

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

February 1, 2026
4th Sunday after Epiphany

Minister Rev. David Allan **Music Director** Martha Vickers
Office Adm. Margaret Daniels **Custodian** Lester Scott
Greeters Julie & Harvey Spence

Audio & Visual Technicians Brenda Parrott & Lester Scott

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<u>Lectionary for today</u>	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u>
Micah 6:1-8	Isaiah 58:1-12
Psalms 15	Psalms 112:1-9
1 Corinthians 1:18-31	1 Corinthians 2:1-16
Matthew 5:1-12	Matthew 5:13-20

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

MUSIC AS WE GATHER

WELCOME

TERRITORY 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)*

We have been invited to God's house.

We have been chosen to dwell in holiness!

We have been called by the God who lives in us!

**We have been blessed to be a blessing,
beckoned into the light.**

Love has drawn us together,
and Love has brought us home.
Love names us Beloved,
**and so we gather for worship,
in the One in whom all belong.**

CENTERING FOR WORSHIP: "Arise, Your Light is Come"

VU #79 (*verses 1 & 4*)

***Arise, your light is come!
The Spirit's call obey;
show forth the glory of your God,
which shines on you today.***

***Arise, your light is come!
The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing;
God's power will make us strong.***

GATHERING PRAYER:

Here and within us, everywhere and among us, abiding God, you take your place. You prepare a place for us, and invite us to help prepare the way of your kingdom. In this time of worship may your Spirit wing its way over your new creation, in us, in all, for the sake of your love. We pray in the luminous name of Jesus, amen.

***GATHERING HYMN:** "Come, Let Us Sing"

VU #222

Come, let us sing to the Lord our song,
we have stood silently too long;
surely the Lord deserves our praise,
so joyfully thank God for our days.

O thirsty soul, come drink at the well;
God's living waters will never fail.
Surely the Lord will help you to stand,
strengthened and comforted by God's hand.

You dwell among us and cause us to pray,
and walk with each other following your way;
our precious brothers and sisters will grow
in the fulfilling love they know.

Deserts shall bloom and mountains shall sing
to the desire of all living things.
Come, all you creatures, high and low,
let your praises endlessly flow.

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

Brighter than the first evening star, brighter still than the awakening dawn, the Christ light shines, the Love light glows, the light of the world illumines all people and all things. We light this candle as a reminder of the presence and the power of the light. We light this candle as a reminder that through the light, the beauty and the need of the world is revealed. This is the season of Epiphany! Through the light we respond, in love revealed for all.

CHORAL RESPONSE: "Light of Christ"

Light of Christ shine in and through me.
Light of Love be with me now.
Take these hands, healing hands.
Light of Christ flow through me now.

*Gathering, A/C/E 2025/26
Pat Mayberry and David Kai*

***PSALM 15:**

Refrain:
Come, bless God, O my soul,
and never forget all God's blessings.

**O Beloved, You invite us to rest in the abode of your
Heart, to forgive our weaknesses and renew our love.**
Who will respond with hearts opened wide to Love?

(Refrain)

Those who walk with integrity, who are in harmony with your
Word, and sing the heart's song;
**whose tongues speak truth judging not others and
seeking only the good;**
**whose eyes behold not the outer garments of the body,
but see within the inner robe of Love;**
whose own weaknesses are acknowledged and brought to light in
prayer;
**those who are just in all affairs of life and take not
advantage of another.**

Refrain:
Come, bless God, O my soul,
and never forget all God's blessings.

Those who dwell in the Heart of Love, who act justly, with
integrity, will join the Dance of Life, will sing the Songs of Joy!

**Their family, friends and, indeed,
the world will be blessed by their love.**

(Refrain)

Psalm 15 paraphrase by Nan C. Merrill,
Psalms for Praying: An invitation to wholeness
(New York: Bloomsbury 2007) pp. 19-20. Refrain from VU 825

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST: (*responsively*)

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

And also with you!

Please share with one another words and signs of peace.

***HYMN:** "What Does the Lord Require of You"

VU #701

What does the Lord require of you?
What does the Lord require of you?

Justice, kindness,
walk humbly with your God.

To seek justice, and love kindness,
and walk humbly with your God.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION: *(in unison)*

We always seek understanding, God of light, and sometimes human ignorance, foolishness and wisdom aren't easily discerned from one another. Illuminate our thoughts, shine upon our hearts and brighten our spirits as we listen for your word. Bless us as we reflect upon what you require of us and as we commit to life in you. Amen

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Wayne Lord

Micah 6:1-8

What does God require of us?

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

God's foolishness is better than human wisdom

Matthew 5:1-12

Blessed are the poor in spirit

SERMON: Blessed to bless

GIFT OF MUSIC: "Three Things I Promise"

YOUR GENEROSITY MATTERS

Martha Vickers

INVITATION TO MAKE AN OFFERING

This is a time of blessing, of sharing and hope and love lived out. And so we give as we ourselves have always been gifted and blessed. Our offerings will now be gathered.

