

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

December 1, 2019

Minister Rev. Neal Palmer **Organist** Martha Vickers
Office Adm. Isabel Clouston **Greeters** Margaret Payne- Chénard
Custodian Steve White Mike Kierstead

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Lectionary for today	Lectionary for next Sunday
<i>Isaiah 2:1-5</i> <i>Psalm 122</i> <i>Romans 13:11-14</i> <i>Matthew 24:36-44</i>	<i>Isaiah 11:1-10</i> <i>Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19</i> <i>Romans 15:4-13</i> <i>Matthew 3:1-12</i>

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

We welcome Rev. Blair Lewis today and thank him for leading our service.

GATHERING

MUSIC AS WE GATHER

CHORAL OPENING - "As We are Waiting for a Sign"
 (tune VU 75 Winchester Old)

As we are waiting for a sign
As we long for Christ's birth.
We trust your word revealed to us
Is hope for all the earth.



WELCOME (including our friends worshipping by CD)

WELCOMING

One: O come, Emmanuel, come to us for we are lonely for God.
All: Come, bring the peace of God - with - us.
 One: O come, wisdom from on high,
All: lead us in the ways of knowledge,
and show us the pathways for peace.

One: Glorious shoot from the Jesse tree,
All: come and bring life,
fresh and green and lovely,
to our spirits.
 One: O Rose that blooms in the snow of winter,
All: come and grant to us the blessed gift of hope.
 One: O bright Morning Star of the darkened world,
All: come and be for us the Light,
the Truth, and the Way.
 One: Jesus our Christ, we welcome you.
All: Come and be known among us,
for we want to be your people.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, O Promised One,
 we come to this time of Advent waiting for your presence.
 Give us the wisdom to see meaning in these busy days.
 Give us the courage to wait in times of pain and trouble.
 Give us the compassion to wait for the Messiah
 when we are threatened by the Harrods of this world.
 Give us the hope to wait for the Saviour
 even when we cannot hear the angels singing.
 Give us the love that does not wait
 when it meets Christ in our neighbour.

GATHERING PRAYER (in unison)

Gracious God,
your vision of peace and wholeness
comes to us in sweeping revelations
and tiny signs of hope.
Light a flame in our hearts
that we might be a hope filled people.
Keep us from growing weary of waiting
and miss the glory of Your amazing birth.
Even so, come quickly, O God. Amen.

***GATHERING HYMN** – "All Earth is Waiting" – VU #5

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING, Advent 1, The Candle of Hope:
(Autumn, Grace, Sally & Clinton Ronalds)

Voice 1: On each Sunday of Advent, we light one candle.
A few weeks from now, all four candles will burn brightly,
and we will know that Christmas has come.

Voice 2: (Read while the candle is lit.)
We wait, and we travel together in this Season of Advent.
This week our light is for hope.
We remember the call of the prophet of long ago
to travel in the way and light of God
and who shared an image of weapons
transformed into instruments of hope.

**All: May the light of hope guide our way
as we travel through Advent. Amen.**

CHORAL RESPONSE

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

CHILDREN OF ALL AGES

PRAYER WITH THE CHILDREN

***SINGING A SONG** – “He is Born” VU #50 vs.1

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (in unison)

**Merciful God, always with us, always coming:
We confess that we do not know how
to prepare for your Advent.
We have forgotten how to hope in miracles;
we have ignored the promise of your kingdom;
we are distracted by all the busyness of the season.
Forgive us, God.
Grant us the simple wonder of the shepherd’s,
the courage of the magi,
and the patient faith of Mary and Joseph,**

**that we may journey with them to Bethlehem,
and find the good news of a child born for us.
Now, in the quiet of our hearts,
we ask you to make us ready for his coming. 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.*

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: The good news of this Advent Season
is forgiveness of sin and new life.
Let us commit our lives
to Christ’s way of hope and peace.

**All: We offer thanks to the Advent God,
who comes among us,
setting us free to love and serve.**

ENGAGING

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 2:1-5
Responsive Psalm: Psalm 122, #845 VU
New Testament Lesson: Matthew 24:36-44

Chesley Eddy

MESSAGE “Finding Hope”

ANTHEM – “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

RESPONDING

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Bev Murphy

PRESENTATION OF OUR GIFTS AND OURSELVES TO GOD

***CHORAL RESPONSE**

*Hope in our faith so filled with awe.
Hope in the promise of our God.
Hope for these gifts we offer here.
Use them and us throughout the year.*

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

**As we prepare, O God,
for the festival of Christ's birth,
help us to give in expectation of his return.
May our gifts be used
to prepare the world for Christ's coming,
when all creation shall sing your praise. Amen.**

ADVENT PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE –

*"We are Waiting Lord" #76 AGCS
(tune Kum ba Yah)*

***We are waiting Lord, come by here,
We are waiting Lord, come by here,
We are waiting Lord, come by here,
O Lord, come by here.***

PASTORAL PRAYER

One: Spirit of hope,
in a time of busyness that threatens
to overpower the sound of your voice
and blinds us to the needs of those around us,
we pray for ourselves:

That we might not become
so preoccupied with our own schedules,
that we forget to live within your time,

That we might not be anxious about tomorrow.
That we might trust you to bring about your love and peace.
That we might work together
to share good news with those around and beyond us.

