

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

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the Season of Creation**

**September 21, 2025**

**Clergy** Rev. David Allan **Music Director** Martha Vickers

**Office Adm.** Margaret Daniels **Custodian** Lester Scott

**Greeters** Sharon McKinnon & Charlene Roy

**Audio & Visual Technicians** Ralph Jamieson & Lester Scott

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<u>Lectionary for today</u>	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u>
Amos 8:4-7 Psalm 79:1-9 1 Timothy 2:1-7 Luke 16:1-13	Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15 Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16 1 Timothy 6:6-19 Luke 16:19-31

*The asterisk \* identifies those times in the service where you are invited to stand as you are able.*

**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.**

**CALL TO WORSHIP:** *(responsively)*

As the crow calls to its mate,  
**and as the flower turns its head to the beckoning sun,**  
as the starlit sky calls to our imaginations,  
**and as the need of another calls to our hearts,**

Love calls to us here.

**We are called to witness and called into wonder,**  
we are called to worship and wholeness too,  
**we are called by Creator as the body of Christ,**  
to celebrate the love that centres us all.

**CENTERING FOR WORSHIP:** "Gather Us In" MV #7

***Gather us in, ground us in you.***  
***Gather us in, ground us in you.***  
***Gather us in, gather us in,***  
***ground us, ground us in you.***

**GATHERING PRAYER:** *(in unison)*

**We are gathered on holy ground, in the presence of you, God, the Ground of our Being. We are your creation, connected and called into oneness in you. As your love flows through and among us here, may we be grounded in humility and in hope, in vulnerability and vibrancy too. In this time may we be rooted in the wisdom of your way, and restored for journeys of growth and grace. In the name of Jesus we come, in his name we pray. Amen**

**\*GATHERING HYMN:** "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" VU #288

Great is thy faithfulness, God our Creator;  
there is no shadow of turning with thee;  
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;  
as thou hast been thou forever wilt be.

*(Refrain)*

*Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!*  
*Morning by morning new mercies I see;*  
*all I have needed thy hand hath provided—*  
*great is thy faithfulness, ever to me!*

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,  
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above  
join with all nature in manifold witness  
to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.

*(Refrain)*  
*Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!*  
*Morning by morning new mercies I see;*  
*all I have needed thy hand hath provided—*  
*great is thy faithfulness, ever to me!*

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,  
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow—  
wondrous the portion thy blessings provide.

*(Refrain)*

**LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE:** *(The Christ Candle is lit)*

We light this candle as a symbol and a reminder of the presence of Christ, the light of the world, the first light of Creation. It is the lovelight shared with all, that shines within and from us all, that draws us ever closer to the Source of All. The light calls us forward as the family of God, to see with new eyes, to love with shimmering hearts, to live in the brightness of hope.

**\*WE OPEN OUR HEARTS: PSALM 79:1-9**

VU #793

***Refrain:***  
***Help us, God of our salvation,***  
***for the glory of your name.***

O Merciful Presence, the ignorant seem unrestrained in the world;  
they defile the Sacred Altar, your dwelling place within;  
they leave those weaker than themselves in ruins.

**Chaos and destruction follow them,**  
**as they oppress the poor through**  
**deception and greed,**  
**and kill the faith-filled who resist.**

Yes, they have poured out their blood like water  
throughout the world;  
many have disappeared without a trace.

**How long will the unjust bring anguish to the loving,**  
**to those who seek justice and peace?**

How long, O Indwelling Presence? Will your patience last forever?  
When will You awaken our long dormant spirits?

***Refrain:***  
***Help us, God of our salvation,***  
***for the glory of your name.***

Pour out your Love on every nation, open the hearts of all people;  
**we await a new birth of Consciousness,**  
**we call upon your Name!**

For the ignorant and unloving are laying waste to the planet.  
Forgive us for the misuse and abuse of your Creation;

**humble us with your steadfast Love,**  
**before the world becomes a barren waste.**

Help us, O Compassionate One, to renew the face of the earth;  
**deliver us, and forgive our sins,**  
**that we might know the joy of co-creation!**

***Refrain:***  
***Help us, God of our salvation,***  
***for the glory of your name.***

**Acknowledgement:**

Paraphrase of Psalm 79:1-9 from *Psalms for Praying*,  
by Nan. C. Merrill (Bloomsbury: New York, 2013), p. 157-158.