*** OFFERING RESPONSE:** "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.***

*Words & Music: Pat Mayberry ©2016
Arrangement: David Kai ©2016*

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

Blessed One, Beloved of Creation, transform these gifts as you have changed our lives with your love. Through them may this community and the world you so love be blessed with abundant grace and the riches of your peace. Amen

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER OF JESUS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CLOSING HYMN:** "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace" VU #684

Make me a channel of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me bring your love;
where there is injury, your healing power,
and where there's doubt, true faith in you:

(Refrain:)

*O Spirit, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love with all my soul.*

Make me a channel of your peace:
where there's despair in life, let me bring hope;
where there is darkness, only light;
and where there's sadness, ever joy.

(Refrain:)

Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving to all that we receive,
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

(Refrain:)

***COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION**

*Take up his song of peace and go into the world.
Take up his song of peace in ev'ry moment.
In ev'ry moment of the journey,
we're laying down our lives;
lay them down, in peace, lay them down,
and take up his song.*

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	9:00-11:00 AM	Badminton – DEMH GYM
Tuesday	9:30 AM-11:30 AM	Quilters – DEMH Downstairs office
	1:00 – 3:00 PM	Knitting Group – RMR
	3:00 PM	Bible Study - RMR
Wednesday	9:00-11:00 AM	Badminton – DEMH GYM
Thursday	4:00 PM	Finance Team
	4:15 PM	Choir Practice
Saturday	8:00 AM–1:00 PM	Bathurst Community Market – GYM

Peanut Butter – Once again this year our goal is to collect 1,000 jars of peanut butter to donate to the Bathurst Volunteer Center. Up to January 28th we have received 30 with funds on hand to purchase 30+ jars.

Please Note – In an effort to assist the Bathurst Volunteer Center, should you wish to make a monetary donation you may now do so by **issuing your cheque to First United Church**, indicating it is to be used for the purchase of Peanut Butter. Your donation will be marked as such and will be included on your annual tax receipt. Your cheques can be dropped off at the church office, put in the offering plate or mailed. Periodically the office will purchase the peanut butter while on sale and have it delivered directly to the Volunteer Center.

Ash Wednesday Service: We are currently in the season of Epiphany, a season of light, of revelation and promise. Later this month, we will enter the season of Lent, a time of introspection as we hear of Jesus' meandering journey to Jerusalem. **Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 18th, and we will be marking this with a special worship service at 4:00.** We will be marked with ashes prepared from last year's palm branches, a sign of grief and our mortality, and a sign too of transformation, of healing and the promised new life that arises, and given a blessing. This may be an entirely new experience for you. The service will be contemplative and meaningful, and all are invited to come and join as we continue our faith journey together.

Church News

Team Committee Reports will be required in order to prepare **2025 Annual Report**. Would the individuals responsible for preparing each report please email them to the church office. **The deadline for reports is February 13th**. *Thank You, Margaret*

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.

It's not about how much you have—how much money, how much stuff—it is about how you use what you have to heal, feed, shelter, comfort, bless and love.

Thank you to our volunteers in December - Counters – Gayle Ferron and Wilma Dempsey; **Greeters** – Cheryl & Dave Brewster and Beth Sullivan & Charlene Roy; **Your Generosity Matters** – Martha Vickers, Ronalds family, Anne Wilson and Judy Losier; **Scripture Readers** – Jennifer Oliver, Stephen Maisey, Isabel MacLaggan and Anne Wilson; **Hospitality & Friendship** – Shirley Sealy, Wilma Dempsey, Lola Nelson, Beth Sullivan, Charlene Roy and Gayle Ferron; **Sound System** – Brenda Parrott, Shirley Allain, and Ralph Jamieson; **Audio Specialist** – Don Eddy for preparing audio for CDs; **Videographer** – Lester Scott and to Josh Gammon and his staff at WebSolutions.ca for uploading the YouTube link to the website and Facebook.

Community News

A FAMILY AND COMMUNITY BREAKFAST will be held at St. George's Anglican Church, 432 King Avenue, on **Saturday, February 14th from 8:00 – 10:00 AM**. As this community event helps 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.

SCRIPTURE READINGS – New International Version

MICAH 6:1-8

NIV

1 Listen to what the LORD says:

“Stand up, plead my case before the mountains;
let the hills hear what you have to say.

2 “Hear, you mountains, the LORD’s accusation; listen, you everlasting foundations of the earth. For the LORD has a case against his people; he is lodging a charge against Israel.

3 “My people, what have I done to you? How have I burdened you? Answer me.

4 I brought you up out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery.

I sent Moses to lead you, also Aaron and Miriam.

5 My people, remember what Balak king of Moab plotted and what Balaam son of Beor answered.

Remember your journey from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the righteous acts of the LORD.”

6 With what shall I come before the LORD and bow down before the exalted God?

Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?

7 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of olive oil?

Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

8 He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-31**NIV**

18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

19 For it is written:

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate."

20 Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

22 Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom,

23 but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,

24 but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

26 Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth.

27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.

28 God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things (and the things that are not) to nullify the things that are,

29 so that no one may boast before him.

30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God - that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

31 Therefore, as it is written: "Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord."

MATTHEW 5:1-12**NIV**

1 Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him,

2 and he began to teach them. He said:

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

