

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

Holy Humour Sunday - April 27, 2025
2nd Sunday of Easter



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

Today's Music Leader – Linda Knowles MacPherson

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<u>Scripture for today</u>	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u>
Genesis 17:1-8, 15-19a; 18:1-15; 21:1-7	Acts 5:27-32 Psalm 118:14-29 Revelation 1:4-8 John 20:19-31

*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 AND INTRODUCTION

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:** "This Is the Day" MV #122

This is the day that God has made; we will rejoice and be glad!
This is the day that God has made; we will rejoice and be glad!
Singing hal-le-lu, singing hal-le-lu, singing hal-le-lu!
We will rejoice and be glad!
Singing hal-le-lu, singing hal-le-lu, singing hal-le-lu!
We will rejoice and be glad!

CALL TO WORSHIP: *(responsively)*

Knock, knock!

Who's there?

... Whether we're grinning or grimacing, laughing or lamenting, Jesus stands at the door and knocks. And we, gathered for worship, welcome the risen Christ who is always there into our hearts, that we may be opened to a great love. We open ourselves to the joy of new life and the gift of laughter and light, for healing, for hope, in a time that needs our hallelujahs. Let us worship. Let us pray...

GATHERING PRAYER:

Loving, playful God, tickle us with your spirit in this time of worship, surprise us with your presence. Like the punchline to a good joke your revelation in all things always catches us off guard; you play

peekaboo in our lives together and we giggle and are grateful. Holy Mystery reveals Holy Mirth. Give us the grace to not take ourselves too seriously. Just as you laugh at the vain and the power hungry, help us to hear you too, to get it, to deeply know what matters the most and what we truly need. Help us to know laughter and love even in the low times, to know your sacred, healing touch when shadows gather. For your light is our way, our hope and our life. We are your eager, Easter people. Amen

***GATHERING HYMN:** "Joy Comes with the Dawn" VU #166

*Joy come with the dawn; joy comes with the morning sun;
joy springs from the tomb and scatters the night with her song,
joy comes with the dawn.*

Weeping may come;
weeping may come in the night,
when dark shadows cloud our sight.

Refrain

Sorrow will turn,
sorrow will turn into song,
and God's laughter make us strong.

Refrain

We will rejoice,
we will rejoice, and give praise,
to the One who brings us grace.

Refrain

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE:

A flame dances with joy. Light spreads making hearts merry and brightening our hopes. We light this candle to remind us of the shining presence of our risen Christ and the Divine delight in our re-creation. It is the light that is never eclipsed, that rises over every heart and every new horizon. May the lovelight always shine in our eyes, that we see more clearly the beauty and the need of the world. In its light may we see ourselves anew. And together, may we respond with a love that helps overcome the shadows of fear with happiness and peace.

CHORAL RESPONSE: "Don't Be Afraid"

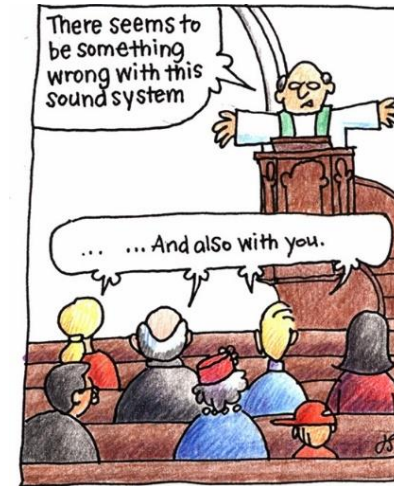
Don't be afraid.

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.***



SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

May unexpected joy be with you! The Peace of the risen Christ be with you all!

And also with you!

Psalm 98:4

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises.

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

***HYMN:** "Sing a Happy Hallelujah"

Sing a happy hallelujah,
sing it out with heart and style,
we're the echo of God's laughter,
we're the image of God's smile.

Refrain:
Hallelujah, all creation,
hallelujah everyone!
Hallelujah, all creation,
hallelujah everyone!

