

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

July 5, 2026

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Minister Rev. David Allan **Music Director** Martha Vickers
Office Adm. Margaret Daniels **Custodian** Lester Scott
Greeters Brenda Gilliss & Dawn Yao
Audio & Visual Technician Brenda Parrott & Lester Scott
Minister Emeritus Rev. Blair Lewis

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<u>Lectionary for today</u>	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u>
Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67	Genesis 25:19-34
Song of Songs 2:8-13	Psalms 119:105-112
Romans 7:15-25a	Romans 8:1-11
Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30	Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

We welcome and thank ***Rosalind Kennedy Townsend***
for providing us with her amazing gift of music.

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

MUSIC FOR GATHERING

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 come seeking divine relationship, trusting in Love's promise and hope, in Love's courage and passion.

**We come as we are, seeking growth in God,
fed through faith, living into the likeness of Love.**

We come seeking God's peace, rest from our burdens,
light for the journey.

**We come, and here in the sure presence of Love,
we worship.**

CENTERING FOR WORSHIP: "Praise to the Lord"

VU # 835
(Verse 1 only)

***Praise to the Lord, all of you, God's servants.
Blessed be the name of our God now and ever.
From the rising up of the sun
may the Lord be praised,
praise to the name of the Lord!***

GATHERING PRAYER:

We bring our praises and our passions, and our passivity too. We bring our complicated lives to you, Holy One, our comforts and our challenges. We come seeking Sabbath, seeking strength, seeking rest for our souls and the restoration of our hopes. In this time of worship may we all become more aware of your presence, more aware of your love, more aware of your vision for all your good creation. Open us to you. **Amen**

***GATHERING HYMN:** "Open My Eyes, That I May See" VU #371

Open my eyes, that I may see
glimpses of truth thou hast for me;
place in my hands the wonderful key
that shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Open my ears, that I may hear
voices of truth thou sendest clear;
and while the wavenotes fall on my ear,
everything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Open my mouth, and let me bear
gladly the warm truth everywhere;
open my heart and let me prepare
love with thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE:

This candle that we light, reminds us of the shining presence of Christ, the luminous flow of divine love that flows through and among us all. It brightens our path; it shows us, and indeed is, our way. It is the Lovelight, the light of justice and peace, the light of hope and of faith. It is the light of the world.

(The Christ Candle is lit...)

LIGHTING THE AFFIRMING CANDLE:

From the Christ Candle we light our Affirming Candle, as a further illumination for us all that the divine light, the Lovelight, shines in all of God's colourful, beloved and good Creation. We are all created in the image of God, we all grow ever more into the likeness of Love, and we are all, through Christ and the affirmation of Jesus, the light of the world.

(The Affirming Candle is lit)

CHORAL RESPONSE: "Take, O Take Me as I am" MV #85

***Take, O take me as I am;
summon out what I shall be;
set your seal upon my heart
and live in me, in me.***

***PSALM 45: 10-17:** A song for the anointed ruler.

Refrain:

God has blessed you forever and ever.

Hear, O peoples, consider, and incline your ear;
forget what has gone before you;
turn your feet to the path of Love.

**Open your hearts to the Beloved, learn of humility,
be blessed even in brokenness,
for those are the treasures stored in eternity.**

Refrain:

All glorious is the soul within, the abode of the Merciful One:
through many trials and suffering do you come to the Beloved,
refined by fire as you follow Love's way.

**With joy and gladness you are led along,
as you awaken to the Heart of your heart.**

Refrain:

Instead of a house of fear, you will come to dwell with Love,
you will radiate the light of truth to all the earth.

**There will you celebrate the Beloved
for all generations to come,
the people will praise Love's way for ever and ever.**

Refrain:

Acknowledgement:

*Psalms for Praying by Nan C. Merrill
(Bloomsbury: New York, 2007) PP.85-86*

***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: "Jesus' Hands Were Kind Hands"

VU #570

Jesus' hands were kind hands, doing good to all,
healing pain and sickness, blessing children small,
washing tired feet, and saving those who fall;
Jesus' hands were kind hands, doing good to all.

Take my hands, O Jesus, let them work for you,
make them strong and gentle, kind in all I do;
let me watch you, Jesus, till I'm gentle too,
till my hands are kind hands, quick to work for you.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION: *(in unison)*

**We bring our prayer, God of our stories, we pray that we
have the courage to listen for your word, to share your
word, and to be renewed in love through your word. Bless
us now in our understanding as in our wondering, bless us
all as we rest in your wisdom and way. Amen**

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Anne Wilson

Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67

Rebekah welcomes Isaac as her husband

Song of Songs 2:8-13

A love song

Romans 7:15-25a

I do not do the good I want to do

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

My yoke is easy; my burden is light

SERMON: It ain't easy, but we're never alone

GIFT OF MUSIC: "Come to My Heart"

YOUR GENEROSITY MATTERS

Anne Wilson

INVITATION TO MAKE AN OFFERING: *(responsively)*

No one knows when we will need God.

**Our offering readies us for the time of need,
in our own lives, in our community,
and in our world.**

We need God when we are tested.

We need God when we are afraid.

We need God when we celebrate.

We need God to bring us together.

We need God to deepen our spirit of fellowship.

**We need God to send us out to bring
laughter and healing.**

Are you ready?

We are ready to present our offering.

Our offerings will now be gathered.

***OFFERING RESPONSE:**

VU #541

"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"

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

***OFFERING PRAYER:** *(responsively)*

You have given us all our gifts, O God,

and we are thankful.

You have shown us how our gifts may be used, O God,

and we are challenged.

