

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

November 19, 2023

Minister Rev. Neal Palmer **Music Director** Martha Vickers
Office Adm. Margaret Daniels **Custodian** Lester Scott
Greeters Charles Ramsey & Linda Knowles MacPherson
Audio & Visual Technicians Ralph Jamieson & Donald Eddy

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Lectionary for today	Lectionary for next Sunday
Judges 4:1-7 Psalm 123 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 Matthew 25:14-30	Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 Psalm 100 Ephesians 1:15-23 Matthew 25:31-46

*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 & TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT *(in unison)*

...Please join me in our Territory Acknowledgement...

Ancient and modern people have inhabited and continue to inhabit this land on which we worship. This is the traditional land of the Mi'kmaq people, and we are deeply grateful to be here and to ground ourselves in the land which has been a place where people have lived for thousands of years.

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE *(responsively)*

We live in a time of turmoil.

Sometimes, it is hard to find peace in the world or in our hearts.

In these anxious times, we turn to the light of Christ to ground us, to guide us, to comfort us.

May this light be our peace,

now and always.

Amen

The Christ Candle is lit...

CENTERING FOR WORSHIP - "Come Build a Church"

(Seasons of the Spirit – volume 7)

***Come build a church with soul and spirit,
come build a church of flesh and bone.
We need no tower rising skyward;
no house of wood or glass or stone.***

***Come build a church with human frailty,
come build a church of flesh and blood.
Jesus shall be its sure foundation.
It shall be built by the hand of God.***

CALL TO WORSHIP *(responsively)*

...When we can't see another way,

we come here.

We come to be renewed and restored,

to feel our attitude shift.

Together,

we'll find a way into joy.

GATHERING PRAYER

*GATHERING HYMN –

“There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy”

VU #271

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.

PRAYER OF HUMILITY

CHORAL RESPONSE – “And When You Call for Me” – MV #96

***And when you call for me,
I have already answered.
And when you call for me,
I am already there.***

*GREETING ONE ANOTHER *(responsively)*

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

And also with you.

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

Sandra Boone & Jini Palmer

Matthew 25:29

*SINGING A SONG – “Small Things Count”

VU #361

Small things count, so Jesus said:
cups of water, crumbs of bread,
small things done because we’re kind
count of big things in God’s mind.

Small things make the big things grow:
grains of yeast inside the dough,
puffs that fill a big balloon,
notes that make a happy tune.

Every hair that’s on our head,
every sparrow, Jesus said,
God takes care of, counts and knows,
God loves us from top to toes!

CELEBRATING BAPTISM

*BAPTISMAL HYMN –

VU #444

“Child of Blessing, Child of Promise”

[Participants gather near baptismal font during hymn.]

Child of blessing, child of promise,
baptized with the Spirit’s sign;
with this water God has sealed you
unto love and grace divine.

Child of love, our love’s expression,
love’s creation, loved indeed!
Fresh from God, refresh our spirits,
into joy and laughter lead.

Child of joy, our dearest treasure,
God's you are, from God you came.
Back to God we humbly give you;
live as one who bears Christ's name.

Child of God your loving Parent,
learn to know whose child you are.
Grow to laugh and sing and worship,
trusting in God's love and care.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATE

(Brenda Parrot – Christian Development Team Chair)

PROFESSION OF FAITH AND PROMISES

COMMITMENT OF PARENTS

COMMITMENT OF GODPARENTS

*Erica Vienneau (Alycia's best friend) & Keishawn Bradstreet
(Sebastian's best friend)*

***CONGREGATIONAL COMMITMENT** *(responsively)*

As the Community of Faith of First United Church, do you commit yourselves to support and nurture these persons within a community which worships God, loves and serves others, seeks justice, and resists evil?

We do, by the grace of God.

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:** "A New Creed" – VU #918 *(in unison)*

We are not alone, we live in God's world.

We believe in God: who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church: to celebrate God's presence, to live with respect in Creation, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND THE POURING OF WATER

(responsively)

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to God.

Let us give thanks to God.

It is good to give thanks and praise.

...Now may your Spirit be upon us and what we do here, that this water may be a sign for all of new life in Christ.

Amen.

