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In the Orchard

Easter the Lamb & the Chicks

by Carol Dewar

I grew up in the fifties, when life seemed to be simpler and less complicated. My Dad came back from the war and married in 1946. In the next three years, we first three children arrived thirteen months apart. In 1952, my parents immigrated to Canada from England, Dad having chosen Liverpool, NS as being closer to England and good employment.

They bought a house unseen before leaving, an old three-story home on three acres on the Mersey River in Liverpool. It must have sounded wonderful after living through the war. Reality set in after the first winter with heating costs, and they decided to live on the first floor, and opened a Bed and Breakfast with 8 rooms on the other floors, with Mum managing it. Two more children followed closely

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Holy Week Services

Orchard Valley is now its new location at the former Sears store in the County Fair Mall.

Apr. 15 Good Friday
10 a.m. In-person and Live-Streamed
 Worship Service

Apr. 17 Easter Sunday
10 a.m. In-person and Live-Streamed
 Worship Service with
 Communion.

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Easter the Lamb (cont.)

afterwards. We grew up among guests, helping serve breakfast at times and making beds.

Having a large property, we had a great toboggan hill and lots of liberty. We also had many animals including a succession of dogs and cats, a hutch of rabbits, Henrietta the hen, some other small rodents. We always wanted a pony but we ended up with a sheep instead, whom we called Lulu, and it was our job to look after her and tether her in various spots in the orchard. Occasionally we got a call from the neighbours that our sheep was on the loose. We had Lulu for five years, and at some point, she had been taken to see a ram, and low and behold, on Easter morning, when we went

months, and then went to a farm, and we kids figured out that he came back to our freezer!

Another Easter event was the coloured chicks, having had dye injected into their shells before hatching. We kept them warm in a box with an overhanging light bulb and then they eventually headed outside. They were roosters, rather nasty and would often chase us if loose. We learned at an early age that chickens really do run around with their heads cut off!

Easter for us meant all seven of us going to church, sitting quietly and not looking around. There were several other large families there as well. Our family was Anglican and mostly we were C and E- Christmas and Easter, although we attended Sunday School regularly which was in a separate location in the parish hall. I attended church more regularly as I grew up, my sister accusing me of trying to get out of helping to make Sunday dinner.

My parents were not regular attenders, but Dad often said "God bless you" when saying good bye on the phone, especially in later life. Mum was a daughter of a minister- not sure what happened to her!!

to let her out, there was a beautiful lamb whom we called Easter. Easter stayed with us for several



Baby sister with Lulu and Easter.

Life is Change

I find myself thinking a lot about change, lately. For the last two years especially, our lives have been nothing but change. Changing perceptions of safety. Changing restrictions. Changes in how we shop, how we work, how we 'church' (which may or may not be a verb).

We are facing even more impactful changes right now. In our global family there is war, and fear, and grief, and a sense of helplessness. But if you look, there is also inspiration, and courage, and perseverance, and glimpses of God in the hands and faces of the helpers. People and businesses and countries have stepped forward in unprecedented ways to reach out, fundraise, transport women and children to safety, provide desperately needed equipment.

We can't predict or stop change. Life IS change. But with every change that comes, we get to decide how to react – Do we flourish? Simply adjust? Barely cope? Deny? My bathroom scales (and wine rack, blush) can tell you that I have gone through all four of these, and then some.

In our own small but beautiful valley, another change is upon us as we begin the expansion of our church home, and while the scale may

be small in the scope of the world, the impact on us is rather direct.

But, in THIS change I feel like we can flourish, and embrace hope and excitement and anticipation. Years of dreams and hard planning work has built to its culmination. Yes, ok, I know, still more work ahead, to move to our temporary home, to adapt to that space, to fundraise, to deal with the little inconveniences . . . yeah, yeah. But think of the opportunities for more people to get to know us/know about us in that very public environment.

