

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

December 5, 2021

Minister Rev. Neal Palmer **Music Director** Martha Vickers
Office Adm. Margaret Daniels **Greeters** Beth Sullivan
Custodian Lester Scott Dorothy Ann McCallum

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<u>Lectionary for today</u>	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u>
Malachi 3:1-4	Zephaniah 3:14-20
Luke 1:68-79	Isaiah 12:2-6
Philippians 1:3-11	Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:1-6	Luke 3:7-18

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

GATHERING

MUSIC AS WE GATHER

WELCOME

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING – PEACE

(Hope candle is lit)

*Lyrics (Tune O Come, O Come, Emmanuel – VU 1)
(traditional music, lyrics c 2021 Adrian Marchuk)*

**O come and bring your peace upon the earth
That even now still longs for its rebirth
We seek to live and move in your ways
Guide us to peace and justice all our days
Rejoice, rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to us
And all things shall be well**

Candle Lighting Ritual (Luke 3:1-6)

When conflict seems never-ending,
relationships rocky,
When we want to deny and pretend,
The Holy invites us to make space
for truth-telling
And we find Peace

(Peace candle is lit)

Where in the world do we find Peace these days?

CENTERING FOR WORSHIP - “We Light This Candle”

***We light a candle for peace.
Await the new life within.
May our hearts now live each day,
So Peace can find a way.
So Peace can find a way.***

CALL TO WORSHIP *(responsively)*

We gather, longing for gentleness among all:

peace is the home we seek.

We gather, longing for healing where there’s been harm:

peace is the home we seek.

We gather, longing for generosity to inform all actions:

peace is the home we seek.

We gather, longing for peace in all parts of life:

God is the home we seek.

GATHERING PRAYER

***GATHERING HYMN -** "A Journey Just Begun" AGCS #51

Come and join us on a journey just begun
As we celebrate the life of God's own son.
The stories of his life become our stories, too.
In the choices that we make, in ev'rything we do.
Come and join us on a journey just begun.

Refrain:

*Preparing the way, preparing the way,
We're preparing the way of our God.*

We will walk from the darkness to the light,
Led by the shining star so bright.
Once more with hope we wait for a baby's birth
When the love of God shall bring Peace to all the earth.
As we walk from the darkness to the light.

(Refrain)

We will walk in the light of all the world,
Shining for the nations to be healed.
Jesus is our friend, companion on the way,
We want to spread his love In all we do and say,
As we walk in the light of all the world.

(Refrain)

We will walk up the mountain of our God
With the children of the whole wide world abroad.
The hungry shall be fed, Yes, ev'ry girl and boy,
The captives shall go free, The lame shall leap for joy,
As we walk up the mountain of our God.

(Refrain)



PRAYER OF HUMILITY (*responsively*)

Holy One,
When greed overtakes compassion; when fear overtakes reason,
may we turn our hearts to you.
When despair overtakes hope; when hatred overtakes understanding,
may we turn our hearts to you.
When apathy overtakes concern; when deception overtakes truth,
may we turn our hearts to you.

(Silence for reflection)

CHORAL RESPONSE - "The Advent Prayer Song"

***Breathe into this moment of peace
with courage to let go, daring to dream.
For the days are surely coming
when we'll rise strong together again in peace.***

***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** "Jesus, Our Brother"

VU #56

Jesus, our brother, kind and good,
was humbly born in a stable rude,
and the friendly beasts around him stood,
Jesus, our brother, kind and good.

"I," said the donkey, shaggy and brown,
"I carried the mother up hill and down,
I carried his mother to Bethlehem town;
I," said the donkey, shaggy and brown.

"I," said the cow, all white and red,
"I gave him my manger for his bed,
I gave him hay to pillow his head;
I," said the cow, all white and red.

"I," said the sheep with curly horn,
"I gave him my wool for his blanket warm,
he wore my coat on Christmas morn;
I," said the sheep, with curly horn.

