

*The United Church of Canada*  
*Bathurst Pastoral Charge*  
**First United Church, Bathurst**  
[www.firstunited-bathurst.ca](http://www.firstunited-bathurst.ca)

**December 11, 2022**

**Minister** Rev. Neal Palmer    **Music Director** Martha Vickers  
**Office Adm.** Margaret Daniels    **Greeter** Julie Spence  
**Custodian** Lester Scott    Harvey Spence

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<b><u>Lectionary for today</u></b>	<b><u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u></b>
Isaiah 35:1-10 Luke 1:47-55 James 5:7-10 Matthew 11:2-11	Isaiah 7:10-16 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 Romans 1:1-7 Matthew 1:18-25
Today's bulletin is placed in loving memory of <b>Donald (Donnie) Branch</b> whose death occurred on December 6, 2022 in Cornwall, Ontario, by Elizabeth & Gary Branch	

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

*GATHERING*

**MUSIC AS WE GATHER**

**WELCOME & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**THE ADVENT OF JOY** *(responsively)*

*The Scott family (Katie, Matt, Avery & Grace)*

*Two candles are lit.*

Today is the Advent of joy.

We light this candle for the joy of the earth, the oceans, the skies, and all that lives.

**We live in a world that takes more from the earth than it gives.**

We light this candle as our commitment to the joy of living in respect with creation.

**We are the caretakers of this earth, our home.**

We light this candle in celebration of Jesus, the Light of the World.

*The third candle is lit.*

**"Hope Is a Star"** – VU #7 *(Verse 3)*

***Joy is a song that welcomes the dawn,  
telling the world that the Saviour is born.  
When God is a child there's joy in our song.  
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
and none shall be afraid.***

**CALL TO WORSHIP** *(responsively)*

In this Season of Advent, we wait humbly and faithfully for the rebirth of the Christ Light within us.

**In the shadows of a sometimes weary world, we come together, trusting this Light will indeed shine upon us once more.**

An ancient song pulls our heartstrings towards the Holy One.

**The way, through Jesus, has been made plain for us.**

**GATHERING PRAYER**

**\*GATHERING HYMN** – “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”  
(*Gathering, A/C/E 2007-8 pg. 86*) (vs. 1-3)

Good Christian friends, rejoice,  
With heart and soul and voice,  
In darkness we have heard a call:  
Hope! Hope!  
Gift of God for one and all.  
Light shines in the darkness near.  
We're released from all our fear.  
A candle flames in hope,  
A candle flames in hope.

Good Christian friends, rejoice,  
With heart and soul and voice,  
Battles, wars should be no more:  
Peace! Peace!  
Harmony will be our core.  
Calls for peace and calls you all,  
In penitence to humbly fall.  
A candle flames for peace,  
A candle flames for peace.

Good Christian friends, rejoice,  
With heart and soul and voice.  
Now we hear of endless bliss:  
Joy! Joy!  
Jesus Christ was born for this.  
He has opened heaven's door  
And we are blessed forevermore!  
A candle flames in joy,  
A candle flames in joy!

**PRAYER OF HUMILITY**

**CHORAL RESPONSE**

***O holy Child of Bethlehem!***  
***Descend to us, we pray;***  
***Cast out our sin, and enter in;***  
***be born in us today.***

**\*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** – “Never Ending Joy” – MV #40

*Refrain:*  
*Never ending joy, never ending joy,*  
*never ending joy,*  
*never ending joy, never ending joy,*  
*never ending joy!*

God of every tribe, every language,  
God of every river and sea,  
God of every mountain and island,  
you bring joy to me.

*Refrain*

God of every hill, every valley,  
God of every leaf, every tree,  
God of every cloud, every raindrop,  
you bring joy to me.

*Refrain*

God of every song, every story,  
God of every captive set free,  
God of every dance, every footstep,  
you bring joy to me.

