



## GATHERING PRAYER

**\*GATHERING HYMN** – “God We Praise You for the Morning”  
VU #415 (*verses 1-5*)

God, we praise you for the morning;  
hope springs forth with each new day,  
new beginning, prayer and promise,  
joy in work and in play.

God, we praise you for creation,  
mountains, seas, and prairie land.  
Waking souls find joy and healing  
in your bountiful hand.

God, we praise you for compassion,  
all the loving that you show;  
human touching, tears, and laughter,  
help your children to grow.

God, we praise you for your Spirit,  
Comforter and daily friend,  
restless searcher, gentle teacher,  
strength and courage you send.

God, we praise you for the Savior,  
come that we may know your ways.  
In his loving, dying, rising,  
Christ is Lord of our days.

**PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION** (*in unison*)

**God of inspiration and change, you guide us with wisdom and grace so that we may grown and develop as your people of faith. We choose to learn spiritual practices that encourage peace, justice and service for a world in need. We use our God given gifts to bring about meaningful change so that the lives of others can be transformed towards the common good.**

**We seek transformational change within ourselves so that we can fulfill your calling for us to be people of justice and peace, kindness and love. May we continue to be sources of hope and goodwill for all. Amen.**

**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 Peace of Christ be with you all.

**And also with you.**

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

**\*SINGING A SONG** – “I’m Gonna Live So God Can Use Me”  
VU #575

I'm gonna live so God can use me  
anywhere, Lord, anytime!  
I'm gonna live so God can use me  
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna work so God can use me  
anywhere, Lord, anytime!  
I'm gonna work so God can use me  
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna pray so God can use me  
anywhere, Lord, anytime!  
I'm gonna pray so God can use me  
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna sing so God can use me  
anywhere, Lord, anytime!  
I'm gonna sing so God can use me  
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

**FOCUS SCRIPTURE**

*Jennifer Oliver*

John 1:1-9, 10-18 (Common English Bible)

This is the trustworthy witness of God's faithful people through the ages,

**The divine word to us today. Amen.**

**REFLECTION** – "Together We Worship"

Rev. Bethany Benz-Whittington

**MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION**

**GIFT OF MUSIC** –

*RESPONDING*

**YOUR GENEROSITY MATTERS**

*Martha Vickers*

**INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

**\*OFFERING RESPONSE** (*Tune Old 100th*)

***Hope in our God so filled with love.***

***Peace in the symbol of a dove.***

***Joy in the coming of the Son.***

***Love fills us up and makes us one.***

*Catherine MacDonald 2007*

**OFFERING PRAYER** (*responsively*)

Generous God, we share these gifts in order to make the world a better place, whether in our communities, country or around the world.

**May they be used in meaningful ways for the common good of all. Thank you and Amen.**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**Our Father/Mother/Creator,**

**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,**

**and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

*GOING OUT*

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CLOSING HYMN:** "Carol at the Manger"

*(Tune Joyous Light VU #578)*

Holy Child within the manger,

long ago yet ever near;

come as friend to every stranger,

come as hope for every fear.

As you lived to heal the broken,

greet the outcast, free the bound,

as you taught us love unspoken,

teach us now where you are found.

Once again we tell the story--

how your love for us was shown,

when the image of your glory

wore an image like our own.

Come, enlighten with your wisdom,

come and fill us with your grace.

May the fire of your compassion

kindle every land and race.

# Church News

This Week at First United Church		
Office Hours: 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM Monday to Friday		
Monday	9:00 – 11:00 AM	Badminton – DEMH Gym
Tuesday	1:00 – 3:00 PM	Knitting Group - RMR
Saturday	8:00 AM–1:00 PM	Bathurst Community Market

Choir practice will resume Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup> at 4:15 PM.