THE ACT OF BAPTISM *(responsively)*

...Ivy Ellen Caplin,

I baptize you, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

MARKING WITH THE SIGN OF THE CROSS *(responsively)*

Ivy, child of God, from this day forward, you bear the sign of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

LAYING ON OF HANDS *(responsively)*

Ivy, may the Holy Spirit, Love's power, guide you, inspire you, and work within you, all the days of your life.

Amen.

PLACEMENT OF BANNER SHEEP

LIGHTING OF A CANDLE *(responsively)*

[Baptismal Candle is lit from Christ Candle, signifying the light of Christ, and as a reminder of the link between baptism and Easter.]

Ivy, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works, and give glory to God.

Amen.

[The candle is passed to Ivy's parents.]

PRESENTATION OF A BIBLE *(responsively)*

Ivy, receive this Bible and hear what the Spirit is saying to you and the Church.

Amen.

[A Bible is presented to Ivy's parents.]

BAPTISMAL STOLE *(responsively)*

[Baptismal Stole is draped around Ivy's shoulders.]

Ivy, you have put on Christ. In Christ, you have been baptized.

Hallelujah, hallelujah!

DECLARATION AND CONGREGATIONAL WELCOME

[A Certificate of Baptism is given to Ivy's parents.]

In the name of Jesus Christ, Ivy has been received into the holy catholic church, the body of Christ in the world.

[The congregation is invited to applaud.]

BLESSING *(responsively)*

Ivy, the grace of Christ attend you, the love of God surround you, the Holy Spirit keep you.

Amen.

[Participants return to their pews]

ENGAGING

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

Gary Branch

Matthew 25:14-30

REFLECTION

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

GIFT OF MUSIC – "My Peace"

RESPONDING

YOUR GENEROSITY MATTERS *(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.***

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

**Holy One,
thanks for this community
and for the responsibility
of being your people.**

**Forgive us for the times
when we've tucked away and hidden
our gifts and talents.
As a community, help us encourage
and support each other
so we can share all of our gifts.
Bless these gifts, both seen and unseen,
that they may be a blessing to others.
Amen**

SHARING OUR CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE *(Based on 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11)*

THE LORD'S PRAYER – VU #921 (Ecumenical Version) *(in unison)*

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kindom 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 kindom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

GOING OUT (as Spirit people)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CLOSING HYMN** – “Be Thou My Vision”

VU #642

Be thou my vision, O joy of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that thou art,
thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, my calm in all strife;
I ever with thee, and thou in my life;
thou loving parent, thy child may I be,
thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.

Be thou my battle shield, sword for the fight
be thou my dignity, thou my delight,
thou my soul's shelter, thou my high tower;
raise thou me heavenward, O power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor vain empty praise,
thou mine inheritance, now and always;
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,
great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.

Great God of heaven, after victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O ruler of all.

***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.***

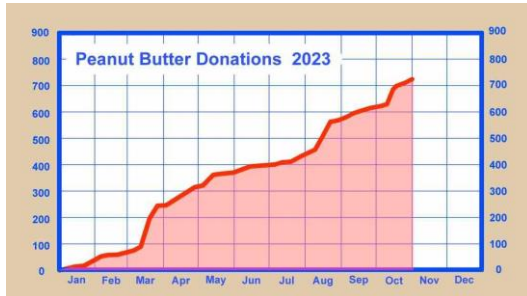
The Christ Candle is extinguished.

POSTLUDE

Church News

This Week at First United – November 20 th to 24 th		
Monday	9:00 AM	Badminton – DEMH Gym
	9:00 AM	Ways & Means -RMR
Tuesday	6:00 PM	Council Meeting - RMR
	7:00 PM	Christian Development Team - RMR
Wednesday	6:30 PM	Choir Practice
	7:00 PM	Christmas Choir Practice
Thursday	3:30 PM – 5:30 PM	Take out Turkey Supper
Saturday	8 AM to 1 PM	Bathurst Community Market - DEMH

Church Office Hours - Monday to Friday – 9 AM to 3 PM.



Peanut Butter – Our pledge this year to the Bathurst Volunteer Center is **900 jars**. As of November 17th **771** jars have been donated

TAKE OUT Turkey Supper will be held this Thursday, November 23rd from 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM. Tickets are \$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.

*Sponsored by
Kenny's Trucking Ltd. & Shine House
(A Division of Stothart Automotive)*

Church News

Ways & Means Team will meet on Monday, November 20th at 9 AM in the Ruth Morrison Room.