*Refrain*

*ENGAGING*

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

**SCRIPTURE READING**

*Anne Brooks*

Isaiah 35:1-10

Luke 1:47-55

James 5:7-10

**REFLECTION**

**MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION**

**GIFT OF MUSIC – “Joy to the World”**

*RESPONDING*

**MINUTE FOR MISSION**

*Bev Murphy*

**INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

**THE OFFERING IS BROUGHT FORWARD**

**\*OFFERING HYMN**

*(Tune – Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow)*

*Joyful is how we seek to live,  
Joyful in what we each can give.  
Joyful in what we speak and hear,  
And joy in what we offer here.*

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

**God of plenty, like a great mother, your fill our lives  
with love, connection, and ultimate care.  
In this moment, we hold open our arms or our hands and  
silently name the ways we’ve been blessed with safe homes,  
enough food, and enough, enough, enough...**

**You, who knows the world’s needs, we thank you so deeply  
that we know our very best response is to give back what  
was always yours to begin with: our talents, our money, our  
very best love.**

**We hold open our arms or our hands and silently name the  
ways we dedicate ourselves to you today.**

**We lift up the very money or time or talents or love we want  
to give...**

**Hear, feel, and know, we pray, our dedicated love for you.**

**Amen**

**SHARING OUR CONCERNS**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (responsively)**

...we’re given courage to speak truth in all things.

**Thanks for giving us voices to raise in joy.**

Give us, we pray, the strength to lift up those who are oppressed or  
marginalized. Give us strength as we seek lives wrapped in justice.

**Help us be patient as progress is made.**

May we lift our voices in loud song, we pray, as we rejoice in the work  
already done.

**May we join in Mary’s song and be forever changed by our  
singing.**

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

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kindom 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 kindom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.**

**Amen.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**\*CLOSING CAROL** – “Hark! the Herald Angels Sing” – VU #48

Hark! The herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn King,  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!”  
Joyful all ye nations rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic host proclaim,  
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

***Refrain:***

*Hark! the herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn King!”*

Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of a virgin’s womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail, the incarnate deity,  
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel!

***Refrain:***

Hail, the heavenborn Prince of Peace!  
Hail, the Son of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
born that we no more may die,  
born to raise us from the earth,  
Born to give us second birth.

***Refrain:***

**\*BLESSING** (*responsively*)

...Go now in joy!

**May it be so.**

**Amen**

**\*CHORAL CLOSING** – “I Am Walking a Path of Peace” – MV #221

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

*(The Advent Candles are extinguished.)*

**POSTLUDE**



# Church News

This Week at First United – Dec 12 <sup>th</sup> to Dec 16 <sup>th</sup>		
Monday	9:00-11:00 AM	Badminton – DEMH GYM
Wednesday	9:00-11:00 AM	Badminton – DEMH GYM
	6:30 PM	Choir Practice

**Church office hours** - Monday to Friday 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

**Christmas Eve Services** will be held at 4 PM and 7 PM. There will not be a worship service held on Christmas morning, December 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Peanut Butter Update** - As of December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022, 372 jars of Peanut Butter has been collected to go to the Bathurst Volunteer Center. **Our goal is 900 jars for the year** and we currently have **830** including what has been purchased with monetary donations.

**Memorial Hymn Sing** is scheduled for this Sunday afternoon, December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 2 PM. Please join with us to sing Christmas Carols that mean so much to us as we remember our loved ones.



**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 13, 2022.**

**Broadview (Observer) Renewal** is due in December. If you receive this publication and have not yet renewed your subscription at the church office please do so by Monday, December 19, 2022. If you would like to start to receive this United Church of Canada publication please contact the office at 546-3532. The annual subscription rate is \$25 (tax included).

# Church News

**Advent Devotional Booklets 2022** – “*What’s Left of the Night?*” are available in the narthex for a donation to First United Church. Please feel free to pick up a copy.

## **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 with 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, healing and reconciliation.

There are catalogues, which show a small 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](http://giftswithvision.ca).

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

# Community News

**A CHRISTMAS CAROL SING** will be held on **Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM** at St. George’s Anglican Church. Join us for a time of singing favorite Christmas carols and enjoying the spirit of Christmas. Coffee and tea to follow in the church hall.

## **SCRIPTURE READINGS** *(New Revised Standard Version)*

### **ISAIAH 35:1-10**

- 1 The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus
- 2 it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.
- 3 Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.
- 4 Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you."
- 5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
- 6 then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert;
- 7 the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.
- 8 A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
- 9 No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there.
- 10 And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

### **LUKE 1:47-55**

- 47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
- 48 for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
- 49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.
- 50 His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.
- 51 He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
- 52 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;
- 53 he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.
- 54 He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,
- 55 according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

### **JAMES 5:7-10**

- 7 Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains.
- 8 You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.
- 9 Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors!
- 10 As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

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