

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

November 15th, 2020

Minister Rev. Neal Palmer
Office Adm. Christina Doucet
Custodian Steve White

Music Director Martha Vickers
Greeters Gayle Ferron &
Bev Murphy

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<u>Lectionary for Today</u> Judges 4:1-7 Psalm 123; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 Matthew 25:14-30	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u> Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 Psalm 100 Ephesians 1:15-23 Matthew 25:31-46
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Today's Music Leader: Linda Knowles MacPherson

We express our appreciation to Rev. Blair Lewis for leading us in our worship service this morning.

Organ Prelude:

Welcoming:

In the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
who calls us to be the church
and to celebrate God's presence,
let us worship.

Lighting of the Christ Candle:

We listen quietly Lord, and the morning sounds of creation draw us to you.

**We come to celebrate God's presence,
we hear your voice: "well done good and faithful servant".
We come remembering Christ's life and ministry,
and the life we are called to live.**

**We come as a pilgrim people like the Israelites
searching for ways to live out our faith.**

We come to celebrate November days and the gift of the seasons.

As we light the Christ candle let us rejoice in God's gift to us!

Cool fall days and crisp November air provides us with energy for life.

We live by faith as we celebrate and give thanks to God.

Gathering for Worship:

Call to Worship:

This is no ordinary place: this is the house of God.
This is the place where the prophets cry out
for peace and justice and righteousness.
It is the place where God reaches down
into the corners of our lives,
to offer us the mystery of holy love.
This is no ordinary gathering.
This is no ordinary place: this is the house of God.

Gathering Prayer:

**Eternal God, we come to you with hungry hearts,
waiting to be filled:
with a sense of your presence;
with the touch of your Spirit;
with new energy for service.**

Come to us, we pray.

Be with us.

Enable us.

Empower us as your people,

that we might worship you,

and take our place in the world for Jesus' sake. **Amen.**

Opening Hymn: "O God Our Help in Ages Past" #806 VU

*O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home:*

*under the shadow of thy throne thy saints have dwelt secure;
sufficient is thine arm alone, and our defence is sure.*

*Before the hills in order stood, or earth received its frame,
from ever-lasting thou art God, to endless years the same*

*A thousand ages in thy sight are like an evening gone,
short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun*

*Time like an ever-rolling stream soon bears us all away;
we fly forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day.*

*O God, our help in ages past, our hope for year to come,
be thou our guard while troubles last, and our eternal home.*

Prayer of Humility:

If we say we have no sin,
we deceive ourselves,
and the truth is not in us.

In humility and faith let us confess our sin to God;
who is faithful and just,
who will forgive us our sins,
and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

**What a debt we owe to you, O God.
You have given us all things in Christ,
and yet we withhold from you
the honor and glory that are yours.**

Instead, we pay tribute to the powerful forces alive in our world.

**The power that threatens to entrap the innocent,
mock your truth with empty praise,
and put your patience to the test.
Forgive us, O God, and by your grace
restore in us a loving relationship with you, our neighbors
and ourselves
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.

Musical Response:

Assurance of Pardon:

God is the love that over and around us lies;
the grace that is totally unearned;
and the healing that makes the earth whole.
Give thanks to God; we are forgiven! Amen.

Greeting one another:

Sharing a story (with children of all ages)

Hymn: "Stay With Us Through the Night" #182 VU

*Stay with us through the night. Stay with us through the pain.
Stay with us, blessed stranger till the morning breaks again.*

*Stay with us through the night. Stay with us through the grief.
Stay with us, blessed stranger till the morning brings relief.*

*Stay with us through the night. Stay with us through the dread.
Stay with us, blessed stranger till the morning breaks new bread.*

Prayer for Understanding:

Your word, O God, is a feast all its own.
Let your Holy Spirit open our minds to your call to listen,
for we know your holy word heals and reconciles your people. Amen.

Scripture Readings:

Wayne Lord

Psalm 23
Matthew 25: 14-30

Reflection: "The Picture of Life"

Moment of Silent Reflection:

Gift of Music: "May the Good Lord Bless and Keep You"

Minute for Mission:

Bev Murphy

Invitation to the Offering:

Prayer of Dedication:

**In the name and in the spirit of Jesus,
we bring our gifts to you, O God.
Help us to give with them
a ready mind,
a willing spirit,
and a joyful heart. Amen.**

Pastoral Prayer:

We thank you, compassionate God,
that you hear the prayers of our hearts:
all who rejoice at a baby's new birth,
all who mourn when the circle is incomplete,
when a friend or loved one has died.

