

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

March 17, 2024

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

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<u>Lectionary for today</u>	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u>
Jeremiah 31:31-34	Mark 11:1-11
Psalms 51:1-12	Psalms 118:1-2, 19-29
Hebrews 5:5-10	
John 12:20-33	

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)

...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 (responsively)

(As we follow the path of Jesus, we light one additional candle for each Sunday of Lent.)

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.**

Five Lenten Candles are lit.

CENTERING FOR WORSHIP –

MV #115

"Behold, Behold, I Make All Things New"

***Behold, behold, I make all things new, beginning with you and starting from today. Behold, behold, I make all things new, my promise is true, for I am Christ the way.***

CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)

Come and seek the Holy One, with your whole heart:

**meditate on Christ's teachings,**

fix ourselves on the ways of the Spirit,

**and delight in God's Word.**

GATHERING PRAYER

\*GATHERING HYMN –

VU #395

"Come In, Come In and Sit Down"

(Refrain)

*Come in come in and sit down,  
 you are a part of the family.  
 We are lost and we are found,  
 and we are a part of the family.*

You know the reason why you came,  
yet no reason can explain,  
so share in the laughter and cry in the pain,  
for we are a part of the family.

*(Refrain)*

God is with us in this place,  
like a Mother's warm embrace.  
We're all forgiven by God's grace,  
for we are a part of the family.

*(Refrain)*

There's life to be shared in the bread and the wine;  
we are the branches, Christ is the vine.  
This is God's temple, it's not yours or mine,  
but we are a part of the family.

*(Refrain)*

There's rest for the weary and health for us all;  
there's a yoke that is easy, and a burden that's small.  
So come in and worship and answer the call,  
for we are a part of the family.

*(Refrain)*

**LENTEN TENEBRAE**      *Marie Oliver & Jennifer Oliver Lavigne*

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

One: Jesus, you wept over your friend Lazarus.

Two: Do you still weep for us?

One: Do you weep when forest fires rage, when homes are burnt,  
animals die, and the smoke blows? Do you weep as floods destroy  
homes and livelihoods?

Two: Do you weep for those suffering from illness and for their  
families? Do you weep for those who live with a myriad of worries,  
anxiety, and depression?

One: Do you weep for injustice, for those who experience ongoing  
racism, bullying, and discrimination of all sorts?

Two: Do you weep for those who have no more tears to shed, who  
have no more prayers to say, who have no more dreams to dream?

One: Then, we are willing to shed our tears with you. We shed tears  
for the world you love.

*The fifth 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,  
who weeps for us and with us,  
we know you are in our pain and in our suffering.  
We know you're in our deepest longings as well.  
We long for your *kindom* to come.  
We pray that our tears of sorrow will lead to tears of joy.  
Then, may our tears of joy turn into a celebration  
as we dance our way into a revolution of your love.  
Amen**

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

**\*SINGING A SONG** – “Look Beyond”

Look beyond the corner ahead;  
see the world that calls you instead.  
Like the fruitful branches joined by the vine,  
so we see our lives intertwine.

Put aside the tranquil and sweet;  
find the light in people you greet.  
For the lives we lead aren't solely our own;  
what we plant will some day have grown.

Leave behind the inward concern;  
there is so much more to discern.  
When we cling too long to days that have gone,  
can we grasp the work to be done?  
When our children call from the streets,  
will we join their dancing and beat?  
Or like sleeping servants tending the gate,  
will we slumber 'till it's too late?

Rise above the worry of loss;  
when we love, we take up our cross.  
So return with kindness even the hurt;  
let a flower bloom from the dirt.  
Reach across the boundries and walls,  
and extend your welcome to all.  
In our neighbour's face, God's image is found;  
and the living Spirit abounds.

