

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

**September 17, 2023**

**Minister** Rev. Neal Palmer    **Music Director** Martha Vickers  
**Office Adm.** Margaret Daniels    **Custodian** Lester Scott  
**Greeters** Lester Scott & Gayle Ferron  
**Visual Technicians** Donald Eddy & Lester Scott  
**Audio Technician** Ralph Jamieson

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<b><u>Lectionary for today</u></b>	<b><u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u></b>
Joel 1:8-10, 17-20	Genesis 8:20-22; 9:12-17
Psalm 18:6-19	Psalm 104:27-33
Romans 8:18-27	Revelation 22:1-5
Matthew 3:13—4:2	Matthew 28:1-10

*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** *(responsively)*

When we light a candle, we usually carry it to where we're going and then set it down.

**Then, we go about doing whatever we're doing within its light.**

Jesus is another kind of light, a candle that lights up our minds, our hearts, and our spirits.

**We experience this as grace, as call, as empowerment, but it's a light we don't set down. Because, we don't actually determine where it guides us.**

We light this Christ Candle

**as the light we carry with us.**

*The Christ Candle is lit...*

**CENTERING FOR WORSHIP** - "This Is the Day" – MV #122

***This is the day that God has made;  
we will rejoice and be glad!  
This is the day that God has made;  
we will rejoice and be glad!  
Singing hal-le-lu, singing hal-le-lu,  
singing hal-le-lu! We will rejoice and be glad!  
Singing hal-le-lu, singing hal-le-lu,  
singing hal-le-lu! We will rejoice and be glad!***

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

...Wilderness calls to us:

**Arid lands and frozen tundra, give us ground on which to stand.**

We welcome the wilds to stretch our horizons, even as they draw us inward:

**Sun-bleached sands and jungled canopies, open us to breath-blowing Spirit around and within.**

Wilderness/Outback, we seek your gifts. Spur us to your hopes in the Spirit.

**Salmon and monarchs, carry us to the waters of faith's birth and the future land of new life.**

### **GATHERING PRAYER**

**\*GATHERING HYMN –** MV #10  
"Come and Seek the Ways of Wisdom"

Come and seek the ways of Wisdom,  
she who danced when earth was new.  
Follow closely what she teaches,  
for her words are right and true.  
Wisdom clears the path to justice,  
showing us what love must do.

Listen to the voice of Wisdom,  
crying in the marketplace.  
Hear the Word made flesh among us,  
full of glory, truth, and grace.  
When the word takes root and ripens,  
peace and righteousness embrace.

Sister Wisdom, come, assist us;  
nurture all who seek rebirth.  
Spirit-guide and close companion,  
bring to light our sacred worth.  
Free us to become your people,  
holy friends of God and earth.

### **REMEMBERING** (*responsively*)

*(Take the Wilderness Rock, hold it with your fingers, and then share with the person next to you a special memory of outback or desert or somewhere in the wild.)*

We remember the wilderness God created, the wild places on Earth, the worlds of wonder and mystery, and the distant dreamings of the Outback.

**We remember the wild worlds and hiding places of our childhood, where we felt the mystery of caves and wild creatures in the mountains.**

We remember, rejoice, and give thanks

**for Wilderness, the wild places that stir us with wonder.**

### **PRAYER OF HUMILITY** (*responsively*)

Humans take up more and more space every year.

**Sometimes, we claim what we think is ours and tame what is wild.**

We don't hear the groaning of Creation, but only our own hopes and dreams.

**Forgive us, Holy One. Help us see all that's connected to our need for hope.** (*Moment of Silence*)

### **CHORAL RESPONSE** – "And When You Call for Me" – MV #96

***And when you call for me,  
I have already answered.  
And when you call for me,  
I am already there.***

### **\*GREETING ONE ANOTHER** (*responsively*)

...The Spirit of Love and Peace be with you all.

**And also with you.**

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

*Wilderness' Story...*

**\*SINGING A SONG** – “Creator and Poet”

*(Seasons of the Spirit vol. 3)*

Father and Mother, creator and poet,  
speaking your wisdom in forest and glade:  
telling your glory in ocean and river  
pouring your pleasure on all you have made.

Christ of the cosmos, you sang into being,  
galaxies spinning through measureless space;  
coming among us and sharing our weakness;  
singing your songs of redemption and grace.

Spirit, you danced at the dawn of creation,  
rising, rejoicing on jubilant wings.  
Yours is the rhythm of cycle and season,  
yours is the heartbeat of all living things.

God, you have made us of stardust and spirit,  
etching your image on ev'ry cell.  
We are your love-song, your poem and rhythm.  
All co-creators, your story to tell.

