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October 20, 2021

Not Just Survive But Thrive

I was recently made aware of this quote from Charles Darwin, "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent. It is the one most adaptable to change."

Scientists advise that 99% of the species that have lived on planet Earth are now extinct. While the reference is to species, it occurred to me that the same logic applies in many other instances. It can also be said of businesses and institutions, including churches. The survival of any species is related to evolution, which is involuntary. However, adaptation and survival in other instances is due to positive action taken to ensure continuation of the entity. It involves a form of reinvention and embracing the necessary changes to meet the new circumstances. While one of the most difficult things that we all face can be accepting change, we know it is inevitable.

I have quoted many times the truism "if you keep doing what you have been doing you will keep getting what you have been getting." In the case of churches it is that the old ways no longer apply, and difficult as it may be to accept, a new approach is needed to continue to be a factor in the wellbeing of our congregation, the immediate community in which we live, and society as a whole.

We at Huron Shores United can be proud of the steps we have taken to extend our outreach to the community at large, by the establishment of our Grand Bend Place meeting facilities and concert venue, as well as the recently developed outdoor living room area on Main Street, and the open door policy for use of the Green Cathedral during the week, as an area that can be a shady space for people to enjoy when weather permits. The promotion of our fellowship hall as an informal drop in space is another example of making better use of our facilities. For too long churches have been that quiet enclave, where the members gather for midweek programs and on Sundays for worship services, with minimal connection to the wider community. As we discovered when we were involved in the Christmas Open House project a few years ago, many local visitors mentioned that although they have lived here for many years, they had never been in the church building before. Not surprising, but a bit sad.

We now have a variety of programs that involve both members and others from the Community. This is a good and healthy situation and is universally recommended for continuation and expansion. It is ironic that another truism is "The only constant in life is change."

If we continue to adapt and to follow and apply the teachings of Jesus, we will not only survive but thrive. So be it.

Bryan Beattie

*"Our relationship with God and each other strengthens us, and helps make the world a better place.
We welcome and include **everyone** into congregational life."*