"I," said the dove, from the rafters high,
"I cooed him to sleep that he should not cry,
we cooed him to sleep, my mate and I;
I," said the dove, from the rafters high.

Thus all the beasts, by some good spell,
in the stable dark were glad to tell
of the gifts they gave Emmanuel,
the gifts they gave Emmanuel.

ENGAGING

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

Helen Knowles

Luke 1:68-79

Luke 3:1-6

REFLECTION

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

GIFT OF MUSIC

John & Isabel Clouston

"Mary's Boy Child"

RESPONDING

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Bev Murphy

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

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

**Holy One,
when what we offer seems small,
help us remember we're part of something larger.
Help us remember, we pray, that every gesture of kindness
magnifies love's reach.**

Amen

SHARING OUR CONCERNS (*Meditative music*)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (*responsively*)

...Like the shepherds, we long for the day when the wolf and the lamb
live together in peace.

Like the shepherds, we place our lives into your hands.

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

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.**

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever.**

Amen.

GOING OUT (as God's people)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CLOSING HYMN** "He is Born"

VU #50

Refrain:

*He is born, little Child divine;
play on the reeds while the lutes are strumming.
He is born, little Child divine;
Join the song to announce the day.*

Through long ages of the past,
prophets have foretold his coming;
through long ages of the past,
now the time has come at last!

(Refrain)

O how lovely, O how pure
is this perfect Child of heaven;
O how lovely, O how pure,
gracious gift to humankind!

(Refrain)

Lowly lodged in a stable poor,
laid on straw for his infant cradle.
Lowly lodged in a stable poor,
God came down to our mortal aid.

(Refrain)

Jesus, Lord of all the world,
coming as a child among us,
Jesus, Lord of all the world,
grant to us your heavenly peace.

(Refrain)

***BLESSING**

***CHORAL CLOSING**

MV #221

"I am Walking a Path of Peace"

***I am walking a path of peace
I am walking a path of peace
I am walking a path of peace
lead me home, lead me home.***

(The Advent Candle is extinguished.)

POSTLUDE



**Once again this year there will be 2 Christmas Eve Services
with the celebration of communion.**

Wednesday, December 23rd at 7 PM

&

Thursday, December 24th at 4 PM

Please register with the office by telephone (546-3532) or by email (firstadmin@nb.aibn.com) **no later than December 20, 2021** to allow for social distancing set up in the sanctuary and preparation of the appropriate number of bulletins and communion elements.

Thank you in advance for your assistance

Church News

The church office hours are Monday to Friday **9:00 AM to 3:00 PM**
The church office will be **closed at 12 noon on December 24th** and will also be closed on Monday and Tuesday December 27th and 28th.

Peanut Butter Update – As of December 2, 2021, 542 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.

Thank You: The Ways and Means team would like to express a sincere thank you to all workers and those who bought tickets FOR THE Take-Out Turkey Supper. Because of the generous sponsorship of Kenny's Trucking and The Shine House, the Ways and Means team realized a profit of approximately \$4,900.00. The next Ways and Means team event will hopefully take place on *January 27, 2022 - a TAKE-OUT ONLY ROAST PORK SUPPER.*

Annual Christmas Benevolence Fund: - It's that time of year! Giving to this fund is even more important than ever because COVID-19 is still affecting lives. Once again this year the process is a bit different, but we hope the results will be the same or better as previous years. Should you wish to give you will find an envelope on the tree in the narthex. Then you may drop it in the offering plate or drop it off at the church office during the week. Make your cheques payable to First United Church. Please mark clearly that this donation is for the Benevolence Fund. The proceeds from this fund support the Bathurst Volunteer Center and people in our congregation who need assistance. ***We thank-you for you generosity***

– Community Outreach Sub-Team

Reminder – If you plan to attend the service in-person, 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. 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.

