

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

**December 2, 2018**  
**First Sunday of Advent**

**Minister** Rev. Jean Herman      **Organist** Martha Vickers  
**Office Adm.** Isabel Clouston      **Greeters** Nancy & Allen Jagoe  
**Custodian** Steve White

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<u>Lectionary for today</u>	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u>
<i>Jeremiah 33:14-16</i>	<i>Malachi 3:1-4</i>
<i>Psalm 25</i>	<i>Luke 1:68-79</i>
<i>I Thessalonians 3:9-13</i>	<i>Philippians 1:3-11</i>
<i>Luke 21:25-36</i>	<i>Luke 3:1-6</i>

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

## THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

### Musical Prelude:

### Choral Opening:

*Emmanuel, Emmanuel,  
 His name is called Emmanuel;  
 God with us, revealed in us;  
 His name is called Emmanuel.*



### Welcoming:

Welcome one another, therefore,  
 as Christ has welcomed you,  
 for the glory of God.

*Romans 15:7*

### Welcoming Friends Worshipping by CD:

### Announcements:

### Lighting the First Advent Candle: (McLaggan Family)

**One:** As we look towards the night sky,  
 we see the sparkle of stars  
 set against the depth of infinite space.  
 We feel humbled by the vastness of the universe  
 and overwhelmed by what we do not know.

**All: Open us to recognize  
 your presence all around us,  
 even when all seems shadowed  
 and overwhelming.**

**One :** Like another star sparkling in the night,  
 we light this candle.  
 Holy night, you shine with hope  
 in the challenges of our world

**All: Together, we light the candle of hope.**  
*(The first blue candle of Advent is lit)*

**Choral Response:** 'Candle Light, Sacred Light '  
 (Tune – Silent Night)

***Candle light, sacred light.  
 Mystery flames, burning bright  
 We are waiting for Jesus' new birth.  
 Shine his hope over all of the earth.  
 Thanks for the gift of hope, thanks for the gift of hope.***

### Call to Worship:

**One:** God's world is a rainbow world,  
 a joyful spectrum of colour

**All: Today, God speaks to us  
 in the greening of a righteous branch.**

**One:** We long for the Christ to bring colour to a waiting world

**All: Let us worship God in this season of hope**

**Prayer of Approach:** (in unison)

**Loving God,  
 our praises and prayers this first Advent day  
 flow from the season's joyous news.  
 You come to your people.  
 You visit us.  
 You dwell with us.  
 You come and your presence alone changes reality.**

**Your truth breaks forth,  
shaking our world and shattering lies,  
setting your people free.  
Your coming is our hope.  
The Kingdom of God has drawn near. Amen.**

**\*Opening Hymn:**      *'God of all Places'*      **#4VU**

**Children of all ages:**

## **THE SERVICE OF THE WORD**

### **Prayer for Understanding:**

Illuminating Spirit of God, use today's reading,  
and the preaching of your word, to shine a clear light.  
Help us to discern and understand the signs  
that are in your word.  
By the power of your Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.

### **Scripture Readings:**

Anne Brooks

**Old Testament Lesson:**

Jeremiah 33: 14-16

**New testament lesson:**

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

**Responsive Psalm:**

Psalm 25:1-10 (VU p. 752)

**Gospel Lesson:**

Luke 21 :25-36

**\*Hymn:**      *'Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus'*      **#2 VU**

**Message:**

**Anthem:**

## **THE COMMUNITY RESPONDS**

**Invitation to the offering:**

**Presentation of Gifts and Self to God:**

**Choral Response:** *'In the Bleak Midwinter'* **#55VU** vs.4

***What can I give him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
If I were a wise man, I would do my part,  
Yet what I can, I give him, give my heart.***

### **Prayer of Dedication:**

**One:** Let us bring our gifts,  
our hopes for God's new world,  
in service and love.

**All:**      **Bless these gifts, O God,  
that they may help  
prepare the way to the manger,  
to your entering our world  
with justice and humility.**

**Prayer of Confession:**      (in unison)

**We confess that we are dull  
to the splendor of your presence  
and are slow to perceive the new life you offer us.  
Instead of turning to your light,  
we remain blinded and live in the darkness.  
Forgive us for living with shallow hope  
and narrow expectations.  
Awaken us to the glory and splendor of your presence.  
Revive our hope and reawaken our energy  
for your purposes so that we may perceive  
your kingdom's coming  
and participate in the holy celebration,  
adding our voices to the singing of angels,  
shepherds, magi, and believers  
down through the centuries.  
Blessing, glory and honour be yours, Lord Jesus Christ.  
Amen**

**Choral Response:**

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

**Assurance of Pardon:**

The One who comes with justice, comes also with mercy.  
The Righteous One makes our relationships right.  
The God of judgment is the Christ of compassion.  
Do not be afraid but rejoice in the God who comes.

