

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

September 3, 2023

Minister Rev. Neal Palmer **Music Director** Martha Vickers
Office Adm. Margaret Daniels **Custodian** Lester Scott
Audio & Visual Technicians Brenda Parrott & Donald Eddy
Greeters Gayle Ferron & Lester Scott

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<u>Lectionary for today</u>	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u>
Genesis 2:4b-22 Psalm 139:13-16 Acts 17:22-28 John 3:1-16	Genesis 3:14-19; 4:8-16 Psalm 139:7-12 Romans 5:12-17 Matthew 12:38-40

*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 *(responsively)*

When we light a candle, we usually carry it to where we are going and then set it down.

Then, we go about doing whatever we're doing within its light.

Jesus is another kind of light, a candle that lights up our minds, our hearts, and our spirits.

We experience that as grace, as call, as empowerment, but it's a light we don't set down. Because, we don't actually determine where it guides us.

We light this Christ Candle

as the light we carry with us.

The Christ Candle is lit...

CENTERING FOR WORSHIP – "Wind is Moving"

Seasons of the Spirit vol. 1 pg. 39

***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.***

CALL TO WORSHIP

GATHERING PRAYER

***GATHERING HYMN** – "Called by Earth and Sky"

MV #135

*Refrain
Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.*

Precious these waters, endless seas,
deep ocean's dreams,
waters of healing, rivers of rain,
the wash of love again.

Precious this gift, the air we breathe;
wind born and free.
Breath of the Spirit, blow through this place,
our gathering and our grace.

Refrain

Precious these mountains, ancient sands;
vast fragile land.
Seeds of our wakening, rooted and strong,
Creation's faithful song.

Precious the fire that lights our way,
bright dawning day.
Fire of passion, sorrows undone,
our faith and justice one.

Refrain

*Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky,
called by earth and sky.*

REMEMBERING *(responsively)*

(Take fragment of cedar branch, rub it between your fingers, and then share with the person next to you a rich childhood memory of Forest, the bush, or a special tree.)

We remember the first garden when *Forest* was planted as God's offspring.

**We remember the gardens and the forests of our childhood,
the places we played when we felt close to Earth and trees.**

We remember, rejoice, and give thanks

for trees, for *Forest* filled with mystery and wonder!

PRAYER OF HUMILITY

(Listen for the sound of breaking sticks & twigs)

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.***

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

...The Spirit of Love and Peace be with you all.

And also with you.

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

Forest's Story

***SINGING A SONG** – "God Says"

MV #172

God says, "Be still so you may hear
the words I whisper in your ear.
If you will listen, you will know
I'm with you always where you go."

God says, "Look up and see the prize
I've placed here right before your eyes.
Find beauty in the things of earth,
a cause for wonder and rebirth."

God says, "Come here! I need your voice.
Please teach my people to rejoice.
In who you are, in what you do,
your life will show my love for you."

God says, "Reach out! The world's in need
and wants a word, a song, a deed.
I send you forth to speak, to sing,
to act for Christ in everything."

ENGAGING

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isabel MacLaggan

Genesis 2:4b-22

Acts 17:22-28

REFLECTION

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

GIFT OF MUSIC

RESPONDING

MINUTE FOR MISSION/YOUR GENEROSITY MATTERS

Martha Vickers

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.*

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

**God of Mystery, no longer unknown,
we're invited to open conversations,
to discern connections,
and to seek always to develop relationships
and communities of life and hope.**

**Holy One, we align our lives
with your love for the whole world
and join our longing with your desire
for all generations
to live, move, and be in you.
Amen**

SHARING OUR CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

(Listen for the sound of birds singing)

THE LORD'S PRAYER – VU #916 (A Paraphrase) *(in unison)*

**Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be.
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:**

**The hallowing of your name echo
through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed
by peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done
by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.**

**With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In the times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.**

**For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and for ever.**

Amen

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CLOSING HYMN** – “As a Fire Is Meant for Burning” – VU #578

As a fire is meant for burning
with a bright and warming flame,
so the church is meant for mission,
giving glory to God’s name.
Not to preach our creeds or customs,
but to build a bridge of care,
we join hands across the nations,
finding neighbours everywhere.

We are learners; we are teachers;
we are pilgrims on the way.
We are seekers; we are givers;
we are vessels made of clay.
By our gentle, loving actions,
we would show that Christ is light.
In a humble, listening Spirit,
we would live to God’s delight.

As a green bud in the springtime
is a sign of life renewed,
so may we be signs of oneness
mid earth’s peoples, many-hued.
As a rainbow lights the heavens
when a storm is past and gone,
may our lives reflect the radiance
of God’s new and glorious dawn.

