

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

May 4, 2025

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

Today's Music Leader – Linda Knowles MacPherson

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<u>Lectionary for today</u>	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u>
Acts 9:1-6, (7-20) Psalm 30 Revelation 5:11-14 John 21:1-19	Acts 9:36-43 Psalm 23 Revelation 7:9-17 John 10:22-30
<p><i>We thank Hugh Ellis & Randy Breckenridge for leading us in worship this morning.</i></p> <p><i>We also thank In Harmony for joining our choir this morning</i></p>	

*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:

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.

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE: *(responsively)*

One: We light this candle as a reminder of the light of the resurrected Christ in our lives

All: We are assured by this reminder of Christ's constant companionship and love for us.

One: God's love for us is one that encompasses both life and death.

All: It is a love that is and unending

One: We come seeking support, reassurance and guidance.

All: We come as a people in need of grace

One: We come seeking direction and longing to become whole and filled with courage and faith willing to share our stories and our journeys.

All: Hallelujah! Christ has risen. He is risen indeed! Our hope and our salvation. Amen.

The Christ candle is lit...

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!

OPENING THOUGHTS: "Don't Lead with Advice"

Randy Breckenridge

GATHERING PRAYER *(in unison)*

Spirit God, give us the courage to share our stories and our faith.
Give us energy and inspiration for our journey.
Be our companion and guide.

Remind us of the importance of listening, of being present in good times and times of trial, of being a good neighbour and loving others as you love us.

Help us realize the kingdom of God begins and lives in each of our hearts.

Amen.

***GATHERING HYMN:** "Blessed Assurance"

VU #337

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God
born of the spirit, washed in Christ's blood.

Refrain:

*This is my story, this is my song,
praising my Savior all the day long;
this is my story, this is my song
praising my Savior all the day long.*

Perfect submission, perfect delight!
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
angels descending bring from above
echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

Refrain:

Perfect submission, all is at rest,
I in my Savior am happy and blessed;
watching and waiting, looking above,
filled with God's goodness, lost in his love.

Refrain:

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION: *(unison)*

Thank you for watching over and protecting us. We truly need Your strengthening power at all times. We humbly pray for Your divine help in transforming our lives. We want to be holier than we are. We want to be better followers of Jesus Christ and more loving neighbours. Send Your divine spirit to influence our thoughts.

We pray that You will sanctify our actions. Use us to help those around us. Make us brave. Help us become examples and leaders among people so that we can guide them to the good news of Jesus Christ. Show us the things we should do. Help us move through doubt and anxiety and move forward in faith and hope to a brighter future. We invite Your power into our lives. Set aside our desires and replace them with Your instruction for us. We offer this prayer in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, our strength and our salvation Amen.

adapted from prays.org

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.*

ASSURANCE OF PARDON:

Even in our moments of doubt, our lack of faith, and the blindness which means we fail to see God amongst us, God is still with us and still at work. God is still healing. God is still forgiving. Even when you fail to see God, God still sees you, and still loves you. Sisters and brothers, your sins are forgiven. Go in peace, and give praise to God!

***GREETING ONE ANOTHER:** *(responsively)*

...The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.



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

***SINGING A SONG** – “Tell Me the Stories of Jesus” VU # 357

Tell me the stories of Jesus I love to hear;
things I would ask him to tell me if he were here:
scenes by the wayside, tales of the sea,
stories of Jesus, tell them to me.

First let me hear how the children stood round his knee,
and I shall fancy his blessing resting on me;
words full of kindness, deeds full of grace,
all in the lovelight of Jesus’ face.

Tell me, in accents of wonder, how rolled the sea
tossing the boat in a tempest on Galilee!
And how the Master, ready and kind,
chided the billows and hushed the wind.

Into the city I’d follow the children’s band,
waving a branch of the palm tree high in my hand;
one of his heralds, yes, I would sing
loudest hosannas! Jesus is King!

Show me that scene in the garden of bitter pain;
and of the cross where my Savior for me was slain.
Sad ones or bright ones, so that they be
stories of Jesus, tell them to me.

