

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

December 19, 2021

Minister Rev. Neal Palmer **Music Director** Martha Vickers
Office Adm. Margaret Daniels **Greeters** Allen Jagoe
Custodian Lester Scott Nancy Jagoe

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Lectionary for today	Lectionary for Christmas Eve
Micah 5:2-5a	Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalms 80:1-7	Psalms 96
Hebrews 10:5-10	Titus 2:11-14
Luke 1:39-55	Like 2:1-20
Today's bulletins are: in loving memory of Allan MacKenzie from Margaret and family & Ruth Knowles lovingly remembered by Joyce MacLeod and family	
<i>We welcome Amanda Godin as guest vocalist this week and thank her for sharing her gift of music</i>	

*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 – LOVE

(Hope, Peace & Joy candles are lit)

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

***O come you source of Love unto us all
 Enlighten us and help us hear your call
 To bear your Love out into the wild
 And celebrate God's wondrous holy Child!
 Rejoice, rejoice!
 Emmanuel shall come to us
 And all things shall be well***

Candle Lighting Ritual (Luke 1:46-55)

Sandra Boone

When we feel invisible, ineffective
 Too small to make a difference
 The Holy invites us to be God-Bearers
 And we find Love

(Love candle is lit)

Where in the world do we find Love these days?

CENTERING FOR WORSHIP - "We Light This Candle"

***We light a 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.***

CALL TO WORSHIP *(responsively)*

The Spirit is making great changes to the world. Are you ready to take part?

We have come to do God's will: to work for justice, to bring balance back to our lives.

The Spirit is making great changes to the world. Are you ready to take part?

We have come to do God's will: to seek and celebrate God's surprising love, to establish God's dominion here on earth.

GATHERING PRAYER

***GATHERING CAROL -**

VU #64

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary;
and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently
the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessed gift of heaven.
No ear may hear his coming;
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in;
be born to us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.

PRAYER OF HUMILITY

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 CAROL**

"Away in a Manger"

VU #69

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask you to stay
close by me forever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

ENGAGING

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

Isabel MacLaggan

Micah 5:2-5a

Luke 1:39-55

REFLECTION

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

GIFT OF MUSIC

“What Child is This?”

Amanda Godin

RESPONDING

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Bev Murphy

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

*OFFERING PRAYER *(in unison)*

**Holy One,
help us see the blessings we have and to value and use them.
Just as importantly, though, help us see the blessings in
others, instead of, what we perceive as being their
limitations.
Help us, in other words, to work together, and ultimately, to
grow love and respect profusely.
Amen**

SHARING OUR CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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.**

GOING OUT (as God’s people)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CLOSING HYMN** “The First Nowell” VU #91

The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay a keeping their sheep
on a cold winter’s night that was so deep.

Refrain:

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

They lookèd up and saw a star,
shining in the east, beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.

Refrain

And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went.

Refrain

This star drew nigh to the northwest;
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay,
right over the place where Jesus lay.

Refrain

Then entered in those wise men three,
full reverently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence
their gold and myrrh and frankincense.

Refrain

Then let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
that hath made heaven and earth of nought,
and with his blood our life hath bought.

Refrain

***BLESSING**

***CHORAL CLOSING**

"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.***

(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 21, 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



***The 2021 Poinsettia Memorial Booklets
are now available in the narthex
or from the office during the week***

Church News

The office hours over Christmas and New Years are as follows: closing at noon on Friday, December 24th and will remain closed until Wednesday, December 29th at 9 AM. On December 31st the office will close at noon and remain closed until Tuesday, January 4, 2022.

Peanut Butter Update – As of December 16, 2021, 568 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.

UCW Open Circle Members will hold a business meeting Monday, January 10th, 2022 at 1:00 PM in the Ruth Morrison Room. Physical distancing will be in place and masks are mandatory. Please note your mission monies are due as well as the \$4.00 Miramichi Presbytery for 2022.

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**, and give Margaret the name(s) and phone number(s) for yourself and anyone in your steady group of 20 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!

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).

White Gift Contributions - The following items were donated to the church for the Volunteer Center:

44 boxed items
67 canned goods
8 beauty and bath aids (soap/toothbrushes/etc.)
2 bags of kitted items (mitts, socks, slippers)
1 toy
13 gift cards
\$95 cash has been donated
Thank you to all who contributed.

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.