We're the proof of God's good humour,
we're the twinkle in God's eye,
made to shine, reflect the glory,
given light and space to fly. **Refrain**

Sarah laughed at God's good timing,
Mary sang and David danced,
Jesus smiled and hugged the children,
so is life for us enhanced. **Refrain**

Every day sing hallelujah!
We are loved, though so absurd,
human, foolish, chosen people,
God still takes us at our word! **Refrain**



PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION: *(in unison)*

Our shared stories, O God, are filled with all that life brings.
You are there in them all, funny or sad, uplifting or mundane.
As we experience the story of Abraham and Sarah, may we
too see ourselves, and grow in wonder, hope and joy. Amen

SCRIPTURE READING:

Judy Losier

Genesis 17:1-8, 15-19a; 18:1-15; 21:1-7

SERMON: God brings laughter

GIFT OF MUSIC:

VU #563

"Jesus, You Have Come to the Lakeshore"

YOUR GENEROSITY MATTERS

Judy Losier

INVITATION TO MAKE AN OFFERING:

The pain, the hunger, the despair in the world is no laughing matter.
The story of places where death seems to speak loudest and have the
last word isn't funny at all. Do we grin and bear it? No! We give and
we pray, we listen and we speak up, we reach out and we give again.
We do so gratefully with the hope and the promise of abundant life in
which we find our joy.

THE OFFERING IS GATHERED

***OFFERING RESPONSE:**

VU #541

"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"

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

***OFFERING PRAYER:**

God of all blessing, we give in the assurance that your creative touch
will transform these gifts and the lives that they touch in turn. Bless
us that in our giving we too are transformed, ever into the likeness of
you, and in the image of Love. Smile on your world, and through the
outpouring of love and the Spirit's flowing, may all see that it is good,
and laugh with joy. Amen

***HYMN:** "Give to Us Laughter"

Give to us laughter, O Source of our life.
Laughter can banish so much of our strife.
Laughter and love give us wholeness and health.
Laughter and love are the coin of true wealth.

Give to us laughter as sign of deep joy;
let us in laughing find Christian employ,
joining with stars and with bright northern lights,
laughing and praising and sharing delights.

Why do we worry that we will lose face?
Why act like king for the whole human race?
Often in family, and often with friend,
laughing at pride causes anguish to end.

Even in sorrow and hours of grief,
laughter with tears brings most healing relief.
God, give us laughter, and God, give us peace,
joys of your promise among us increase.

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER OF JESUS

ANNOUNCEMENTS



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***CLOSING HYMN:** "Did He Laugh?"

A hymn for Holy Humour Sunday

Words by Rev. David Allan, 2025

Refrain:

Did he laugh? I'm sure that Jesus did,
did he laugh, I want to know.
Did he laugh, and smile, his heart not hid,
that we with joy follow?

Verse 1:

As a child I'm sure he laughed out loud,
with his friends and parents too.
As a child he wasn't oft too proud,
to laugh at himself too.

Refrain:

Did he laugh? I'm sure that Jesus did,
did he laugh, I want to know.
Did he laugh, and smile, his heart not hid,
that we with joy follow?

Verse 2:

As he stood all wet in Jordan stream,
with cool water running down,
as he walked in desert's hot sunbeams,
he laughed with new faith found. (Refrain)

Verse 3:

As he called new friends to follow near,
as he healed and said, "You're free,"
as he fed and wiped away sad tears,
said, "Rise and laugh with me!" (Refrain)

Verse 4:

As disciples wondered what to do,
cross and tomb shadowed their minds,
he appeared in hearts and memories too,
their laughter was the sign! (Refrain)

Verse 5:

We can laugh together every one,
we can laugh with Jesus too,
we can laugh because new life has won,
in him we are brand new! (Refrain)

***COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION**

***CHORAL SENDING FORTH:** "We Wish You the Blessing"

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

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SHARING THE LIGHT

POSTLUDE



Laughing Jesus on his mother Mary's knee

Church News

This Week at First United Church		
Office Hours: 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM Monday to Friday		
Monday	Federal Election Polling Stations - DEMH	
Tuesday	9:00 - 11:00 AM	Badminton – DEMH GYM
	9:30 AM-11:30 AM	Quilters – DEMH Downstairs office
	1:00 – 3:00 PM	Knitters - RMR
Thursday	4:15 PM	Choir Practice
	4:00 – 5:30 PM	Take out Ham & Potato Scallop Supper
	4:30 – 6:00 PM	Eat in Ham & Potato Scallop Supper
Saturday	8:00 AM–1:00 PM	Bathurst Community Market - GYM

Rev. David Allan will be out of the office, on vacation, from April 28th to May 5th, returning to the office on Tuesday, May 6th. For any Pastoral Care emergencies during Rev. David's absence, Rev. Blair Lewis will be available.

Hugh Ellis will be leading our worship service next Sunday, **May 4th**. "In Harmony Choir" will also be sharing music at this service.

