

The United Church of Canada
Bathurst Pastoral Charge
First United Church, Bathurst
www.firstunited-bathurst.ca

May 2, 2021

Minister Rev. Neal Palmer **Music Director** Martha Vickers
Office Adm. Margaret Daniels **Greeters** Peter Gammon
Custodian Steve White Edie Gammon

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| <u>Lectionary for today</u> | <u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Acts 8:26-40 | Acts 10:44-48 |
| Psalm 22:25-31 | Psalm 98 |
| 1 John 4:7-21 | 1 John 5:1-6 |
| John 15:1-8 | John 15:9-17 |

***We welcome Linda Knowles-MacPherson
and thank her for leading our music once again today***

The asterisk * identifies those times in the service where the congregation is invited to stand as able.

GATHERING

MUSIC AS WE GATHER

WELCOME

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE *(responsively)*

The images the Bible uses to reveal the fullness of Jesus' grace often cause us to ponder.

They can be large, like, "I am the light of the world." They can be outside the range of our experience, like, "I am the good shepherd." Like last week.

Today we hear an image offered that's close to all of us: vine and branch, sun and soil, fruit and pruning.

We light the Christ candle, acknowledging Jesus, the true vine.
The Christ candle is lit.

CENTERING FOR WORSHIP "Come Build a Church"

***Come build a church with soul and spirit,
come build a church of flesh and bone.
We need no tower rising skyward;
no house of wood of glass or stone.
Come build a church with human frailty,
come build a church of flesh and blood
Jesus shall be its sure foundation,
it shall be built by the hands of God.***

CALL TO WORSHIP *(responsively)*

...As we seek God's wisdom, may God interweave our presence and words to create holy dialogue.

**In this time of worship, let's engage in holy dialogue,
as children of God seeking to learn, seeking to teach, seeking
to be one.**

GATHERING PRAYER

GATHERING HYMN

"Open My Eyes, That I May See"

VU #371

Open my eyes, that I may see
glimpses of truth thou hast for me;
place in my hands the wonderful key
that shall unclasp and set me free.

Refrain

*Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my ears, illumine me,
Spirit divine!*

Open my ears, that I may hear
voices of truth thou sendest clear;
and while the wave-notes fall on my ear,
everything false will disappear.

Refrain

*Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my ears, illumine me,
Spirit divine!*

Open my mouth, and let me bear
gladly the warm truth everywhere;
open my heart and let me prepare
love with thy children thus to share.

Refrain

*Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my heart, illumine me,
Spirit divine!*

PRAYER OF HUMILITY

CHORAL RESPONSE "Kyrie Eleison" MV #68

***O God have mercy,
O God have mercy,
O God have mercy,
have mercy on us.***

***GREETING ONE ANOTHER** (*responsively*)

...The peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

SHARING A STORY (*with those of all ages*)

SINGING A SONG

"Circle Song"

(*Seasons of the Spirit Songbook Volume 7*)

(*Chorus*)

Come and join the circle, come and take my hand.
Come and join the circle, come and be my friend.

Gather round and see
what the world can be.
Come and join the circle,
come and share God's word with me.

(*Chorus*)

Come and join the circle, come and take my hand.
Come and join the circle, come and be my friend.

Gather round and see
what the world can be.
Come and join the circle,
come and share God's word with me

ENGAGING

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isabel MacLaggan

Acts 8:26-40

John 15:1-8

REFLECTION

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

GIFT OF MUSIC

"It Is No Secret"

Linda Knowles-MacPherson

RESPONDING

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Bev Murphy

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

***OFFERING PRAYER** *(in unison)*

Giver of Life,
may these, the fruits of our lives, meet the basic needs of
those in our community and beyond.
May they nourish and strengthen all and be used to grow
even bigger gardens to feed those yet to come.
You are the vine, Holy One, and we are the branches.
Connected in love, may we share all we have, in your name.
Amen

MEDITATIVE MUSIC

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE *(responsively)*

Holy One,

in times of sadness, loss, and disorientation,

we pray you'll abide in us.

In times of anger, betrayal, and slander,

we pray you'll abide in us.

In times of hopelessness, brokenness, and failure,

we pray you'll abide in us.

In times of hopefulness, renewed faith, and the assurance of good yet
to come,

we pray you'll abide in us.

In times of forgiveness, happiness, and thankfulness,

we pray you'll abide in us.