*ENGAGING*

## **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

### **SCRIPTURE READING**

Jeremiah 31:31-34

### **REFLECTION**

### **MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION**

**GIFT OF MUSIC** - "Loving God, Lead Us On"

*RESPONDING*

## **YOUR GENEROSITY MATTERS**

*Bev Murphy*

## **INVITATION TO MAKE AN OFFERING**

## **THE OFFERING IS GATHERED**

### **\*OFFERING RESPONSE –**

VU #541

"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
praise God, all creatures high and low;  
give thanks to God in love made known:  
Creator, Word and Spirit, One.***

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

**Loving One,  
open our hearts to a new world.  
A world where there's enough for all,  
and all are treated as beloved.  
Until then, though, bless our small contributions  
of time, talent, and treasures  
and may they work towards building  
what's to come.  
Amen**

*COMMUNING*

### **\*COMMUNION HYMN – "Long Ago and Far Away" – MV #195**

Long ago and far away  
Jesus lived and worked and prayed  
healed the sick and the fearful and lonely  
lived his life to show us God's way.

*Refrain*

*Stretched his arms out as he said*

*Fill the cup and share the bread*

*Remember me*

*in love and joy and blessing.*

Jesus gathered children around him  
spoke of Love and the joy to be found  
told them stories of wisdom and wonder  
God's creation in all that's around.

*Refrain*  
*Stretched his arms out as he said*  
*Fill the cup and share the bread*  
*Remember me*  
*in love and joy and blessing.*

Jesus called all his friends to be with him  
share the bread and the cup once again  
life to you I will offer it gladly  
love will be with you right to the end.

*Refrain (2X)*

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

...The Peace of Christ be with you all.

**And also with you.**

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

### **INVITATION**

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

God is with us.

**We are not alone.**

Christ is present here.

**The Spirit is among us.**

Let us give thanks to the Holy One,

**in hope and in love.**

...So it is that throughout these Lenten days and nights, we proclaim  
your goodness, 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.**

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

**Our Father-Mother, who is in the heavens,**  
**may your name be made holy,**  
**may your dominion come,**  
**may your will be done,**  
**on earth as it is in heaven.**  
**Give us today the bread we need;**  
**and forgive us our debts,**  
**as we have forgiven our debtors;**  
**and do not put us to the test,**  
**but rescue us from evil.**  
**For yours is the dominion, and the power,**  
**and the glory forever.**

**"Great Amen"** – MV #205

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

Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life.

Jesus Christ, the True Vine.

***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've 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,  
now and always.**

**Amen**

*GOING OUT (as Spirit people)*

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**\*CLOSING HYMN** – “How Firm a Foundation”

VU #660

How firm a foundation, you servants of God,  
is laid for your faith in God's excellent word!  
What more can be said than to you has been said,  
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

“Fear not, I am with you; O be not dismayed!  
For I am your God and will still give you aid;  
I'll strengthen and help you, and cause you to stand,  
upheld by my righteous omnipotent hand.”

“When through the deep waters I call you to go,  
the rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;  
for I will be with you, your troubles to bless,  
and sanctify to you your deepest distress.”

“When through fiery trials your pathway shall lie,  
my grace, all-sufficient, shall be your supply:  
the flame shall not hurt you; I only design  
your dross to consume, and your gold to refine.”

“The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose  
I will not – I will not desert to his foes;  
that soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,  
I'll never – no, never – no, never forsake!”

## **\*BLESSING**

**\*CHORAL CLOSING** – “An Old Irish Blessing”

***May the road rise up to meet you.  
May the wind be ever at your back.  
May sun shine warm upon your face  
and the rains fall soft upon your fields.  
And until we meet again, and until we meet again,  
May you be held in the hollow of God's hand.***

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

## **POSTLUDE**

# Church News

This Week at First United – March 18 <sup>th</sup> to March 23 <sup>rd</sup>		
Monday	9:00-11:00 AM	Badminton – DEMH GYM
Wednesday	9:00-11:00 AM	Badminton – DEMH GYM
	7:00 PM	Highland View Cem. - RMR
Thursday	4:15 PM	Choir Practice
Saturday	8:00 AM–1:00 PM	Bathurst Community Market

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

**Peanut Butter** – Once again this year we have set **a goal of 900 jars** of peanut butter to donate to the Bathurst Volunteer Center. Up to March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024 we have collected 150 jars.

**Confirmation Classes:** If anyone is interested in attending confirmation classes, please contact Rev. Neal or the church office at 506-546-3532.

