

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

December 16, 2018
Third Sunday of Advent
Communion

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>Zephaniah 3:14-20</i>	<i>Micah 5:2-5a</i>
<i>Isaiah 12:2-6</i>	<i>Psalms 80:1-7</i>
<i>Philippians 4:4-7</i>	<i>Hebrews 10:5-10</i>
<i>Luke 3:7-18</i>	<i>Luke 1:39-45</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:

I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the LORD!"
Psalm 122:13

Welcoming Friends Worshipping by CD:

Announcements:

Lighting the Third Advent Candle: 'The Candle of Joy'
(First two candles are relit) (The Watling Family)

One: As increasing light colours the skies
in a chorus of pinks and reds,
birds, too, raise their song of greeting
for the coming day.
Like that coloured sky,
these flames remind us of the growing light
that announces Jesus' birth with a chorus of angels' song
proclaiming a new day

All: **May we pause to hear the twitter
of that song and join our voices
to the joyful cries of praise of Jesus' birth. Amen**
(The pink 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 joy over all of the earth.
Thanks for the gift of joy, thanks for the gift of joy.***

Call to Worship:

One: The Lord, your God, is in your midst.
God rejoices over you with gladness
and renews you in his love.
God exults over you with loud singing
and gathers you as one people.

All: **Let us sing out loud,
let us shout our praise and rejoice
with all our hearts at what the Lord has done!**

Prayer of Approach: (in unison)
**O God, you sent Jesus so that we might have life
and have it abundantly.
May that abundance come alive as joy.
Help us to know that life is good
and that you are good, O God.
May the joy of your presence in us
be our witness to the world that you are our God.
Amen.**

***Opening Hymn:** *'Hark! The Herald Angels Sing'* #48 VU

Children of all ages:

THE SERVICE OF THE WORD

Prayer for Understanding: (in unison)
**Teach us this morning as we come to your Word.
Make your presence known to us
and open our eyes to your truth. Amen**

Scripture Readings: Chesley Eddy
New Testament Reading: Philippians 4:4-7
Responsive Reading: Isaiah 12:2-6 (VU p. 880)
Gospel Lesson: Luke 3 :7-18

***Hymn:** Never Ending Joy #40 MV
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:

Meditation:

Anthem: *'It Came Upon a Midnight Clear'*

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: (in unison)
**Lord of Light, you gave yourself to this world
by the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ.
We thankfully rejoice and praise you
for your peace and light shared with all nations.
Now, center us on the King of Glory
during these prayerful moments of giving.
We present these gifts as your humble
and willing servants in the name of the One
who comes to us anew, Jesus the Living Christ. Amen.**
Philippians 4:4-7

THE SERVICE OF THE TABLE

An Invitation to the Table:

Prayer of Confession: (in unison)
**We confess that while we know perfect joy
only comes through faith in you,
we seek it out in lesser places.
In search of comfort, we indulge in excess.
In search of warmth,
we fabricate illusions of perfect relationships.
In search of love, we hide our faults.
In search of affirmation, we spend beyond our means.
Help us to turn to you,
our true source of joy and to resist misleading forces.**

**During the season of Advent
keep our minds on what is true,
what is honourable, what is just, what is pure,
what is pleasing and what is commendable. 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 Scriptures say,
"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.
Do not worry about anything,
but in everything by prayer and supplication
with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God".
Forgiveness is yours through Jesus Christ.
May such assurance grant you the peace of God,
which surpasses all understanding.

(Based on Philippians 4)

Silent Prayer / Reflective Music:

***Our Communion Hymn:** *'Come and Gather, at the Stable'*
(Tune Beach Spring)

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 as 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.

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The Great Thanksgiving Prayer:

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

One: Blessed are you, gracious God,
Creator of light, Giver of all life, and Source of love.
We bless you for all your gifts.
We praise you for this holy season of hope
and for the wonder of this time of joy.