**OUR HEARTS ARE FILLED:**

We all have our needs of course, and we have our wants too. At times we look for those things that in the end do not serve us well or the world, and serve those things that ultimately leave our hearts wanting. The daily tugs and pulls of life, of likes and wishes and impulse can lead us away from serving our God, in humility, openness and with vision. But Jesus, who leads us as a servant, who makes us whole in his wounded humanity, shows us the way. He tells us that we are forgiven and tells us that we are loved. He tells us that your peace, your freedom and fulfillment are found in the service of God's love, and that it is that very same love that gives you the strength to offer your light, your life, and so contribute to creation's flourishing. "Fear not," God sings to our souls, "don't be afraid." Believe, and be love.

**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.***

*A moment for silent reflection and contemplation,  
a time for listening...*

**SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST:** *(responsively)*

...The peace of the risen Christ be with you all!

**And also with you!**

*Please share with one another words and signs of peace.*

**SHARING OUR STORIES**

In the silence of the morning we are alive to the new day’s light,  
alert to the early stirrings of the wind and  
the first sounds of the creatures.

In the silence of our heart we hear the yearnings  
that are in us and the fears,  
the hopes that rise from within and the doubts  
that trouble our soul.

In the beginnings of this day, O God, before night’s stillness is lost  
to the day’s busyness,  
open to us the treasure of our inner being that in the midst of  
this day’s busyness we may draw on wisdom.

Assure us again of our origins in you, assure us again that our true  
depths are of you.

Amen

**Acknowledgement:**

Prayer from *Sounds of the Eternal:  
a Celtic Psalter*, by John Philip Newell  
(New Beginnings: San Antonio, 2012), p.14.

**\*HYMN:** “Teach Me, God, to Wonder”

VU #299

Teach me, God, to wonder, teach me, God, to see;  
let your world of beauty capture me.

*Refrain:*

*Praise to you be given, love for you be lived,  
life be celebrated, joy you give.*

Let me, God, be open, let me loving be;  
let your world of people speak to me.

*Refrain*

Let me, God, be ready, let me be awake,  
in your world of loving my place take.

*Refrain*

Teach me, God, to know you, hear you when you speak,  
see you in my neighbour when we meet.

*Refrain*

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION:** *(responsively)*

In our listening to the sacred story, may we hear our story.

**In our reflecting upon God’s Word,  
may we see who we might yet be.**

In our listening and in our reflecting,  
in our imagination and inspiration,

**may we be filled by the Spirit with courage  
and with hope,  
that Love’s story be told again today  
and through all our tomorrows. Amen**

**SCRIPTURE READINGS:**

*Anne Wilson*

Amos 8:4-7 Hear this, my wayward people

Luke 16:1-13 The parable of the shrewd manager

**SERMON:** Sacred squandering

**GIFT OF MUSIC - “It Moves in Creation”**

**YOUR GENEROSITY MATTERS**

*Anne Wilson*

## **INVITATION TO MAKE AN OFFERING:**

We give generously because we live in grace, we live for love, and we live as one. Together we live in God, giver of all. Our offerings will now be gathered.

## **OUR OFFERING IS GATHERED**

### **\*OFFERING HYMN – “These Gifts We Bring”**

*These gifts we bring with grateful hearts,  
to reconcile, make new.  
Gather us in grace, show us the way,  
to live our lives in Truth  
to share Your love in all we do.*

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

**Loving Creator God, accept these gifts and transform them that they may serve you and the building of your reign of love. Transform us, that we too may serve the cause of love in our families, church and community. Amen**

## **PASTORAL PRAYER**

## **PRAYER OF JESUS**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **\*CLOSING HYMN – “Will Your Anchor Hold”** VU #675

Will your anchor hold in the storms of life?  
When the clouds unfold their wings of strife,  
when the strong tides lift and the cables strain,  
will your anchor drift or firm remain?

*Refrain:*

*We have an anchor that keeps the soul  
steadfast and sure while the billows roll,  
fastened to the Rock which cannot move,  
grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love.*

It will surely hold in the straits of fear,  
when the breakers tell that reef is near;  
though the tempest rave and the wild winds blow,  
not an angry wave shall our bark o'er-flow.

*Refrain:*

It will surely hold in the floods of death  
when the waters cold chill our latest breath;  
on the rising tide it can never fail  
while our hopes abide within the veil.