Bathurst Pastoral Council will meet on Tuesday, November 21st at 6 PM in the Ruth Morrison Room.

The Christian Development Team will meet Tuesday, November 21st at 7 PM in the Ruth Morrison Room.

Christmas Hymn Sing will be held at **First United Church** on **Sunday, December 3rd** at 2 PM in the sanctuary. This will be a unique concert as it will be the *combination of the choirs* of First United Church and Central United Church in Clifton. Tickets are \$10.00 each and are available from choir members or from the First United Church office. A limited amount of tickets will be available at the door. There will be a reception following the concert.

As part of our **Stewardship Program** here at First United, information on Planned Giving through Wills and Bequests will be made available to our congregational membership this fall. All members are encouraged to review this information and take the appropriate steps pertaining to your wishes. The information will be available later this year from the church office. Below you will find a stewardship scripture verse and quote relating to the same.

"From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded." *Luke 12:48*

Congregations and Christians everywhere are discovering that the best giving flows not from heads informed about the budget but from hearts that are tuned to the will of God.

Thomas C. Rieke

Church News

Welcome to Gifts with Vision for 2023–2024!



[Image credit: The United Church of Canada]

[Gifts with Vision](#) are opportunities for you to make a difference in someone's life—during Advent and Christmas, or at any time of year—by giving gifts from the comfort of home, with no packaging or wrapping needed.

This year's new gifts include [solar power](#) for the United Theological College in Zimbabwe, [backpacks full of school supplies](#) for children who live under the poverty line, a [biofuel pilot project](#) run by women in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and making the United Church camp experience possible for children in underserved communities in the Maritimes—along with many others. You'll also recognize lots of returning gifts, like [Operation Backpack](#), [Return of the Buffalo](#), and [A Kindergarten in a Refugee Camp](#).

See all the Gifts available and find out more by visiting the [Gifts with Vision website](#), and pick up a catalogue in the narthex.

Annual Christmas Benevolence Fund: - It's that time of year! Giving to this fund is even more important than ever. The costs relating to feeding families, and having a warm place to live has become very prevalent in our area and yes, COVID-19 is still affecting lives. Should you wish to give you will find an envelope on the tree which will be set up in the narthex beginning next Sunday, November 26th. And then you may drop the envelope in the offering plate or drop it off at the church office during the week. Make your cheques payable to First United Church. Please mark clearly that this donation is for the Benevolence Fund. The proceeds from this fund support the Bathurst Volunteer Center and people in our congregation who need assistance.

***We thank-you for your generosity
– Community Outreach Sub-Team***

Church News



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 Fundraiser** may place an envelope in the offering plate on Sunday morning. Please mark clearly on the face of the envelope – Poinsettia Fundraiser 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 Wednesday, December 13, 2023.*

Community News

The North Shore Shrine Club is raising funds to help sick children by the sale of calendars and fruit cakes. The funds are used to pay for the transportation of sick children to the Shriners Children's Hospital in Montreal. The calendars are \$20 each and you have the chance to win a prize each day of the year. The fruit cakes - 3 cakes per box - are \$23 per box. To order a calendar or cakes please contact Harvey Spence at 506-546-2742. Thank you!

Central United Church in Clifton will be having a **Roast Pork Take-Out Supper** on **Saturday, December 2nd from 4 to 6 PM**. For tickets please call Lois Archibald at 506-548-8927. Tickets are \$15 per person.

Thank you!

On behalf of the "Lesotho Initiative" Committee of ASD - N, a special 'thank you' is extended to you for your support of our recent calendar drive. A total of 160 "Help Lesotho" 2024 calendars were sold, and this will raise \$ 2400 for the work of "Help Lesotho" with Grandmothers and vulnerable children in the tiny mountain kingdom of Lesotho, Africa. Since 2006, this initiative has raised \$ 142,366 for the work of "Help Lesotho". (There are additional calendars available for anyone else who would like to support this cause.)

SCRIPTURE READING

MATTHEW 25:14-30

The Parable of the Talents

14 "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them;

15 to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. At once

16 the one who had received the five talents went off and traded with them and made five more talents.

17 In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents.

18 But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

19 After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them.

20 Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.'

21 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

22 And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.'

23 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

24 Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you did not scatter,

25 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.'

26 But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I did not scatter?

27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest.

28 So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents.

29 For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance, but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.

30 As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

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