

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

December 12, 2021

Minister Rev. Neal Palmer **Music Director** Martha Vickers
Office Adm. Margaret Daniels **Greeters** Mike Kierstead
Custodian Steve White Margaret Payne-Chénard

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<u>Lectionary for today</u>	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u>
Zephaniah 3:14-20	Micah 5:2-5a
Isaiah 12:2-6	Psalm 80:1-7
Philippians 4:4-7	Hebrews 10:5-10
Luke 3:7-18	Luke 1:39-55
Today's bulletins are in loving memory of grandparents Harold & Edith Payne and Aulay & Florence Scott by Melanie	
We welcome John & Isabel Clouston as our guest vocalists again this week and thank them for the beautiful music they have so graciously contributed to our worship services throughout the year!	

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

GATHERING

MUSIC AS WE GATHER

WELCOME

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING – JOY

(Hope & Peace candles are lit)

*Lyrics (Tune O Come, O Come, Emmanuel – VU 1)
 (traditional music, lyrics c 2021 Adrian Marchuk)*

***O come to us like joy of heaven's dawn,
 From Mary's womb a faithful paragon***

***Brought forth into this world by love's power
 Your Spirit through her labors in that hour
 Rejoice, rejoice!
 Emmanuel shall come to us
 And all things shall be well***

Candle Lighting Ritual (Luke 3:7-18)

Brooke Knowles

When confusion claims us
 When we feel unable to do anything right
 The Holy invites us to be faithful
 And we find Joy

(Joy candle is lit)

Where in the world do we find Joy these days?

CENTERING FOR WORSHIP - "We Light This Candle"

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

CALL TO WORSHIP

GATHERING PRAYER

***GATHERING HYMN -**

VU #48

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

Hark! The herald angels sing,
 "Glory to the new born King,
 peace on earth, and mercy mild,
 God and sinners reconciled!"
 Joyful all ye nations rise,
 join the triumph of the skies;
 with the angelic host proclaim,
 "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain

Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"

Christ, by highest heaven adored,
late in time behold him come,
off spring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the God head see;
hail, the incarnate deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel!

Refrain

Hail, the heaven born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
Born to give us second birth.

Refrain

PRAYER OF HUMILITY *(responsively)*

...At those times, we pray, forgive us,

and let us start again.

When we're reluctant to share, we pray, pardon us,

and let us start again.

When we'd rather receive than give, we pray, excuse us,

and let us start again.

When we prefer our way to your way, we pray, please forgive and forget,

and let us start again.

(Silence for reflection)

CHORAL RESPONSE - "The Advent Prayer Song"

***Breathe into this moment of peace
with courage to let go, daring to dream.
For the days are surely coming
when we'll rise strong together once again in peace.***

***GREETING ONE ANOTHER** *(responsively)*

The Peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

SHARING A STORY *(with those of all ages)*

***SINGING A SONG** "Never Ending Joy"

VU #40

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

ENGAGING

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

Helen Knowles

Luke 3:7-18

REFLECTION

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

GIFT OF MUSIC

John & Isabel Clouston
"Do You Hear What I Hear?"

RESPONDING

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Bev Murphy



INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

***OFFERING PRAYER** *(in unison)*

**Holy One, with joy,
we gather water from the well of salvation,
from the well which never runs dry.
Grant that we too, we pray, may be like wells that never
run dry, pouring ourselves out for the sake of the world,
trusting in your unending grace.**

Amen

SHARING OUR CONCERNS *(Meditative music)*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE *(responsively)*

God of all places, and yet ever so near, as we continue our wait for
the birth of Emmanuel, we pray, quiet our minds.

**If we're still too busy, grant us a centre of stillness that
busyness can't disturb.**

And grant the same growing stillness, so the silence of the chosen
night may be filled with holiness when it comes.

**To the perpetrators of violence, that the clash of their
weapons might be stilled.**

To the young and restless, that they might set aside their anxiousness
and listen.

**To the retailers and the shopkeepers, that they might set
aside their commerce.**

To the grieving and the hurting, that their wounds might subside.

**That all hearts may join together in a holy peace on that
night and know, without doubt, we are one.**

We are one in the love of God, who loved the world without limit,
sending Jesus to live among us.

Emmanuel: God is with us. Now and forever.

THE LORD'S PRAYER – VU #921 *(in unison)*

**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.**

GOING OUT (as God's people)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CLOSING HYMN** "Joy to the World" VU #59

Joy to the world! the Lord is come:
let earth receive her King!
Let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! the Saviour reigns:
let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
nor thorns infest the ground:
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the earth with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

***BLESSING**

***CHORAL CLOSING**

MV #221

"I am Walking a Path of Peace"

*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.*

(The Advent Candles are extinguished.)

