



2020

SPRING ISSUE

VISIONS UNITED

EASTER NEWSLETTER

THIS ISSUE

Minister's Message

Ways to Give

Office Relocation

Community Hub Update

When We Meet Again

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Eastering an Alleluia

Seeing and Believing With the 'Eyes of Our Heart'.

Jesus said, "Have you believed because you have seen me?

Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." - John 20:29

It's always true, but this year, especially, Easter is more than a date we mark on the calendar. Easter is a verb, not a noun. That's why I'm using the word, 'Eastering'. We *Easter* new beginnings. We *Easter* possibility. We *Easter* love. We *Easter* Good News. We are an *Eastering* People.

At Easter we celebrate good news. But where, you may wonder, is the good news this year? How can we sing 'Alleluia' and proclaim 'Jesus is Risen'? How can we be joyful and happy when we are in the midst of this COVID-19 pandemic? After all, we certainly don't want our 'Alleluias' to ring hollow, devoid of relevance to present circumstance or compassion for humanity. These are real and important wonderings.

This is why we must 'see and believe with our hearts', so that Eastering is not just back then - a moment in history - but is now. Here within us. Today.

Eastering is about having 'eyes that see' and 'hearts that believe', even when our Easter celebrations with our church community and with our families will be very different this year.

Eastering brings to us the surprise of something that is difficult to see or imagine. ***Eastering is about living with faith:*** seeing life differently, even when the storms of life blow around us and surround us with confusion, despair, disappointment, grief or fear.

From the bulb and the damp cold of the earth blooms a flower. From the compost of our fears comes life. From death, comes resurrection. From the Spirit of Christ, comes the promise to us of newfound hope in the face of death. Many things in life take faith to bring to birth a new reality. Faith in resurrection is faith that new life can come - even when hope seems illusive! This is Eastering.

The 'eyes of my heart' remind me every day that Visions is filled with Eastering people! Friends, keep the Eastering faith in these fearful times. Keep Easter for each other, until we meet again.

With love,
Rev. Shawn



SHARING YOUR OFFERING DURING COVID19

We would like to express our appreciation to everyone for their financial support of Visions and our mission. We recognize this time may bring financial uncertainty for some of us. We know there are others who are looking for ways to lend support. Please be in touch with us so we can make any changes you need.

Thank you to those who give by PAR. This automatic donation tool greatly helps the stability of financing for our congregation. If you would like to begin using PAR, make any changes to your current offering or would like to know more about this method of giving, please contact Emily.

We also appreciate those who give regularly using envelopes and would like to suggest some easy options for your continued giving during COVID19.

1. Canada Helps. This is a registered charity which transfers money to whichever Canadian charity you request. They keep a four percent charge for administration. At the end of the year, receipts are issued by Canada Helps rather than Visions United. To use Canada Helps first go to www.visionsunited.ca At the top of the site click on the "Ways to Give" button. From the new page simply click on the "Donate" button and it will lead you to Canada Helps.

2. Cheque. Please mail your cheque to: PO Box 29101 RPO North End, Moncton, NB, E1G 4R3. Please note the amount you wish to contribute to each contribution fund (Congregational Life /general fund, Mission and Service or Visions Aid) either on an offering envelope, a note on a separate paper, or in the memo area of the cheque. Please indicate your donor number if you know it.

3. Volunteer pick up. Another option is to have a member of our congregation pickup your offering at your residence. You may contact our church office at 384-0843 and leave a message for our administrator, Emily, that you would like someone to stop by to pick up a donation.

We cannot receive e-transfers at this time.

We know many of you like to give special Easter offerings and we have included an Easter offering envelope for your convenience. We hope the above methods enable your giving intention.

With Gratitude,
Your Finance Team

SALE OF THE CAMPUS

At our February 23 AGM it was announced that the Trustees had approved an Offer to Purchase the 1270 Gorge Road property. The 'conditions date' on the Offer was March 24. We are pleased to report that all conditions were met and the property is now considered sold. The 'closing date' is April 30. The purchaser is the Notre-Dame-de-Joie (Our Lady of Joy) Mission whose present location is the former Lakeville United Church.