Think about our choir singing, and maybe enticing people in to listen. Think about the opportunities to expand our outreach, and help others who we may never have met otherwise. Think how we will feel when we come back to our 'new' facility, ready and better able to serve God by serving others.

And . . . yet another change. . . as the new chair of council, I am very honoured to be a part of this momentous change in our church life. Life IS change. And things don't always change like we think. Just imagine rolling a rock away from the entrance to a tomb and finding it empty.

Change can be a pretty good thing.

I hope you all have a blessed Easter.

Mindy Vinqvist-Tymchuk Council Chair

Rev. Don's Message: Now it Springs Forth

I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. - Isaiah 43:19

As we creep slowly, oh so slowly into spring, there is new life out of the decay of winter. It's abounding right now. Have you noticed? Can you feel it? The crocuses are up. The robins are fat. The geese are passing over. And yes, I have seen my first mosquito - sigh.

Spring is the perfect metaphor for Easter with the dying and rising again. And in the rising up there is much hope and optimism for the future.

It has often been said that the final words of a dying church are, "We've never done it that way before." If this is true, we are alive and well! Because like spring bursting forth, we are doing a new thing!

Isaiah is speaking for God when he exclaims, "I am about to do a new thing." There's a long and challenging back story to this scripture from Isaiah. It was understood that God had sent the Babylonians to conquer Judah and send the Israelites into exile. And now, a few decades later, God is sending the Persians to defeat the Babylonians and allow the Israelites to return home.

Isaiah also tells the Israelites to not

look to the past but instead to the future. Something new is happening and although they can learn from their past, it is not what is going to define their future. And may it be so for us!

I feel it is as if this scripture was given just for us right now. Something new is happening here. Can you feel it? Something exciting is unfolding right before us. Can you not perceive it? We have been doing so many great things. We have hung together during the exile we call the pandemic. We have remained strong throughout all its the ups and downs, stops and starts, and lock downs and re-openings.

And now we are off into our modern-day exile called the County Fair Mall! And even there new things are about to spring forth, do you not perceive it? We are a rising up people, and we have a journey ahead of us yet.

And as our current building goes through its tearing down and building up while we are in exile, let us catch Isaiah's enthusiasm and excitement for what God is doing for us now – a new thing is springing forth! I hope you can feel it too.

Pastor Katie's Message: A New Day

This new year has been something special. Although we are still dealing with the effects of the pandemic we seem to have found our rhythm and are working on taking care of others and ourselves. We're finally seeing some flowers pop up marking the beginning of spring and even some potholes have been filled on my street! I remember the lyrics from one of my mom's favourite songs by Celine Dion, A New Day Has Come, "I was waiting for so long. For a miracle to come, Everyone told me to be strong, Hold on and don't shed a tear."

Winter is tough for most of us, and many of us deal with mental health issues all through the long dark season. February and March felt endlessly dark this year but somehow we made it through to April and the days are getting longer, and warmer. Through those tough times we wait for a miracle but it's as if God's beautiful creation already has the miracle of spring set in motion for us every year! What a beautiful gift we have been given. Change.

This year marks something amazing for us here at Orchard Valley, a chance to grow! I'm pretty excited to move to our temporary space, and not just



because there's a Tims close by! I'm excited because it gives us a chance to do more outreach, to work on projects we've always wanted to, and to

explore our faith in new ways. Although my heart feels some bittersweetness as I pack boxes to prepare to move I feel this sense of excitement as well. I've seen this excitement reflected in our kids as they feel like they have a place that they can bring friends to, a place they can ask questions and help the world around them. God is good and is right there with us every step of our journey.

I think this says alot about the Easter season, after all it's all about a new day, a resurrection, being forgiven and more. Jesus guides us towards love for all and reminds us that He loves us more than we will ever be able to know. So as we move towards change, may we go out with hope in the resurrection and may the springtime season bring new life wherever we may go.