We pray for all who are experiencing serious illness and uncertainty in their lives. May they and their loved ones and caregivers know the certainty of your love during a time of overwhelming challenge.

We pray for:

**All who are grateful when their work meets with success,
all who suffer because no work is to be found,
all who are bored, not having enough to do,
all who are tired, having too much to do,
all who are surrounded by the love of family and friends,
all who are lonely.**

Thank you for hearing us in every situation of life.
Help us to support one another always:
rejoicing with those who rejoice,
and weeping with those who weep.

**We want to be joined together
as members of the body of Christ,
loving one another and serving the world.
Like Jesus, we want to respond
to each human being who crosses our path
with sensitivity and compassion.
This we pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.**

We now join in the prayer that Jesus taught us to say:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

Hymn: "Praise My Soul" #240 VU

*Praise, my soul, the God of heaven, glad of heart your carols raise,
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven, who, like me should sing God's
praise. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Praise the Maker all your days!*

*Praise God for the grace and favour shown our forebears in distress;
God is still the same forever, slow to chide and swift to bless.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Sing our Maker's faithfulness!*

*Like a loving parent caring, God knows well our feeble frame;
gladly all our burdens bearing, still to countless years the same.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! All within me, praise God's name!*

*Frail as summer's flower we flourish; blows the wind and it is gone;
but, while mortals rise and perish, God endures unchanging on.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Praise the high eternal one.*

*Angels, teach us adoration, you behold God face to face;
sun and moon and all creation, dwellers all in time and space.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Praise with us the God of grace!*

Announcements:

Commissioning:

**O God,
as we go to our homes and our work this coming week,
we ask you to send the Holy Spirit into our lives.
Open our ears—
that we may hear what you are saying to us
in the things that happen to us and in the people we meet.
Open our eyes—
that we may see the needs of people around us.
Open our hands—
that we may do our work well,
and help when help is needed.**

**Open our lips—
that we may tell the Good News of Jesus
and bring comfort, happiness, and laughter to others.
Open our minds—
that we may discover new truth about you and the world.
Open our hearts—
that we may love you and others as you have loved us.**

Blessing:

Light of God to give us hope.
Power of God to protect us.
Light of God to give us joy.
Peace of God to calm us.
Light of God to give us faith.
Grace of God to save us
this day and forevermore.

Church News

Please note that starting November 16, 2020 the office hours will be 9:00 am to 3:30 pm, closed for lunch from 12:00 to 12:30.

Just a reminder that you need to register at the church office before noon (12:00) each Friday for the following Sunday's service.

Peanut Butter Update To date, 409 jars have been collected and \$1090.00 towards the purchase of Peanut Butter has been given to the Bathurst Volunteer Center. Peanut butter can be dropped off at the church office anytime during office hours; cheques can be delivered or mailed to the Bathurst Volunteer Center at 464 King Ave., Bathurst NB E2A 1P5. Please indicate on your cheque that it is for the purchase of Peanut Butter for the First United contribution.

Annual Christmas Benevolence Fund: It's that time of year! Giving to this fund is even more important than ever because of COVID-19. Things will be a bit different, but we hope the results will be the same as other years. Should you wish to give, please place your donation in an envelope and drop it in the offering plate, or drop it off at the Church or mail to First United Church, 309 St. Patrick Street, Bathurst N.B, E2A- 1E2. Make your cheques payable to First United Church. Please mark clearly that this donation is for the Benevolence Fund. The proceeds from this fund support the Bathurst Volunteer Center and people in our congregation who need assistance. We thank-you for you generosity.
Community Outreach Sub-Team

First United Church in Bathurst, NB is accepting applications for the position of full-time, permanent Office Administrator. The successful applicant will work closely with the Minister, Custodian and Music Director to conduct the operations of the church.

Location: 309 St. Patrick Street, Bathurst, NB E2A 1E2

Job Duties: Responsibilities include the general operation of the church office. This includes, but is not limited to, preparation of weekly church and special bulletins, congregational communications, annual reports, maintenance of church records, maintenance of banking activities - including petty cash, deposits, recording donations, etc. Duties also include preparation of weekly CD ministry packages, control of office supplies and maintenance of the church website

Skills: Competence with the Microsoft Office Suite of software, as well as other relevant computer skills, i.e. email, CD burning, etc.

Effective oral and telephone communication skills. Confidentiality is a must.

Effective office management skills, including receptionist, filing, banking, scheduling and mailing. Strong work ethic, team player, organized and reliable.

Experience: Minimum of 2 years in an office setting.

Education: High School diploma

Security: Criminal record check at personal expense. At least 2 references required.

