

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

July 23, 2023

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

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<u>Lectionary for today</u>	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u>
Genesis 28:10-19a Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24 Romans 8:12-25 Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43	Genesis 29:15-28 Psalm 105:1-11, 45b Romans 8:26-39 Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52
<i>We welcome Rev. Blair Lewis who is leading us in worship today – Thank you!</i>	
Today's bulletin has been placed in loving memory of Melissa Carroll by Mom and Dad, with love <i>Always in our thoughts..... Forever in our hearts.</i>	

*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.

***LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE:** *(in unison)*

**Give me a candle of the Spirit, O God,
as I go down into the depths of my being.
Show me the hidden things,
the creatures of my dreams,
the storehouse of forgotten memories and hurts.
Take me down to the summer of my life
and tell me my nature
and my name.
Give me freedom to grow, so that I may become that self,
the seed of which you planted in me at my making.
Out of the depths I cry to you, O God.**

The Christ Candle is lit.

CENTERING FOR WORSHIP: "Wind is Moving"

Seasons of the Spirit vol. 1

***Wind is moving over water,
patterns shifting out across the bay.
Grass is bending on the hillside;
clouds are drifting right across the sky.
O Holy Spirit, move over all our lives.
O Holy Spirit, move over all our lives.***

Praise to the Lord, all of you, God's servants.
Blessed be the name of our God now and ever.
From the rising up of the sun
may the Lord be praised,
praise to the name of the Lord!

CALL TO WORSHIP: *(responsively)*

Be still, and know that God is.

Before creation began, God was.

And when all human striving has ceased, God will still be.

From everlasting to everlasting,

God is God, who alone is worthy to be worshipped.

Let us sing praise to our God.

GATHERING PRAYER: *(in unison)*

God, you touch our lives with mystery and hope. We come to this place today, ready to see your power working through us. Help us to be open to your Word, and to answer your call among us. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

***GATHERING HYMN:** "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" VU #220

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, who rules all creation!
O my soul, praise Him, all times your health and salvation.
Come, all who hear: brothers and sisters draw near,
joining in glad adoration!

Praise to the Lord, above all things so mightily reigning,
keeping us safe at his side, and so gently sustaining.
Have you not seen how all you needed has been
met by God's gracious ordaining?

Praise to the Lord, who will prosper our work and defend us;
surely his goodness and mercy will daily attend us.
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do,
Who out of love will befriend us.

Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that is in me adore Him!
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before Him!
Let the Amen sound from God's people again;
Gladly with praise we adore Him.

PRAYER OF HUMILITY: *(responsively)*

Sometimes we hurt our friends.
Sometimes we hurt ourselves.
Sometimes we hurt God.
Our prayer of humility is a chance to say "We're sorry."

Giver of life,
in the midst of a plundered earth we groan with creation:

have mercy on us.

Giver of life,
in the midst of poisoned waters we groan with creation:

have mercy on us.

Giver of life,
in the midst of polluted air we groan with creation:

have mercy on us.

Giver of life
in the midst of mountains of waste we groan with creation:

have mercy on us.

Giver of life,
in the midst of a world at war we groan with creation:

have mercy on us.

Giver of life,
we who are made in the image of God have gone astray,
and creation groans with us:

have mercy on us.

CHORAL RESPONSE: "Take, O Take Me as I Am" – MV #85

***Take, O take me as I am;
summon out what I shall be;
set your seal upon my heart
and live in me, in me.***

The Assurance of our Faith:

No matter where we are, God is there.
No matter what we have done, God forgives.
No matter our reluctance to accept God, God has accepted us.
With that assurance, receive forgiveness,
and live in fullness and in hope. Amen.

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

The Peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

(We greet one another in the name of Christ)

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

Brenda Parrott & Gayle Ferron



***SINGING A SONG:** "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus"

VU #357

Tell me the stories of Jesus I love to hear;
things I would ask him to tell me if he were here:
scenes by the wayside, tales of the sea,
stories of Jesus, tell them to me.

First let me hear how the children stood round his knee,
and I shall fancy his blessing resting on me;
words full of kindness, deeds full of grace,
all in the lovelight of Jesus' face.

Tell me, in accents of wonder, how rolled the sea
tossing the boat in a tempest on Galilee!
And how the Master, ready and kind,
chided the billows and hushed the wind.

Into the city I'd follow the children's band,
waving a branch of the palm tree high in my hand;
one of his heralds, yes, I would sing
loudest hosannas! Jesus is King!

Show me that scene in the garden of bitter pain;
and of the cross where my Savior for me was slain.
Sad ones or bright ones, so that they be
stories of Jesus, tell them to me.

ENGAGING

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION:

O God, open our hearts and minds
by the power of your Holy Spirit,
that as the scriptures are read
and your Word is proclaimed,
we may hear what you are saying to us today. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Gary Branch

Old Testament Lesson: Genesis 28:10-19a

*Responsive Reading: Psalm 139: Page 861 Voices United

(Please stand as you are able)

Gospel Lesson: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

REFLECTION: "Jacob's Dream at Bethel"

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION:

GIFT OF MUSIC: "I Am the Dream"

RESPONDING

MINUTE FOR MISSION/YOUR GENEROSITY MATTERS:

Judy Losier

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING:

As we come to present our offerings at this table,
we remember God's generous hospitality.
Our calling is to feed
those dismissed from the world's tables,
that they may no longer feel hungry or alone.