**Eat in or Take out Roast Pork Supper** will be held on **Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup>**. Tickets are available now - \$18 for adults and \$6 for children. Please contact a member of the *Ways & Means Committee* or call (506-546-3532) or drop by the church office.

*Sponsored by*



**Upcoming special services:**

**Palm Sunday – March 24<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM**

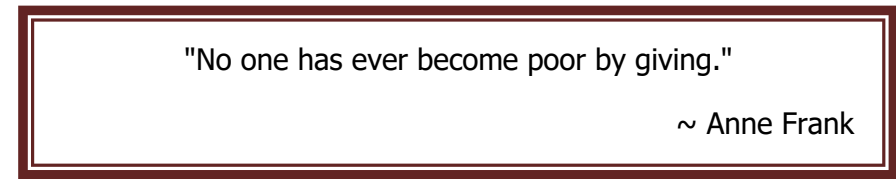
**Good Friday – March 29<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM**

**Easter Sunday – March 31<sup>st</sup> at 10 AM with Holy Communion**

# Church News

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

Below you will find a stewardship quote relating to the same.



## **Gratitude**

On behalf of the Community Outreach Sub-Team, appreciation is expressed for your response to our request for socks in support of homeless & needy individuals. Socks for men, women & children have been received & some have been distributed at the Volunteer Center & the Homeless Shelter, while others have been retained here at the church. Thanks to your generosity, we've already blessed the lives of needy folks with socks in all three locations. Obviously, your donations enable the sub-team to provide ongoing support in our community.

***Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters***  
***Regional News***

The Council of First United Church has voted in favour of **Remit 1, Establishing an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization within the United Church of Canada.**

***Background Information*** (based on information from Michael Blair, General Secretary, General Council):

The 44<sup>th</sup> General Council met virtually between February 2022 and August 2022.

At that meeting, the General Council approved an amendment to the Basis of Union in *The Manual* of The United Church of Canada to establish an autonomous National Indigenous Organization. It also authorized a Category 3 Remit to test the will of the church with respect to this change.

The General Council's decision was in response to proposal **NIC-01: Restructuring of the Indigenous Church** from the National Indigenous Council, which named its vision of the two parts of the church (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) working side-by-side, and recommending the identification and removal of "all the structural barriers to developing and sustaining an autonomous Indigenous Church within The United Church of Canada". The way to remove these "structural barriers" is named in a proposal from the General Secretary, **GS-10: Living into Reconciliation**, which asks the church to give pre-emptive remit approval for whatever the Indigenous Church determines in the future as the place it will have in the United Church, guided by the *Calls to the Church*—and without the need for further remit approvals.

*(See next page)*

*(Continued from page 1)*

This is a Category 3 Remit, and so requires a vote by every regional council and each pastoral charge's governing body. If a regional council or a pastoral charge does not register a vote that is considered a vote against the proposal.

There is one question to be voted on, as follows.

Does the regional council/pastoral charge agree to amend the Basis of Union to reflect:

1. That The United Church of Canada will be organized as follows: (1) a three-council structure, consisting of communities of faith, regional councils and a Denominational Council [also known as General Council]; and (2) an autonomous National Indigenous Organization; and
2. That once the new autonomous National Indigenous Organization is established within The United Church of Canada, it will have its own mechanisms to make any future changes to its structure and processes, and, therefore will not be subject to the remit process under section 7.4.1 of the Basis of Union; and
3. The changes required for the establishment of the autonomous National Indigenous Organization.

For further background information and videos regarding this Remit, please click on the following link. If you have questions or are seeking clarification, please speak to Rev. Neal or one of our two First United FSLDW Regional Representatives: Martha Vickers and Jini Palmer.

