

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

Fifth Sunday in Lent – April 6, 2025

Clergy Rev. David Allan **Music Director** Martha Vickers
Office Adm. Margaret Daniels **Custodian** Lester Scott
Greeters Julie & Harvey Spence
Audio & Visual Technicians Brenda Parrott & Donald Eddy

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<u>Lectionary for today</u>	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u>
Isaiah 43:16-21 Psalm 126 Philippians 3:4b-14 John 12:1-8	Psalm 118 Parts 1, 3, 4 Zechariah 9:9-10 Luke 19:28-40
<i>The bulletin today has been placed in loving memory of our parents, Thomas W and Dorothy Scott and our brother, Keith Scott by the family</i>	

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

MUSIC FOR GATHERING

WELCOME

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: *(in unison)*

...As we gather to worship, let's respectfully pause to remember we live and love, 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.

CENTERING FOR WORSHIP: "Spirit Open My Heart" MV #79
(refrain only)

***Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.***

CALL TO WORSHIP: *(responsively)*

Today we will hear the story of Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus, and how she anointed Jesus' feet with very expensive perfume.

She must have loved her teacher and friend very much to even think of doing that!

Clearly, he meant the world to her.

We remember that not everyone understood what she did, and thought it a waste.

But Jesus understood, he defended her, because true grace is without price.

And we remember Mary and what she did for him, for her open heart and her selfless act of devotion...

(a time for silent reflection)

Let us worship our generous God. Let us pray to our God of grace.

GATHERING PRAYER:

God among us, of our spirits and our senses, some of us awoke to a smile, an embrace, a kiss, and some to the warmth of memory and the blessing of hope. Some of us began our day with the fragrance and taste of tea, coffee or juice. Perhaps we stepped outside and the fresh, cool air filled us with the breath of a new day. Some of us have come to the familiarity of this sanctuary and some of us are in the comfort of home; together we all long to experience your presence in all the ways of knowing. Send your Spirit among us all, let love fill this your house with the fragrance of unlimited grace. We are anointed with your love poured out, our cup overflows with your living water. And so, on this new day may we perceive, and may we always be, your new and beloved creation. Amen

***GATHERING HYMN:**

MV #87

"Water Flowing from the Mountains"

Water flowing from the mountains.
Water flowing o'er the earth.
Water comes to us, so precious.
Living water gives us birth.

Refrain

Drink deep this source of life.

Drink deep and know.

*For living water sings, and living water brings
the love that makes our spirit grow.*

Water rushing down the rivers.
Water rushing to the sea.
Water comes to us, so precious.
Living water makes us free.

Refrain

Water springing from the dry place.
Water springing in the sun.
Water comes to us, so precious.
Living water for each one.

Refrain

LENTEN CANDLE LITURGY:

Joanne Wiseman & Anne Wilson

During the season of Lent, we remember and retell the story of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. He came bringing light and love, assurance and amazing grace. But there were those who were shut down by the shadows of fear, or reshaped by a desire for power, with hearts that were shrunken and shrivelled up. They sought to extinguish the light and exclude the love that brings life.

We remember from Matthew's Gospel the heartbreaking story of Jesus telling his disciples of what was to come. "In two days," he said, "it will be, as you know, the Passover Festival, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified." In the meantime, the elders and chief priests were meeting with Caiaphas the High

Priest in his palace. They plotted to secretly arrest Jesus and have him executed. Their thinking was that they shouldn't do it during the festival because there would likely be a riot, and the Romans would clamp down even harder. But to their surprise and no doubt delight, one of the disciples, one of the twelve who were closest to Jesus, Judas Iscariot, came to them. He asked what they would give him if he betrayed his teacher to them. They gave him thirty silver coins, and from then on, he looked for his chance. The intimacy of a kiss, the emptiness of a troubled heart, the overwhelming doubt that led to despair and to death... in those tense and troubled times, in those days of anxiousness and joyless desperation, of human hardship and frailty... it could have been anybody really... For a moment the glint of the silver in a man's hand seemed to be the only light that mattered.

We know that the lovelight will always be raised up, it will rise over every new horizon, and we know that it will never be overcome. And yet, in such places, in too many places still, the presence of the light within and among all was dimmed for a while...

