

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

Dec 13, 2015
Third Sunday of Advent

Clergy Rev. Blair Lewis **Organist** Martha Vickers
Office Adm. Isabel Clouston **Greeters** Nancy & Allen Jagoe
Custodian Alan Wilcox

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<u>Lectionary for today</u>	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u>
<i>Zephaniah 3:14-20</i> <i>Isaiah 12:2-6</i> <i>Philippians 4:4-7</i> <i>Luke 3:7-18</i>	<i>Micah 5:2-5a</i> <i>Psalm 80</i> <i>Hebrews 10:5-10</i> <i>Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)</i>

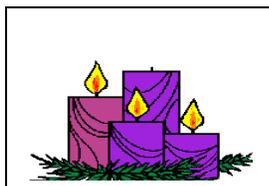
THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

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

Organ Prelude:

*Choral Opening:

Emmanuel, Emmanuel,
His name is called Emmanuel;
God with us, revealed in us;
His name is called Emmanuel.



Welcoming: (in unison)

This is the day the Lord has made:
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalm 118:24

Welcoming Friends Worshipping by CD:

Announcements:

Call To Worship:

One: Grace to you, and peace from God.

All: As Advent people
we give thanks to the One who is faithful.

One: Let us proclaim the wonder of the God
who came, is coming, and will always come.

All: In word, action, and with gentleness of spirit,
we celebrate the Advent of our God.

Lighting the Advent Candle: *'The Candle of Joy'*
(First two candles are relit) Knowles Family

One: It's a story, quite a story.
That began long ago,
When the prophets foretold
A messiah.

Line of David, it was stated
Would bring forth a new son,
Who would change the world –
Turn upside down!

All: Angel's words, angel's wings –
New life is growing, my heart sings:
"Peace on earth, enough for all!
Soon we'll be living God's way"

One: Then there's Mary (not yet married)
Gave her "Yes" to the plan
With her love, she became co-creator.

Child of Wisdom, Child of Promise
Here comes Emmanuel!
And with that joy, she sang out her song –

All: Angels's words, angel's wings –
New life is growing, my heart sings:
"Peace on earth, enough for all!
Soon we'll be living God's way!"

(The third candle is lit)

Advent Candle-Lighting Hymn: 'A Light Is Gleaming' #82 VU

A light is gleaming,
Spreading its arms throughout the night,
Living in the light.
Come share its gladness,
God's radiant love is burning bright,
Living in the light.

Prayer of Approach:

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

***Opening Hymn:** *'Hark! The Herald Angels Sing'* #48VU

Children of All Ages:

Prayer:

THE SERVICE OF THE WORD

Prayer for Understanding:

Holy God, help us to give voice to the wonderful news:
you are coming to dwell among us!
Quicken our imaginations to find new and creative ways
to proclaim Christ's coming. Amen.

Scripture Readings:

Chesley Eddy

Old Testament Reading:

Isaiah 12:2-6

Responsive Psalm:

Psalm 122 #845 VU

Gospel Lesson:

Luke 3 :7-18

***Hymn:** *'Never Ending Joy'* #40MV

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:

Meditation: "The Challenge of John the Baptist"

Anthem: *'Mary's Boy Child'* John & Isabel

THE COMMUNITY RESPONDS

Presentation of Gifts and Self to God:

Choral Response: *'In the Bleak Midwinter'* #55VU vs.4

What can I give him, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;

If I were a wise man, I would do my part,

Yet what I can, I give him, give my heart.

***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.

Prayer Of Confession:

One: O Holy Child of Bethlehem,

descend to us we pray.

Cast out our sin and enter in;

be born in us today.

All: 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 get distracted by all the busyness of this season.

Forgive us, God.

One: Grant us the simple wonder of the shepherds,
the intelligent 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.***

Assurance of Pardon:

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: Thanks be to the Advent God,
who comes among us,
setting us free to love and serve.**

Reflective Music:

Silent Prayer:

THE SERVICE OF THE TABLE

An Invitation to the Table:

***Our Communion Hymn:**

I Come with Joy' **#477VU** vs. 1, 3&5

The Great Thanksgiving Prayer:

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

One: Blessed are you, gracious God, Creator of light,
Giver of all life, Source of love.
We bless you for all your gifts.
We praise you for this holy Advent day
and for the wonder of this time of joy.

**All: We praise you, O God.
We thank you, O God.**

One: For Jesus Christ, in whom you gather
the hopes and fears of all the years,
we bless your Holy Name.
We join with all your people of every time and place
we share our thoughts and prayers
with God our source of hope.
On this third Sunday of Advent
we celebrate the joy of our faith;
your presence is alive through
the power of the resurrection.