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.*

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION:** *(in unison)*

**Holy God,
we bring to you the ordinary things of life:
food and drink and money;
and in bringing them we bring ourselves.
Take us and our gifts of money
to do your work in this place and in the world. Amen.**

PASTORAL PRAYER: *(responsively)*

In prayer we bring everything to God—
good things and bad things.
And God always hears us when we pray.
Let us pray.

This morning in our pastoral prayer we remember all who are ill in
hospital or at home.

We remember those who are living in long-term care who are facing
significant health challenges and all who are searching for a path
forward in the presence of uncertainty.

We remember all who are living in a time of grief and loss that they
may know the comforting presence of loved ones and your Holy
Spirit.

We remember all who are living with the impact of wild fires that are
happening across our country. May the power of Your love be a
source of comfort in a time of uncertainty.

**We pray for the peace of the world, O God,
and for the peace that only you can give—
not only the absence of conflict and battle,
but also the fullness of life that is prosperity for all,
goodwill among neighbours,
and welcome for every outsider.**

Hear us now as we name the situations and nations
for which we seek your Shalom:
our own country, Canada . . .
families buffeted by the storm of economic despair . . .
war-torn countries . . .
our families, our friends, ourselves
We gather these and all our prayers,
those spoken aloud and those too deep for words,
in Jesus' name.
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER: *(in unison)*

VU #921

**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 Spirit people)

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

***CLOSING HYMN:** "Blest Be the Tie That Binds"

VU #602

Blest be the tie that binds
our hearts in Christian love;
the unity of heart and mind
is like to that above.

Before our Maker's throne
we pour our ardent prayers;
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
our comforts and our cares.

We share each other's woes,
each other's burdens bear;
and often for each other flows
the sympathizing tear.

This glorious hope revives
our courage on the way;
that we shall live in perfect love
in God's eternal day.

***COMMISSIONING:**

Lord our God,
accept the prayers of your people.
In your great mercy,
look with compassion on us
and all who turn to you for help,
for you are gracious, O lover of souls.
To you we give glory, O blessed Trinity,
now and forever. Amen.

***BLESSING:**

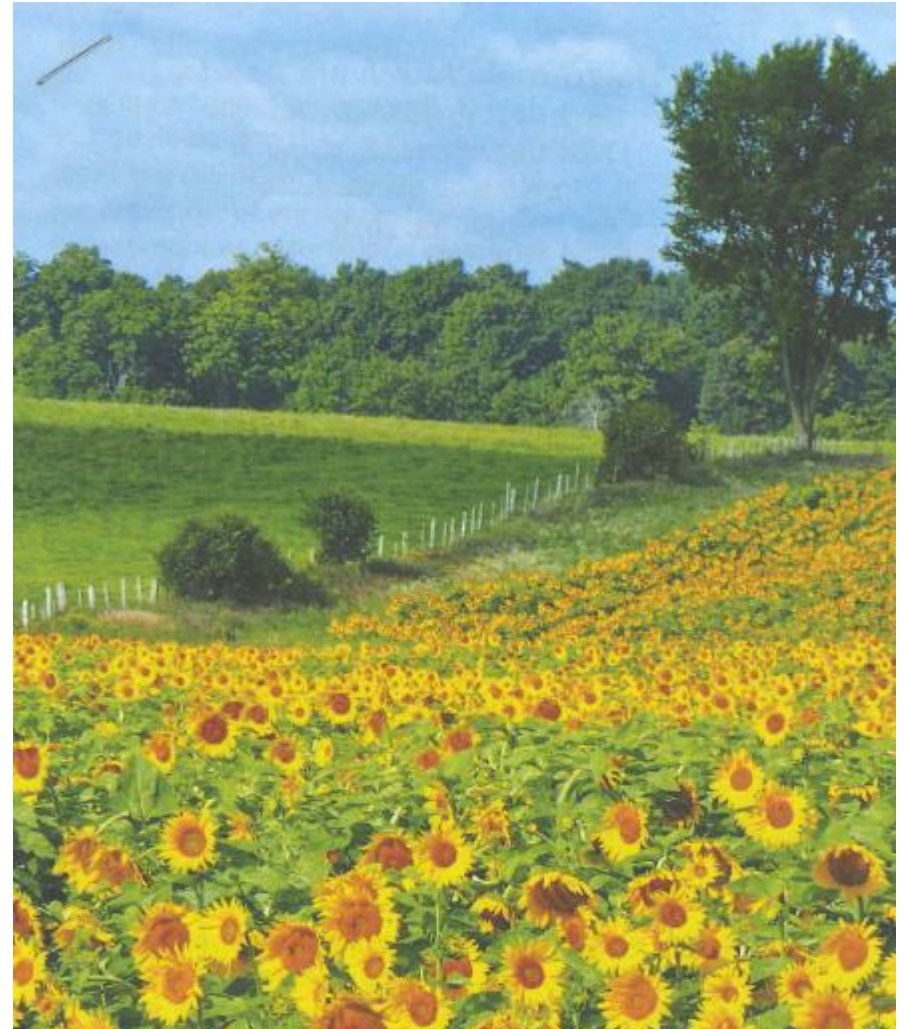
God the Father bless you and keep you,
God the Son save you and direct you,
God the Spirit teach you and guide you,
this day and evermore.