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 Pastoral Care Team.

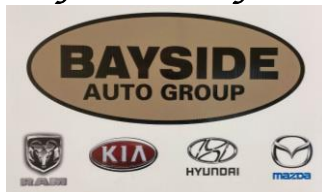
Covenanting Service: The special worship service celebrating the new covenant between First United Church, the Rev. David Allan, Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Regional Council and our loving God will take place at **2:30** on **Sunday May 25, 2025**, at the church. Our guest preacher will be our friend the Rev. Ivan Gregan. A time of fellowship will follow in the Ruth Morrison Room. All are welcome to this important celebration of ministry and pastoral relationship in the life of our congregation and in our community.

Peanut Butter –Our quota for 2025 is to collect 1,000 jars of peanut butter for the Volunteer Center. Up to April 24th we have received 415 jars.

Church News

Eat in or Take out Ham & Scallop Potato Supper will be held on **Thursday, May 1st**. \$18 for adults and \$6 for children. Please contact a member of the *Ways & Means Committee* or drop by/call (506-546-3532) the church office for tickets. Tickets are on a first come/first serve basis.

Sponsored by



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.

Whatever it takes to share the amazing news of Jesus' resurrection, let us offer those things.

FSLDW Affirm Webinar- April 30th Getting Started!

If you have a few people talking about becoming an Affirming congregation, you have enough! Join a larger conversation on April 30th at 2:00. Kim Curlett, our Atlantic East Affirm United consultant, will take us through the process and answer the questions you have. It's always good to chat with others who are on this path. Hope to see someone from your community of faith with us.

Please click [here](#) to register or enter the following website:

<https://ucceast.ca/90757-fsl dw-affirm-committee-webinar-april-30th-2025-getting-started>

If you wish to watch it here in the sanctuary we will be broadcasting it. Please note this is at "no cost" to anyone who wishes to view it.

Community News

The Anglican Parish of New Bandon will hold its **Annual Fishermen's Service** today at **2:00 PM** at the **Christ Church in Clifton**. You are invited to come out join in the blessing of the 2025 fisheries.

A **take-out lobster supper** is being held at **Central United Church** in Clifton on **Saturday May 10 from 4:00-6:00**. For tickets, please contact Lois Archibald (506-548-8927). The cost is \$30 per dinner.

The Bathurst Legion is serving a delicious breakfast every Sunday from 9 AM to 1 PM - \$10 per person.

The Anglican Parish of New Bandon has a "Student Summer Employment Program" and has 3 positions of 35 hours per week for 12 weeks for 12 weeks starting June 2, 2025; and a "Youth Employment Opportunity" starting June 9, 2025 for 8 weeks. For further information contact Lauramcnulty79@gmail.com

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE: A Family and Community Breakfast will be held at St. George's Anglican Church, 432 King Avenue, on **Saturday, May 17th from 8:00 – 10:00 AM**, as this date marks the beginning of our celebration of the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Anglican Parish of Bathurst. Your donation of \$10.00 at the door (\$ 5.00 for children under 12) is greatly appreciated as it helps to fund our local mission projects. Come join us for a warm welcome and a tasty hot breakfast.

SCRIPTURE READING - NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION

GENESIS 17:1-8

The Covenant of Circumcision

- 1** When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless.
- 2** Then I will make my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers."
- 3** Abram fell facedown, and God said to him,
- 4** "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations.
- 5** No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations.
- 6** I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you.
- 7** I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.
- 8** The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God."

GENESIS 17:15-19

- 15** God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah.
- 16** I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her."
- 17** Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, "Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?"
- 18** And Abraham said to God, "If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!"
- 19** Then God said, "Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.

GENESIS 18:1-5

The Three Visitors

- 1** The LORD appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day.
 - 2** Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground.
 - 3** He said, "If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord, do not pass your servant by.
 - 4** Let a little water be brought, and then you may all wash your feet and rest under this tree.
 - 5** Let me get you something to eat, so you can be refreshed and then go on your way—now that you have come to your servant."
- "Very well," they answered, "do as you say."

GENESIS 21:1-7

The Birth of Isaac

- 1** Now the LORD was gracious to Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did for Sarah what he had promised.
- 2** Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him.
- 3** Abraham gave the name Isaac[a] to the son Sarah bore him.
- 4** When his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God commanded him.
- 5** Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.
- 6** Sarah said, "God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me."
- 7** And she added, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age."