

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

July 30, 2023

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<u>Lectionary for today</u>	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u>
Genesis 29:15-28 Psalm 105:1-11, 45b Romans 8:26-39 Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52	Genesis 32:22-31 Palm 17:1-7, 15 Romans 9:1-5 Matthew 14:13-21
<i>We welcome Rev. Blair Lewis who is leading us in worship today – Thank you!</i>	
<i>We also welcome Linda Knowles MacPherson as our guest pianist/organist and thank her for the beautiful music</i>	
Today's bulletin has been placed in loving memory of Melissa Carroll by Mom and Dad, with love <i>Always in our thoughts..... Forever in our hearts.</i>	

The asterisk * identifies those times in the service where you are invited to present yourselves, body, mind, and spirit, as is comfortable for you today...

GATHERING

MUSIC AS WE GATHER:

***WELCOME & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:** (in unison)

...As we gather to worship, let's respectfully pause to remember we live and work and worship on lands that are, by law, the unceded territory of the original peoples, the Mi'kmaq. May we live with respect on this land, and live in peace and in friendship with its people.

***LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE:** (in unison)

Eternal God, as we light the Christ Candle we celebrate that you are the light of the minds that know you, the joy of the hearts that love you, and the strength of the wills that serve you; grant us so to know you that we may truly love you, and so to love you that we may fully serve you, whose service is perfect freedom, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Augustine 354-430

The Christ Candle is lit.

CENTERING FOR WORSHIP: "Wind is Moving"

Seasons of the Spirit vol. 1

**Wind is moving over water,
 patterns shifting out across the bay.
 Grass is bending on the hillside;
 clouds are drifting right across the sky.
 O Holy Spirit, move over all our lives.
 O Holy Spirit, move over all our lives.**

Give us, our God, a little sun, a little happiness, and some work.

Give us a heart to comfort those in pain.

Give us the ability to be good, strong, wise, and free, so that we may be as generous with others as we are with ourselves.

Finally, may we with the guidance of your spirit, all live as your own one family. Amen.

Mexico, 20th Century



CALL TO WORSHIP: *(responsively)*

We have been called the salt of the earth.

Let us remain distinctive and salty.

We have been called the light of the world.

Let us shine brightly in the midst of pain or confusion.

We have been called a city set on a hill.

Let us, like Jerusalem, lift our gates, lift our hearts,

lift our voices in the worship of God.

GATHERING PRAYER: *(in unison)*

**Touch us, O God, through the ministry of melody,
through the sounds and senses of song,
through the wordless wonder which fills
our souls with heaven,
through the spirit which teaches our feet to
dance and causes our hearts to overflow,
that we might be absorbed in the mystery
and magic of music,
and that, in this moment of oneness,
our lives will be bonded to each other and to you.
Amen.**

***GATHERING HYMN:** "Let There Be Light"

VU #679

Let there be light,
let there be understanding,
let all the nations gather,
let them be face to face;

open our lips,
open our minds to ponder,
open the door of concord
opening into grace;

perish the sword,
perish the angry judgment,
perish the bombs and hunger,
perish the fight for gain;

hallow our love,
hallow the deaths of martyrs,
hallow their holy freedom,
hallowed be your name;

your kingdom come,
your spirit turn to language,
your people speak together,
your spirit never fade;

let there be light;
open our hearts to wonder,
perish the way of terror,
hallow the world God made.

PRAYER OF HUMILITY: *(responsively)*

Sometimes we hurt our friends.
Sometimes we hurt ourselves.
Sometimes we hurt God.
Our prayer of humility is a chance to say "We're sorry."

**Jesus, who sat at the table with outcasts and sinners,
we confess that too often our words and actions
are not consistent with our beliefs.**

**Often we ignore the needy,
show indifference to the lonely,
and reject those who seem different from us.**

Forgive us, we pray.

Empower us to reach out in love and acceptance.

O God of mystery,
we confess that, more than deep questions,

we love easy answers;
explaining away miracles, disarming the Good News,
we domesticate your wild ways.

Teach us to love our questions, O God.
Teach us to struggle with faith.
Teach us to live with your holy mysteries.

ASSURANCE OF OUR FAITH: *(responsively)*

Anyone in Christ becomes a new person altogether;
the past is finished and gone;
everything has become fresh and new.
Friends, believe the Good News of the gospel:
In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

CHORAL RESPONSE: "Take, O Take Me as I Am" MV #85

Take, O take me as I am;
summon out what I shall be;
set your seal upon my heart
and live in me, in me.

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

The Peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

(We greet one another in the name of Christ)

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

Margaret Payne-Chénard & Sandra Boone

***SINGING A SONG:** "Small Things Count" VU #361

Small things count, so Jesus said:
cups of water, crumbs of bread,
small things done because we're kind
count as big things in God's mind.

Small things make the big things grow:
grains of yeast inside the dough,
puffs that fill a big balloon,
notes that make a happy tune.

Every hair that's on our head,
every sparrow, Jesus said,
God takes care of, counts and knows,
God loves us from top to toes!

ENGAGING

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION:

O God,
your Word is a lamp to our feet,
and a light to our path.
Give us grace to receive your truth
in faith and love. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Judy Losier

New Testament Lesson: Romans 8:26-30

*Psalm 23 Page 747 Voices United *(to be sung by congregation)*
(Please stand as you are able)

Gospel Lesson: Matthew 13:31-34; 44

REFLECTION: "The Mustard Seed, Yeast and the Hidden Treasure"

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION:

GIFT OF MUSIC: "I Love to Tell the Story"

RESPONDING

MINUTE FOR MISSION/YOUR GENEROSITY MATTERS:

Anne Wilson

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING:

With joy, let us present offerings of commitment
and support for the work of Christ's church.

