

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

December 22, 2019

Minister	Rev. Neal Palmer	Organist	Martha Vickers
Office Adm.	Isabel Clouston	Greeters	Nancy & Allen Jagoe
Custodian	Steve White		

All musical selections reprinted under licence #4-606499, One licence for Churches

Lectionary for today	Lectionary for next Sunday
<i>Isaiah 7:10-16</i> <i>Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19</i> <i>Romans 1:1-7</i> <i>Matthew 1:18-25</i>	<i>Isaiah 63:7-9</i> <i>Psalm 148</i> <i>Hebrews 2:10-18</i> <i>Matthew 2:13-23</i>

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

GATHERING

MUSIC AS WE GATHER

WELCOME (including our friends worshipping by CD)

HOPE, PEACE & JOY CANDLES ARE LIT (*The Brewster Family*)

CENTERING FOR WORSHIP - "As We Are Waiting"

***As we are welcoming to Christ,
when he is born anew.
We trust your word revealed to us,
today and all year through.***



CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)

Instead of just waiting for presents and Christmas treats,
we choose to wait on God.

Instead of only the ways of consumerism, capitalism, and individualism,
we choose to seek another way.

Instead of fear, hate, and complacency,
we choose to be courageous .
Instead of being bound by the pressures and expectations of traditions alone,
we chose to trust in God.
Instead of everything else,
we choose to be here this morning.

GATHERING PRAYER

***GATHERING CAROL –**

"Angels, from the Realms of Glory" – VU #36

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING (responsively)

(The Brewster Family)

Voice 1: On this last Sunday of Advent, we light four candles.
Our first light was for hope, our second for peace,
and our third for joy. Today—we light the candle for love.

Voice 2: (Read while candle is lit.)
We have waited and travelled together
in this Season of Advent.
This week, our light is for love.
For hundreds of years, people have journeyed
toward the light of Christ. Why?
Because in Jesus, the love of God burns brightly.
Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us.
After the excitement of Christmas has passed,
all the gifts opened, all our energy spent,
the love of God remains.
God's love will burn like a candle in our hearts.

**May the light of hope, peace, joy, and love
guide our living and our loving.**

CHORAL RESPONSE – "We Light This Candle"

***We light this candle for Love.
Await the new life within.
May our hearts now live each day,
so Love can find a way,
so Love can find a way.***

SHARING A STORY (with children of all ages)

***SINGING A SONG** – “He Is Born” – VU #50 (Verses 1 & 3)

ENGAGING

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 1:18-25

Isabel MacLaggan

REFLECTION

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

ANTHEM – “God in This Child”

RESPONDING

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

THE OFFERING IS GATHERED

(in support of the ministry and mission of the church)

***OFFERING HYMN**

*Love fills our hearts and overflows,
Love fills our lives, expands and grows.
Loving is how we're called to live,
Loving is how each one can give.*

***OFFERING PRAYER** (responsively)

For all that we are—

thank you, God of love.

For all that we have—

thank you, God of love.

For all that we're becoming—

thank you, God of love.

Now and forever.

Amen.

COMMUNING

***COMMUNION HYMN** — “Come and Gather, at the Stable”
(tune Beach Spring)

Catherine MacDonald 2005

Come and gather, at the stable
They have journeyed far from home
Mary, Joseph, young and able
Travelled ways as yet unknown
With a dream of untold promise
That great things would come to pass
In the sureness of God's blessing
They found peace and rest at last.

Come and gather, round the manger
Where the Christ child gently lays.
Open up our hearts to wonder
At the glory of that day.
Visit him with thanks and promise,
Peace and hope and love and joy
Take them daily into living
Wrapped up in a baby boy.

Come and gather, at the table
Where we seek him once again
Let us enter into mystery
Needed now as much as then.
In the breaking of the sweet bread
In the pouring of the wine,
We meet him again among us
With a love so dear, divine.

Come and gather, in his footsteps
We will tread where he once went
With the lost and lonely people
Now to them we're also sent
Loving, working, tending, caring
In our Saviour's name we pray
In our work and in our worship
We find hope in every day.

***GREETING ONE ANOTHER** (responsively)
The Peace of Christ be with you all.
And also with you.

INSTRUCTIONS

INVITATION

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (responsively)

God is with us!

We are not alone.

Christ is present here.

The Spirit is among us.

Let us give thanks to God.

in memory and in hope.