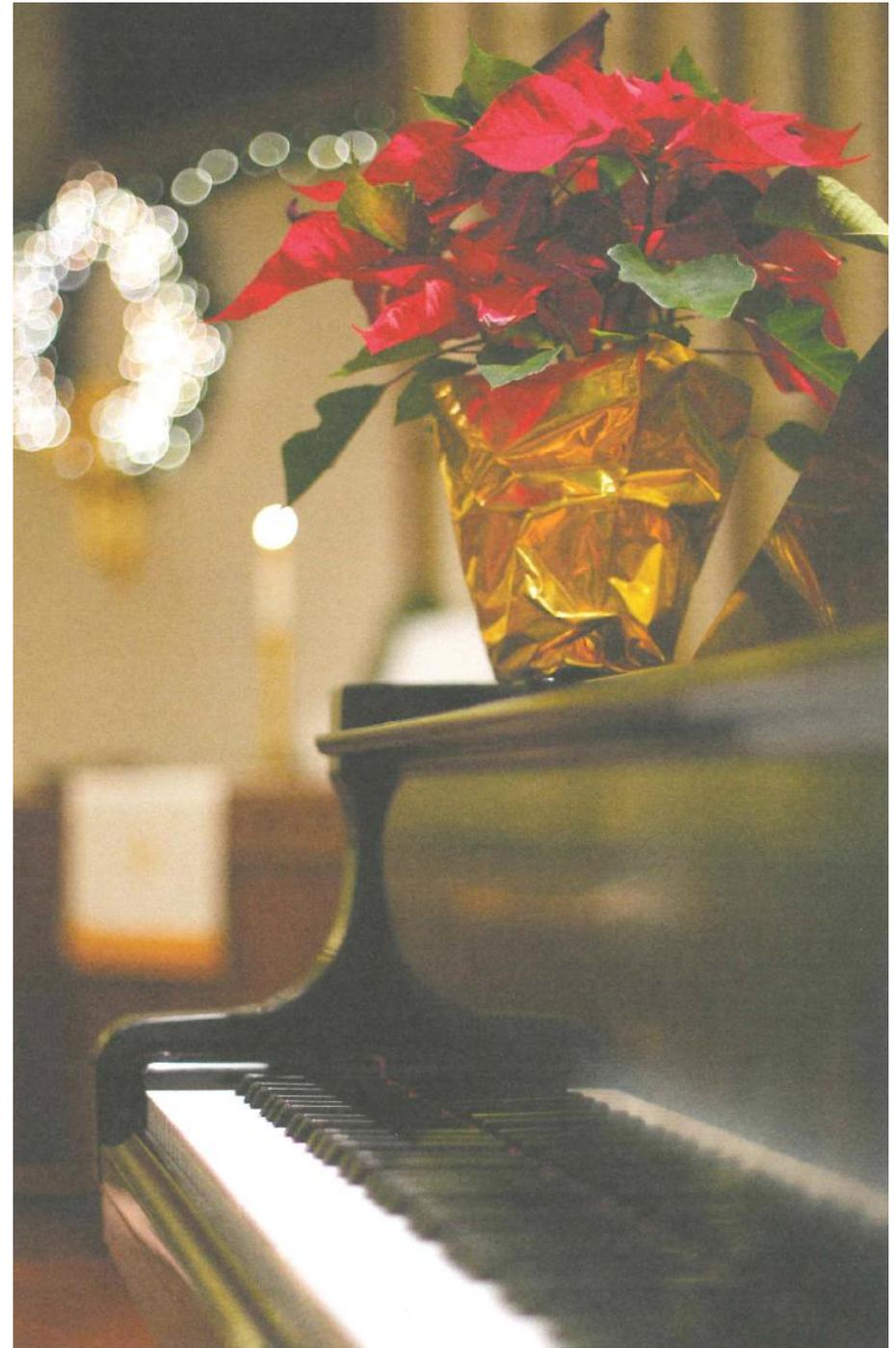
The registration form can be accessed <https://ucceast.ca/64326-book-study-bootstraps-need-boots-one-torys-lonely-fight-to-end-poverty-in-canada/> **Registration deadline is January 4, 2022.**

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

MICAH 5:2-5a

2 But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

3 Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel.

4 And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth;

5 and he shall be the one of peace.

LUKE 1:39-55

39 In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country,

40 where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit

42 and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.

43 And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me?

44 For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy.

45 And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

46 And Mary said, 'My soul magnifies the Lord,

47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,

48 for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

50 His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

51 He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

52 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;

53 he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

54 He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,

55 according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'