ENGAGING

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING: *(in unison)*

Lord, open our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit, that as the scriptures are read and your Word is proclaimed, we may hear with joy what you say to us this day. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Isabel MacLaggan

Acts 9:1-20

REFLECTION: “Stories and Journeys”

***THE NEW CREED:** *(in unison)*”

**We are not alone,
we live in God’s world.**

**We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,**

**the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.**

We trust in God.

**We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God’s presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.**

**We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.**

The United Church of Canada, General Council 1968, alt. 1998

GIFT OF MUSIC: “The Old Rugged Cross” ***Gifted by In Harmony***

*Words by George Bernard,
Arrangement by Heather Sorenson*

RESPONDING

YOUR GENEROSITY MATTERS:

Judy Losier

INVITATION TO MAKE AN OFFERING: *(in unison)*

Lord we are the recipients of an abundance of your grace. It is our responsibility to share a portion of what we have been given in terms of time, talent and possessions. We offer joyfully these and with a grateful and generous heart. May they be used to the honour and glory of your name and in the invitation to and expansion of your kingdom here on earth. Amen.

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**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

(Our silent prayers)

A PARAPHRASE OF THE PRAYER OF JESUS

Loving God, in whom is heaven,
may your sacred name be known,
and your eternal being blessed in all your good creation,
your home, and ours.

We are a hungry people.
Feed our bodies with food for today, that we may have hope for tomorrow.
Nourish our spirits, that we may grow in loving relationship with your world and so avoid temptation, bear all trials and, newly healed and whole, rejoice together in our transformation.

We are an attentive people.
With all of our senses, with all that we are and share,
with the light that is never overcome, we know and name your intimate presence.

We seek justice, love kindness and humbly journey with you.
In you we live and move and have our being.

And so we are a thankful people,
for the glory of the power that is love is yours
and by grace and gift,
present in all, now and forever.
In gratitude, whatever we do, we do it for love. Amen

Rev. David Allan 2015, amended 2021, 2024

(Influenced by the paraphrase of Jim Cotter (NZ) and the Casa del Sol version by J.P. Newell, and with thanks to the prophet Micah and the apostle Paul)

GOING OUT

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

***CLOSING HYMN:** "We Are Pilgrims"

VU #595

We are pilgrims on a journey,
fellow travellers on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.

Sister, let me be your servant,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

I will hold the Christ light for you
in the night time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping,
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow,
till we've seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven,
 we shall find such harmony,
 born of all we've known together
 of Christ's love and agony.

Brother, let me be your servant,
 let me be as Christ to you;
 pray that I may have the grace to
 let you be my servant too.

***COMMISSIONING:**

***BLESSING:**

***CHORAL SENDING FORTH –**

*(tune: Promise #703 VU)
 from Gathering Lent 2011*

***As we go into the future,
 As we tell of the Good News,
 We will show our love for others,
 Just as Christ has told us to.
 We will tell the wondrous story,
 Of a love that's made for you,
 And it's all because of Easter –
 Sing a joyous Hal-le-lu!***

(The Christ Candle is extinguished)

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
	9:00 AM	Ways & Means – RMR
Tuesday	9:30 AM-11:30 AM	Quilters – DEMH Downstairs office
	1:00 – 3:00 PM	Knitters – RMR
	4:00 PM	Bathurst Pastoral Council – RMR
Wednesday	9:00-11:00 AM	Badminton – DEMH GYM
	6:30 PM	Choir Practice
Thursday	7:00 PM	Christian Development - RMR
Saturday	8:00 AM–1:00 PM	Bathurst Community Market

Peanut Butter –Our quota for 2025 is to collect 1,000 jars of peanut butter for the Volunteer Center. Up to May 1st we have received 423 jars.

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.

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.

“Sometimes it takes a short, sharp shock to help us see the needs that are right in front of us and respond to them.”

Church News

Ways & Means Team will meet Monday, May 5th at 9 AM in the Ruth Morrison Room.