(Silence)

**All: We pray for all who need to be embraced by love;
All who are cramped and narrowed in spirit;
All who have lost the ability to trust;
All who wait for a signal they are cherished,
or even noticed by someone;
All who struggle with a lifetime burden
of being told they are not good enough.
Prepare among us, O God, the path of hope.
We pray for all in need of hope today;
All who mourn the death of a loved one;
All who grieve the end of a relationship;
All who are worried for a friend;
All who experience the weight of uncertainty
as they long for a hope filled future.**

One: Creator of joy,
we are waiting with excitement and impatience,
we pray that you will surround us with your stillness,
and quiet us with your Spirit.
With your help
may we be ready to receive the light of the world. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER –

GOING OUT (as God's people)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CLOSING HYMN – "See Amid the Winter's Snow" VU #76**

***COMMISSIONING** (in unison)

**God who leads by a star,
show us the directions to Bethlehem.
Lead us to the place
where love is to be born in our lives.
Give us signs along the road
as we make our journey
that we may follow in your way.**

Church News

This Week at First United – Dec. 1 – Dec. 8

Sunday	11am	Children Choir Practice
Monday	9-11am	Badminton
	6:15pm	Beaver Scouts rms. 1,2&3
Tuesday	9am	Ways & Means – Eddy Rm
	6:30	Cub Scouts - DEMH Gym
Wednesday	9–11:30	TAB
	9-11am	Badminton
	2pm	Office Closed
	6:30pm	Choir Practice
Thursday	1:30	Pastoral Care Team - RMR
Friday		Christmas Luncheon

***BLESSING**

May God bless you and keep you
 May God’s face shine upon you and be gracious to you,
 May God look upon you with kindness and give you peace.
Numbers 6:24–26

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

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

POSTLUDE

*Hope
 is the word
 which God has written
 on the brow of every man.
 ~Victor Hugo~*

The bulletin today has been placed
in loving memory of Betty Scott
 by Haines, Cindy, Shane and Families.

The flowers in our sanctuary and bulletin today
 have been placed
in loving memory of Cletus Lavigne
 by Judy & Macky

Peanut Butter for Volunteer Centre

Commitment December 31, 2019 **900**
 Total Collected **842**

To meet our obligation, we will need to collect 16-17 jars of peanut butter per week. The Volunteer Center supplies, on average, 500 households monthly. The need increases greatly over the Christmas season.



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

2020 Envelopes: The Contribution Envelopes for 2020 are located in the Narthex. Please insure that envelopes for the correct year are used as individual contribution #'s may have changed.

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

Friday, Dec. 6, 2019 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.
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. 5th between 12&3 1 or Friday morning prior to the Luncheon.

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

Silent Auction: There are a number of items in the Narthex that are being auctioned in a silent auction as a fund raiser sponsored by the Friends of First Team. Next to each item there is a bid sheet. If there is an item that you are interested in, -please feel free to add your bid. Bids are to be increased in no less than \$2.00 increments. The person with the highest bid at 1pm on Dec. 6th will be awarded the item.



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 16, 2019.

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



**Christmas Hymn Sing Concert
Joy to the World!**

The annual Christmas Hymn Sing will be held on Sunday, Dec, 15, 2019 at 2pm, First United Church, Bathurst.(Storm Date - Dec. 16th 7pm) 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 Amanda Godin, Emma Vickers, Take Note, Catalyst, BHS Choir, and our very own Children’s Choir!
Cost \$10 adults, \$5 youth. Tickets are available from choir members, the church office 546-3532 and at the door.

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 8, 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.



Attention all hand quilters: If you like to hand quilt or would like to learn to hand quilt come and join us at TAB each Wednesday morning at 9am-11:30am. In rooms 1,2 & 3 of the Donald Eddy memorial Hall. Contact Anne Brooks 548-2156, Pat Thibideau 546-2702 or Karen Whelton 546-6273. Tea and Coffee supplied. All new members welcome.

