

A Note from the Treasurer – Update for April 2, 2020

The impact of the Covid-19 virus is unprecedented. Even during the World Wars and the Great Depression, faith communities were able to meet in person to support each other and find solace.

The current impact on our economy – with hundreds of thousands of Canadians temporarily losing their jobs – is staggering. Many small businesses may never recover. **Please know, then, that we continue to put your personal needs ahead of the financial affairs of First-St. Andrew's.**

In spite of the current crisis, many of you have continued to honour your financial pledges and kept up your donations. It looks like FSA will not be eligible for any salary support from government programs, so your generosity is very important. The Executive and staff of First-St. Andrew's are so very grateful for your contributions through PAR and other means.

We are currently asking all committees and budget units to update their financial forecasts for the 2020 year. A revised budget will be presented to the Congregation at an appropriate time. Our revenue forecast may be significantly affected by the loss of revenue from space rentals. Our staff are still working from home but many overhead expenses continue. As mentioned previously, events, such as the Wearable Art Show, may be able to be rescheduled for the fall. But, other events have been cancelled completely. Since we are unable to have Sunday worship at the church, there is no opportunity for visitors and others to make donations. The shopping card program – one of our biggest internal fund-raisers – has been suspended and its revenue cannot be recovered. Unfortunately some of our outreach fund raising has also been reduced; an example being the White Squirrel Golf Tournament. UCW events have been affected, which reduces their opportunity to provide outreach and operations support as well.

We understand that your ability to maintain your level of givings may be reduced. If this is the case, kindly advise Heather Vouvalidis (admin@fsaunited.com) or 519-672-8182, ext 5; or myself (kerryh.fsa@rogers.com). Your information will be held in strict confidence, as always. It will be used to help revise our 2020 budget. (Note that you can still leave messages on the FSA phone system, which is being checked continuously.)

Our **annual Easter Appeal** would normally be running right now. *If you are able*, please consider making a special donation to the operating fund.

Regardless of the level of your support, please consider the following suggestions for processing your contributions, if you currently use envelopes or cash:

1. Switch to PAR (pre-authorized payments taken directly from your bank account each month). Most of our members use PAR and have never had any banking problems with it.
2. Use electronic funds transfers from your bank account to the FSA bank account. No password is required. Heather can help you with the necessary information.

3. Mail your cheques to the church. Seal envelopes by using a sponge, not licking. Consider post-dated cheques for now until September for your regular givings. (The building is being checked daily for mail and security.)
4. Donate using the "[Donate](#)" button on the FSA website.

For options 1 and 2, please contact Heather. If necessary, make it clear how you want your donation to be used: FSA operating fund, United Church M&S fund, Easter Appeal, or other.

Speaking of M&S: the United Church has indicated that it will have to curtail some of its spending for programs and projects that it has supported in the past. This has nothing to do with the Covid pandemic; rather it reflects an ongoing situation. The United Church has two main sources of income – M&S and Congregational Assessments. Both these sources of funding are down considerably because of declining memberships. If you haven't supported M&S in the past, please consider doing so now.

Thank you for your prayerful support of First-St. Andrew's. Your personal welfare is the first concern of Rev. Michelle, the staff and Council. Stay home, stay healthy, stay in touch by phone and email.

Blessings, Kerry Hill