***BLESSING** *(Based on Psalm 139)*

...What is your name?

(Name), you are one of God’s wonderful works!

Amen

***CHORAL SENDING FORTH** – “I Wish You the Blessing”

***We 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.***

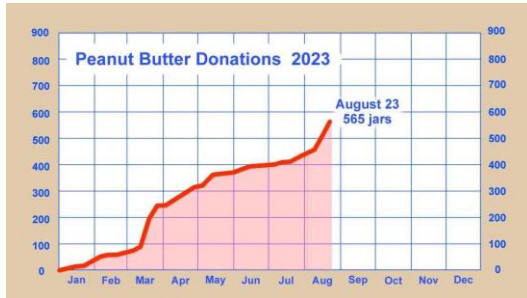
The Christ Candle is extinguished.

POSTLUDE



Church News

Regular Office Hours are now back in effect – open Monday to Friday – 9 AM to 3 PM. Please note the office will be closed on Monday, September 4th for Labour Day



Peanut Butter – Our pledge this year to the Bathurst Volunteer Center is **900 jars**. As of August 31st 570 jars have been donated.

Choir Practice will be starting for the fall season on Wednesday, September 13th at 6:30. We meet for approximately an hour. Anyone who enjoys singing, please feel free to attend. New members are always welcome!



TAKE OUT BBQ Beef Supper will be held on **Thursday, September 21st** from **3:30 PM to 5:30 PM**. Tickets are now available - **\$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 from 9 AM to 3 PM Monday to Friday.

Sponsored by Hatheway Auto Group

Thank you to our volunteers during the month of August:

Greeters – Cheryl & Dave Brewster and Margaret Payne-Chenard and Mike Kierstead; **Counters** – Beth & Bob Sullivan; **Scripture Readers** – Helen Knowles, Mike Kierstead, Jennifer Oliver Lavigne and Brenda Parrott; **Minute for Mission** – Martha Vickers, Brenda Parrott, Pat MacIntosh, and Judy Losier; **Story time** – Brenda Parrott and Sandra Boone; **Sound System** – Brenda Parrott, Shirley Allain, Ralph Jamieson and Lester Scott and **Videographer** – Don Eddy as well as to Josh Gammon for uploading our services to the website and Facebook. Also, a big thank you to the individuals, who prepare for and set up the refreshments and snacks for everyone to enjoy after each worship service.

Church News

BACK TO SCHOOL - The Community Outreach Sub-Team requests your help in providing a variety of school supplies for needy students. These items will be donated to Terry Fox Elementary School & distributed as necessary. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Community News

"Help Lesotho" Calendars - The Anglophone School District – North has been sponsoring "Help Lesotho" since 2006 as part of its global awareness initiative. As a fundraiser where all of the money raised goes to help finance its work with orphans, vulnerable children, and grandmothers in Lesotho, Africa; "Help Lesotho" has 2024 calendars for sale at a cost of \$15.00. You are invited to support this initiative with your donation. Gary Branch (506-546-9208) or via email (egbranch@rogers.com) will be taking orders for these calendars until October 10, 2023. Payment can be made in advance by cash, cheque, or e-transfer, or when the calendars are delivered in November. Cheques are to be made payable to "Help Lesotho". Thank you for your support of this initiative.

A Royal Tea will be held at **Central United Church Hall** in Clifton, to celebrate the new King on **Saturday, September 9, 2023 from 1 PM to 3 PM**. Tickets are \$10 per person and are available now. Please wear your favorite fascinator or hat! A display of "vintage" wedding dresses will be set up in the church to admire. Entertainment will be provided. For tickets please contact Brenda Peters – 506-545-7983; Sandra Ward – 506-546-4802; or Muriel Daley – 506-546-6024.

St. George's Anglican Church Hall, 432 King Avenue will hold a **Family and Community Breakfast** on **Saturday, September 9th from 8:00 – 10:00 am**. Come and enjoy fellowship and great food. Free will offering at the door

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They will also hold a **Yard Sale** on **Saturday, September 23rd from 8 AM to 12 PM**.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

GENESIS 2:4b-22

4b In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens,

5 when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground;

6 but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground—

7 then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being.

8 And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

9 Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

10 A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches.

11 The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold;

12 and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there.

13 The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush.

14 The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

16 And the Lord God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden;

17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

18 Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner."

19 So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name.

20 The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner.

21 So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh.

22 And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

ACTS 17:22-28

22 Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way.

23 For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.

24 The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands,

25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things.

26 From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live,

27 so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us.

28 For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we too are his offspring.'

May the Spirit bless to our understanding these significant parts of our Christian story...