

President's Easter Message

If there ever is a week to be celebrated in our Christian calendar, it must be Easter! As we enter Holy Week, we recall all the twists and turns of the week that is to come. The triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the teachings of Jesus, the rising tensions, scheming and backdoor politics of the religious leadership and the Roman oversight, the fervent prayers in Gethsemane, the betrayal, the agony and humiliation of the Crucifixion and finally the ultimate triumph of Easter Sunday. As we relive and commemorate all the ups and downs which are crammed into this short period of time we are reminded of the highs and lows of our own life journey.

My personal and special relationship to Easter dates to the early 1970's when a small but hearty group of believers would gather to celebrate the annual 7 am Easter Sunrise Service at Wesley United Church in Stonehaven, N.B. Wesley (now a privately owned community chapel) sits on the brow of a hill overlooking the Bay of Chaleur and the beautiful blue-grey mountains of the Gaspé Peninsula in the distance. Regardless of the weather, we would gather. I remember the warmth of the wood fire set by a devoted volunteer about an hour earlier and the organ being coaxed out of its winter slumber to the opening chords of Jesus Christ Is Risen Today. In some small way it was like sharing a portion of the mystery, discovery and astonishment of Mary and Mary Magdalene on that first Easter morn.

2000+ years later we find ourselves still gathering at Holy Week services, sunrise services, breakfasts, Easter Worship and Communion. We gather as community to proclaim with certainty that "Christ has risen! Christ has risen indeed!". Life, hope and love have overcome sin and death.

To each of you I send wishes for a joyous and meaningful Easter season. My hope is that, at least for a few moments in the coming days, we will be able to reflect on the promise and renewal that is Easter and that Christ has indeed risen in our minds, our hearts and in our communities of faith. Let us all be brought to life again just as Jesus was on that day.

Easter Blessings and Peace

Hugh

