

*The United Church of Canada*  
*Bathurst Pastoral Charge*  
**First United Church, Bathurst**  
[www.firstunited-bathurst.ca](http://www.firstunited-bathurst.ca)

**March 19, 2023**

**Minister** Rev. Neal Palmer    **Music Director** Martha Vickers  
**Office Adm.** Margaret Daniels    **Custodian** Lester Scott  
**Audio & Visual Technicians** Ralph Jamieson & Donald Eddy  
**Greeters** Harvey & Julie Spence

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<u>Lectionary for today</u>	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u>
1 Samuel 16:1-13	Ezekiel 37:1-14
Psalm 23	Psalm 130
Ephesians 5:8-14	Romans 8:6-11
John 9:1-41	John 11:1-45

*The asterisk \* identifies those times in the service where you are invited to present yourselves, body, mind, and spirit, as is comfortable for you today...*

*GATHERING*

**MUSIC AS WE GATHER**

**\*WELCOME & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** *(in unison)*

**As we gather to worship, let's respectfully pause to remember we live and work and worship on lands that are, by law, the unceded territory of the original peoples, the Mi'kmaq. May we live with respect on this land, and live in peace and in friendship with its people.**

**LENTEN CANDLE-LIGHTING PRAYER** *(responsively)*

...Today we take one step further on our Lenten journey, travelling in the shadow of our teacher, hoping to follow faithfully in his Way.

**We keep our senses attuned, attentive to God's Child, the Beloved. Even when what we experience makes us uncomfortable or afraid, we don't turn away.**

*Four Lenten Candles are lit.*

**CENTERING FOR WORSHIP** - "Hold us in your grace"

***Hold us in your grace, O God,  
hold us in your grace.  
Hold us in your grace, O God,  
hold us in your grace.***

***Hold us,  
hold us in your grace.  
Hold us,  
hold us in your grace.***

**CALL TO WORSHIP** *(responsively)*

...Come into the wild pastures, where sheep graze, and nothing seems amiss.

**This place feels so very alive.**

The trees clap, the birds sing, and the light bounces so that it feels like anything could happen here.

**We come to worship that promise and possibility.**

**We come to open our eyes to endless grace.**

**GATHERING PRAYER**

\***GATHERING HYMN** – “Are You a Shepherd?” – MV #126

Are you a shepherd, good shepherd who leads us,  
safely through danger, while calming our fears?  
Are you a father who shelters and feeds us,  
shares in our laughter and wipes away tears?

*Refrain*

*Yes, you are shepherd, parent and teacher,  
but you are greater than all that we know.  
Holy and living, loving and giving,  
God, you are with us wherever we go.*

Are you a mother, good mother who bears us,  
comforts, protects us and helps us to rest?  
Are you a teacher who daily prepares us,  
challenging students to offer their best?

*Refrain*

Great, gentle shepherd, forever beside us,  
lead all your children in paths that are right.  
Great, loving parent, wise teacher, you guide us.  
We want to love you and bring you delight.

*Refrain*

**LENTEN TENEBRAE** (*responsively*)

(*Speakers - Chelsey & Jamie MacLaggan*)

(*Candle Lighters/Extinguisher – Charlotte Woods, Julia Woods,  
Addison MacLaggan & Cameron MacLaggan*)

*...Three Candles are lit, as well as the Christ Candle...*

One: Though we yearn for great vision, many of our visions are limited.

Two: Yet, we do not know just how limited we are spiritually.

One: We do not know that we do not know.

Two: Content to live with illusions and self-delusions, the people of this world do not even want to know wisdom and truth.

One: As the prophet Joel said, when the leaders lack vision, it is the people who suffer.

Two: We suffer from narrow leadership, compromised integrity, and self-centered values.

One: We experience the suffering of God’s people on our streets, in shantytowns, in refugee camps, and in every neighbourhood.

*The fourth candle is extinguished...*

**CHORAL RESPONSE** – “Don’t Be Afraid” - MV #90

***Don’t be afraid. My love is stronger,  
my love is stronger than your fear.  
Don’t be afraid. My love is stronger  
and I have promised,  
promised to be always near.***

Two: Let us pray.