**Thank you to our volunteers in December - Counters** – Margaret Payne Chenard & Mike Kierstead; **Greeters** – Julie & Harvey Spence; **Lighting Advent Candles & Reading** – Anne Brooks, Brooke & Helen Knowles, Krissy, Chloe & Lia McLellan and Cindy & Alan Doucet; **Your Generosity Matters** – Martha Vickers, Anne Wilson, Sally Ronalds, and Judy Losier; **Scripture Readers** – Gary Branch, Cheryl Brewster, Anne Brooks, Helen Knowles and Joanne Wiseman **Hospitality & Friendship** – Beth Sullivan, Charlene Roy, and Gayle Ferron; **Sound System** – Brenda Parrott, Shirley Allain, and Ralph Jamieson; and **Videographer** – Don Eddy as well as to Josh Gammon for uploading our services to the website and Facebook

## ***Upcoming Services at First United:***

January 12<sup>th</sup> ~ Service lead by Hugh Ellis

January 19<sup>th</sup> ~ Service lead by Kyle Grant

January 26<sup>th</sup> ~ Service lead by Kyle Grant

**Thank you to everyone who so generously donated** to the fundraisers during the Advent Season. We raised \$3,090 for the Benevolence/White Gift Fund, a large portion of which will go directly to the Bathurst Volunteer Center and \$2,900 for the Poinsettia Fundraiser (including costs of the plants). And **thank you to Anne Wilson** for attending at the church several times to check on/care for the plants.

Holy Child within the manger,  
lead us ever in your way,  
so we see in every stranger  
how you come to us today.  
In our lives and in our living  
give us strength to live as you,  
that our hearts might be forgiving  
and our spirits strong and true.

## **\*SENDING FORTH** (*responsively*)

This day, the Spirit of God waits on the threshold of our experience,

**Waits to be embodied as always, in responsive human lives.**

So, let us renew our commitment to be the vehicles of that Spirit,

**And let us go forth with joy, to set that Spirit free in our daily living.**

**Amen**

## **\*CHORAL SENDING FORTH** – “May the God of Peace” – MV #224

***May the God of peace and of all good,  
may the God of peace and of all good  
be always with you. Amen!  
May God’s peace be with you. Amen!***

*(The Christ Candle is extinguished.)*

## **POSTLUDE**

# Church News

The Christmas decorations will be removed from the sanctuary, narthex and other areas on Tuesday morning January 7<sup>th</sup>. If anyone would like to take a poinsettia to any shut-ins, please pick them up prior to noon Tuesday. Thank you.

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 / adherents 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.