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*ENGAGING*

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

**SCRIPTURE READING**

*Gary Branch*

Romans 8:18-27

**REFLECTION**

**MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION**

**GIFT OF MUSIC** – “As the Deer Pants for Water”

*RESPONDING*

**MINUTE FOR MISSION/YOUR GENEROSITY MATTERS**

*Pat MacIntosh*

**INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

**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.*

**\*OFFERING PRAYER** *(responsively)*

We are called to step out beyond our homes

**and see this world,**

to be adventurers who meditate

**on the vastness of the universe.**

Bless us, Holy One, and the gifts we bring,

**to your vibrant, diverse world of life.**

We are all on a lifelong journey

**to the heart of your presence.**

**Amen**

**SHARING OUR CONCERNS**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE** *(responsively)*

Life-giving One,  
in the wild places, you are teeming with life.

**We are called to enter the wilderness, to enter our senses to all.**

Pain-bearing One,  
we bring our longings into the wild.

**Stir in us those deep pains, and all that aches for lives lost, and yearns for what is still to come.**

Where there is waste, where there is a desire to tame and control,  
where the spread of human population treads heavily,

**open our senses, stir our compassion.**

In the deep inner hurts and human struggles, where language and story have stunted life, where painful disappointments have burned deep within,

**open our hearts with tenderness, stir our acts of kindness.**

Where there is silencing of profound longing, when the cries go unheard, when the voices of desolation are unheeded,

**open our mouths in protest, stir our passion to plead.**

When there are fragile shoots of new birthing, when the tiny glimmer of hope stirs unbidden, when breath quickens or sighs from the deep,

**open our wisest discerning, stir the midwife within.**

For you, Wild One, breathe us into action

**that gives flesh to our prayer.**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER** – VU #916 (A Paraphrase) *(in unison)*

**Eternal Spirit,  
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,  
Source of all that is and that shall be.  
Father and Mother of us all,  
Loving God, in whom is heaven:**

**The hallowing of your name echo  
through the universe!**

**The way of your justice be followed  
by peoples of the world!  
Your heavenly will be done  
by all created beings!  
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom  
sustain our hope and come on earth.**

**With the bread we need for today, feed us.  
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.  
In the times of temptation and test, strengthen us.  
From trials too great to endure, spare us.  
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.**

**For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,  
now and for ever.**

**Amen**

*GOING OUT (as Spirit people)*

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**\*CLOSING HYMN –**

VU #556

“Would You Bless Our Homes and Families”

Would you bless our homes and families,  
Source of life who calls us here;  
in our world of stress and tension  
teach us love that conquers fear.  
Help us learn to love each other  
with a love that constant stays;  
teach us when we face our troubles,  
love's expressed in many ways.

When our way is undemanding,  
let us use the time that's ours  
to delight in simple pleasures,  
sharing joys in gentle hours.  
When our way is anxious walking  
and a heavy path we plod,  
teach us trust in one another  
and in you, our gracious God.

# Church News

From the homes in which we're nurtured,  
with the love that shapes us there,  
teach us, God, to claim as family  
every one whose life we share.  
And through all that life may offer,  
may we in your love remain;  
may the love we share in families  
be alive to praise your name.

Let us reach beyond the boundaries  
of our daily thought and care  
till the family you have chosen  
spills its love out everywhere.  
Help us learn to love each other  
with a love that constant stays;  
teach us when we face our troubles  
love's expressed in many ways.

## \*BLESSING

**\*CHORAL SENDING FORTH** – "I Wish You the Blessing"

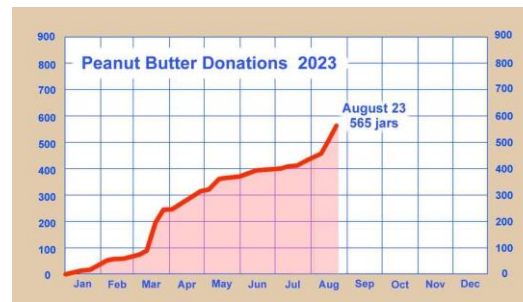
***We wish you the blessing of faith to sustain you,  
friends to support you, challenge to stir you,  
songs to empower you, peace to refresh you,  
tears to release you, laughter to heal you,  
love to nurture your soul.***

*The Christ Candle is extinguished.*

## POSTLUDE

This Week at First United – September 18 <sup>th</sup> to 23 <sup>rd</sup>		
Monday	9:00 AM	Ways & Means Committee - RMR
Wednesday	6:30 PM	Choir Practice
	7:00 PM	Property Management - RMR
Thursday	3:30 to 5:30 PM	BBQ Beef Take Out Supper
Saturday	8:00 AM to 1:00 PM	Community Market - DEH

**Regular Office Hours** are now back in effect – open Monday to Friday – 9 AM to 3 PM.



**Peanut Butter** – Our pledge this year to the Bathurst Volunteer Center is **900 jars**. As of September 14<sup>th</sup> **601** jars have been donated.