PIE Day in Pictures

by Vicky Austin & Dale MacArthur
co-chairs, Affirming Committee

Orchard Valley United Church held its second Annual PIE Day Service on Sunday, March 13th.

PIE Day is an initiative of the United Church of Canada to acknowledge and celebrate the full inclusion of 2SLGBTQIA+ in our faith communities
PIE = Public. Intentional. Explicit.

It was a PIE Day service we will not soon forget – and not just because we all got to take home some pie! Cheryl Sellsted hosted a pie-making

“bee” at her home beforehand with some help from Affirming committee members, and additional homemade pie support from Jane McDonald, Sandra Bornemann and her daughter Micah Bornemann-Davis.

Orchard Valley is now graced by the addition of two beautiful Affirming banners designed and created by Helen Seymour. Both banners were displayed for the first time at this PIE Day service.

We thank Pastor Katie Logan for planning the service and for her courage and honesty in leading us in worship.



The members of the Affirming Committee , Pastor Katie Logan, Dale MacArthur, Rev. Don Sellsted, Cheryl Sellsted, Cheryl MacDonald, Julien Davis, Chris Seymour, and Vicky Austin (missing from photo Carol Wooster), hold the beautiful affirming banners created by our own Helen Seymour.



Pastor Katie Logan was one of the team at Cheryl Sellsted's apple pie making bee.

Many hands made light work in the packaging as well as the baking of the apple pies.



Chris Seymour played "Somewhere Over the Rainbow".

Micah and Gabe Bornemann-Davis under the rainbow umbrella.



Orchard Valley Votes for Affirming

by Vicky Austin & Dale Mac Arthur,
co-chairs, Affirming Committee

After a three-year journey along the road to Affirming, the Motion to apply for official designation from Affirm United was presented to the congregation at the AGM on March 20th and successfully passed with overwhelming approval. As part of this process, we were also required to have congregational approval of an enhanced Affirming Mission Statement. This Motion was presented and approved. It appears here in full, along with the existing Vision for Orchard Valley. Our Vision: Living and Acting through Faith Our Mission: Inspired by the grace

of God, we are a welcoming faith family called to love ourselves, others and the world. We seek to deepen our spiritual understanding and reach out to others through worship and socially just action.

As an inclusive community of faith, we actively seek to live our Mission by:

- Publicly declaring our commitment to welcome all people inclusive of age, gender, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability/disability, ethnic background or economic circumstances.
- Creating a safe space for courageous and challenging conversations enabling “radical hospitality”.
- Celebrating, honouring and respecting the richness that inclusion



The congregation voted overwhelmingly to become an Affirming congregation at the at the Annual General Meeting.

and diversity bring to our church.

- Continuing to educate ourselves, to learn and to grow by expanding our worship, study, resources, fellowship and actions.
- Praying for the Holy Spirit to guide us as we work for justice for all, in church and in society.

The Affirming Committee is grateful for the interest, support and

encouragement we have received from Orchard Valley members since our first meeting in April 2019. We continued to meet regularly, via Zoom, through two years of COVID restrictions.

We will remain active on this committee, trusting that we will continue to learn and to grow into an ever stronger, inclusive, sincerely welcoming, community of faith.

“Off to a New Adventure” - Farewell to Ken Hassell and Cynthia Bruce

by Donna Murphy

It is with mixed feelings that we at Orchard Valley United Church think of Ken and Cynthia leaving ... feelings of regret they go AND feelings of excitement for their new adventure in Montreal. Cynthia's job takes them to Concordia University's Department of Creative Arts Therapies where she has been teaching since August 2020.

Ken, born and raised near Middleton, studied organ and music education at Acadia after high school. There he met Cynthia, from Truro, at Acadia after completing her Bachelor of Music at McGill. They were married in 1991, spent two years doing graduate studies in Dallas, Texas, then settled in Kentville in the mid-90s.