<https://generalcouncil44.ca/council/remit-1-establishing-autonomous-national-indigenous-organization#msdynttrid=NR4WXydfBNYoJJZU1bGT1fKgtz94P13HSIwEKPgYVKg>



## SCRIPTURE READING

*Jennifer Oliver Lavigne*

### **JEREMIAH 31:31-34**

A New Covenant

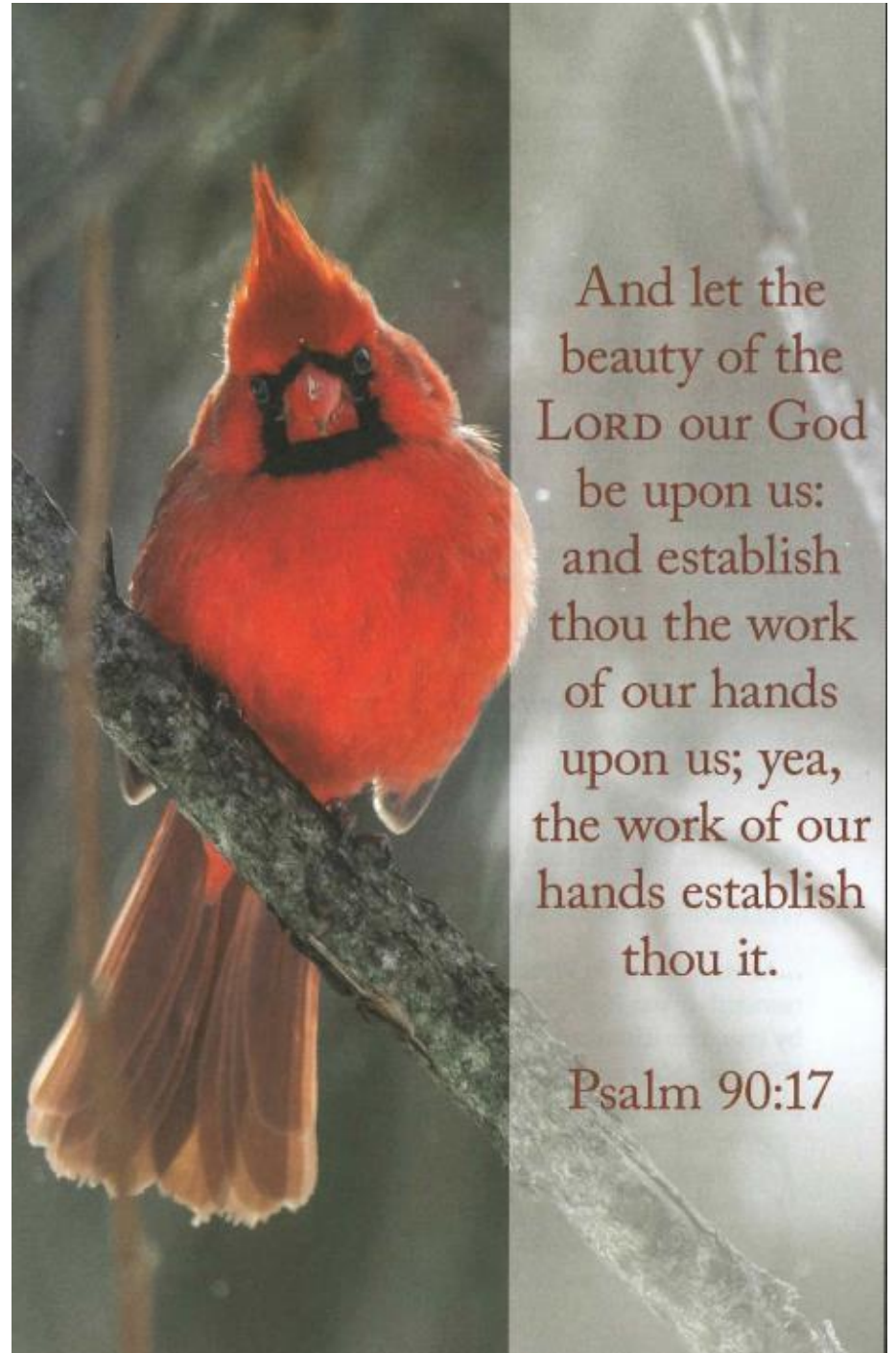
31 The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

32 It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord.

33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

34 No longer shall they teach one another or say to each other, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more.

*May the Spirit bless to our understanding this significant part of our Christian story...*



And let the  
beauty of the  
LORD our God  
be upon us:  
and establish  
thou the work  
of our hands  
upon us; yea,  
the work of our  
hands establish  
thou it.

Psalm 90:17