**Holy One,  
we long for enlightened leaders to emerge  
who have the audacity to hope  
and to declare the truth we long to receive.  
How long must we wait?  
How long must we suffer?  
Or are we the ones who are to embrace the visions and  
possibilities?  
If so, open our spirits for us to embrace your truth.  
Open our minds to receive your wisdom.  
Open our hearts to love widely, generously, and deeply.  
May our faith shine through us  
and may we experience your *kingdom*  
on earth as in heaven.  
Amen**

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

Ephesians 5:8-14

**\*SINGING A SONG** – “This Little Light of Mine”

This little light of mine  
I’m gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine  
I’m gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine  
I’m gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Hide it under a bushel (NO!)  
I’m gonna let it shine.  
Hide it under a bushel (NO!)  
I’m gonna let it shine.  
Hide it under a bushel (NO!)  
I’m gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Don’t let anyone “whiff” (blow) it out.  
I’m gonna let it shine.  
Don’t let anyone “whiff” (blow) it out.  
I’m gonna let it shine.  
Don’t let anyone “whiff” (blow) it out.  
I’m gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

See the light spreading round the world.  
See all the faces shine.  
See the light spreading round the world.  
See all the faces shine.  
See the light spreading round the world.  
See all the faces shine.  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

*ENGAGING*

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

*Jennifer Oliver-Lavigne*

1 Samuel 16:1-13

John 9:1-41

**REFLECTION**

**MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION**

**GIFT OF MUSIC** – “The Lord’s My Shepherd”  
*[Emma Vickers – previously recorded Winter, 2020)*

*RESPONDING*

**MINUTE FOR MISSION**

*Pat MacIntosh*

**INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

**THE OFFERING IS BROUGHT FORWARD**

**\*OFFERING HYMN** – “These Gifts We Bring”

***These gifts we bring with grateful hearts,  
to reconcile, make new.  
Gather us in grace, show us the way,  
to live our lives in Truth  
to share Your love in all we do.***

*Words & Music: Pat Mayberry ©2016  
Arrangement: David Kai ©2016*

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

**Creator and Creating One,  
giver of all things,  
as people alive to your goodness,  
we offer these gifts  
and the talents of this community  
to the service of all children—**

**within our neighbourhood and beyond,  
throughout our nation and the world.  
Amen**

*COMMUNING*

**\*COMMUNION HYMN** – “We Come to the Hungry Feast”  
*(Seasons of the Spirit – volume 6)*

We come to the hungry feast  
hungry for the word of peace.  
To hungry hearts unsatisfied  
the love of God is not denied.  
We come, we come to the hungry feast.

We come to the hungry feast  
hungry for a world released  
from hungry folk of every kind,  
the poor in body, poor in mind.  
We come, we come to the hungry feast.

We come to the hungry feast  
hungry that the hunger cease,  
and knowing, though we eat our fill,  
the hunger will stay with us; still  
we come, we come to the hungry feast.

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

...May the God of peace be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

**INVITATION**

**THE GREAT THANKSGIVING** *(responsively)*

The Spirit is among us!

**The poor hear Good News! The captives are released!**

The blind see! The oppressed go free!

**These are the ways of God’s justice!**

**These are the signs of the Spirit’s jubilee!**

...For all your goodness, Holy One, we give thanks; and together,  
offer praise, singing...

**“Holy, Holy, Holy”** – MV #203

***O holy, holy, holy God, O God of time and space.  
All earth and sea and sky above bear witness to your grace.  
Hosanna in the highest heaven, creation sings your praise.  
And blessed is the One who comes and bears your name  
always!***

...Great is the mystery of faith.

**We remember Jesus’ death.**

**We proclaim Christ arisen.**

**We await the full revelation of love incarnate.**

...We gather these and all our prayers, thankful we may turn to you  
as to a loving mother, saying together, ecumenically...

**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...**

"Great Amen" – MV #205

**Amen, amen, O Holy One!  
Hosanna and Amen!  
Amen, amen, O Holy One,  
Hosanna and Amen!**

The bread of tomorrow.

The cup of new life.

*Congregational Response – "Amen" or "Thanks be to God"*

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION** *(in unison)*

**For the bread we have eaten,  
for the juice we have tasted,  
for the life we have received,  
we thank you, God.  
Grant that what we have done  
and been given here,  
may so put its mark on us,  
that it will always remain in our hearts.  
Grant that we may grow  
in Christian love and understanding,  
and that ours may be lives of faithful action.  
Amen**

*GOING OUT (as Spirit people)*

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**\*CLOSING HYMN** – "I, the Lord of Sea and Sky" – VU #509

I, The Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.  
All who dwell in deepest sin my hand will save.  
I who made the stars of night,  
I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

*(Refrain)*

*Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard you calling in the night.  
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.  
I will hold your people in my heart.*

I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain,  
I have wept for love of them; they turn away.  
I will break their hearts of stone,  
give them hearts for love alone.  
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?

*(Refrain)*

I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame,  
I will set a feast for them; my hand will save.  
Finest bread I will provide  
till their hearts be satisfied.  
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

*(Refrain)*

**\*BLESSING** *(responsively)*

...Go now, into the world in peace and joy, knowing in all your turnings, the Spirit will restore your soul, and follow you with goodness and mercy, each step of the way.