**Choir Practice** has started for the fall season. It is held each Wednesday at 6:30. We meet for approximately an hour. Anyone who enjoys singing, please feel free to attend. New members are always welcome!



**TAKE OUT BBQ Beef Supper** will be held on Thursday, September 21<sup>st</sup> from 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM. Tickets are now available - **\$17** for adults and **\$6** for children. As there are a limited number of tickets they will be sold on a first come-first served basis. Please contact a member of the *Ways & Means Committee* or drop by the church office from 9 AM to 3 PM Monday to Friday.

**Sponsored by Hatheway Auto Group**

**Scent Reduced Environment** – This is a reminder to everyone that First United Church has a policy stating the buildings are scent reduced. We ask that everyone refrain from using strong scents when attending the church buildings.

# Church News

**BACK TO SCHOOL** - The Community Outreach Sub-Team requests your help in providing a variety of school supplies for needy students. These items will be donated to Terry Fox Elementary School & distributed as necessary. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

**Ways & Means Team** will meet on **Monday**, September 18<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM in the Ruth Morrison Room.

**Property Management Team** will meet on **Wednesday**, September 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM in the Ruth Morrison Room.

## Community News

**"Help Lesotho" Calendars** - The Anglophone School District – North has been sponsoring "Help Lesotho" since 2006 as part of its global awareness initiative. As a fundraiser where all of the money raised goes to help finance its work with orphans, vulnerable children, and grandmothers in Lesotho, Africa; "Help Lesotho" has 2024 calendars for sale at a cost of \$15.00. You are invited to support this initiative with your donation. Gary Branch (506-546-9208) or via email ([egbranch@rogers.com](mailto:egbranch@rogers.com)) will be taking orders for these calendars until October 10, 2023. Payment can be made in advance by cash, cheque, or e-transfer, or when the calendars are delivered in November. Cheques are to be made payable to "Help Lesotho". Thank you for your support of this initiative.

**A Talent Evening** will be held on Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> beginning at 6:30 PM at Christ Church Hall in Clifton. Admission is \$10 for adults and children under 12 are free.

St. George's Anglican Church Hall, 432 King Avenue will hold a **Yard Sale** on **Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> from 8 AM to 12 PM.**

## THE MOD'S BOOK SQUAD

Brew a cup of tea or pour a glass of your favourite drink, and snuggle in with a good book. Oh, and you can discuss the book with at least two friends—the Right Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne, Moderator of The United Church of Canada, and her guest—in one of Canada's biggest book clubs.

**Starting September 21, 2023** and ending in June 2025, these (mostly) monthly book club sessions will feature fiction, non-fiction and poetry written by (mostly) Canadian authors. Through a lens of flourishing, the books explore:

- Dreaming, utopias, and dystopias
- The environment and resource extraction
- Urban/rural difference of experience
- Reconciliation
- Poverty
- The theology of The United Church of Canada

There will be bold ideas. There will be daring connections. There will be content you can dig your teeth into. And guaranteed, there will be laughter. Because the Mod is like that.

### Get reading and join the discussion!

1. Visit your local library or purchase the books from [United Church Bookstore \(opens in a new tab\)](#)!
  - Get 15% off your purchase of two or more books featured in The Mod's Book Squad at the United Church Bookstore with the discount code MODSQUAD (applied at checkout). Visit [the collection \(opens in a new tab\)](#) to see all available featured books.
2. Register for the monthly discussions [on ChurchX \(opens in a new tab\)](#) (create or log into your account to register). All sessions run 6:30-8:00 p.m. EST.
3. Read whichever books strike your fancy. **Tune in to one session, some, or all of them.**

### The first 2 on the list

- *The Marrow Thieves*: Cheri Dimaline
  - [Discussion: September 21, 2023](#)
  - Guest: John Thatamanil
- *Doughnut Economics*: Kate Raworth
  - [Discussion: October 19, 2023](#)
  - Guest: John Havens

## SCRIPTURE READING

### ROMANS 8:18-27

18 I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us.

19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God,

20 for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope

21 that the creation itself will be set free from its enslavement to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning together as it suffers together the pains of labor,

23 and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

24 For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what one already sees?

25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

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.

*May the Spirit bless to our understanding this significant part of our Christian story...*