THE OFFERING IS BROUGHT FORWARD:



***OFFERING HYMN:** "These Gifts We Bring"

*These gifts we bring with grateful hearts,
to reconcile, make new.
Gather us in grace, show us the way,
to live our lives in Truth
to share Your love in all we do.*

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION:** *(in unison)*

**God of all peoples and God of all places,
we present these offerings,
that they may be used to extend your liberating reign.
With them, we offer our varied ministries,
that each of us may be part of your answer
to the cries of the world. Amen.**

PASTORAL PRAYER:

In prayer we bring everything to God—
good things and bad things.
And God always hears us when we pray.
Let us pray.

This morning in our pastoral prayer we remember all who are ill in
hospital or at home.

We remember those who are living in long-term care who are facing
significant health challenges and all who are searching for a path
forward in the presence of uncertainty.

We remember all who are living in a time of grief and loss that they
may know the comforting presence of loved ones and your Holy
Spirit.

We remember all who are living with the impact of wild fires that are
happening across our country. May the power of Your love be a
source of comfort in a time of uncertainty.

**We pray for the peace of the world, O God,
and for the peace that only you can give—
not only the absence of conflict and battle,
but also the fullness of life that is prosperity for all,
goodwill among neighbours,
and welcome for every outsider.**

We thank you, God, that we have lived
in this great world and known its many joys.
For all of life,

we give you thanks.

Remembering the song of birds,
the strong, sweet scent of hay,
and cooling breezes in the secret dusk,
the flaming sunset at the close of day.
For all of life,

we give you thanks.

Remembering the lonely hills,
music at night and moonlight on the sea,
the beat of waves on the rocky shore,
and wild, white spray flung high.
For all of life,

we give you thanks.

Remembering the love of kin and the support of friends,
and all that makes life dear and beautiful;
remembering that there has come
a little sorrow, and sometime defeat,
a little heartache, and the loneliness
that comes with parting, and the word "Goodbye."
For all of life,

we give you thanks.

Remembering the breaking dawn after dreary hours of pain,
the discovery that night's gloom yields,
and morning light breaks through again.
For all of life,

we give you thanks.

Because of these and other blessings
poured unasked upon our heads;
because there waits an even richer
and more glorious life;
and most of all, because your only Son
once sacrificed life's loveliness for us,
we thank you, God, that we have lived
in this great world and known its many joys.
For all of life,

we give you thanks. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER: *(in unison)*

VU #921

**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 Spirit people)

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

***CLOSING HYMN:** "Faith of Our Fathers"

VU #580

Faith of our fathers, living still
in spite of dungeon, fire, and sword;
O how our hearts beat high with joy,
when e'er we hear that glorious word:
faith of our fathers, holy faith,
we will be true to you till death.

Faith of our mothers, daring faith,
your work for Christ is love revealed,
spreading God's word from pole to pole,
making love known and freedom real:
faith of our mothers, holy faith,
we will be true to you till death.

Faith of our sisters, brothers too,
who still must bear oppression's might,
raising on high, in prisons dark,
the cross of Christ still burning bright:
faith for today, O living faith,
we will be true to you till death.

Faith born of God, O call us yet;
bind us with all who follow you,
sharing the struggle of your cross
until the world is made anew.
Faith born of God, O living faith,
we will be true to you till death.

***COMMISSIONING:**

May the God of hope
fill you with all joy and peace,
so that you may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit.
Romans 15:13

***BLESSING:**

God the Father bless you and keep you,
God the Son save you and direct you,
God the Spirit teach you and guide you,
this day and evermore.

***CHORAL SENDING FORTH:** "I Wish You the Blessing"

*I wish you the blessing of faith to sustain you,
friends to support you, challenge to stir you,
songs to empower you, peace to refresh you,
tears to release you, laughter to heal you,
love to nurture your soul.*

The Christ Candle is extinguished.

POSTLUDE

Church News

The summer church office hours are now in effect – open Monday to Thursday – 9 AM to 3 PM. The office will be closed on Fridays until after the Labour Day weekend.



Peanut Butter – Our pledge this year to the Bathurst Volunteer Center is **900 jars**. As of July 27th **431** jars have been donated.

Several cases of COVID-19 Tests have been donated to First United Church. Please feel free to pick up some boxes of tests to have on hand at home.

Community News

Celebration of Life for John Whelton, Black Rock, deceased April 4th at the age of 91, will be held on August 5th at 11 AM at the St. Simon and St. Jude Church in Grand Anse. The family welcomes your presence.



SCRIPTURE READING *(New Revised Standard Updated Edition)*

ROMANS 8:26-30

26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words.

27 And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

28 We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family.

30 And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

PSALM 23 - VU PAGE 747 - *(to be sung by congregation)*

MATTHEW 13:31-34; 44

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

31 He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;

32 it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

The Parable of the Yeast

33 He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

The Use of Parables

34 Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing.

Three Parables

44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

May God bless to our understanding this significant part of our Christian story...

PSALTER 747

Psalm 23
The Lord's My Shepherd



1 The Lord's my Shep-herd, I'll not want;
2 My soul he doth re-store a-gain;
3 Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
4 My ta-ble thou hast fur-nish-ed;
5 Good-ness and mer-cy all my life

he makes me down to lie in pas-tures green; he
and me to walk doth make with-in the paths of
yet will I fear no ill, for thou art with me;
in pres-ence of my foes, my head thou dost with
shall sure-ly fol-low me, and in God's house for

lead-eth me, the qui-et wa-ters by.
right-eous-ness, even for his own name's sake.
and thy rod and staff me com-fort still.
oil a-noint, and my cup o-ver-flows.
ev-er-more my dwell-ing-place shall be.