**Amen**

**\*CHORAL CLOSING** – "When You Walk from Here" – VU #298

***When you walk from here,  
when you walk from here,  
walk with justice, walk with mercy,  
and with God's humble care.***

*(The Christ Candle, Lenten Tenebrae & Lenten candles are extinguished.)*

**POSTLUDE**

# Church News

This Week at First United – March 20 <sup>th</sup> to March 24 <sup>th</sup>		
Monday	9:00-11:00 AM	Badminton – DEMH GYM
	9:00 AM	Ways & Means Team - RMR
Wednesday	8:00 AM	Preparation for supper - DEMH
Thursday	3:30 - 5:30 PM	Roast Pork Supper - DEMH
	7:00 PM	CD Team – via Zoom

**Church office hours** – Monday to Friday 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

**Peanut Butter** – Once again this year we are setting **a goal of 900 jars** of peanut butter to donate to the Bathurst Volunteer Center. Up to March 17<sup>th</sup> we have collected 195 jars.

**Affirm Zoom Webinar: March 21, 7 p.m. - “Conversion Therapies: How to recognize them and how to help people in recovery”**

Did you know that despite being illegal, conversion therapy continues today by other names? The discussion will outline what Conversion therapy is and the language and modalities that it can be presented in churches and society. Points will be given as to how to listen and acknowledge a person’s journey and provide a welcoming safe harbour.

Guest presenter: Sue King, Registered Nurse, Master’s of Theological Studies

Sue has been a member of United Church of Canada in New Brunswick for nearly 17 years and is committed to the Affirming process in the United Church in Canada.

This webinar will not be recorded. To register go to <https://ucceast.ca/77014-fslw-affirm-webinar-conversion-therapies-how-to-recognize-them-and-how-to-help-people-in-recovery>

# Church News

**TAKE OUT Roast Pork Supper** will be held on Thursday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> from 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM. Tickets will be available starting February 21<sup>st</sup> - \$17 for adults and \$6 for children. As there are a limited number of tickets they will be sold on a first come-first served basis. Please contact a member of the *Ways & Means Committee* or drop by the church office.

*Sponsored by*



# Community News

**A FAMILY AND COMMUNITY BREAKFAST** will be held at St. George’s Anglican Church, 432 King Avenue, on **Saturday, April 8<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 – 10:00 am**. Come and enjoy fellowship and great food. Free will offering at the door.

**Free Tax Clinics – KC Irving Center**

**March 20 to 24 and April 3 to 6 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 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.

## **SCRIPTURE READINGS** *(New Revised Standard Version)*

### **1 SAMUEL 16:1-13**

1 The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons."

2 Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the Lord said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.'"

3 Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you."

4 Samuel did what the Lord commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?"

5 He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

6 When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed is now before the Lord."

7 But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."

8 Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one."

9 Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one."

10 Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen any of these."

11 Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here."

12 He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The Lord said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one."

13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

### **JOHN 9:1-41**

1 As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth.

2 His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

3 Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him.

4 We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work.

5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

6 When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes,

7 saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.

8 The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?"

9 Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man."

10 But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?"

11 He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight."

12 They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind.

14 Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.

15 Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see."

16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided.

17 So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

18 The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight

19 and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"

20 His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind;

21 but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself."

22 His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue.

23 Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

24 So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner."

25 He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."

26 They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

27 He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?"

28 Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.

29 We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from."

30 The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes.

31 We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will.

32 Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind.

33 If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

34 They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

35 Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

36 He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him."

37 Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he."