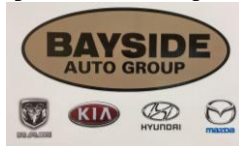
Bathurst Pastoral Council will meet on Tuesday, May 6th at 4 PM in the Ruth Morrison Room.

Christian Development Team will meet on Thursday, May 8th at 7 PM in the Ruth Morrison Room.

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.

Thank You: The Ways and Means team would like to express a sincere thank you to all who helped in anyway with our Ham & Scallop Potato Supper from the planners, to the food preparers, cooks, bakers, servers, set uppers and take downers, dishwashers, ticket sellers and to all who purchased a ticket to support us.

Sponsored by



Thank you to our volunteers in April - Counters – Margaret Payne-Chenard & Mike Kierstead; **Greeters** – Julie & Harvey Spence; **Your Generosity Matters** – Martha Vickers, Ronalds family, Anne Wilson, and Judy Losier; **Scripture Readers** – Gary Branch, Wayne Lord, Anne Wilson and Judy Losier; **Lenton Candle Readers** – Joanne Wiseman, Anne Wilson, Gayle Ferron and Autumn Ronalds; **Good Friday Readers** – Beth Sullivan and Anne Wilson; **Hospitality & Friendship** – Shirley Sealy, Wilma Dempsey and Gayle Ferron; **Sound System** – Brenda Parrott, Shirley Allain, and Ralph Jamieson; and **Videographer** – Don Eddy as well as to Josh Gammon for uploading the YouTube link to the website and Facebook.

Community News

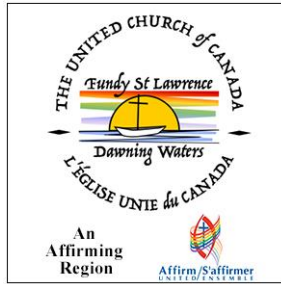
The 2025 Paul Harris Awards Dinner is being held on Wednesday, May 7th at the Gowan Brae Golf & Country Club. Reception at 6 PM and Dinner at 7 PM. Tickets are \$45 each – business/semi-formal attire – 3 Course meal with Honey Sesame Pork Tenderloin. The recipients this year are: Gilles Daveaux, Dr. John LeBlanc, **Isabel MacLaggan**, and Al Buzas (*in memoriam*). Tickets available until Sunday evening May 4th at Gowan Brae Golf Club Pro Shop (506-543-0811).

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 (506-548-9977). The cost is \$30 per supper.

The Bathurst Legion is serving a delicious breakfast every Sunday from 9 AM to 1 PM - \$10 per person. The final breakfast until the fall will be served next Sunday, May 11th – Mother's Day.

The Anglican Parish of New Bandon has a "Student Summer Employment Program" and has 3 positions of 35 hours per week 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.



Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Regional News

Youth @ Region 2025!

Calling all Youth, between grades 6-12! Registration is now open for Youth@Region!

Y@R is a place of community and a place of faith where United Church youth, between grade 6 and grade 12, meet from across Bermuda, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and the Gaspé. It will take place during the Centennial Gathering of Bermuda-Nova Scotia and Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Regional Councils at Mount Allison University, Sackville NB. May 30th to June 1st.

The group creates an inclusive, diverse and safe community for youth in the name of Christ. We provide a place for youth to explore their faith and to learn more about the United Church of Canada while sharing in music, worship and fun in a spirit-filled community.

We hope to see you there!

If you have any questions, please email Catherine Stuart
cstuart@united-church.ca

Register [here!](#)
(<https://ucceast.ca/89862-2025-bns-and-fsldw-youthregion>)

Hope to see you there!

SCRIPTURE READINGS – New International Version

Acts 9:1-20

Saul's Conversion

1 Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest

2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.

3 As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.

4 He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

5 "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked.

"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied.

6 "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

7 The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone.

8 Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus.

9 For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

10 In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!"

"Yes, Lord," he answered.

11 The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying.

12 In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight."

13 "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem.

14 And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

15 But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel.

16 I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

17 Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

18 Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized,

19 and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus.

20 At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God.