

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

March 27, 2022

Minister Rev. Neal Palmer **Music Director** Martha Vickers
Office Adm. Margaret Daniels **Greeters** Shirley Sealy
Custodian Lester Scott Beth Sullivan

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Lectionary for today	Lectionary for next Sunday
Joshua 5:9-12 Psalm 32 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32	Isaiah 43:16-21 Psalm 126 Philippians 3:4b-14 John 12:1-8
<i>We welcome John & Isabel Clouston as our guest vocalists this week and thank them for their 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

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

Christ the Life of the World,

as we travel through this Lenten journey, lead us from ignorance to enlightenment, from shadows to brightness, from death to life.

The Christ Candle is lit.



CENTERING FOR WORSHIP

MV #79 (Refrain)

"Spirit, Open My Heart"

*Spirit, open my heart
to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love,
in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.*

CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)

...Carrying heavy loads, travelling light;
walking in fear, living in faith—
welcome...

**We come to worship with all that's good in our lives,
with all that hurts and hinders us,
with past and present in us,
and the future before us.**

We come to find our way home.

GATHERING PRAYER

*GATHERING HYMN

VU #271

"There's a Wideness in God's Mercy"

There's a wideness in God's mercy
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in God's justice
which is more than liberty.

There is no place where earth's sorrows
are more felt than up in heaven;
there is no place where earth's failings
have such gracious judgement given.

There is plentiful redemption
in the blood that Christ has shed;
there is joy for all the members
in the sorrows of the Head.

Troubled souls, why will you scatter
like a crowd of frightened sheep?
Foolish hearts, why will you wander
from a love so true and deep?

For the love of God is broader
than the measures of the mind,
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.

TAKE UP THE CHALLENGE *(A Lenten Spiritual Practice)*

Lent Challenge 4

Anne Wilson

CHORAL RESPONSE "Silent Spring Song" *(Verse 4)*
(Words by Shirley Erena Murray/Music by Ron Klusmeier)

***We are the spenders of precious store,
we are the greedy who take no score,
God, help your children mindfully listen:
ours are the mouths wanting more and more.
Silent spring,
silent spring.***

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

The Peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

SHARING A STORY *(with those of all ages)*
Brenda Parrott & Cheryl Brewster

Luke 15:1-3

***SINGING A SONG**

VU #296

"This Is God's Wondrous World"

This is God's wondrous world,
and to my listening ears
all nature sings, and round me rings
the music of the spheres.
This is God's wondrous world;
I rest me in the thought
of rocks and trees, of skies and seas
God's hand the wonders wrought.

This is God's wondrous world:
the birds their carols raise;
the morning light, the lily white
declare their Maker's praise.
This is God's wondrous world:
God shines in all that's fair;
in the rustling grass or mountain pass,
God's voice speaks everywhere.

This is God's wondrous world:
O let me ne'er forget
that though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the ruler yet.
This is God's wondrous world:
why should my heart be sad?
Let voices sing, let the heavens ring:
God reigns, let earth be glad!

ENGAGING

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

Helen Knowles

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

REFLECTION

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

GIFT OF MUSIC

Isabel & John Clouston
"Lord Jesus, of You I Will Sing"

RESPONDING

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Bev Murphy

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

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

Holy One,
as the prodigal made for home, we turn to you.
As the parent celebrated his return, we rejoice with those
who love you.
What we offer is a simple token of all we've been given.
And so, receive us and our offerings, we pray, as we come
with grateful hearts into your presence.
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 kin-dom 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 kin-dom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.

GOING OUT (as Spirit people)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CLOSING HYMN**

VU #427

"To Show by Touch and Word"

To show by touch and word devotion to the earth,
to hold in full regard all life that comes to birth,
we need, O God, the will to find
the good you had of old in mind.

Renew our minds to choose the things that matter most,
our hearts to long for truth till pride of self is lost.
For every challenge that we face
we need your guidance and your grace.

Let love from day to day be yardstick, rule, and norm,
and let our lives portray your word in human form.
Now come with us that we may have
your wits about us where we live.

***BLESSING**

***CHORAL CLOSING** "An Old Irish Blessing"

May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be ever at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face
and the rains fall soft upon your fields.
And until we meet again, and until we meet again,
May you be held in the hollow of God's hand.

(The Christ Candle is extinguished.)

