contributions to February 28th total \$3,443. Approximately 6% of our pledge for this year. Please watch for more information on the work of M&S in the months ahead.

KAIROS Canada is in the process of implementing a revised strategy and fee schedule for their popular Blanket Exercise events. As a result, the local KAIROS Blanket Exercise volunteer team is awaiting further developments and updates.

Renata MacDonald

LAND LEASE PROPOSAL

Hopefully by now everyone will have heard the news that Trinity United was approached by Phoenix Transition Society and Harmony House to be partners with BC Housing Commission to lease the 3 unserviced, non-residential lots on Zelkwas Ave. The reason for leasing the land is to provide new and larger space for an expanded Harmony House program that includes second stage housing.

While The Board has been working on this for some time, the desire is to ensure that there is a maximum level of congregational input in the discernment process. To facilitate that process The Board has set aside several times to share information, ask questions, provide feedback, and share answers. Two events, the initial sharing and information session, have already happened, yet there's still plenty of opportunity to add your voice to the process. The dates are:

March 31 - 1st Q&A Session following worship.

April 3 - 1st mid-week Session at 6pm.

April 10 - 2nd mid-week Session at 6pm.

April 28 - 2nd Information Session following worship.

May 5 - Congregational Meeting to consider approving land lease.

There will also be information shared in print, through our email system, and on our website. Keep an eye out for more information and an expanding Q&A sheet.

GREETINGS FROM YOUR FELLOWSHIP TEAM

As this is written, Spring is beginning to show on the horizon. The days are warmer and longer, sidewalks and fields are clearing. There is a promise of rebirth.

Since Christmas, we have been busy. We continue to serve refreshments following Sunday services. Muffin sales have been held. Cards have been sent.

On February 13, we hosted another successful Golden Age Tea. 187 seniors were entertained and served refreshments by 37 volunteers from Trinity and friends. Megan Peters offered a recitation and the Elks Elastic Band provided music much to the delight of our guests. Thanks to all who helped us, whether by assisting on the day or by providing baking or other refreshments for us to serve. You all help us to succeed.

Upcoming is the Spring Silent Auction on Palm Sunday, April 14, 2019. We are soliciting donations of new and home-made goods, baking, and services. We have a Spring/Easter theme, please put on your thinking caps. Please also fill in a donation slips, these will be included in the weekly bulletin. It really helps us to get organized and also with our record-keeping.

Is there a way you can assist us in our ministry of fellowship and fund raising? Is there a special event you would like to help us to carry out? Please let us know! We are always happy to welcome you, whether as team members or just to help out at a single event. You will find us in the kitchen before and after church services each week, or you can contact us through the office.

Wishing you all Spring blessings.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Wilson on behalf of Trinity Fellowship Team

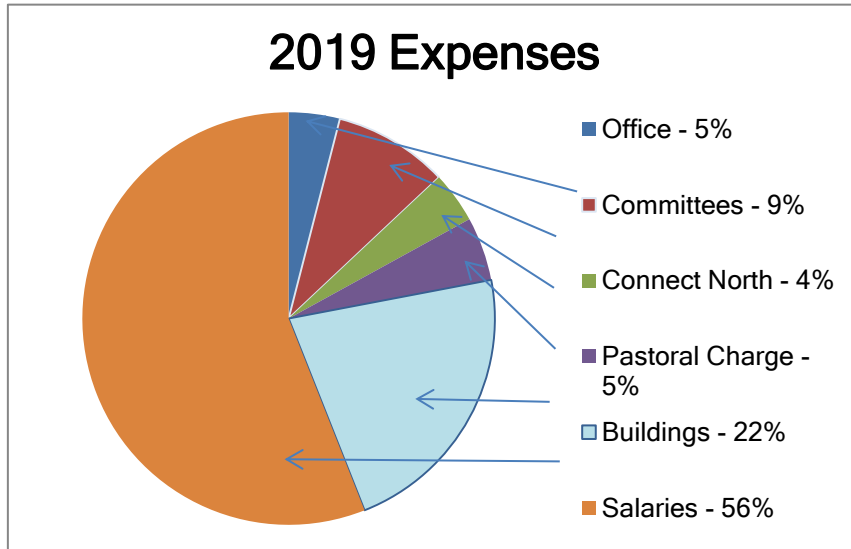


FINANCE COMMITTEE

At the second annual congregational meeting held on February 10, 2019, the 2019 operating budget for Trinity United Church, Prince George was approved.

The Revenue budget includes \$157,500 from regular offerings, \$60,000 from rent, \$20,000 from other revenue, and \$7,000 from interest. The Mission and Service target for 2019 was again set at \$20,000. That target was exceeded last year and Mission and Service offerings to date in 2019 are ahead of those for the same two month period last year.

Total budgeted revenue, not including Mission and Service offerings, is \$244,550 and it covers the commitments made by the congregation for:



The 2019 budget plan for expenses recognizes an increased focus on, and support of, committee work, the pastoral charge assessment under the United Church of Canada’s new governance model, and the efficiencies and costs of a single congregation with two buildings.

Summary financial information for the first two months of our 2019 fiscal year is presented below with a comparison to 2018. Again, this year, our expenses have exceeded our revenue for this two-month period. The Finance Committee will continue to monitor our revenue and expenses throughout the coming year.

	Actual for January and February 2019 (2 months)	Actual for January and February 2018 (2 months)
Revenue	\$ 36,835	\$ 40,108
Expenses	<u>42,017</u>	<u>48,853</u>
Excess Expenses	<u>\$ (5,182)</u>	<u>\$ (8,745)</u>

Revenue to date in 2019 is lower than the prior year due to an expected decrease in rental revenue. Expenses to date in 2019 are lower than the prior year due to fewer merger related expenses and close management of the expenses related to operating both buildings. If you have any questions about the church’s financial position, please contact any member of the Finance Committee or me.

The members of the Finance Committee wish you a Happy Easter - Trish Appleton, Nancy Buchanan, Katherine Cruwys, Johanna Jenkins, Jim Reid.

Allan Reed, Treasurer

