



The United Church of Canada L'Église Unie du Canada



First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council
320 Elizabeth Avenue, St. John's, NL A1B 1T9
Tel: (800) 268-3781 ext. 6141 • Email: info4rc16@united-church.ca

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Dear Colleagues in Ministry:

With heartfelt gratitude in acknowledging your service, I bring you greetings during this “Clergy Appreciation Month”.

2020 has been a very challenging and unpredictable year for you. The pandemic changed almost everything you do in ministry but ‘you stepped up to plate’ quickly developing phenomenal strategies to reach the spiritual needs of your communities of faith.

With churches suddenly closed, you had to find new ways to provide worship. Using technology to present online services certainly presented quite a learning curve but you did it with tremendous success. Preaching to a camera (instead of a congregation) and doing communion in a virtual world became unique ways of sharing the message of the gospel. Some of you had also had tremendous success through your weekly teleconferences with your congregations where your worship service also created opportunity for dialogue.

Being unable to visit, you had to be a shepherd learning new ways to stay connected to your flock. Through the telephone, social media and other means, you accomplished that too. During our Zoom meetings with lay representatives from your congregations, it was truly heartwarming for me to hear the many positive reports of how you were truly meeting the spiritual needs of your congregations.

You went into ministry because of a ‘calling’. You wanted to share the good news of the gospel; to help people, and make the world a better place. The pandemic has shown us we never know what life holds or where the call to ministry will lead us. But through it all, we know God is right there with us!

I trust that you have been finding time for self-care as well as nurturing your relationship with loved ones and friends. I pray that God’s blessing and guidance be with you as you gradually move into what is now being called our ‘new normal’...always keeping safety at the forefront.

Yours in Christ,

Peggy Johnson

Rev. Peggy Johnson
President
First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council