POSTLUDE



Church News

Please note the regular church office hours are Monday to Friday 9 AM to 3 PM. The office will be closing at 2:30 PM on Tuesday, March 29th.

Peanut Butter Update - As of March 24th, 2022, **79** jars of Peanut Butter have been collected to go to the Bathurst Volunteer Center and an additional **106** jars have been dropped off directly at the Centre from the monetary donations made at the church office. Peanut butter can be dropped off at the church office anytime during office hours. We have an additional \$380 collected for the next group purchase.

Should you wish to make a monetary donation you may now do so by **issuing your cheque to First United Church**, indicating it is to be used for the purchase of Peanut Butter. Your donation will be marked as such and will be included on your annual tax receipt. Your cheques can be dropped off at the church office or mailed to 309 St. Patrick Street, Bathurst NB E2A 1E2. Periodically someone from our Community Outreach Team will purchase the peanut butter and have it delivered directly to the Volunteer Center.

Purses Plus – The Community Outreach Sub-team, in consultation with Passage House, a residence for the abused, has decided to coordinate a project in support of needy residents. Supplies will be gathered, delivered to Passage House and replenished, as available. Requested supplies include, but are not limited to used purses in good condition, reusable shopping bags, tooth brushes/past, hand/body cream, soap/shower gel, hair combs/brushes, nail files/clippers or cleaning supplies. Donated items may be deposited in a designated container in the narthex. For more information please contact Helen Knowles at 546-9563.



A donation of 2 boxes of yarn has been given to First United Church. Anyone who wishes to knit items is welcome to use this yarn and return the items to the church for the Community Outreach team to donate. Recommendations are hats, mitts and/or socks.

Church News

Ways & Means Team will meet on Monday, March 28th at 9 AM in the Ruth Morrison Room.

News reports of the invasion of Ukraine stir both our hearts and our conscience. As people of faith, The United Church of Canada holds in prayer all those facing fear and violence and seeks the immediate cessation of war. To donate money to help **Ukraine**, through the United Church of Canada, go to this link: <https://united-church.ca/social-action/act-now/conflict-ukraine>

Notice from the FSLDW Region - Spark Newsletter

Do you ever wonder what other communities of faith are up to these days? Maybe you're curious because you have heard there is a new minister around but how do you find out anything about them? Do you have this amazing idea but who can you share it with? Church anniversary is coming up but how do you let people know?

We are launching a newsletter! It will be distributed to all churches but we don't want to stop there! We want you to have your very own Spark. All you have to do is register! You heard me! Monthly Spark can be delivered to your email address and for those without technology, we are exploring ways to get a paper copy (gasp) into your mail box. So...here is the link to start discovering everything our Region has to offer! <https://ucceast.ca/66810-fsldw-spark-newsletter>

Community News

St. George's Anglican Church, 432 King Avenue, will be having a **"A Family and Community Breakfast"** on Saturday, April 9th from 8 AM to 10 AM, after an absence of two years. Come and enjoy fellowship and great food. Free will offering at the door.

COVID-19 Procedures Update

As we have all worked so diligently to keep our community and our First United Church family as safe as possible, we are moving cautiously to reduce the pandemic restrictions. The plan our COVID-19 Response Team has developed is as follows:

Effective March 14, 2022:

- Prior registration to attend worship services is discontinued.
- Signing-in at the entrances is discontinued.
- Hand sanitization **will** continue at the entrances.
- We welcome and encourage all who would prefer to wear masks and continue to maintain physical distancing to do so. Wearing of masks and physical distancing are no longer requirements.
- If you have symptoms of a respiratory illness, please do not attend the church.
- Deep cleaning of the church building will continue, and our ventilation system will remain turned on during the Services and office hours.
- The Minister will not wear a mask while in the Chancel, and speakers may choose not to wear a mask.
- Congregational singing and occasional soloists will continue – with and without masks depending on the person's preference.

Effective later in April if all goes well:

In addition to the above,

- The choir may return!
- Hymnbooks will be available in the chairs and pews.
- Refreshments after church may occur, possibly outside initially.

Many, many thanks to all of you for your continued support, encouragement and eye-smiles during these past two years. We are indeed a people of love and hope!!!

Your COVID-19 Response Team

Free Tax Clinics

Get your benefits and credits



If you have a modest income and a simple tax situation, volunteers can do your tax return for you!