...In assurance of that hope, we join with all the company of heaven and earth to give you praise, singing:

"Holy, Holy, Holy" – MV #203 (sung in unison)

O holy, holy, holy God,

O God of time and space.

All earth and sea and sky above

bear witness to your grace.

Hosanna in the highest heaven,

creation sings your praise.

And blessed is the One who comes

and bears your name always!

...By this bread and cup, Holy One, we remember Christ, and share in the mystery of your being, your bliss, and your purpose...

"Great Amen" – MV #205 (sung in unison)

Amen, amen, O Holy One! Hosanna and Amen!

Amen, amen, O Holy One, Hosanna and Amen!

Friends, we remember Jesus:

On Good Friday he died. On Easter he rose again.

Today—he lives forever.

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.

Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life.

Jesus Christ, the True Vine.

Congregational Response – "Amen" or "Thanks be to God"

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION (in unison)

Holy One,

**may your gifts of love transform and enliven us
that we may live lives of thanksgiving.**

May your presence among us

provoke such longing that we'll never be satisfied

until the whole earth knows

your justice, your peace, and your love.

Amen.

GOING OUT (as God's people)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CLOSING CAROL** – "Joy to the World" – VU #59

***BLESSING**

***GOING FORTH** – "I Am Walking a Path of Peace" – MV #221

I am walking a path of love,

I am walking a path of love,

I am walking a path of love,

lead me home, lead me home.

POSTLUDE

Church News

This Week at First United –Dec. 23 – Dec. 27

Tuesday	12pm Closed	Christmas Eve
	4pm	Christmas Eve Church Service
	7pm	Christmas Eve Church Service
Wednesday	Closed	Christmas
Thursday	Closed	Boxing Day

The bulletin today has been placed
in loving memory of Ruth Knowles
by Bill, Joyce and family

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



Poinsettia Memorial booklets are available in the Narthex.



Thank You: Thank you to all the participants as well as those who attended our Christmas concert, 'Joy To The World. \$2220.00 was raised to support the ongoing life and work of our church.

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.

Profession of Faith Chats

Do you have questions about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, the United Church of Canada, etc.? Things you'd like to discuss in a safe setting?

Are you interested in being baptized, confirmed, transferring your membership to First United, reaffirming your faith and/or simply introducing or reintroducing yourself to the United Church of Canada? If so, we can make it happen. Please let the church office and/or Rev. Neal know as soon as possible and we'll look at getting something going in the new year. Sessions like this, generally, run for 6-8 weeks, but please know—that can and will be negotiated within the group itself.

Looking forward to it... :o)

Community Events

Family & Community Breakfast
Saturday, January 11, 2020 8:00 – 10:00 am
Saint George's Church Hall 432 King Avenue

*So remember while December
Brings the only Christmas Day
In the year let there be Christmas
In the things we do and say
Wouldn't life be worth the living
Wouldn't dreams be coming true
If we kept the Christmas spirit
All the whole year through.
~Author unknown, c.1962*

This
Christmas
end a quarrel.
Seek out a forgotten
friend. Dismiss suspicion,
and replace it with trust.
Write a love letter. Share some
treasure. Give a soft answer. Keep
a promise. Find the time. Forgo a grudge.
Forgive an enemy. Listen. Apologize if you
were wrong. Try to understand. Examine your
demands on others. Think first of someone else.
Be kind; be gentle. Appreciate. Laugh a little. Laugh a
little more. Express your gratitude. Gladden the heart of a
child. Welcome a stranger. Take pleasure in the beauty and the
wonder of Earth.
Speak your love.
Speak it again.
Speak it yet
Once again.

Joseph Accepts Jesus as His Son

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about. His mother Mary and Joseph had promised to get married. But before they started to live together, it became clear that she was going to have a baby. She became pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit.

¹⁹ Her husband Joseph was faithful to the law. But he did not want to put her to shame in public. So he planned to divorce her quietly.

²⁰ But as Joseph was thinking about this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. The angel said, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary home as your wife. The baby inside her is from the Holy Spirit.

²¹ She is going to have a son. You must give him the name Jesus. That's because he will save his people from their sins."

²² All this took place to bring about what the Lord had said would happen. He had said through the prophet,

²³ "The virgin is going to have a baby. She will give birth to a son. And he will be called Immanuel." ([Isaiah 7:14](#)) The name Immanuel means "God with us."

²⁴ Joseph woke up. He did what the angel of the Lord commanded him to do. He took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not sleep with her until she gave birth to a son. And Joseph gave him the name Jesus.