**All: We praise you, O God.
We thank you, O God.**

One: For Jesus Christ,
in whom you gather the hope and fears of all the years,
we bless your Holy Name.
Joining now with all your people
of every time and place,
and with the angels and arcangels,
who proclaim the gift of his love.

Choral Response: (Sanctus and Benedictus # 203 MV)

**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 heav'n,
Creation sings your praise.
And blessed is the One who comes
And bears your name always!**

One: On the night before Jesus died,
he had supper with his disciples:
he took bread; thanked you, as we have thanked you;
broke the bread; and gave the bread to his friends, saying,
Take this, all of you, and eat it.
This is my body, given for you.
Each time you do this, remember me.
After supper he took the wine; thanked you for it,
and passed a cup of wine to his friends saying,
This cup is the new promise
God has made with you in my blood.
Each time you do this and drink from this cup,
remember me.
Remembering his death and celebrating his resurrection,
we await with hope his coming again
to bring peace and justice to the earth.
And so, we affirm the mystery of our faith:

**All: Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.**

One: Send, O God, your Holy Spirit
upon us and what we do here;
that we, and these gifts, touched by your Spirit,
may be signs of life and love to each other,
and to all the world.
Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory is yours,
God most holy, now and forever.
We gather these and all our prayers,
thankful that we may now turn to you in one voice,

All: Our Father, Who art in heaven..... Amen

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Breaking of the Bread and Pouring of the Cup:

Sharing of the Bread and Cup:

Communion Musical Offering:

'What Can I Give to the Holy Child?'

THE COMMUNITY GOES FORTH

***Closing Hymn: 'Unto Us A Boy is Born' #54 VU**

***Blessing and Sending Forth**

**All: Let us go out into the world in joy.
We are not alone. God is with us.**

One: Joy is promised in these Advent days.
Joy is known deeply in these Advent days.
God bless you as you wait.
God bless you as you work for joy.
God bless you as you live the life that is yours.
Your joy is blessed. Go in joy

***Choral Closing: 'I Am Walking a Path of Peace' #221MV**

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

Organ Postlude:

*My joy is the golden sunset
giving thanks for another day.
Gratitude itself is a source of joy.
-Jonathan Lockwood Huie*

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Church News

This Week at First United –Dec. 17 – Dec. 21

Monday	6:15	Beavers – Rms 1,2&3
Tuesday	2pm	Bible Study
	6:15	Cubs & Scouts – DEMH Gym
Wednesday	9am – 12pm	TAB - Rms 1,2 & 3
Thursday	3pm	Office Closed

Peanut Butter for Volunteer Centre

Commitment December 31, 2018 **900**

Total to Date **812**

To meet our obligation, we will need to collect 46-47 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 Jan. and Feb. 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.

Thank You: The organizers of the Luncheon that was held on Friday Dec. 7th would like to thank all who attended as well as baked for the sale table. Because of your generous support the "Friends of First" raised approximately \$1200.00 to go towards the life and work of First United.

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.

Christmas Newsletters are ready for pick up in the Narthex. Please help with postage costs by delivering to your family, friends and neighbors. Special envelopes for Christmas contributions can be found in the Narthex.

*Sometimes your joy
is the source of your smile,
but sometimes your smile
can be the source of your joy.
- Thich Nhat Hanh*

Joy

*May love and laughter light your days,
and warm your heart and home.
May good and faithful friends be yours,
wherever you may roam.*

*May peace and plenty bless your world
with joy that long endures.
May all life's passing seasons
bring the best to you and yours.*

- Irish Blessing

Philippians 4:4-7 New International Version (NIV)

Final Exhortations

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.

⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Luke 3:7-18 New International Version (NIV)

⁷ John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?"

⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.

⁹ The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰ "What should we do then?" the crowd asked.

¹¹ John answered, "Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same."

¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?"

¹³ "Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them.

¹⁴ Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?"

He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely—be content with your pay."

¹⁵ The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah.

¹⁶ John answered them all, "I baptize you with ^[a] water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with ^[b] the Holy Spirit and fire.

¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

¹⁸ And with many other words John exhorted the people and proclaimed the good news to them.