## Silent Prayer / Reflective Music:

### Pastoral Prayer:

One: O Spirit of Hope;  
When the world is confusing and bleak,  
you pierce the darkness with light.  
We give you thanks for lessons learned,  
for changes of heart,  
for new discoveries made and hope restored.  
O God, give us hope in our time; Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayer.**

One: O God of Peace;  
Within ourselves, our relationships,  
our communities and world  
there is often strife and discord.  
We pray for all places where violence and cruelty  
appear to win the day.  
We pray for places where peace  
is not accompanied with justice  
and where justice is not accompanied by mercy.  
O God, give us peace in our time; Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayer.**

One: O High Love of Heaven;  
You call us to live in communion  
with you and one another.  
We remember before you our families,  
whether we be close or estranged,  
our friends whether they be close or far away,  
and we ask you blessing on our partners, friends,  
children, parents and our elders.  
By your advent among us,  
inspire us to be present to one another –  
expressing our love and gratitude  
and concern for one another in words and actions.  
O God, give us love in our time. Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayer.**

One: O God that hears our prayers,  
hear us as we pray the prayer that your son taught us;

**All: Our Father...**

## THE COMMUNITY GOES FORTH

### \*Closing Hymn:

*'I Have Called You by Your Name'* #161 MV

I have called you by your name, you are mine,  
I have gifted you and ask you now to shine.  
I will not abandon you;  
all my promises are true.  
You are gifted, called, and chosen; you are mine.

I will help you learn my name as you go;  
Read it written in my people, help them grow.  
Pour the water in my name,  
speak the word your soul can claim,  
Offer Jesus' body given long ago.

I know you will need my touch as you go;  
Feel it pulsing in creation's ebb and flow.  
Like the woman reaching out,  
choosing faith in spite of doubt,  
Hold the hem of Jesus' robe, then let it go.

I have given you a name, it is mine;  
I have given you my Spirit as a sign.  
With my wonder in your soul,  
make my wounded children whole;  
Go and tell my precious people they are mine.

### Blessing:

God's presence and promises are real.  
Go now into God's world,  
trusting in God's love and placing your hope in God.  
Go in peace. AMEN

**\*Choral Closing:** *'Hope Shines as the Solitary Star'* #220MV  
***Hope shines as the solitary star,  
Faith is the inner light.  
You and I together mirror the Light of Lights,  
And illumine the pathway home.***

### Organ Postlude:

# Church News

## **This Week at First United –Dec. 3 – Dec. 8**

Monday	9-11am	Badminton
	9am	Ways & Means – Eddy Rm
	10am	Pastoral Care- Work Morning
		UCW - Christmas Luncheon
	6:15	Beavers – Rms 1,2&3
Tuesday	6:15	Cubs & Scouts – DEMH Gym
	2pm	Bible Study – Eddy Rm
Wednesday	9am – 12pm	TAB - Rooms 1,2 & 3
	3pm	Office Closed
	6:30	Choir Practice

### **Peanut Butter for Volunteer Centre**

Commitment December 31, 2018 **900**

Total to Date **761**

To meet our obligation, we will need to collect 35-36 jars of peanut butter per week.

The Volunteer Center supplies, on average, 500 households monthly. This amount increases over the Christmas Season.



**The Upper Room** for Nov. and Dec. are in the Narthex. Please feel free to take one. A container for donations is located with the publication.

**2019 Envelopes:** The Contribution Envelopes for 2019 are located in the Narthex. Please insure that envelopes for the correct year are used as individual contribution #'s may have changed.

**Missing Dishes?** There are a number of baking dishes and other containers in the Donald Eddy Memorial Hall kitchen that have been left after suppers. If you are missing yours, it could be here.

**Notice from the Property Management Team** For security reasons, all doors to the sanctuary will be kept locked except the one closest to the office. To enter the church during business hours, please use the St. Patrick Street entrance.



### **Christmas Luncheon, Bake Sale and Craft Sale**

Friday, Dec. 7, 2018 Donald Eddy Memorial Hall 11:00 am-1:00 pm  
Lunch is assorted sandwiches, fruit salad and small cakes, coffee/tea. Bake table with pies, fudge, preserves, cookies and cakes, jams/jellies All benefitting First United Church.

*Anyone wishing to donate baking, homemade beans, preserves, tea biscuits etc. for the bake table is asked to bring it to the DEMH on Thursday, Dec. 6 between 9 & 1 or Friday morning prior to the Luncheon.*

Team Esperanza will have crafts for sale.

Christmas Wreaths and Evergreen Baskets will be sold in support of Servants Heart Ministries. Orders will be taken upon request.

Admission \$10, children (12 & under) \$5 Tickets available from the First United Church office.

**Annual Christmas Benevolence Program:** For those interested in supporting this benevolence program, donation envelopes are available on the Christmas tree located at the entrance to the sanctuary. The White gift service will be on Sunday, December 9, and the envelopes can be returned at that time. Any personal cheque may be made payable to First United Church. Donations to this fund will be used to support the volunteer center as well as those people in our congregation who find it difficult, financially, throughout the year.