Before OVUC, their (including sons

Colin and Doug) home church was St. Paul and St. Stephen, Kentville. The boys were active in church life in their own ways growing up. Even though they drifted away as teens, like many kids do; they have both continued to value the relationships they developed as children in the church. Colin has particularly enjoyed returning as an adult to perform with his dad. Doug has always been happy to return to help with events, such as Christmas tree decorating and planning and testing the route for road rallies.

Apart from Cynthia's work on the Worship Committee and Council, she participated on the initial facilities committee. Of course, she has been a faithful member of the choir and contributed musically as a vocal and

“Off to a New Adventure” cont.

trumpet soloist. As we grappled with the pandemic, Cynthia and Ken both served on the Re-opening Committee; which planned and articulated conditions under which we would return to allowable in-person worship and Ken was a resource as the live stream team planned the technical aspects of live streaming our weekly services.

Ken has been leading music ministry in various faith communities for 44 years, first in St. John's United Church, Middleton and then Wolfville United Baptist Church. Following that, Ken was music director at St. Paul and St. Stephen; and then, at OVUC. He continues to serve as an ex officio member of the worship committee, and was a member of the initial facilities committee. Ken served on the search committee that happily hired Pastor Katie Logan and on the outreach committee through working with the benevolent fund.

Music is always a highlight with the couple; we are blessed with incredible talent. It brings Cynthia particular joy to hear Ken play weekly and to witness the joy he brings to many. She feels it is an incredible privilege to be

present when he and Colin play together.

Ken feels that making music is always a privilege, especially when doing so with Cynthia and/or Colin.

He said it has

been a joy and privilege to work with so many talented musicians. Of course, the choir and chimes have been a constant source of joy! Ken believes they give him more than they will ever know; each week they fill him with such energy and fulfillment.

Ken and Cynthia agree that the arrival of Don and Cheryl was, and continues to be, a highlight and they feel blessed to have them as friends and to have had the time to be in ministry with them. Ken says he and Don are, in so many ways, two peas in a pod, and it



is such a pleasure to work with him!

One of Cynthia's research participants answered, when asked to describe his university experiences, "It's all about the people". That is how she thinks of OVUC; the people are warm, welcoming, and she truly thinks of Orchard Valley as family.

Since OVUC came into being, the overarching highlight has been, for Ken, the loving and caring nature of

the congregation; it has truly grown into the closest and most caring church family he has ever been privileged to serve. Ken and Cynthia closed by saying "It is always hard to leave family you love, but we do so with a rich store of memories that we will cherish forever."

We feel fortunate that technology makes it easier to stay connected, and we remind everyone that Montreal is a fabulous place to visit!"

We Have Arrived!: The First Service at Our Temporary County Fair Mall Location

by Jane McDonald

Just as Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey on Palm Sunday we celebrated our first service in our temporary space in the County Fair Mall. We welcomed some new folks, some returning folks and some of our regulars. It doesn't matter! ALL ARE WELCOME! This was a journey that incorporated the work of many to get us to this point. Shortly after the congregation made the decision to move ahead with the project, teams of individuals came together to a) find us a new home for the duration of the build and b) ready us for a move. Thank you to Frank Hartman and his team for their searches and discernment on the best



place for us during our exile from our permanent home. Many factors came into play with their work. In looking after our community they needed to think about accessibility, location within our catchment area and space large enough for us to carry

We Have Arrived! cont.