Church News

Thank you to our volunteers in November: **Counters** – Mike Kierstead and Margaret Payne-Chenard; **Greeters** – Shirley Sealy, Dorothy Ann McCallum and Gayle Ferron; **Minute for Missions** – Bev Murphy and Pat MacIntosh; **Scripture Readers** – Sherry Mitton, Isabel MacLaggan, Wayne Lord and Sandra Boone; **Vocalists** – John & Isabel Clouston; **Sound System** – Brenda Parrott, Shirley Allain and Ralph Jamieson; and **Videographer** – Don Eddy



Poinsettia Fund: Once again this year we are hoping to have the beauty of our sanctuary enhanced with poinsettias for the Christmas season. Those wishing to contribute to the annual poinsettia fund may place an envelope in the offering plate on Sunday morning. Please mark clearly on the face of the envelope – Poinsettia Fund with your name, PAR or envelope number. List the names that you wish to have printed in the Christmas bulletin insert. Donations will also be received in the church office – deadline is December 15, 2021.

Gifts with Vision: Are you looking for a gift to celebrate someone special for Christmas, Birthday, Anniversary, Congratulations - for that someone who has everything, or who doesn't want anything more to add to their 'clutter'? **Gifts for Vision** is the perfect gift for you to give! The United Church of Canada has put together a catalogue and online 'store' of gifts that make a difference in people's lives throughout Canada and the world. Each 'Gift with Vision' provides support for remarkable Mission and Service partners for special projects that address many life-changing issues, such as hunger, poverty, anti-racism, well-building, environment, vaccines.

There are catalogues (a sample of what is in the on-line store) at the back of the church for you to take - we can get more! The on-line store is at giftswithvision.ca.

Thank you for being part of these life-changing activities!

YOU ARE INVITED!

Join your colleagues/friends/neighbours in the three Atlantic Regions in the rescheduled on-line book study through 4 weeks in early 2022 (January 12, 19 26 and February 2). We'll read together Canadian Senator (Retired) Hugh Segal's recent book: Bootstraps Need Boots; One Tory's Lonely Fight To End Poverty in Canada (UBC Press, Vancouver, 2019).

The four Zoom sessions are to be held on Wednesdays, January 12, 19, 26 and February 2 at 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Atlantic Time (7:30 to 9 NL Time.) Each session will be 1½ hours duration. Meetings will be hosted by Marion Pardy (NL), Karen & Hal Llewellyn (NS), Audrey Louder and Rose-Hannah Gaskin (NB).

We ask those who register to make a commitment to read through the book and to participate as fully as possible in the sessions. The plan is to go through 5 chapters each evening of January 12, 19 and 26. We have Senator Hugh Segal himself confirmed for the February 2 discussion and final session.

The registration form can be accessed <https://ucceast.ca/64326-book-study-bootstraps-need-boots-one-torys-lonely-fight-to-end-poverty-in-canada/> **Registration deadline is January 4, 2022.**

There is no charge for the course. We invite participants, however, to consider making a free-will offering to the Mission and Service Fund of The United Church of Canada.

A number of the books are now in stock at the United Church Resource Centre, St. John's, NL at a subsidized cost of \$25 (plus shipping, if necessary). United Church Resource Centre, 320 Elizabeth Avenue, St. John's, NL A1B 1T9; by telephone at 1-800-268-3781, extension 6141; or email Leona Laundry at LLaundry@united-church.ca.

For any further information you may contact rose-hannah.gaskin@gmail.com or m-pardy@nf.sympatico.ca

The book is also available through the Interlibrary Loan program through our local library.

SCRIPTURE READING – NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION

LUKE 1:68-79

68 “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.

69 He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David,

70 as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,

71 that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

72 Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant,

73 the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us

74 that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear,

75 in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

77 to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins.

78 By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us,

79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

LUKE 3:1-6

1 In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene,

2 during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

3 He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins,

4 as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth;

6 and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”