**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 17, 2018.

**Thank You** to the children of the Sunday school for lighting the Christ Candle, Shirley Allain, Beth Sullivan, Dorothy McCallum and Shirley Sealy for being our greeters and Gayle Ferron, Margaret Payne-Chénard and Mike Kierstead for being the counters for the month of November.



**Christmas Hymn Sing**  
***What Can I Give to the Holy Child?***

The annual Christmas Hymn Sing will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 12th, (storm date Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>), 7pm at First United. Come join with us as we celebrate the Christmas season with familiar carols as well as new selections you are sure to enjoy. The choir will be joined by Alysa Collins, Amanda Godin, Linda Knowles - MacPherson with The Treble Makers, as well as Take Note and the BHS Choir. Cost \$10 Adults \$5 Youth. Tickets are available from choir members and the church office 546-3532.



The Christian Development team would like to thank Marie Oliver, Debrah & Rick Watling, Colette & Wayne Clowater, Sara Ernst, Beth Sullivan and Steve White for decorating the church for the Christmas Season. Their talent is much appreciated.

**White Gift Sunday – Dec. 9, 2018**

The tradition of White Gift Sunday has its roots in a small Methodist church in Ohio in 1904. What began as a humble way to reflect on the love and devotion of the giver and not the value of the gift has grown into today's white gift services in many churches across several denominations. The story is told that a minister's wife initiated the idea to solve the problem of inequity of gifts given at the Sunday school Christmas party. Instead of focusing on receiving gifts, the focus shifted to bringing gifts to Jesus that could in turn be shared with people around the world who did not have much. All the gifts would come wrapped in plain white paper, so that no one would know which was an expensive gift and which was a more modest one. No one would feel ashamed of their gift and everyone would share in the joy of giving to others.

In keeping with the spirit of the first White Gift service all those attending bring a gift wrapped in white paper to be given to someone in need.

Some suggestions from the Volunteer Center are pasta, cereal, canned meat, canned milk, canned fruits and canned vegetables. It is also suggested that \$5 gift cards from places such as Burger King or McDonalds could be placed in small boxes and gift wrapped for children. They love to unwrap something at Christmas.

*Once you choose hope,  
anything's possible.*  
~Christopher Reeve~

## Community Events

A "**Spirit of Christmas 2018**" Holiday Show will feature performances by local musicians Rosalind Kennedy – Townsend, Anick Turner, and Dorothy Roy- Nini ; Marc Melanson and the Bandits; Stacy Hickey-Buraglia; Jody Lavigne; Alysa Collins; Derek Knowles; Chad Townsend; Take Note; B.H.S. Choir and Choral Ensemble; Jeff Long; Jocelyne and Marc Hachey; Stephane and Michelle Hebert; Bernie Beaudoin; Eddie Edwards; and the Landry Highland Dancers. The concert will take place at the Gwendolyn Kent Auditorium, Bathurst High School, on Saturday, December 1, (7:00 P.M.) and Sunday, December 2, (2:00 P.M.), 2018. The concert is being held in support of the "Spirit of Christmas" Senior Initiative. Tickets are \$15.00 and are available from participating members, committee members (Gary Branch 546-9208), Tower Jewellers (181 Main Street), and at the door.

The annual **Feast of Saint Andrew** and Scottish entertainment evening will be held December 2 at Gowan Brae Golf and Country Club at 4:30 pm. The event will include a roast beef dinner with haggis and dessert, traditional bagpiping and highland dancing. Tickets cost \$30.00 and are available by phoning Jean Babin at 546-5758, Lois Campbell at 546-2348 or Isabel MacLaggan at 546-5521. Come Celebrate. Everyone is welcome.

### **Family & Community Breakfast**

Saturday, December 8, 2018 8:00 – 10:00 am  
Saint George's Church Hall 432 King Avenue

### **Jeremiah 33:14-16 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>14</sup>“The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will fulfill the good promise I made to the people of Israel and Judah.

<sup>15</sup>“In those days and at that time  
I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David’s line;  
he will do what is just and right in the land.

<sup>16</sup>In those days Judah will be saved  
and Jerusalem will live in safety.  
This is the name by which it<sup>[a]</sup> will be called:  
The LORD Our Righteous Savior.’

### **1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>9</sup>How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you?

<sup>10</sup>Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.

<sup>11</sup>Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you.

<sup>12</sup>May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.

<sup>13</sup>May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

### **Luke 21:25-36 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>25</sup>“There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea.

<sup>26</sup>People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken.

<sup>27</sup>At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

<sup>28</sup>When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

<sup>29</sup>He told them this parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees.

<sup>30</sup>When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near.

<sup>31</sup>Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.

<sup>32</sup>“Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.

<sup>33</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

<sup>34</sup>“Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap.

<sup>35</sup>For it will come on all those who live on the face of the whole earth.

<sup>36</sup>Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.”