POSTLUDE



**Once again this year there will be 2 Christmas Eve Services
with the celebration of communion.**

Thursday, December 23rd at 7 PM

&

Friday, December 24th at 4 PM

Please register with the office by telephone (546-3532) or by email (firstadmin@nb.aibn.com) **no later than December 20, 2021** to allow for social distancing set up in the sanctuary and preparation of the appropriate number of bulletins and communion elements.

Thank you in advance for your assistance

Church News

The church office hours are Monday to Friday **9:00 AM to 3:00 PM**
The church office will be **closed at 12 noon on December 24th** and will also be closed on Monday and Tuesday December 27th and 28th.

Peanut Butter Update – As of December 9, 2021, 558 jars of Peanut Butter have been collected to go 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.

The Christian Development team would like to thank *Colette & Wayne Clowater, Lela & Percy Branch* and *Lester Scott* for decorating the church for the Christmas Season. Their talent is much appreciated.

Annual Christmas Benevolence Fund: - It's that time of year! Giving to this fund is even more important than ever because COVID-19 is still affecting lives. Once again this year the process is a bit different, but we hope the results will be the same or better as previous years. Should you wish to give you will find an envelope on the tree in the narthex. Then you may drop it in the offering plate or drop it off at the church office during the week. 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

Reminder – If you plan to attend the service in-person, please call the church office at 546-3532 by **Friday** morning, and give Margaret the name(s) and phone number(s) for yourself and anyone in your bubble who will be sitting with you. A seating plan will be pre-arranged based on the required physical distancing rules. On-line services will continue, on a delayed basis, as the in-person service will be recorded and then uploaded to the church website and Facebook page in due course.

Church News

Gifts with Vision: Are you looking for a gift to celebrate someone special for Christmas, Birthday, Anniversary, Congratulations - for that someone who has everything, or who doesn't want anything more to add to their 'clutter'? **Gifts for Vision** is the perfect gift for you to give! The United Church of Canada has put together a catalogue and online 'store' of gifts that make a difference in people's lives throughout Canada and the world. Each 'Gift with Vision' provides support for remarkable Mission and Service partners for special projects that address many life-changing issues, such as hunger, poverty, anti-racism, well-building, environment, vaccines.

There are catalogues (a sample of what is in the on-line store) at the back of the church for you to take - we can get more! The on-line store is at giftswithvision.ca.

Thank you for being part of these life-changing activities!



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 15, 2021.

Broadview (Observer) Renewal is due in December. If you receive this publication and have not yet renewed your subscription at the church office please do so by Monday, December 20, 2021. If you would like to start to receive this United Church of Canada publication please contact the office at 546-3532. The annual subscription rate is \$25 (tax included).

YOU ARE INVITED!

Join your colleagues/friends/neighbours in the three Atlantic Regions in the rescheduled on-line book study through 4 weeks in early 2022 (January 12, 19 26 and February 2). We'll read together Canadian Senator (Retired) Hugh Segal's recent book: Bootstraps Need Boots; One Tory's Lonely Fight To End Poverty in Canada (UBC Press, Vancouver, 2019).

The four Zoom sessions are to be held on Wednesdays, January 12, 19, 26 and February 2 at 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Atlantic Time (7:30 to 9 NL Time.) Each session will be 1½ hours duration. Meetings will be hosted by Marion Pardy (NL), Karen & Hal Llewellyn (NS), Audrey Louder and Rose-Hannah Gaskin (NB).

We ask those who register to make a commitment to read through the book and to participate as fully as possible in the sessions. The plan is to go through 5 chapters each evening of January 12, 19 and 26. We have Senator Hugh Segal himself confirmed for the February 2 discussion and final session.

The registration form can be accessed <https://ucceast.ca/64326-book-study-bootstraps-need-boots-one-torys-lonely-fight-to-end-poverty-in-canada/> **Registration deadline is January 4, 2022.**

There is no charge for the course. We invite participants, however, to consider making a free-will offering to the Mission and Service Fund of The United Church of Canada.

A number of the books are now in stock at the United Church Resource Centre, St. John's, NL at a subsidized cost of \$25 (plus shipping, if necessary). United Church Resource Centre, 320 Elizabeth Avenue, St. John's, NL A1B 1T9; by telephone at 1-800-268-3781, extension 6141; or email Leona Laundry at LLaundry@united-church.ca.

For any further information you may contact rose-hannah.gaskin@gmail.com or m-pardy@nf.sympatico.ca

The book is also available through the Interlibrary Loan program through our local library.



SCRIPTURE READING – NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION

LUKE 3:7-18

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

8 Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

9 Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

10 And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?"

11 In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise."

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

13 He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you."

14 Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

15 As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah,

16 John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with 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 granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

18 So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.