In times of joy, unity, and peace,

we pray you'll abide in us.

Your love, Holy One, is ever-present—in times of deepest despair as
well as in times of deep joy. Your invitation to abide in you has no
qualifications, but promises to be ever-close and ever-present when
life is at its best, its worst, and all things between.

Abide in us, then, as we abide in you.

THE LORD'S PRAYER – VU #921 *(in unison)*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth, as it is in
heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our
trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever
and ever.
Amen.

GOING OUT (as God's people)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CLOSING HYMN – “In the Bulb There Is a Flower” – VU #703

In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;
in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;
there's a dawn in every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;
in our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity.
In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

BLESSING

CHORAL CLOSING

"When You Walk from Here"

VU #298

***When you walk from here,
when you walk from here,
walk with justice, walk with mercy,
and with God's humble care.***

(The Christ Candle is extinguished.)

POSTLUDE:

*Prayer is when you talk to God;
Meditation is when you listen to God.
~ Author Unknown*



Church News

The regular office hours are Monday to Friday 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, closed for lunch from 12:00 to 12:30.

Peanut Butter Update – As of April 29, 2021, 198 jars of Peanut Butter have been collected to go to the Bathurst Volunteer Center. Peanut butter can be dropped off at the church office anytime during office hours; cheques can be delivered or mailed to the Bathurst Volunteer Center at 464 King Ave., Bathurst NB E2A 1P5. Please indicate on your cheque that it is for the purchase of Peanut Butter for the First United contribution.

Flowers for Mother's Day – We will be having flowers placed in our sanctuary in honor of Mother's day. Those wishing to contribute to the Mother's Day flower fund may place an envelope in the offering plate on Sunday morning or drop it in at the office during the week between 9 AM and 3 PM. Please mark clearly on the face of the envelope – **Mother's Day Flowers** with your *name, PAR or envelope number*. An insert will be included in the bulletin on Mother's Day, May 10th with your dedications. Please have your dedications in by Tuesday, May 4th.

A special thank you to our volunteers in April: counters, Shirley Sealy & Haines Scott; sound system – Shirley Allain & Ralph Jamieson; greeters – Margaret Payne-Chenard & Mike Kierstead; candle lighter – Mya Brewster; readers – Jini Palmer, Catherine Eddy, Breanna & Jodie Lee, Anne Brooks & Cheryl Brewster; videographer Don Eddy; minute for missions – Bev Murphy.

Reminder – As the in-person worship services have resumed, if you plan to attend the service, please call the church office at 546-3532 by Friday morning, and give Margaret the name(s) and phone number(s) for yourself and anyone in your bubble who will be sitting with you. A seating plan will be pre-arranged based on the required physical distancing rules. *As seating capacity will be much less than usual, please call the office if your plans change and you are unable to attend.* On-line services will continue, on a delayed basis, as the in-person service will be recorded and then uploaded to the church website and Facebook page in due course.

Central United Church in Clifton will be having their Annual Lobster Supper as a TAKE OUT ONLY, on Saturday, **May 8**, 2021 from 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM. There are a limited number of tickets this year, so they will be sold on a first come-first served basis. Tickets are \$25 per person and include one lobster, potato salad, coleslaw, pickles, a roll and dessert. You will have your choice of having the lobster included in the shell or already shelled. If you do not specify when getting your ticket, your lobster will be shelled. For tickets please call Lois Archibald at 548-8927.



The Anglican Parish of New Bandon is holding a take-out only lobster supper on Saturday, **June 5**. Tickets are \$25 for adults and \$12.50 for children under 12. All tickets are being sold in advance and can be purchased by contacting Norma Ellis 546-9638, Kay Addison 350-0960, Mitzi Whelton 545-0298, Darlene Dempsey 480-1078 or Nancy Hodnett 545-5263.

SCRIPTURE READINGS - NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION

Acts 8:26-40

Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch

26 Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.)

27 So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship

28 and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah.

29 Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it."

30 So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

31 He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him.

32 Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: "Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth.

33 In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth."

34 The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?"

35 Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus.

36 As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?"

38 He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him.

39 When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.

40 But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

John 15:1-8

15 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower.

2 He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit.

3 You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you.

4 Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.

5 I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.

6 Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

8 My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

May God bless to our understanding these significant parts of our Christian story...