*Refrain:*

When our eyes behold, through the gathering night,  
the city of gold, our harbour bright,  
we shall anchor fast by the heavenly shore,  
with the storms all past for evermore.

*Refrain:*

### **\*COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION**

### **\*CHORAL SENDING FORTH “Lift Us Up, Send Us Out”**

*Lift us up, send us out  
as we now go in peace  
and our worship and living entwine.  
May God's presence be near  
and may concord increase  
when our hope and our actions combine.*

*Be the salt, be the light  
and let each be a sign  
that our caring will highlight the way.  
Share a meal, plant a tree,  
let our faith underline  
that by giving, our love is conveyed.*

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## \*SHARING THE LIGHT

*(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 AM	Ways & Means – Eddy Room
Tuesday	9:30 AM-11:30 AM	Quilters – DEMH Downstairs office
	1:00 – 3:00 PM	Knitting Group – Eddy Room
Wednesday	4:00 PM	Bathurst Pastoral Council
	6:30 PM	Choir Practice
Saturday	8:00 AM–1:00 PM	Bathurst Community Market – GYM
Sunday	10:00 AM	Orange Shirt Sunday

We will be recognizing "**National Day of Truth & Reconciliation**" next Sunday, September 28<sup>th</sup>. If possible, please wear an **Orange Shirt** to the service. We will also be celebrating 2 baptisms.

**Peanut Butter** –Our quota for 2025 is to collect 1,000 jars of peanut butter for the Volunteer Center. Up to September 18, 2025 we have received 684 jars.

**Thanksgiving – October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025** – Anyone wishing to contribute items to decorate the church is encouraged to bring them in by **3 PM Thursday October 9<sup>th</sup>**. Thank you in advance.

As part of our **Stewardship Program** here at First United, information on Planned Giving through Wills and Bequests is available to our congregational membership. The information is available from the church office. Below you will find a stewardship quote relating to the same.

Faithful in small things, faithful in all things.

**The Knitting Group** meets on Tuesday afternoons at 1 PM in the Eddy Room of the Donald Eddy Hall.

# Church News

**Quilters** have started to meet each Tuesday morning at 9:30 AM. If you like to quilt or would like to learn to quilt, come and join us each Tuesday morning from 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM downstairs in the old office in the DEMH. Tea and Coffee supplied.

**All new members welcome.**

# Community News

## **"HELP LESOTHO" CALENDARS**

The Anglophone School District – North has been sponsoring "Help Lesotho" since 2006 as part of its global awareness initiative. As a fundraiser where all of the money raised goes to help finance its work with orphans, vulnerable children, and grandmothers in Lesotho, Africa; "Help Lesotho" has 2026 calendars for sale at a cost of \$15.00. You are invited to support this initiative with your donation. Gary Branch (506-546-9208) ([egbranch@rogers.com](mailto:egbranch@rogers.com)) will be taking orders for these calendars until October 14, 2025. Payment can be made in advance by cash, cheque, or e-transfer, or when the calendars are delivered in November. Cheques are to be made payable to "Help Lesotho". Thank you to the congregation of First United Church for your continued support of this initiative.

## **SCRIPTURE READINGS – New International Version**

### **Amos 8:4-7**

**4** Hear this, you who trample the needy and do away with the poor of the land,

**5** saying, “When will the New Moon be over that we may sell grain, and the Sabbath be ended that we may market wheat?” – skimping on the measure, boosting the price and cheating with dishonest scales,

**6** buying the poor with silver and the needy for a pair of sandals, selling even the sweepings with the wheat.

**7** The LORD has sworn by himself, the Pride of Jacob: “I will never forget anything they have done.”

### **Luke 16:1-13**

**1** Jesus told his disciples: “There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions.

**2** So he called him in and asked him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.’

**3** “The manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I’m not strong enough to dig, and I’m ashamed to beg –

**4** I know what I’ll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.’

**5** “So he called in each one of his master’s debtors. He asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’

**6** “‘Nine hundred gallons of olive oil,’ he replied. “The manager told him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred and fifty.’

**7** “Then he asked the second, ‘And how much do you owe?’

“‘A thousand bushels of wheat,’ he replied.

“He told him, ‘Take your bill and make it eight hundred.’

**8** “The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light.

**9** I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

**10** “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.

**11** So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?

**12** And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s property, who will give you property of your own?

**13** “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”

*For the word of God in scripture, for the word of God among us, for the word of God within us all, thanks be to God.*