Another candle is extinguished

CHORALE RESPONSE:

MV #18

"Lord, Prepare Me to be a Sanctuary"

***Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary,
pure and holy tried and true;
with thanksgiving, I'll be a living
sanctuary for you.***

ASSURANCE:

We hear many scripture stories of price, of cost, of pearls and pieces of silver and expensive perfume, of what is valued and what is not. What we can count on is the unconditional love of God, a grace that is priceless, the economy of heaven. You are loved without price, and your God, whose holy name is Love, who each new day sings, "Let there be light," will always be with you that you too might shine and be a light to the world. There is, it has been said, a cost of discipleship, of self-giving, but there is no price to be paid to be wrapped and enraptured in the loving mercy of your God.

CHORALE 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.***

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 126 (*Refrain 2*) VU Page #850
"Those who sow in tears reap with joy."

Refrain:

*We praise the One who gave the growth,
With voices full and strong.*

When God brought Zion's captives home,
it seemed to us like a dream.

**But then our mouths were full of laughter,
and our tongues uttered shouts of joy.**

Then they said among the nations:

"God has done great things for them."

**Truly God has done great things for us,
and therefore we rejoice.**

Refrain:

Restore our fortunes, O God,
as streams refresh the Negev.

Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy.

Those who go out weeping, carrying seed for sowing.

**shall come home with songs of joy,
bringing in their sheaves.**

Refrain:

SHARING OUR STORIES (*with those of all ages*)

***HYMN:** "Friend to Friend"

(Seasons of the Spirit Vol. 7)

Let us now as God's own people,
give the sign of peace,
proclaiming our love for one another,
binding friend to friend.

(Chorus)

*Christ Jesus calls us to love one another,
to be one in him,
friend to friend, in love to each other,
we shall give our hands.*

In our care for one another,
by each kindly word,
by ev'ry loving deed,
we make known the love of Jesus Christ.

(Chorus)

We feed the hungry, clothe the naked,
give drink to those who thirst,
for Jesus came in love as a servant
and we follow him.

(Chorus)

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PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION: (*in unison*)

**Through the hearing of your word, gracious God, may we
be renewed as a people of vision. May our senses be filled
with the power and presence of your outpouring love. May
we be blessed to experience a whiff of your wisdom, a
glimpse of your abundance, to be anointed with eternity
and to be touched in heart and mind to be your loving,
Gospel people. Amen**

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Gary Branch

Isaiah 43:16-21

Look, I am doing something new

Philippians 3:4b-14

I count everything as loss but knowing Christ

John 12:1-8

Mary anoints Jesus with costly ointment

REFLECTION: "The fragrance of faith; the scent of something more"

GIFT OF MUSIC:

YOUR GENEROSITY MATTERS

Martha Vickers

INVITATION TO MAKE AN OFFERING:

Mary's example is a stirring one. Indeed, the concern of Judas, however sincere, makes us think as well. We think about the cost of really and truly living. And so, our giving is a spiritual practice that enhances our living, an act that goes beyond expenses and budgets. Our giving is one of the ways that in gratitude we show what matters, what we hold dear, in whom we trust, and together, for all that we hope for...

THE OFFERING IS GATHERED

***OFFERING RESPONSE:**

"Give What You Can, Take What You Need"

Give what you can, take what you need.

For the body of Christ, is enough to feed.

The hungry for Spirit and the thirsty for love.

Give thanks when you can to our God up above.

Gathering L/E 2017 pg. 53 Words & Music: Bryan Cook

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

God of all creation, bless us and these gifts that we and they might be a part of everything that is new in you. Anoint us and our offerings that we and they might be balms of healing, with the shared wealth of abundant life and the fragrance of a faith filled with wonder, trust and devotion. This we pray as the Body of Christ. Amen

***HYMN: "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"**

VU #333

Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.

Come, almighty to deliver;
let us all thy grace receive;
suddenly return, and never,
nevermore thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.

Finish, then, thy new creation;
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see thy great salvation
perfectly restored in thee,
changed from glory into glory,
till in heaven we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise.

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER OF JESUS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CLOSING HYMN: "May the God of Hope Go with Us"** VU #424

***COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION; SHARING THE LIGHT**

Christ Candle is extinguished

May God's sheltering wings,
her gathering wings protect you.
May God's nurturing arms,
her cradling arms sustain you,
and hold you in her love,
and hold you in her love.

