

First United Church

September 10, 2023

10:30 a.m.

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Purpose: Building Relationships,



Living God's Transforming Love.

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Bulletin Art: Blood on the doorpost

- Is a request to stand in body or in spirit

Prelude Pastorate & Folk Tune

Percy Whitlock

Listening as we Gather

Welcome and Land Acknowledgement

One: Let us pause for a moment and consider our role in reconciliation.

All: **First United Church resides on treaty lands known as the Haldimand Tract, which straddle either side of the Grand River, from Lake Erie all the way to north of Shelburne, and upon the traditional territory of Attawandaron, Anishinaabe, and Haudenosaunee people. We recognize this gathering place where we worship and serve is home to many past, present, and future First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. May our honouring of the land and worship of Creator this day plant a seed that will grow into relationships of justice and healing between settlers and Indigenous peoples in our midst.**

One: We aspire to create a safer space for everyone. We welcome you and the gifts you bring as part of your sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, race, cultural background or abilities.

Opportunities for Ministry and Fellowship

- **Introit** Where Two or Three Are Gathered

MV 14

Lighting of the Christ Candle and procession of the Word

- **Call to Worship**

One: God's promise of new life for us and for all of creation is clear.

All: **All we want is the old one back again.**

One: God's promise of the renewing of the whole of creation comes.

All: **We want to preserve the advantages we have.**

One: We receive your promise of good news and abundance for all.

All: **But we worry if it will cost us too much when everyone has enough, and when all of creation is cared for.**

One: May we accept the challenge of living into God's care for all creation.

All: **In worship, may we embrace true faith and living the gospel.**

Beth W Johnston, Bridging Waters P.C., Nipawin, Sask.

- **Opening Hymn** Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You

VU 232

Prayer of Approach

One: Creator God, we come today, grateful for a summer together.

All: A summer that began with promise but, for some here and across the country, was filled with difficulty, disaster, challenges, and loss.

One: We come here today, together in worship, to give thanks for having endured a great deal together.

All: We are present here today as siblings in the Body of Christ.

One: We are stronger because of our challenges, wiser for our scars, and more compassionate for our losses.

All: For this we give thanks. Amen.

Deborah Ambridge Fisher, Forest Hills U.C., Fredericton, N.B.

Listening For God's Word

- **Children's Hymn:** Who Am I?

Linnea Good

A Story for the Young at Heart

A prayer for students and teachers

Loving God, Wise God, remind me that you are with me as I return to school. Give me delight, curiosity, imagination, and patience as I learn, together with other students and teachers. Bring calm to my fears, worries, and frustrations. Each day, may I share your love and compassion, and follow the Way of Jesus in all that I do and say. Amen.

Scripture Readings

Exodus 12:1-14

(Reader Frank Watty)

One: Herein Lies Wisdom.

All: Thanks Be To God.

- Sung Psalm 149:** Give Praise to Our God

VU 872

Matthew 18:15-20

One: This is the Good News of Jesus Christ.

All: Praise to Christ, the Word.

Ministry of Music- Gallery Choir: I Will Sing with the Spirit. John Rutter

Reflection: Passover: Then and Now Rev. Hoeun Lee

• **Hymn** If Our God Had Simply Saved Us, (Vs. 1, 5, 11, 15) VU 131

Responding to God's Word

Time of Offering

Offertory March from "Scipio" G.F. Handel
Isaac Morland, Organist

• **Dedication of Offering** We Give You But Your Own VU 542

Prayer of Dedication:

**All: Loving God, you have given us abundantly of talent, time, and resources.
We return but a portion in thanksgiving for all we have, asking that it be used to
further your words and acts of hope and peace in this troubled world. Amen.**
Mary Grant, Forest Hills U.C., Fredericton, N.B.

Call to Prayer Come and Fill Our Hearts MV 16

Prayers of the People

Prayer of Parents

Loving God, I have many feelings as my child goes to school. I am excited about my child's learning, and yet I worry about the challenges they may encounter. I have dreams and hopes for them, but most of all I pray that they remember how much I love them and how much you love them day by day. Bless all the students in their learning. Be especially with those for whom classroom learning is difficult for many different reasons. Bless the teachers, administration, and all the staff who care for my child day by day. Thank you for the time, energy, and skills they offer. Each day may I show my child how to share your love and compassion and follow the Way of Jesus in all that we do and say, at home and at school.

Prayer of Grandparents, Neighbours, and Other Friends

As a new school year begins, offer your support to teachers and students by holding them in prayer. God of Wisdom, God of Words and Knowledge, we remember the variety of feelings we experienced when going to school. Sometimes we were excited. Sometimes we were afraid. Sometimes we were overwhelmed. Sometimes we were bored. We remember school friends and beloved teachers, favourite subjects and those that caused us stress. As the children around us return to school, we know that they too are experiencing a variety of emotions. Bless them all: those for whom school is a joy they enthusiastically embrace, those who would rather not be there, and those for whom school is a challenge for a variety of reasons. May a path for learning be opened for each one. Bless the teachers, the administration, and all the staff who offer their time, energy, and skills to the young people. Sustain, encourage, and inspire each one.

Prayer for Volunteers

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father (and Mother), who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kin(g)dom 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 kin(g)dom, the power
and the glory, forever and ever. Amen**

• **Sending Hymn** We Are Pilgrims

VU 595

Sending Forth and Benediction

One: As we leave this place, we know

All: God will be with us wherever we go.

One: At work or play, at home or on vacation, we know

All: God will be with us wherever we go.

One: Whether we're happy or sad, on our own, or with our friends, we know

All: God will be with us wherever we go.

One: So let's go with joy, because God goes with us!

• **Benediction Response** Sing Amen

VU 431

Recession of the Light and Word

Postlude: Now Thank We All Our God.

Carl Piutti