**"We make a living by what we get;  
we make a life by what we give."**

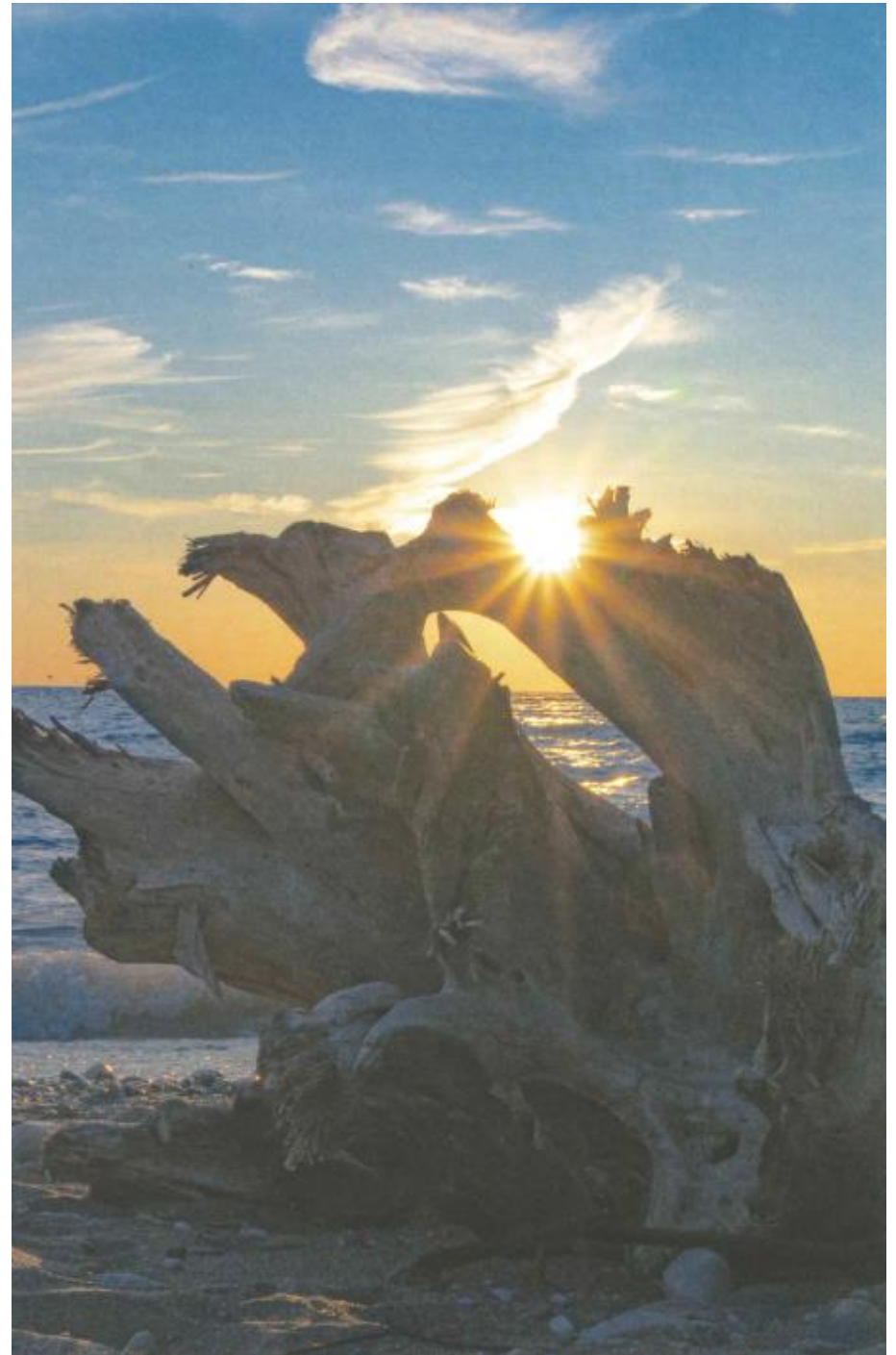
*-Winston Churchill*

## Community News

**A FAMILY AND COMMUNITY BREAKFAST** will be held at St. George's Anglican Church, 432 King Avenue, on Saturday, January 11<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 – 10:00 AM. As this community event serves to fund our local mission projects, we rely on donations and ask that you consider a minimum donation of \$ 8.00 to help defray costs. We appreciate your kindness and support. Come and enjoy fellowship and great food.

### 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 196 "Help Lesotho" 2025 calendars were sold, and this will raise \$ 2940 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 \$ 147,551.78 for the work of "Help Lesotho". (There are additional calendars available for anyone else who would like to support this cause.)



**Focus Scripture:** John 1:1-9, 10-18 (Common English Bible)

## **Story of the Word**

- 1** In the beginning was the Word  
and the Word was with God  
and the Word was God.
- 2** The Word was with God in the beginning.
- 3** Everything came into being through the Word,  
and without the Word  
nothing came into being.  
What came into being
- 4** through the Word was life,  
and the life was the light for all people.
- 5** The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light.
- 6** A man named John was sent from God.
- 7** He came as a witness to testify concerning the light, so that  
through him everyone would believe in the light.
- 8** He himself wasn't the light, but his mission was to testify  
concerning the light.
- 9** The true light that shines on all people  
was coming into the world.
- 10** The light was in the world,  
and the world came into being through the light,  
but the world didn't recognize the light.
- 11** The light came to his own people,  
and his own people didn't welcome him.
- 12** But those who did welcome him,  
those who believed in his name,  
he authorized to become God's children,
- 13** born not from blood  
nor from human desire or passion,  
but born from God.

**14** The Word became flesh  
and made his home among us.  
We have seen his glory,  
glory like that of a father's only son,  
full of grace and truth.

**15** John testified about him, crying out, "This is the one of whom I said,  
'He who comes after me is greater than me because he existed before  
me.'"

**16** From his fullness we have all received grace upon grace;

**17** as the Law was given through Moses,  
so grace and truth came into being through Jesus Christ.

**18** No one has ever seen God.

God the only Son,  
who is at the Father's side,  
has made God known.

This is the trustworthy witness of God's faithful people through the  
ages,

***The divine word to us today. Amen.***