***CHORAL SENDING FORTH:** "I Wish You the Blessing"

*I wish you the blessing of faith to sustain you,
friends to support you, challenge to stir you,
songs to empower you, peace to refresh you,
tears to release you, laughter to heal you,
love to nurture your soul.*

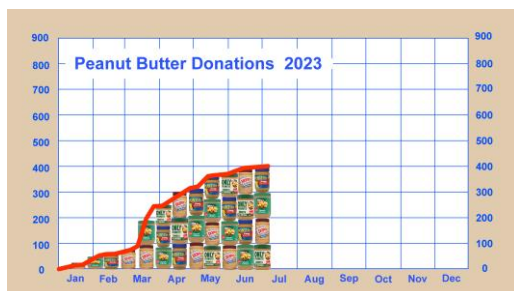
The Christ Candle is extinguished.

POSTLUDE



Church News

The summer church office hours are now in effect – open Monday to Thursday – 9 AM to 3 PM. The office will be closed on Fridays until after the Labour Day weekend.



Peanut Butter – Our pledge this year to the Bathurst Volunteer Center is **900 jars**. As of July 20th **XXX** jars have been donated.

Several cases of COVID-19 Tests have been donated to First United Church. Please feel free to pick up some boxes of tests to have on hand at home.

Community News

BBQ & Grand Opening of Pokeshaw Heritage Park and the VISTA Project will be held *this afternoon, July 23rd at 4 PM*. Exciting announcement to be made! An annual event of the Pokeshaw & Black Rock Recreation Council - 9203 Route 11, Pokeshaw, NB **"Food will be provided and all are welcome!"**

Central United Church, Clifton will be hosting an Old Time Country and Country Gospel Concert on *Sunday, July 30 at 2 PM*. Local entertainment and some new entertainers. Grab a glass of refreshing lemonade, come in and sit down and enjoy! Bring a friend! You won't be disappointed! It's a great way to spend a Sunday afternoon with your friends. Free will offering

Celebration of Life for John Whelton, Black Rock, deceased April 4th at the age of 91, will be held on August 5th at 11 AM at the St. Simon and St. Jude Church in Grand Anse. The family welcomes your presence.

Psalm 139

PSALTER 861

Refrain 1

Hal H. Hopson 1989



O God, you have searched me and known me.
You know when I sit down and rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.
You discern my path and the places I rest;
you are familiar with all my ways.
Before a word is on my tongue, you know it, O God, completely.
You guard me from behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.

It is beyond my knowledge; it is a mystery; I cannot fathom it. R

Where can I escape from your spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

If I ascend to heaven, you are there,
if I lie down in the grave, you are even there.
If I take wing with the dawn and alight at the sea's farthest limits,
there also your hand will be guiding me
your powerful hand holding me fast.
If I say, "Let the darkness cover me and my day be turned to night,"
even darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day,
for darkness is as light to you. R

It was you who formed my inward parts;
you fashioned me in my mother's womb.

I praise you, for I am fearfully, wonderfully made.

Wondrous are your works; that I know very well.

My frame was not hidden from you when I was being fashioned in secret,
intricately woven in the mystery of clay.

Your eyes saw my substance taking shape,
in your book my every day was recorded,
all my days were fashioned, even before they came to be. R

How deep your designs are to me, O God! How great their number!

I try to count them but they are more than the sand.

I come to the end – I am still with you.

Search me, O God, and know my heart;

test me and know my thoughts.

Watch closely, lest I follow a path of error
and guide me in the everlasting way. R

SCRIPTURE READING *(New Revised Standard Version)*

GENESIS 28:10-19A

Jacob's Dream at Bethel

10 Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran.

11 He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place.

12 And he dreamed that there was a stairway set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

13 And the LORD stood beside him and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring,

14 and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring.

15 Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

16 Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place—and I did not know it!"

17 And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

18 So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it.

19 He called that place Bethel, but the name of the city was Luz at the first.

RESPONSIVE READING - PSALM 139 – VU Page 861

MATTHEW 13:24-30, 36-43

The Parable of Weeds among the Wheat

24 He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field,

25 but while everybody was asleep an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and then went away.

26 So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well.

27 And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?'

28 He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?'

29 But he replied, 'No, for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them.

30 Let both of them grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.' "

36 Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field."

37 He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man;

38 the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one,

39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels.

40 Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age.

41 The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers,

42 and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

May God bless to our understanding this significant part of our Christian story...