out the programs that we want to continue to deliver as we patiently wait to return home and last the financial cost to the congregation. Then of course there is our stuff! This is all the chairs, stands, tables, decorations, electronic equipment and organ that we use every week in the sanctuary but everything that you can't see. Under the skilled direction of Judy Gilmour, she and her wonderful crew purged what is no longer useful and sorted to make sure we had the tools we might need available to us during our time in our new space. Then they packed and packed and packed. We all owe this wonderful group our enormous thanks for the days and days of effort to prepare for the move. Then the MOVE! It seemed to go without too much trouble. The crew worked tirelessly moving everything to our temporary home. From start to finish with the movers returning home it covered approximately twelve hours. A long day but well done! We had several people in throughout the week to help set up spaces for our 'Sanctuary,' Children and Youth area, our Minister's working area and finally our Admin Assistant Rachel's area. Thanks to all who helped throughout

the week. We are still waiting for Bell to connect us for our internet and phones. By the time you read this we hope that these items have been resolved. The spaciousness of the site has appealed to many, and Katie and team have done a fantastic job setting up spaces for the children and youth. Don looks comfortable in his little nook and can see those entering through the mall door. Rachel has a cozy corner yet accessible to those with questions or need help. We were able to have our full choir in attendance at our first service in the temporary space certainly a nice sight after so long a time. Come visit and check us out!





There was lots of space for everyone: congregation, live streaming team, Voyagers, and choir at our first service in our temporary location in the former Sears store at the County Fair Mall.

Voyagers, Youth Group Having Busy Year

by Pastor Katie Logan

It's been a tough but fun year for our kids! Many of our kids have had to isolate this year and be extra careful with activities, but now we're groovin' and we're ready for our new space.

This year has been a blast, from our virtual Nativity kicking off the church calendar, to our most recent Open Arms Family walk, we've been busy! One of my favourite days would have to be our awesome Saint Patrick's Day party, filled to the brim with plenty of games, an awesome rainbow shamrock craft, and a boat making science experiment!

I also loved our sledding day where we all went out to Kentville and went sledding down Burgher Hill (and

snowman building), something our youth group used to do back in the day!

We also got to participate in PIE day! Johanna Rolsen and Katia Duyan came up and read our Lenten journey and Micah and Gabe Bournemann-Davis came up and read "What is



The kids play a game during the St. Patrick's Day party.

Gabe & Micah Bornemann-Davis and Katia Duyan make a snowman.

God like?” by Rachel Held Evans and Matthew Paul Turner, Illustrated by Ying Hui Tan. We’ve seen so many amazing things happen this year and we can’t wait to keep going!

We have also had our kids working at home on our Lenten kits. Many of us struggle to keep up with a lenten practice but it’s really good to challenge ourselves and try and learn and grow during this time. Our kids have been working at home on different prayers, crafts, games, science experiments, and more keeping them pretty busy! My favourite experiment talks about atonement and we learn how to clean

up pennies then turn them green!

We’re looking forward to the year ahead with activities planned all over the place including an Easter Egg hunt the day before Easter in our new space at the mall! All are welcome and we’re so excited! From all our kids and youth have a Happy Easter!



As part of the their walk for Open Arms, Voyagers members and Andy Pitter donated items to OATS before heading to Miner’s Marsh for the rest of their walk including a group photo on the bridge.



The Sod Turning Ceremony

by Sylvia Jacquard

A ceremonial sod turning for the expansion and renovation of Orchard Valley United took place at 1 p.m. on April 3rd. Over 80 people gathered outside for the ceremony.

Rev. Don began the ceremony by introducing the former OVU ministers who were in attendance and then reading a Statement of Purpose. Greetings came from congregation member and Commissioner Cheryl Manzer, followed by MP Kody Blois and Region 15 President and congregation member Jane McDonald.

At this point the audience heard from the ministers present: Rev. Ivan Norton, Rev. Randy Crozsmann, Rev. Karen Lynch and Rev. Don. Members of the congregation read letters of recognition: Betty Rockwell read words from Rev. Gloria Churchill, Sheila Francis continued with words from Rev. Pix Butt and

finally Ken Hassell concluded with words from our MLA Keith Irving.

Rev. Don gave a blessing and then those present took whatever implement that they brought with them, whether it was a some kind of shovel, trowel, rake or spoon, into the ground and turned a bit of the earth.

Pastor Katie Logan concluded the ceremony with a prayer.