The **covenanting service** for the Bathurst Pastoral Charge, Rev. Neal Palmer and Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Region 14 will be held at First United Church, Bathurst, N.B. on December 8, 2019 at 2:00 p.m. Everyone welcomed to share in this important event.

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)

White Gift Sunday – Dec. 8, 2019

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.

Community Events

"Reflections of Christmases Past" - a "Spirit of Christmas 2019" Holiday Show will feature performances by local musicians, Anick Turner, Dorothy Roy- Nini, and Rosalind Kennedy – Townsend ; Andre Arseneau, Donald Lagace, and Louis Elliot; Bathurst Youth Singers Alumni; Bernie Beaudoin; Catalyst (Alysa Collins, Claudette Belliveau, Eddie Edwards); Danse Bogeste; Elizabeth Willett-Blanchard; Jeff Long; the Landry School of Dance; Michelle and Stephane Hebert; Movement Workshop; Ragged Haggis (Alistair Tulloch, Craig Caldwell, and Jason Nicol); Stacy Hickey-Buraglia; and Take Note. The concert will take place at the Gwendolyn Kent Auditorium, Bathurst High School, on Saturday, November 30, (7:00 P.M.) and Sunday, December 1, (2:00 P.M.), 2019. 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, Tower Jewellers (181 Main Street), Kent and White Insurance (280 Main Street), Parkwood Heights Elementary School (1125 Highland Avenue) and at the door.

Bathurst Community Orchestra Christmas Concert

Saturday Dec 14th at 6:30 p.m. at Evangel Church
150 Basin Road, Bathurst. Tickets \$10 and \$5/child under 12
Tickets available at the door or in advance at a Few Splinters,
Main Street or Evangel Church office.
In Support Of: Evangel Mission Team Construction Project

Saint George's Choir will be presenting an evening of Christmas Music on Thursday, Dec. 12th at 7:00 pm. A light lunch will follow in the Hall.

Family & Community Breakfast

Saturday, December 14, 2019, 8:00 – 10:00 am
Saint George's Church Hall, 432 King Avenue

Mille Cherubini in Coro! Immerse yourself in the Holiday spirit with the Louisbourg Choir under the direction of **Monique Richard!** For this magnificent Christmas concert, the choir will feature tenor **Éric Thériault**, singing classics of the season, from both classical and traditional repertoires. At First United Church Bathurst, Saturday, December 7, at 7:30 pm. Tickets: \$30, at the door. Free for students.

Change for Change This project was promoted in local congregations with great success. Total proceeds were \$1101.90, all of which has been forwarded to Servant's Heart Ministries, in support of their Pregnancy Education Center. Your *change* will enable *change* in the lives of Dominican women & their babies.. Gracias!

*"Hope" is the thing with feathers –
That perches in the soul –
And sings the tune without the words –
And never stops – at all....
~Emily Dickinson, c.1861*

Isaiah 2:1-5 New International Reader's Version (NIRV)

People From Many Nations Will Worship at Mount Zion

2 Here is a vision that Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw about Judah and Jerusalem.

² In the last days

the mountain where the LORD's temple is located will be famous.

It will be the highest mountain of all.

It will be raised above the hills.

All the nations will go to it.

³ People from many nations will go there. They will say,

"Come. Let us go up to the LORD's mountain.

Let's go to the temple of Jacob's God.

He will teach us how we should live.

Then we will live the way he wants us to."

The law of the LORD will be taught at Zion.

His message will go out from Jerusalem.

⁴ He will judge between the nations.

He'll settle problems among many of them.

They will hammer their swords into plows.

They'll hammer their spears into pruning tools.

Nations will not go to war against one another.

They won't even train to fight anymore.

⁵ People of Jacob, come.

Let us live the way the LORD has taught us to.

Matthew 24:36-44 New International Reader's Version (NIRV)

The Day and Hour Are Not Known

³⁶ "But no one knows about that day or hour. Not even the angels in heaven know. The Son does not know. Only the Father knows.

³⁷ Remember how it was in the days of Noah. It will be the same when the Son of Man comes.

³⁸ In the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking. They were getting married. They were giving their daughters to be married. They did all those things right up to the day Noah entered the ark.

³⁹ They knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be when the Son of Man comes.

⁴⁰ Two men will be in the field. One will be taken and the other left.

⁴¹ Two women will be grinding with a hand mill. One will be taken and the other left.

⁴² "So keep watch. You do not know on what day your Lord will come.

⁴³ You must understand something. Suppose the owner of the house knew what time of night the robber was coming. Then he would have kept watch. He would not have let his house be broken into.

⁴⁴ So you also must be ready. The Son of Man will come at an hour when you don't expect him.