

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

August 16, 2026

12th Sunday after Pentecost

Minister Rev. David Allan **Music Director** Martha Vickers
Office Adm. Margaret Daniels **Custodian** Lester Scott
Greeters Julie & Harvey Spence
Audio & Visual Technician Ralph Jamieson & Lester Scott
Minister Emeritus Rev. Blair Lewis

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<u>Lectionary for today</u>	<u>Lectionary for next Sunday</u>
Genesis 45:1-15	Exodus 1:8—2:10
Psalms 67	Psalms 124
Isaiah 56:1, 6-8	Romans 12:1-8
Matthew 15:10-28	Matthew 16:13-20
We welcome Linda Knowles MacPherson and thank her 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) (drawn from Psalm 133)*

How very good and pleasant it is when all live together in unity!

**It is like a cooling, refreshing breeze on a hot
summer's day.**

How wonderful it is when a community comes together in love!

It is like a double rainbow, seen after a sudden storm.

How beautiful it is when we come together for worship!

It is like the peel of church bells, heard over the land.

How hopeful it is when we share our lives for the healing of the
world!

It is like the kingdom of heaven.

For in all these things, God bestows the blessing:

love and life, forevermore.

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 have been called here, today, to this place. In this holy time,
in this sacred place, God of all, we gather as one, your people. We
gather in the oneness of your creation, your beloved community.
Bless this time of worship, God of life, with the knowledge and
experience of your presence among us. Bless us in all that we do
and commit to doing, that in all that we are, we might better be
your faithful people. This is our prayer; this is our praise.

Amen

***GATHERING HYMN:** "We Are One"

VU # 402

(verses 1, 2 and 4)

We are one as we come,
as we come, joyful to be here,
in the praise on our lips
there's a sense that God is near.
We are one as we sing,
as we seek, we are found;
and we come needful of God's grace
as we meet, together in this place.

We are one as we share,
as we share brokenness and fear,
in the touch of a hand
there's a sense that God is here.
We are one as we care,
as we heal, we are healed;
and we share warmth in God's embrace
as we pray together in this place.

We are one as we hear,
as we hear, heart and hand unite;
in the word we receive
there's a sense that God is light.
We are one as we leave,
as we love, we are loved;
and we seek justice in God's ways
as we move together from this place.

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE:

This candle that we light, reminds us of the shining presence of Christ, the luminous stream 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. The rainbow is a sign of God's eternal covenant with all that God sings into being and brings into belonging, through love making the waters of chaos recede and new life to rise up and appear. We are all created in the image of God, we all grow ever more into the likeness of Love. And so, we affirm that all can find belonging here, not only regardless of your background, culture or where or how you find yourself today, not only regardless of your understanding or your questions or your circumstances, not only regardless of your sexual orientation or gender identity or your politics, but *precisely because of who you are*, a beloved child of God. We are all, together through Christ and the affirmation of Jesus, the light of the world. God affirms your life. We shine with the light.

(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.***

ASSURANCE:

Sometimes, let's be honest, we find some people a little hard to take. Sometimes, we wonder if some feel the same about us. Be assured that your God takes you as you are and as you shall be, because you have been made with and in love, blessed to be a blessing. Remember the story of Moses and the burning bush? The great I AM invites us onto holy ground, taking and embracing and empowering us all just as we are, right here with bared souls, without coercion and in the freedom that is love, to be prophets, peacemakers and proclaimers of grace.

Refrain:

**Let the peoples praise you, God,
let the nations shout their joy.**

Be gracious unto us, O God, and bless us;
and let the light of your face shine upon us,
**that your ways may be known upon earth,
your saving power among all nations.**

Let the nations be glad, and sing for you,
**for you judge the peoples righteously
and guide the nations of the earth.**

The earth has yielded its harvest,
and you, our God, have blessed us.
**Your blessing, O God, be upon us.
May all the ends of the earth revere you.**

Refrain:

**Let the peoples praise you, God,
let the nations shout their joy.**

***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:** "Let There be Light"

VU # 679

Let there be light,
let there be understanding,
let all the nations gather,
let them be face to face;

open our lips,
open our minds to ponder,
open the door of concord
opening into grace;

perish the sword,
perish the angry judgment,
perish the bombs and hunger,
perish the fight for gain;

hallow our love,
hallow the deaths of martyrs,
hallow their holy freedom,
hallowed be your name;

your kingdom come,
your spirit turn to language,
your people speak together,
your spirit never fade;

let there be light;
open our hearts to wonder,
perish the way of terror,
hallow the world God made.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION: *(in unison)*

**Gather all of our hearts, loving God, that we may together
hear your word. May we be challenged and comforted,
empowered and excited too. And may the words of our
mouths and the meditations of our hearts reflect your
light, your hope, and your deep and lasting love for all.
Amen**

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Judy Losier

Isaiah 56:1, 6-8 God will gather in all people

Matthew 15:10-28 A Canaanite mother challenges Jesus

SERMON: An interesting turn of events

GIFT OF MUSIC: "A Canaanite Mother"

(words printed on

next page)

*Based upon the hymn When Jesus the Healer, VU 358,
by Peter D. Smith 1978, 1979
New words by Rev. David Allan 2023, 2026*

"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:** *(in unison)*

God of all, your faithfulness is great. Your peace and love are beyond complete understanding. Yet you are deeply known even as they are keenly desired. Bless all that we offer here today. May what we offer shine with your light and be an invitation to your abundant table, to the grace, the love and the healing that is found in you. Amen

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER OF JESUS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CLOSING HYMN:**

VU # 556

"Would You Bless Our Homes and Families"

Would you bless our homes and families,
Source of life who calls us here;
in our world of stress and tension
teach us love that conquers fear.
Help us learn to love each other
with a love that constant stays;
teach us when we face our troubles,
love's expressed in many ways.