OFFICE RELOCATION

Due to both the sale of the Stilesville location and COVID19; the office has been relocated to Emily's home. The office phone number, 506-384-0843, and our mailing address remain the same. Office hours continue to be Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:30am-12:30pm. If you call outside of these hours, please leave a phone message. Email is also a great way to communicate and Emily can be reached at office@visionsunited.ca At home pickups of offerings can be arranged for Wednesday mornings.

STAYING CONNECTED WHILE PHYSICALLY APART

Our goal is to stay connected as a church body throughout this unprecedented time. We are currently sending a mid week email as well as our regular Friday email which includes the link to our Virtual Spirit Gathering. Here is the link: www.visionsunited.ca/virtual-spirit-gatherings/
Would you like to be added to our mailing list? Email: office@visionsunited.ca

CARING CALLS

Volunteers will be making "old-fashioned" phone calls to be in touch with you during this time when we are not gathering in person. (More volunteers are still welcome to make friendly, check-in calls) If you are interested in making some calls please contact Emily by email: office@visionsunited.ca

We are a spiritual community
welcoming
a diversity of people

Celebrating and exploring
in faith together

Reaching out in love

Daring to make a difference
one act of kindness
at a time.

COMMUNITY HUB PARTNERSHIP

While much of the world has slowed down with some businesses closed temporarily, the Steering Committee has been continuing its work through video-conferencing, doing their part to support the timeline for the Community HUB and our new home.

Construction at 140 Joyce Avenue continued in March as the building site is prepared for the next phase – the laying of the foundation. Plans have been finalized for the audio visual and security layouts to support the electrical and mechanical tender process. Have a look yourselves from Joyce Avenue – the progress is impressive (and your drives there will make it so much more a habit for when we resume our church community in that area)!

The Fundraising Subcommittee has been researching and applying for grants from other sources. They have also secured donation commitments from businesses and individuals for the furnishings and supplies for some apartments.

Visions is also preparing an application for a New Ministry Grant from The United Church of Canada that will be submitted this spring.

The Trustees have signed an addendum to the partnership agreement with the John Howard Society, based on the principles approved by the congregation last November. This will give guidance for upcoming lease negotiations.

We will soon turn our attention to the mission of the Community Hub: engaging the neighbourhood, finding more partners, and creating a place where "abundant community" thrives!

Linda Higgins and Peter Lightfoot
Envisions 20/20 Steering Committee Representatives





WHEN WE GATHER AGAIN

Our weekly Spirit Gatherings on Sunday mornings at 10:30am will be relocated to the Centre Père Patrice Leblanc Centre, 91 Murphy Avenue, once we are able to resume in person gatherings. The Campus at 1270 Gorge Road is sold as of April 30, 2020. The new Community Hub building at 140 Joyce Avenue is still under construction. This new temporary location (see the photos above and below) was presented to the congregation and approved unanimously at the annual meeting, held February 23, 2020.

This location is only a few blocks away from the new Community Hub (140 Joyce Avenue). We can begin our ministry and develop relationship with our new neighbours.

We will also launch an alternative service called 'Supper Church' once a month on a Thursday, beginning in September. This initiative will replace our usual gathering on the 3rd Sunday of each month. The Knights of Columbus operate a community breakfast fundraiser so the Centre is not available for rental that Sunday.

We are enthused about the potential of this new kind of gathering to reach people who may not usually attend worship services on a Sunday morning.

The Père Patrice Leblanc Centre is accessible, with an easy to use elevator lift. The main entrance is to the left of the building. The accessible entrance is to the right of the building. There is ample parking, space for Conversation Cafe, a room for our children's program downstairs, and all set-up and clean up is included in the rental fee.

**When we gather again, we look forward to seeing you at
the Père Patrice Leblanc Centre, 91 Murphy Avenue.**



Mailing Address: RPO North End, Box 29101, Moncton, NB, E1G 4R3
Phone number: 506-384-0843
www.visionsunited.ca

Open Doors - Open Minds - Open Hands - Open Hearts