POSTLUDE



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	9:30 AM-11:30 AM	Quilters – DEMH Downstairs office
	1:00 – 3:00 PM	Knitters - RMR
	7:00 PM	Property Management
Wednesday	9:00 - 11:00 AM	Badminton – DEMH GYM
Thursday	4:15 PM	Choir Practice
	7:00 PM	Christian Development
Saturday	8:00 AM–1:00 PM	Bathurst Community Market - GYM

Peanut Butter –Our quota for 2025 is to collect 1,000 jars of peanut butter for the Volunteer Center. Up to April 3rd we have received 309 jars and have funds on hand to purchase another 65+ jars.

If you are aware of **anyone in the hospital or needing a visit**, please let the office know (506-546-3532) and the message will be forwarded to the minister and to the Pastoral Care Team.

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.

"When you use what God has blessed you with generously to care for creation and neighbour, you are praising God."

First United Quilters are now gathering on *Tuesday mornings* in the old office downstairs in the Donald Eddy Memorial Hall from 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM. It is a time for *fun, work, talk* and *fellowship* with new or old friends. Please contact Anne Brooks (506-548-2156) or Pat Thibodeau (506-546-2705) for more details

Church News

Thank you to our volunteers in March - Counters – Edie Gammon, Gary Branch and Isabel Clouston; **Greeters** – Shirley Sealy, Wilma Dempsey, Nancy & Allen Jagoe, Gayle Ferron, Beth Sullivan and Gary Branch; **Your Generosity Matters** – Martha Vickers, Ronalds family, Anne Wilson, Joanne Wiseman and Judy Losier; **Scripture Readers** – Brooke Knowles, Helen Knowles, Joanne Wiseman, Anne Brooks and Jennifer Oliver; **Lenton Candle Readers** – Margaret Payne-Chenard & Mike Kierstead; Cheryl & Mya Brewster, Helen & Brooke Knowles; **Hospitality & Friendship** – Dorothy Ann McCallum, Lola Nelson, Beth Sullivan and Charlene Roy; **Sound System** – Brenda Parrott, Shirley Allain, and Lester Scott; and **Videographer** – Don Eddy as well as to Josh Gammon for uploading our services to the website and Facebook.

Livestream Update – We are now live-streaming our services through YouTube. Please have patience with the sound issues as we become comfortable with the program. You can click on the link below to access this Sunday's Morning Service (*hopefully*). Many thanks to Lester Scott and Donald Eddy for their hard work bringing the livestream to fruition.

<https://youtube.com/live/ND2MCjZvmO4?feature=share>



Community News

Free Tax Clinics for those with a modest income and a simple tax situation will be held at the KC Irving Regional Center (Paul Ouelette Room) March 31st – April 4th and April 7th – 11th from 9 AM to 3 PM.

A FAMILY AND COMMUNITY BREAKFAST will be held at St. George's Anglican Church, 432 King Avenue, on **Saturday, April 12th from 8 AM – 10 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.

The Bathurst Legion will begin serving a delicious breakfast every Sunday beginning today. 9 AM to 1 PM - \$10 per person. This will be a weekly project and everyone is welcome.

The Bathurst Chapter New Brunswick Scottish Cultural Association presents a **Tartan Tea – A Highland Social & Dance** on Sunday, April 6th at the Bathurst Heritage Museum. 1:30 PM to 4:00 PM. Tickets at the door \$10 per person. (*snow date: Sunday April 13th*)

SCRIPTURE READINGS – New International Version

Isaiah 43:16-21

16 This is what the LORD says - he who made a way through the sea, a path through the mighty waters,

17 who drew out the chariots and horses, the army and reinforcements together, and they lay there, never to rise again, extinguished, snuffed out like a wick:

18 "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.

19 See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.

20 The wild animals honour me, the jackals and the owls, because I provide water in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland,

to give drink to my people, my chosen,

21 the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise.

Philippians 3:4-14

4 If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more:

5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee;

6 as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.

8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ

9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ - the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.

10 I want to know Christ - yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,

11 and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead,

14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

John 12:1-8

1 Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.

2 Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honour. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him.

3 Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

4 But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected,

5 "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages."

6 He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

7 "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial.

8 You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."