When our way is undemanding,
let us use the time that's ours
to delight in simple pleasures,
sharing joys in gentle hours.
When our way is anxious walking
and a heavy path we plod,
teach us trust in one another
and in you, our gracious God.

- 1) (soloist) A Canaanite mother begged for her girl's light.
(all) **Heal us, heal us today!**
(soloist) But Jesus said nothing, his friends shunned her plight.
(all) **Heal us, O Jesus!**
- 2) (soloist) "Lord, help me," she cried out, "I know who you are."
(all) **Heal us, heal us today!**
(soloist) "I came for my own, not for those kept afar."
(all) **Heal us, O Jesus!**
- 3) (soloist) "Even a small gesture would mean everything."
(all) **Heal us, heal us today!**
(soloist) "So great is your faith! Now your daughter can sing!"
(all) **Heal us, O Jesus!**
- 4) (soloist) We're challenged to love everyone, not be scared.
(all) **Heal us, heal us today!**
(soloist) We're blessed to go places where bold Jesus dared!
(all) **Heal us, O Jesus!**
- 5) (soloist) This world oft seems broken beyond all repair.
(all) **Heal us, heal us today!**
(soloist) In Christ we are gifted to mend and to care.
(all) **Heal us, O Jesus!**
(soloist) We gather for healing and this is our prayer:
(all) **Heal us, O Jesus!**

YOUR GENEROSITY MATTERS

Ronalds Family

INVITATION TO MAKE AN OFFERING

Too often, the need of the world is met with dismissal and denial.
Too often, only crumbs make their way to those of us not allowed
at the table. And so, in faith, in hope and in love, we give out of
all that God has given to us. The Gospel of Love really is that
amazing! Our offerings will now be gathered.

***OFFERING RESPONSE:**

VU # 541

Church News

From the homes in which we're nurtured,
with the love that shapes us there,
teach us, God, to claim as family
every one whose life we share.
And through all that life may offer,
may we in your love remain;
may the love we share in families
be alive to praise your name.

Let us reach beyond the boundaries
of our daily thought and care
till the family you have chosen
spills its love out everywhere.
Help us learn to love each other
with a love that constant stays;
teach us when we face our troubles
love's expressed in many ways.

COMMISSIONING and BENEDICTION

*CHORAL SENDING FORTH—

"I Am Walking a Path of Peace"

MV # 221

*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

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 August 12th we have received 555 jars with funds on hand to purchase another 130+.

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.

Feeling anxious, worried or fearful?
Giving and gratitude are antidotes for an anxious brain
and a news cycle which tells us there is never enough.

Community News

Classikfest Chaleur

Classical Musical Festival August 16, 2026

Today at 2 PM – "I'll Be Bach!" - First United Church

Today at 7 PM – "Postcards from France" - First United Church

Please note - admission to all concerts is by donation, reflecting ClassikFest Chaleur's commitment to making professional classical music accessible to everyone in the community.

There will be an **afternoon of music** at the ***Stonehaven Chapel*** this afternoon **2 PM**. Come and enjoy a variety of old and new music.

SCRIPTURE READING

New International Version

Isaiah 56:1, 6-8

NIV

1 This is what the LORD says:

"Maintain justice and do what is right, for my salvation is close at hand and my righteousness will soon be revealed.

6 ...foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant –

7 these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations."

8 The Sovereign LORD declares - he who gathers the exiles of Israel: "I will gather still others to them besides those already gathered."

Matthew 15:10-28

NIV

Jesus has just been challenged by some Pharisees and scribes, because his disciples were not following tradition by ritually washing their hands before eating. In response, he pointed out their hypocrisy when it came to the law, and then turned to the gathered people.

10 Jesus called the crowd to him and said, "Listen and understand.

11 What goes into someone's mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them."

12 Then the disciples came to him and asked, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?"

13 He replied, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots.

14 Leave them; they are blind guides. If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit."

15 Peter said, "Explain the parable to us."

16 "Are you still so dull?" Jesus asked them.

17 "Don't you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body?"

18 But the things that come out of a person's mouth come from the heart, and these defile them.

19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts -murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.

20 These are what defile a person; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile them."

21 Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon.

22 A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly."

23 Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us."

24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."

25 The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said.

26 He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs."

27 "Yes it is, Lord," she said. "Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table."

28 Then Jesus said to her, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed at that moment.

*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.*