KC Irving Center

March 28 to April 1 and April 4 to 8 from 9 AM to 3 PM

Do you need help with your tax return? The Community Volunteer Tax Program (CVITP) is collaboration between the Canada Revenue Agency and community organizations. If you have a modest income and a simple tax situation, volunteers from CVITP may be able to complete your tax return for you, **free of charge**.

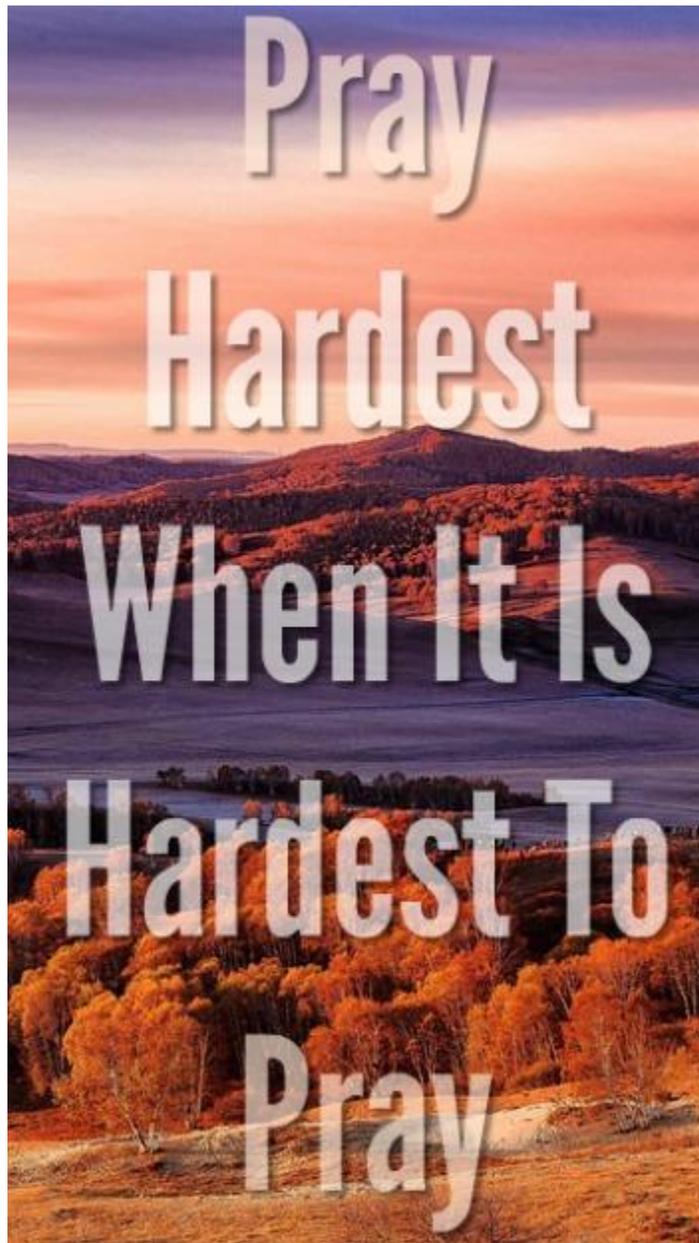
An individual with income less than \$35,000, a two person family with income less than \$45,000, plus \$2,500 for each additional person in the family can get their return done **free**.

If general, your tax situation is simple if you have no income or if your income comes from employment pension, benefits such as Canada Pension Plan, employment insurance, social assistance, registered retirement savings plans, support payments, scholarships, fellowships, bursaries or grant and interest (under \$1,000).

If you are unable to attend the clinic at KC Irving Center contact either Margaret Payne-Chénard or Mike Kierstead (548-4393) and an arrangement can be made for preparing your return.

Go to canada.ca/taxes-help or call 1-800-959-8281 for more information.

Volunteers are not employees of the Canada Revenue Agency



SCRIPTURE READING – NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION

LUKE 15:1-3, 11B-32

1 Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him.

2 And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

3 So he told them this parable:

11 Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons.

12 The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them.

13 A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living.

14 When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need.

15 So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs.

16 He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything.

17 But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger!

18 I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you;

19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'"

20 So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him.

21 Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

22 But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.

23 And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate;

24 for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

25 "Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing.

26 He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on.

27 He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.'

28 Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him.

29 But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends.

30 But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!'

31 Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.

32 But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"