38 He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him.

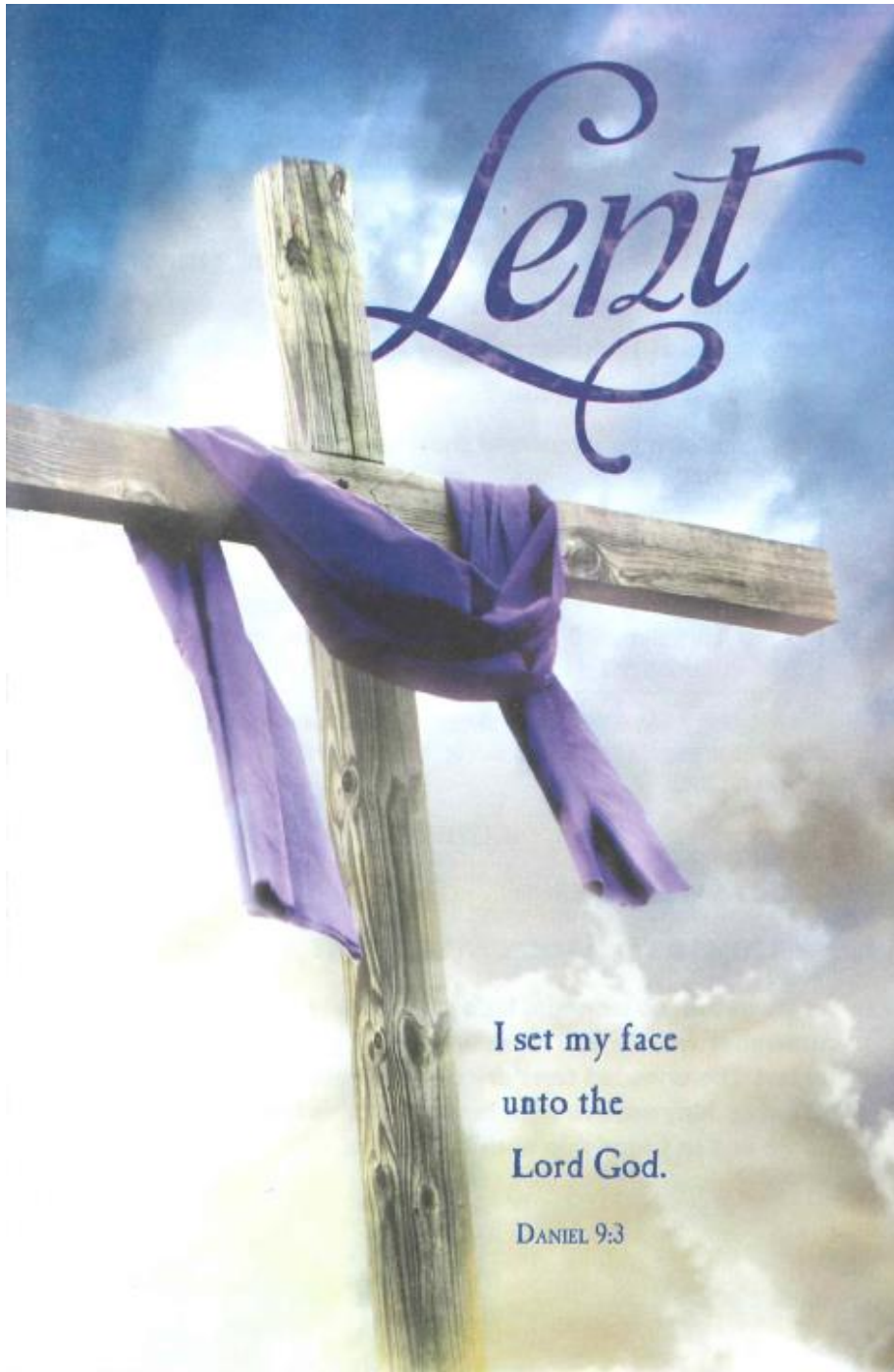
39 Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind."

40 Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?"

41 Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

*May God bless to our understanding these significant parts of our Christian story...*





## Minute for Mission

### Educating the Ministers of Tomorrow: Jennifer Janzen-Ball's Work



[Video still credit: Mission & Service]

You may think Mission & Service just happens far away from your church.

But the effects of Mission & Service may be as close as your local pulpit.

Mission & Service does a surprising amount of development in your local church, recruiting new ministers and funding theological schools. It even shapes the hymn books you sing from every service.

Another important way Mission & Service supports local ministry: by providing academic bursaries for students studying to become ministers and theological leaders.

"The church has a lot to offer in terms of witness to the community and supporting people who are struggling," explains the Rev. Dr. Jennifer Janzen-Ball, the United Church's Executive Minister for Theological Leadership.

*The money is really helpful, but the other thing that is so important to students is realizing that people throughout the church cared enough to donate to Mission & Service.*

Janzen-Ball knows there's more to a bursary than just the financial gift. "The money is really helpful," she says, "but the other thing that is so important to students is realizing that people throughout the church cared enough to donate to Mission & Service."

The Rev. Alexa Gilmour received one of these bursaries when she was still a ministry candidate. "I was a single parent, and I knew I couldn't get through without support," Gilmour says. "I felt blessed by God through people who donated and who, by giving, encouraged me on my journey.

"I have tremendous gratitude for that important role the church played in my life at that time."

Janzen-Ball wants you to know that your gifts do matter.

"They matter both tangibly in peoples' lives in a real way but also in intangible ways because they signal the support of the wider community," she says. "The care of people who are strangers to one another—the importance and impact of that can't be overstated.

"Giving to Mission & Service is an opportunity to support future and current leaders. Those gifts make a significant difference."