

Happy New Year,

January 2020

I can hardly believe another year has passed already! We have so much to be thankful for in the past year and much to look forward to in 2020. Our family all seem very comfortable living here in the Haliburton Highlands. Amanda continues to supply teach in our local schools. Thomas is currently six but his birthday is the 29th of January so he might be seven by the time you read this. He loves grade 1 and has a wonderful teacher, Mrs. Davis. Emily is in grade 8 this year. She is doing very well despite missing many days of school last year. Her surgery to prevent seizures appears to be 100% successful. For that alone we are truly grateful. Lily is in grade 11 this year! She is also driving the van so beware on the roads and sidewalks! She is actually a very good driver but I'm sure the two skid marks in the front lawn will still be there in the spring! All three take the same school bus into Haliburton and are in the French Immersion program at the three different schools there.

Thanks go to our Pastoral Care teams at each church for keeping me up-to-date and keeping everyone in touch with our church. Your mindfulness gives tangible meaning to the love of the Spirit in our churches. Please give me a call if you know of someone in the hospital, someone who is sick, or someone who simply may need a visit. The pastoral care committee and I appreciate your input in order to be able to try to meet the needs of others.

The Amalgamation/Integration has continued to be on our agendas but in a more day to day living together way as much of the heavy lifting decision making has been completed. This is a long run project that is already benefitting our members and our community. In 2019 we said goodbye to Zion UC officially in April and in many smaller ways since then especially with the final move out of items in November. Generally, we have worked together and met the challenge. I would like to thank everyone that has managed to continue to support the church in various ways while also doing the extra work needed to help the Amalgamation go as smoothly as it has so far. Special mention to the Trustees and the Group of Four who have put a tremendous amount of careful planning, thoughtful consideration of emotions involved and shoulders to the wheel in doing much of the physical tasks of moving; many thanks.

2019 saw some changes with our Voluntary Associate Ministers. We grieved the loss of Rev. Kim Warne, gave thanks for the continued support of Rev. John Patterson & Rev. Peter Walford-Davis plus welcomed Rev. Doug Norris as a VAM. Thank you to Diane Welborn for all of her attention to detail and superior work during another busy year. Her ability to catch my mistakes helps me to look my best! Thanks! Also, I would like to thank Kathleen Owens and Melissa Stephens for your wonderful gifts of musical leadership. The worship service and our participation in it is blessed with your ministry of music. Thanks to all the musicians(alphabetically); Eric Casper, the Choir, Catherine Kellett and the Joyful Musicmakers for adding your beautiful music.

2020 holds much promise for us all as we work and worship with the Holy Spirit. May we see the face of Christ in whoever we meet and interact with in this new year; both in the life of the church and the life of the community!

Sincerely,