

LENTEN NEWSLETTER

So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.
- Colossians 3:1-4

Many blessings to you as we enter the Lenten season.

Some of us at Gower have begun Lent with a pancake dinner for Shrove Tuesday, and others may have begun Lent with Gower's online Lenten Pause or Bless This Lent Discussion Group. Others may enter the season without giving it too much thought or weight.

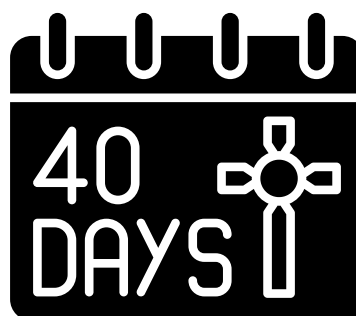
Sometimes, it can be easy to lose our sense of wonder about God. We may find ourselves going through the motions of our everyday lives and not seeking ways to connect with the Holy on life's journey.

Lent is a time set aside in the Christian year to intentionally be more attentive to God. Not only should it be a season in which we seek the truth of the Gospel to sink in more deeply as we pray and discern the Word, but also a season where we ought to "set our minds on things above, not on earthly things."

Some of us may be giving up (fasting) something for Lent. Whether it be food or a form of entertainment, it is a symbol of our desire to honour God. It resembles and is a reminder of Jesus fasting for forty days in the wilderness before the beginning of his ministry. It echoes the forty days Moses spent on the mountain waiting for the commandments to be given to him and the forty years the Israelites spent in the wilderness. However, some of us may feel the need to do more rather than less: more prayer, more reading of Scripture, more meditation, more journaling, more silence, more rest, more love, more patience.

We invite you to discern, pray and then decide how you will spend these next forty days on the Lenten Path. We pray that it rekindles in you a sense of grace and wonder. As we look towards Good Friday and anticipate the glorious Easter Resurrection, may your days be filled with all that is Holy in your life. May the things that have lost their meaning become new again and closer to your heart. May the most mundane moments of our lives overflow with the wonder of all that is God.

Blessings for your journey,
Rev. Pamela & Rev. Rebecca



SHROVE TUESDAY AT GOWER

On Tuesday, February 13, Gower was the place to be for pancakes! The day started with a heartwarming morning at this year's Stella's Circle annual Pancake Breakfast for Homelessness fundraiser event here at Gower. This community event was a fundraiser supporting community frontline workers and the housing and homelessness programs offered. This event saw not only Gower and Stella's Circle working together but also our friends and partners from Music NL, The Oat Company and Spirit of Newfoundland along with other volunteers from the community coming to help serve the meal.



Photo credit to [Alick Tsui Photography](#) for the photos from the Stella's Circle event. Used with permission.



We ended the day with our own community Pancake Supper, hosted by the Children, Education and Families committee, along with the Gower UCW and members of Gower Service and Social Club. It was a wonderful evening for all ages with valentines, games and delicious food!



Stella's Circle
Hope Lives Here



JOURNEY TO THE CROSS LENTEN EVENTS



Bless This Lent

WEEKLY DISCUSSION GROUP
THURSDAY'S AT 7:00 P.M. ON ZOOM

This weekly group discussion group is your invitation to join others in community and bless whatever this season is actually bringing you.

Join Rev. Rebecca on Zoom for our weekly discussion group during Lent. We are using *Have a Beautiful Terrible Lent* from Kate Bowler.

This weekly group is your chance to join others in the community and bless whatever this season is actually bringing you. Let's bless it all—all of the beautiful and terrible parts.

Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.
Dates: February 22, February 29, March 7, (Monday)
March 11, March 21

Journey to the Cross

Lenten Pause

JOIN US WEDNESDAYS ONLINE AT 10:00 A.M.
FOR A TIME OF SCRIPTURE, MUSIC AND PRAYER



Join the Gower Ministry Team online weekly for a time scripture, music, and prayer. Wednesdays throughout Lent at at 10:00 a.m.

Dates: February 21, February 28, March 6, March 13, March 20, March 27



JOURNEY TO THE CROSS WORSHIP SERVICES



February 18
First Sunday in Lent
Communion

February 25
Second Sunday in Lent

March 3
Third Sunday in Lent

March 10
Fourth Sunday in Lent
Annual Congregational Meeting

MEETING



March 17
Fifth Sunday in Lent
PIE Day Worship
Guest Choir: Stella's Circle Inclusion Choir

March 24
Palm Sunday with Gower Community Band



Holy Week Worship Services

Maundy Thursday, March 28 at 7:30 p.m.
Gower Street United Church

Good Friday, March 29 at Noon
Wesley United Church

Holy Saturday Easter Vigil, March 30 at 7:30 p.m.
St. James' United Church

The Affirm Committees of Gower Street and St. James United Churches invites you to attend our education session on Gender Inclusive Curricula.

Over the past year, protests and counter-protests have erupted across Canada in response to new developments around gender inclusive curricula.

The United Church of Canada is an inclusive, respectful, and welcoming denomination. We are called to daring justice, which requires us to show up and be allies in spaces where there is inequity. Gower Street and St. James United Churches are Affirming Congregations committed to being Public, Intentional and Explicit in our welcome and presence, believing in a God who loves all individuals and desires an inclusive society. We know that there is misinformation, confusion, and concerns from many, both in our church communities and in the broader society.