Choral Response: (Sanctus and Benedictus # 942VU)

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might;
holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.
Heav'n and earth are full, full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.**

One: On the night before Jesus died,
he had supper with his disciples:
he took bread; thanked you, as we have thanked you;
broke the bread; and gave the bread to his friends, saying,
Take this, all of you, and eat it.
This is my body, given for you.
Each time you do this, remember me.
After supper he took the wine; thanked you for it,
and passed a cup of wine to his friends saying,
This cup is the new promise
God has made with you in my blood.
Each time you do this and drink from this cup,
remember me.
Remembering his death and celebrating his resurrection,
we await with hope his coming again
to bring peace and justice to the earth.
And so, we affirm the mystery of our faith:

**All: Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.**

One: Send, O God, your Holy Spirit upon us and what we do here;
that we, and these gifts, touched by your Spirit,
may be signs of life and love to each other,
and to all the world.
Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory is yours,
God most holy, now and forever.
We gather these and all our prayers,
thankful that we may now turn to you in one voice,

All: Our Father, Who art in heaven..... Amen

Breaking of the Bread and Pouring of the Cup:

Sharing of the Bread and Cup:

Musical Offering: *'All Poor Ones and Humble'*

THE COMMUNITY GOES FORTH

***Closing Hymn:** *'Go, Tell It on the Mountain'* #43 VU

***Commissioning:** (in unison)

**O Candle of calm and peace, symbol of ancient light,
lending your beauty and wonder to our darkened corners:
Come and share your halo of light with us,
to soothe, comfort, and guide us on the way.**

**O Star of Night, lead us to new dawns,
guide our journey to our deepest desires,
banish doubts, free us from fear, guide us to all fullness.
Amen.**

***Blessing:**

May the Spirit of hope lead you
to prepare the way of the Lord;
may the God of comfort embrace you,
as the valleys are lifted up,
and every mountain and hill made low;
may the Child of Promise leap with you,
as together we journey through this Advent time. Amen.

*** Choral Closing:** *I am Walking a Path of Peace' (#221 MV)*
***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.***

Organ Postlude:

*I will honor Christmas in my heart,
and try to keep it all the year.
~Charles Dickens*

Church News

This Week at First United –Dec. 14 – Dec. 19

Monday	6:15	Beavers – Rms 1.2&3
Tuesday	6:15	Cubs & Scouts – DEMH GYM
	6:30	Choir Practice
Wednesday	7:00	Christmas Hymn Sing

Peanut Butter for Volunteer Centre

Commitment December 31, 2015 **900**

Total to Date **799**

To meet our obligation, we will need to collect 33-34 jars of peanut butter per week.

The Volunteer Center supplies, on average, 430 households monthly with that amount growing to over 530 during the Christmas season.



Christmas Hymn Sing

Waiting for Bethlehem's Light

The annual Christmas Hymn Sing will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 16th, (storm date Dec. 17th) at 7pm at First United. 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 Take Note, BHS Choir and other special guests. Cost \$10 Adults \$5 Children. Tickets are available from choir members and the church office 546-3532.

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 13, 2015.

Christmas Newsletters are ready for pick up in the Narthex. Please help with postage costs by delivering to your family, friends and neighbors.

The CD titled, "Christmas on the Bay", is now available. It features a variety of Christmas music by Linda Knowles MacPherson, with help from friends, Donald Eddy, Archie Fowlie, and Anne Marie Hocquard. A copy may be obtained with a donation to First United Church. Please contact Isabel at the church office to obtain or reserve a copy.

Notice: Sound system units for hearing impaired individuals are available. Please ask the soundboard operator for assistance.

2016 Envelopes: The Givings Envelopes for 2016 are located in the narthex. Please insure that envelopes for the correct year are used as individual contribution #'s may have changed.

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

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.

*Happiness is not a goal;
it is a by-product.
~Eleanor Roosevelt~*

Community Events

Bathurst Christian Women invite you to our Joy to the World Luncheon Wednesday, December 16, 2015 at Danny's Inn and Conference Center \$15 from 11:15am - 1:00pm. We will be carol singing around the piano and guest speaker Peter Scott will bring his message "Wise Men Still Seek Him". Reservations are necessary. Please contact Joanne at 542-1118 or ejgodin@rogers.com or contact Connie at 546-2127

Guidelines for Refugee Project Support:

1. 'Gifts in Kind' - Bedroom and living room furniture of good quality.

- Personal and cleaning items (they can be rationed).

- Clothing (sizes to be passed along once we know).

2. 'Church-based Fundraisers' – Organize a church-wide event or activity with proceeds going to the project.

3. 'Individual Donation' – In the form of a special church-approved

offering, a personal donation or a business donation.

4. 'Hands-on Support' - Assist with the collection and subsequent transport of gifts to Miramichi. A Saturday collection event in mid-January is proposed.*

*For up-dates on required items contact the following people:

Dalhousie/Campbellton – Gail Levesque - 826-3156

Bathurst area – volunteer needed

Miramichi – Wayne Mullin – 778-8292

Isaiah 12:2-6 New International Version (NIV)

² Surely God is my salvation;
I will trust and not be afraid.
The LORD, the LORD himself, is my strength and my defense^[a];
he has become my salvation.”

³ With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation.

⁴ In that day you will say:

“Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name;
make known among the nations what he has done,
and proclaim that his name is exalted.

⁵ Sing to the LORD, for he has done glorious things;
let this be known to all the world.

⁶ Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion,
for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.”

Luke 3:7-18 New International Version (NIV)

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

⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.

⁹ The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”¹⁰ “What should we do then?” the crowd asked.

¹¹ John answered, “Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.” ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized. “Teacher,” they asked, “what should we do?”

¹³ “Don’t collect any more than you are required to,” he told them.

¹⁴ Then some soldiers asked him, “And what should we do?”

He replied, “Don’t extort money and don’t accuse people falsely—be content with your pay.”

¹⁵ The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah.

¹⁶ John answered them all, “I baptize you with^[a] water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with^[b] 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 barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

¹⁸ And with many other words John exhorted the people and proclaimed the good news to them.