



# Minister's Message

In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;  
in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!  
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.  
(Voices United 703 vs.1)

Happy Easter!

After 40 days of prayer, contemplation, challenge, and growth, we have arrived! Easter is a time of great joy and new beginnings, and we give thanks for the gift of abundant life in and around us. We are grateful for our experiences of God's love and presence, the stories and examples of Jesus that bring joy and inspiration to our lives, and the guidance of the Spirit whose call we work hard to prayerfully consider. The days ahead are filled with tremendous potential for transformation, and we give thanks.

As we journey through this time together discerning the next few years of our life and ministry, and as we continue plans to sell our building and transition from being landlords to tenants, it will be interesting to see where God's Spirit leads us - what opportunities we embrace, and new partnerships we forge. I encourage each of us to continue to dream big and think outside the box! It is truly an exciting time to be part of the St. James faith community.

Be sure to check out the calendar of special events planned for this year as we celebrate our 116th anniversary, and as the United Church of Canada begins its 100th anniversary celebrations.

Together, let us offer thanks to God for the hidden promise of abundant congregational and community new life found in the seeds of our imaginations, hopes, and aspirations.

Blessings to you and your families during this season of new beginnings.

*Reverend Julie van Haaften*

# Treasurer's Update

by Marilyn Perrin

## Happy Easter to all of you.

As we move into Spring, we have completed a very successful Stewardship campaign. The committee asked the congregation to help raise \$3000 towards the January snowplowing bill. The response was not surprising! Once again, you not only met, but exceeded the goal. Our members donated \$3092 and with additional contributions by the St. James Players and the Tuesday Morning Craft Club, our grand total was \$4592. Thank you to all who were able to help with this campaign.

The first three months of the year are historically expensive ones with high utility bills, and an ECORC (East Central Ontario Regional Council) assessment fee of \$11,800. In addition, this year we had an asbestos removal bill totaling \$2500 as well as our everyday costs. This year we have a \$33,000 deficit (to Feb. 28) compared to our budget. As the weather warms up, snowplowing and fuel costs will decrease, hopefully allowing us to become more in line with our budget. Your donations are always appreciated, no matter the amount.

## How Can You Help?

### You have already started.

Please continue to support the activities which take place throughout the year:

Gift Card Orders (a very simple way to raise money - \$800 earned already this year)	Giving Sundays
UCW events such as Muffin parties, Christmas Tea and Bazaar, bake sales, etc.	St. James Players productions (Spring and Fall)
Lunches, dinners	Matching Donor Campaigns
Scrap metal collections	Toonie drives
Fyd-L-Styx concerts and other similar events	Anniversary Sunday donation (\$115 for 115 years)
	Special collections (Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Thanksgiving, Christmas)

One easy way for you to help us budget for the year is to sign up for PAR (pre-authorized remittance) if you have not already done so. This ensures that the church receives donations throughout the year, even if you are not able to be at church. Historically, revenues drop significantly during the summer months but expenses do not. PAR donations guarantee that we will receive your donation through July and August.

Once again, I would like to thank you for your contributions. Together, we can get ourselves back on track! Even a little helps a lot!

# THE EASTER CHALLENGE

EVERY YEAR IT HAPPENS:  
EARTH SHAKES HER SLEEPY HEAD,  
STILL A BIT WINTERED AND DULL,  
AND FEELS NEW LIFE STIRRING

EVERY YEAR COCOONS GIVE UP THEIR TREASURES,  
FRESH SHOOTS PUSH THROUGH BROWN LEAVES,  
SEEMINGLY DEAD BRANCHES SHINE WITH GREEN,  
AND SINGING BIRDS FIND THEIR WAY HOME.

EVERY YEAR WE HEAR THE STORIES

EMPTY TOMB, SURPRISED GRIEVERS,  
RUNNERS WITH NEWS AND REVELATION,  
UNEXPECTED ENCOUNTERS,  
CONVERSATIONS ON THE ROAD,  
TALES OF NETS FILLING WITH FISH,  
AND BREAKFAST ON A SEASHORE.

AND EVERY YEAR  
THE DULL AND DEAD IN US  
MEETS OUR EASTER CHALLENGE:

TO BE OPEN TO THE UNEXPECTED,  
TO BELIEVE BEYOND OUR SECURITY,  
TO WELCOME GOD IN EVERY FORM,  
AND TRUST IN OUR OWN GREENING

*JOYCE RUPP*

