

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

November 26, 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 Shirley Allain & Donald Eddy

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<u>Lectionary for today</u>	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u>
Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24	Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalms 100	Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19
Ephesians 1:15-23	I Corinthians 1:3-9
Matthew 25:31-46	Mark 13:34-37

The flowers in our sanctuary and bulletin today have been placed
in loving memory of Cletus & Betty [Branch] Lavigne
by Judy, Macky and Jennifer

*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 *(responsively)*

...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)*

Earth is full of noise.

We push through these doors to find a spirit of wisdom.

Open the eyes of our hearts

to worship our God with gladness.

Hope calls to us here.

God's presence greets us.

We are invited to wonder and dream

about the reign to come.

GATHERING PRAYER

***GATHERING HYMN** – “Rejoice, the Lord is King” VU #213

Rejoice, the Lord is King!
Your risen Lord adore!
Rejoice, give thanks and sing
and triumph evermore:

Refrain:

***Lift up your heart, lift up your voice:
rejoice; again I say, rejoice!***

Jesus the Saviour reigns,
the God of truth and love;
when he had purged our sins,
he took his seat above.

Refrain

God's kingdom cannot fail;
Christ rules o'er earth and heaven;
the keys of death and hell
are to our Jesus given.

Refrain

Rejoice in glorious hope,
for Christ, the Judge, shall come
to glorify the saints
for their eternal home.

**We then shall hear the archangel's voice;
the trump of God shall sound, rejoice!**

PRAYER OF HUMILITY (*responsively*)

... We feel we've made lots of noise.

**We've protested for justice. We've called for peace. We've
insisted upon hope until our voices have grown tired.**

We have believed and imagined you share in our story,

**but sometimes, we've walked past the suffering that
surrounds us daily.**

We pray for your reign to come without actually believing

**our efforts to feed, clothe, and welcome each stranger are
work we share with you.**

Forgive us, we pray, and invite us once again

to share in your story of hope. (*Moment of Silence*)

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, Love and Hope be with you all.

And also with you.

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

Brooke & Helen Knowles

Matthew 25:32-33

***SINGING A SONG** –

VU #579

“The Church is Wherever God's People”

The church is wherever God's people are praising,
singing God's goodness for joy on this day.

The church is wherever disciples of Jesus
remember his story and walk in his way.

The church is wherever God's people are helping,
caring for neighbours in sickness and need.

The church is wherever God's people are sharing
the words of the Bible in gift and in deed.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Judy Losier

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

Matthew 25:31-46

REFLECTION

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

GIFT OF MUSIC - "I Have Called You by Your Name"

RESPONDING

YOUR GENEROSITY MATTERS (*Minute for Mission*)

Anne Wilson

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,
may our gifts express our deepest faith.
May they meet the greatest longings of those in need.
May they truly bring good news and blessings.
May they help answer prayers for liberation.
In joy and in gratitude, we offer a portion,
of what we've been given in abundance.
Amen**

SHARING OUR CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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 –**

VU #681

"Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life"

Where cross the crowded ways of life,
where sound the cries of race and clan,
above the noise of selfish strife,
we hear your words of life again.

In haunts of wretchedness and need,
on shadowed thresholds, dark with fears,
from paths where hide the lures of greed,
we catch the vision of your tears.

The cup of water given for you
still holds the freshness of your grace;
yet long these multitudes to view
the strong compassion of your face.

O Jesus, from the mountainside,
make haste to heal these hearts of pain;
among these restless throngs abide;
and tread the city's streets again,

Church News

till all the world shall learn your love
and follow where your feet have trod,
till glorious from your heaven above
shall come the city of our God.

*BLESSING

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

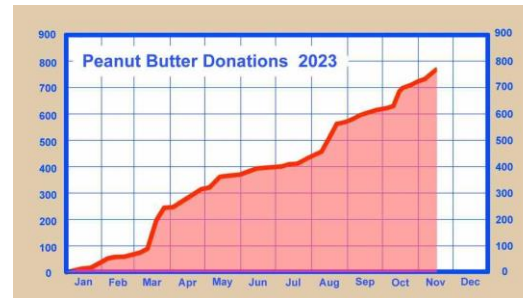
***We wish you the blessing of faith to sustain you,
friends to support you, challenge to stir you,
songs to empower you, peace to refresh you,
tears to release you, laughter to heal you,
love to nurture your soul.***

The Christ Candle is extinguished.

POSTLUDE

This Week at First United – November 27 th to December 3 rd		
Monday	9:00 AM	Badminton – DEMH Gym
	9:00 AM	Ways & Means -RMR
Wednesday	9:00 AM	Badminton – DEMH Gym
	6:15 PM	Choir Practice
	7:00 PM	Christmas Choir Practice
Saturday	8 AM to 1 PM	Bathurst Community Market – DEMH
Sunday	10:00 AM	Worship Service
	2:00 PM	Hymn Sing

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 23rd **785** jars have been donated



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.*

Church News

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.

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

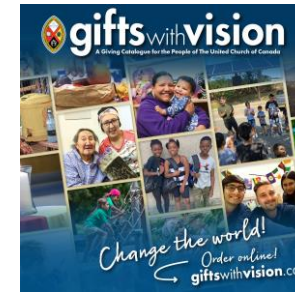
As part of our **Stewardship Program** here at First United, information on Planned Giving through Wills and Bequests will be made available to our congregational membership this fall. All members are encouraged to review this information and take the appropriate steps pertaining to your wishes. The 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.

"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."
2 Corinthians 9:7

Preserve our heritage.
Create our future. Please remember
The United Church of Canada in your estate plans.

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.

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!

Community News

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.

A FAMILY AND COMMUNITY BREAKFAST will be held at St. George's Anglican Church, 432 King Avenue, on **Saturday, December 9th from 8 AM to 10 AM**. Come and enjoy fellowship and great food.

Christmas Recital - Please join the vocal and piano students of Rosalind Kennedy-Townsend for an evening of beautiful music.

Wednesday, December 6, 2023; 6:30 p.m. in the **First United Church Sanctuary**. No admission fee. Free will offering at the door in support of the Bathurst Food Bank.

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 READINGS

EZEKIEL 34:11-16, 20-24

11 For thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep and will sort them out.

12 As shepherds sort out their flocks when they are among scattered sheep, so I will sort out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness.

13 I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them into their own land, and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land.

14 I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel.

15 I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord God.

16 I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strays, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

20 Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep.

21 Because you pushed with flank and shoulder and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide,

22 I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged, and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

23 I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them; he shall feed them and be their shepherd.

24 And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I the Lord have spoken.

MATTHEW 25:31-46

31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory.

32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats,

33 and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left.

34 Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world,

35 for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,

36 I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.'

37 Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink?

38 And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing?

39 And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?'

40 And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.'

41 Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You who are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels,

42 for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink,

43 I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.'

44 Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not take care of you?'

45 Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.'

46 And these will go away into eternal punishment but the righteous into eternal life."

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