Hours: To be determined.

Wage: \$14 - \$16 per hour, commensurate with education and experience.

Benefits: Vacation, sick leave, compassionate leave as well as pension and various insurances as per The United Church benefits package.

Interested candidates should apply by email to Wayne Lord at elordwam@nbnet.nb.ca.

Bathurst Pastoral Council Highlights

November 4, 2020 by Isabel MacLaggan

- A virtual zoom meeting of Council was convened at 4:00 pm by Council Chair Sandra Boone followed by an opening prayer by Rev. Neal Palmer.
- Judy Losier, who resigned as Council Secretary earlier this year, was welcomed back. She will continue to serve in the same capacity.
- Others taking part in Council's first meeting since early July were Brenda Parrott, vice-chair; Wayne Lord, Anne Brooks, Lester Scott, Ian Oliver and Isabel MacLaggan.
- In his report to Council, Rev. Palmer said changes to the website are needed. Outdated information includes the postponement of regular Sunday services due to Covid 19. On the contrary, in sanctuary Sunday services have been held since October 4 when 41 persons attended. Attendance at last Sunday's 10:00 am Remembrance Day service was 50, the Covid 19 limit.
- Rev. Palmer has been making weekly pastoral phone calls to the congregation but he will be on designated study leave for the next two weeks. Presiding at the next two services will be Rev. Blair Lewis and Helen Knowles respectively.
- Wayne Lord, co-chair of Ways and Means, said the team will review the possibility of meal catering in the new year.
- Anne Brooks reported the UCW plans to organize the Poinsettia Fund again. UCW gave \$2000.00 to the General Fund earlier this year as well as a donation to Mission and Service.
- Sandra thanked Jini Palmer, Lester Scott and others on the Covid 19 committee for their support during the past months. Brenda noted that Lester carried out the custodial tasks over the summer.
- As chair of Financial Management, Ian Oliver expressed thanks to those who have continued to support the Church during the pandemic.
- The financial picture as of October 31 shows local givings are \$1,748.00 below what was budgeted for the 10 month period. Total revenue stands at slightly below \$169,000.00 (\$31,743.00 under budget). Operating expenses came in at \$173,141.00 (\$220,874.00 budgeted).
- Meanwhile, a federal government wage subsidy of \$26,000.00 has been applied ever since it was granted. Also granted was an interest-free loan of \$40,000.00 over a three year period.
- The Christian Development Team, chaired by Brenda Parrott, has been holding virtual meetings. The Remembrance Day service, although different from past years, was built around traditions. The team, working in conjunction with the minister, has not announced a date for the observance of Holy Communion.
- Isabel reported for the Board of Trustees and said the Pastoral Care Team is sending the usual greetings.
- First United is accepting applications for a full time permanent office administrator. Wayne Lord, chair of Ministry and Personnel, said Margaret Payne-Chenard will be supplying as of November 23 until the position is filled.
- Property Management chair Lester Scott said the reduced number of people in the sanctuary is having an echo effect on the sound. He said the ventilation system is now on the fall/winter setting.
- The next meeting of Council was set for January 20.



COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Shriners - Each year the Shriners have calendars and fruit cake for sale. All profit goes to help support sick children in our region. Calendars are 20\$ each and fruit cake are 3 in a box for 20\$. If interested please contact Harvey Spence at 546-2742 or by email at colovey@hotmail.ca Thank you for supporting the Shriners!

Team Esperanza - Due to pandemic-related restrictions, our mission team won't be holding a pre-Christmas craft sale. However, note that we have a large variety of crafts suitable for gift giving on hand & Marie is prepared to take orders for hand painted items prior to Dec 1st. As well, we have a limited quantity of chili (individual servings), smoked cheese & lobster paste for sale. For more information, contact Helen Knowles (546-9563) or Marie Oliver (548-3493).

Psalm 23

The Divine Shepherd

A Psalm of David.

¹ The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.
² He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;^[a]
³ he restores my soul.^[b]
He leads me in right paths^[c]
for his name's sake.

⁴ Even though I walk through the darkest valley,^[d]
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

⁶ Surely^[e] goodness and mercy^[f] shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
my whole life long.^[g]

Matthew 25:14-30

The Parable of the Talents

¹⁴ "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; ¹⁵ to one he gave five talents,^[a] to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶ The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. ¹⁷ In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. ¹⁸ But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹ After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' ²¹ His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' ²² And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' ²³ His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' ²⁴ Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; ²⁵ so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' ²⁶ But his master

replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter?'²⁷ Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest.²⁸ So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents.²⁹ For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.³⁰ As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'