You are with us as we put our gifts to work
in the way of Jesus Christ,

and we are blessed. Amen

Acknowledgement:

*Offering Invitation and Offering Prayer by David Sparks, Summerland, BC.
Gathering, Pentecost 1, 2023, pp. 41 and 50 respectively. Used with permission.*

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER OF JESUS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CLOSING HYMN: "Will You Come and Follow Me" VU #567**

Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?

Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?

Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?
Will you set the prisoners free and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean, and do such as this unseen,
and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?

Will you love the "you" you hide if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found to re-shape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?

Christ, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In your company I'll go where your love and foot-steps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

***CHORAL SENDING FORTH—**

MV #221

"I Am Walking a Path of Peace"

*I am walking a path of peace,
I am walking a path of peace,
I am walking a path of peace,
lead me home, I am home.*

SHARING THE LIGHT

(The Christ Candle and Affirming Candle are extinguished.)

POSTLUDE

Church News

Summer hours are now in effect – The office will be closed on Fridays until the Labour Day Weekend.

The Celebration of Life for **Robert (Bob) Willis** will be held here at First United Church this coming **Friday, July 10th at 1:00 PM**. A reception will be held following the service in the Donald Eddy Hall.

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 June 30th we have received 429 jars with funds on hand to purchase another 135+.

Thank you to all who assist with this meaningful project!

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.

Good stewardship is about caring for and sharing the resources God has provided. Good stewardship nourishes communities and in turn nourishes our spiritual health.

Community News

The Annual Meeting for the Stonehaven New Bandon Union Cemetery Inc will be held on **Monday evening, July 6, 2026**, at the chapel beginning at 6:30 pm. All are welcome to attend.

SCRIPTURE READING – New International Version

GENESIS 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67

Abraham has sent his chief servant to the land of the aging patriarch's people, to find a wife for his son Isaac. Eventually he meets a young woman named Rebekah by a spring of water. After Rebekah tells her family about him, the servant is offered hospitality, and is urged by Laban, Rebekah's brother, to tell his story and what has just happened.

34 So he said, "I am Abraham's servant.

35 The Lord has blessed my master abundantly, and he has become wealthy. He has given him sheep and cattle, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys.

36 My master's wife Sarah has borne him a son in her old age, and he has given him everything he owns.

37 And my master made me swear an oath, and said, "You must not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I live,

38 but go to my father's family and to my own clan, and get a wife for my son.'

42 "When I came to the spring today, I said, 'Lord, God of my master Abraham, if you will, please grant success to the journey on which I have come.

43 See, I am standing beside this spring. If a young woman comes out to draw water and I say to her, "Please let me drink a little water from your jar,"

44 and if she says to me, "Drink, and I'll draw water for your camels too," let her be the one the Lord has chosen for my master's son.'

45 "Before I finished praying in my heart, Rebekah came out, with her jar on her shoulder. She went down to the spring and drew water, and I said to her, 'Please give me a drink.'

46 "She quickly lowered her jar from her shoulder and said, 'Drink, and I'll water your camels too.' So I drank, and she watered the camels also.

47 "I asked her, 'Whose daughter are you?'

"She said, 'The daughter of Bethuel son of Nahor, whom Milkah bore to him.'

"Then I put the ring in her nose and the bracelets on her arms,

48 and I bowed down and worshiped the Lord. I praised the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me on the right road to get the granddaughter of my master's brother for his son.

49 Now if you will show kindness and faithfulness to my master, tell me; and if not, tell me, so I may know which way to turn."

58 So they called Rebekah and asked her, "Will you go with this man?" "I will go," she said.

59 So they sent their sister Rebekah on her way, along with her nurse and Abraham's servant and his men.

60 And they blessed Rebekah and said to her,
"Our sister, may you increase to thousands upon thousands;
may your offspring possess the cities of their enemies."

61 Then Rebekah and her attendants got ready and mounted the camels and went back with the man. So the servant took Rebekah and left.

62 Now Isaac had come from Beer Lahai Roi, for he was living in the Negev.

63 He went out to the field one evening to meditate, and as he looked up, he saw camels approaching.

64 Rebekah also looked up and saw Isaac. She got down from her camel

65 and asked the servant, "Who is that man in the field coming to meet us?" "He is my master," the servant answered. So she took her veil and covered herself.

66 Then the servant told Isaac all he had done. **67** Isaac brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah, and he married Rebekah. So she became his wife, and he loved her; and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

SONG OF SONGS 2:8-13

8 Listen! My beloved! Look! Here he comes,
leaping across the mountains, bounding over the hills.

9 My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look! There he stands
behind our wall, gazing through the windows, peering through
the lattice.

10 My beloved spoke and said to me, "Arise, my darling, my beautiful
one, come with me.

11 See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone.

12 Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come,
the cooing of doves is heard in our land.

13 The fig tree forms its early fruit; the blossoming vines spread their
fragrance. Arise, come, my darling; my beautiful one, come with me."

ROMANS 7:15-25

15 I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but
what I hate I do.

16 And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good.

17 As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me.

18 For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful
nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it
out.

19 For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to
do - this I keep on doing.

20 Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it
is sin living in me that does it.

21 So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right
there with me.

22 For in my inner being I delight in God's law;

23 but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of
my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me.

24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that
is subject to death?

25 Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

MATTHEW 11:16-19, 25-30

16 "To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting
in the marketplaces and calling out to others:

17 "'We played the pipe for you, and you did not dance;
we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.'

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a
demon.'

19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a
glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' But
wisdom is proved right by her deeds."

25 At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and
earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned,
and revealed them to little children.

26 Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

27 "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows
the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son
and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give
you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and
humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

*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.*