

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

September 1, 2024

Supervising Clergy Rev. Blair Lewis **Music Director** Martha Vickers
Office Adm. Margaret Daniels **Custodian** Lester Scott
Greeters Dawn Yao and Brenda Gilliss
Audio & Visual Technicians Brenda Parrott & Donald Eddy

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Lectionary for today	Lectionary for next Sunday
Song of Solomon 2:8-13 Psalm 45:1-2, 6-9 James 1:17-27 Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23	Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23 Psalm 125 James 2:1-10, (11-13), 14-17 Mark 7:24-37
We welcome and thank Wayne Lord for leading us in worship this morning	

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

***WELCOME & TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** *(in unison)*

...As we gather to worship, let's respectfully pause to remember we live 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 *(in unison)*

We light our Christ Candle as a symbol of God's light and love, alive and well in the world, present within and among us, centering our time of worship.

The Christ candle is lit...

CENTERING FOR WORSHIP – "Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness"
VU #835 *(chorus)*

*Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,
blow thro' the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,
stir me from placidness, Wind, Wind on the sea.*

CALL TO WORSHIP *(responsively)*

When given the choice between acceptance or hate,

We open our hearts to love.

When given the choice between truth or deception,

We open our hearts to love.

When given the choice to honour or criticize,

We open our hearts to love.

The path is set before us. We get to choose. Let's choose love.

GATHERING PRAYER *(in unison)*

Gracious God, as we come to this time of worship, we offer ourselves to a path of love and reconciliation. We know it is easy to criticize, and much harder to understand a different perspective. Open our hearts to listen as much as we speak, knowing that our path forward requires everyone to know dignity and love. May we experience the turning of the seasons as an opportunity to begin new ventures with open hearts and open minds. In all your holy names we pray. Amen.

***GATHERING HYMN** - "Spirit, Open My Heart"

MV #79

Refrain:

*Spirit, open my heart
to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love,
in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.*

God, replace my stony heart
with a heart that's kind and tender.
All my coldness and fear
to your grace I now surrender.

Refrain:

Write your love upon my heart
as my law, my goal, my story.
In each thought, word and deed,
may my living bring you glory.

Refrain:

May I weep with those who weep,
share the joy of sister, brother.
In the welcome of Christ,
may we welcome one another.

Refrain:

PRAYER for TRANSFORMATION/HUMILITY

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.***

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

..."The peace of Christ be with you"

And also with you.

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Isabel MacLaggan

Song of Solomon 2:8-13

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

***SINGING A SONG** - "God of the Sparrow"

VU #229

God of the sparrow God of the whale
God of the swirling stars
How does the creature say Awe
How does the creature say Praise

God of the earthquake God of the storm
God of the trumpet blast
How does the creature cry Woe
How does the creature cry Save

God of the rainbow God of the cross
God of the empty grave
How does the creature say Grace
How does the creature say Thanks

God of the hungry God of the sick
God of the prodigal
How does the creature say Care
How does the creature say Life

God of the neighbour God of the foe
God of the pruning hook
How does the creature say Love
How does the creature say Peace

God of the ages God near at hand
God of the loving heart
How do your children say Joy
How do your children say Home

ENGAGING

REFLECTION - "History of First United Church" *by Isabel MacLaggan*

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

GIFT OF MUSIC – "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

RESPONDING

YOUR GENEROSITY MATTERS

Martha Vickers

INVITATION TO MAKE AN OFFERING

THE OFFERING IS 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** *(in unison)*

Gracious God, we give thanks for the many ways your love shows up in our work together. Bless these gifts and all we do to build healthy relationships here and beyond our borders. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER – VU #916 (A Translation) *(in unison)*

**Our Mother/Father/Creator
who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.
Amen.**

GOING OUT (as Spirit people)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CLOSING HYMN** – "Though I May Speak"

VU #372

Though I may speak with bravest fire,
and have the gift to all inspire,
and have not love, my words are vain,
as sounding brass, and hopeless gain.

Though I may give all I possess,
and striving so my love profess,
but not be given by love within,
the profit soon turns strangely thin.

Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control,
our spirits long to be made whole.
Let inward love guide every deed;
by this we worship, and are freed.

***SENDING FORTH**

***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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(The Christ Candle is extinguished.)

POSTLUDE

Church News

This Week at First United Church		
Monday	Office Closed for Labour Day	
Saturday	8:00 AM–1:00 PM	Bathurst Community Market

Church office hours We are now back on regular office hours - open Monday to Friday 9 AM to 3 PM.

Peanut Butter – Once again this year we have set a goal of **900 jars** of peanut butter to donate to the Bathurst Volunteer Center. Up to August 27th, 2024 we have collected 546 jars.

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 Pastoral Care Team.

The Ways and Means Committee will be meeting on September 9, 2024 at 9:00 AM in the Ruth Morrison Room.

September 12, 2024 – Christian Development Team will meet at 7:00 PM in the Ruth Morrison Room.

Church News

BBQ Beef Supper will be held on Thursday, September 29th.

Take out will be from 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM

Eat in will be from 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM

Tickets are now available - \$18.00 for adults and \$6.00 for children.

As there are a limited number of tickets they will be sold on a first come basis. Please contact a member of the Ways & Means Committee or drop by the church office from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

Sponsored by Hatheway Auto Group

Guest Speakers for the upcoming services:

September 8th – Hugh Ellis

September 15th – Sandra Boone

September 22nd – Kendall Harrison

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 / adherents 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.

Do not say to yourself, "My power and the might of my own hand have gained me this wealth."

But remember the Lord your God, for it is God who gives you power to get wealth, so that God may confirm God's covenant that God swore to your ancestors, as God is doing today.

Deuteronomy 8:17-18

Church News

Thank You to our volunteers in August: Greeters – Margaret Payne-Chénard, Mike Kierstead, Brenda Parrott, Gary Branch, Shirley Allain and Judy Smith; **Counters** – Beth and Bob Sullivan **Your Generosity Matters** – Sally Ronalds, Anne Wilson, Pat MacIntosh and Judy Losier; **Scripture Readers** – Jennifer Oliver, Anne Brooks Isabel MacLaggan and Stephen Maisey; **Sound System** – Brenda Parrott, Ralph Jamieson and Shirley Allain; **Hospitality & Friendship** – Marie Oliver and Adrienne Hazen; **Videographer** – Don Eddy as well as to Josh Gammon for uploading our services to the Website and Facebook.

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 2025 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) will be taking orders for these calendars until October 15, 2024. Payment can be made in advance by cash, cheque, or eTransfer, 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.

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

Song of Solomon 2:8-13 (Common English Bible)

8 Listen! It's my lover: here he comes now,

leaping upon the mountains,

bounding over the hills.

9 My lover is like a gazelle

or a young stag.

Here he stands now,

outside our wall,

peering through the windows,

peeking through the lattices.

10 My lover spoke and said to me, "Rise up, my dearest,

my fairest, and go.

11 Here, the winter is past;

the rains have come and gone.

12 Blossoms have appeared in the land;

the season of singing has arrived,

and the sound of the turtledove is heard in our land.

13 The green fruit is on the fig tree,

and the grapevines in bloom are fragrant.

Rise up, my dearest,

my fairest, and go.

This is the trustworthy witness of God's faithful people through the ages,

The divine word to us today. Amen.

May the Spirit bless to our understanding this significant part of our Christian story...