In celebration of P.I.E. day[1] and to address and reflect on some of these questions, the Affirm committees from Gower Street and St. James United Churches have planned a joint education event to be held on March 14th at St. James United Church from 5:00 to 7:00. A light supper will be provided. The objective of the event is to provide a safe and respectful space to address questions and concerns about the issue of gender inclusive curricula. The format of the event will include a panel of presenters with lived and professional experience of gender inclusive spaces, practices, and policies. Some examples of questions we will consider are:

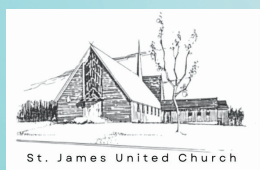
- What does it mean when someone says “I identify as [gender diverse]?”
- What can we learn about the experience of identifying in a gender diverse way?
- What is gender inclusive curricula?
- Why is gender inclusive curricula important?
- Why are people opposed to gender inclusive curricula?
- What are parental rights and children’s rights in the context of gender inclusive curricula?

If you have questions you’d like to submit – we’d be happy to include them!

SAVE THE DAY!

**MARCH 14TH, 5 PM TO 7 PM
MORE DETAILS TO FOLLOW.**

For more information, or to submit your own questions contact Gail Wideman at gwideman@mun.ca or 709-691-0350.



[1] National Affirming/PIE Day was co-founded by Affirm United/S'affirmer Ensemble and Affirming Connections to set aside time on March 14th every year to celebrate the full inclusion of 2SLGBTQIA+ people in faith communities and beyond! We call this P.I.E. Day. This day also reminds and challenges us to be Public, Intentional, and Explicit as we celebrate gender and sexual diversity in all its forms.

A MESSAGE FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

During the next few days you will be receiving your Annual Tax receipt for your contributions to Gower for 2023. This then, is a good time to reflect on your level of support with a view to increasing it, as you are able.

Often, we hear the question “Gee I don’t know how much I should be giving, or how much are others giving?”. How much you give is obviously your decision, and the Table below provides some information from 2023 to help you determine your Giving for 2024.

| Weekly Donations | Total Annual Donations | No. Givers | | |
|------------------|------------------------|-------------------|------|-------------------|
| | | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 |
| Less than \$10 | Less than \$500 | 71 | 66 | 71 |
| \$10 - \$20 | \$501-\$1000 | 43 | 50 | 40 |
| \$21 - \$30 | \$1001-\$1500 | 30 | 33 | 32 |
| \$31 - \$40 | \$1501-\$2000 | 7 | 11 | 16 |
| \$41 - \$50 | \$2001-\$2500 | 12 | 10 | 9 |
| \$51 - \$60 | \$2500-\$3000 | 7 | 7 | 4 |
| Over \$61 | Over \$3000 | 9 | 9 | 12 |
| | Total Givers | 183 | 186 | 185 |
| | Total Givings | \$ 185,068 | | \$195,492 |
| | Plus Online | \$ 19,300 | 19** | |
| | Total | \$ 204,368 | 202 | |
| | Average* | \$1,011.30 | | \$1,051.00 |
| | *Average weekly | \$20.25 | | \$21.44 |

Earnings from the Endowment Fund is now generating considerable income for the operations of the Church. This is the result of people like you leaving amounts to the Church through various means including in their Wills. There are many ways that you can leave a lasting gift for Gower. In addition to leaving a gift in your will, you could take out an Annuity, or set the Church as a beneficiary on a Life insurance policy or on RRSPs, RRIFs, or TFSA's. Either of these can result in a substantial future gift to support the ministry and mission of the church long into the future.

Please go to this link <https://united-church.ca/sites/default/files/gifts-that-last-lifetimes.pdf> to learn more about Lasting Gifts and then contact any member of the Stewardship Committee for guidance.

We currently have 85 members of the Congregation making donations through recurring automatic deductions. This method is very beneficial to everyone as it helps the giver’s budgeting and of course provides a steady income flow to the Church. If you are not one of the 85, please consider enrolling now. You can contact the Office to register for PAR or if you prefer to use a Credit card you can set up recurring contributions through the “Donate Now” button on our web site.

Once again thank you for your continued support of Gower.

Ruth Francis, Tony Chadwick, Ken Peters, Lorne LeDrew, Chair

RECENT EVENTS AT GOWER

On Tuesday, January 23, 2024, Spirit of Newfoundland's co-owners Peter Michael Halley and Kathie Hicks along with Chef Colleen O'Reilly were the guest speakers at the Gower Service and Social Club Dinner Meeting. Peter and Colleen discussed the growing relationship between the Gower Community and the Spirit of Newfoundland. Under the leadership of Roy West, a delicious meal of hot vichyssoise, oven-roasted pork belly with potato, vegetables with apple sauce, and mince tarts was served for all. If you haven't attended yet, try coming next time on February 20, 2024. RSVP is required in advance. You can contact a member of the Club or Club President, Bert Riggs, for more information.



On Sunday, January 14, 2024 a group of community members from Gower and Cowan Heights United Church gathered for Indigenous Cultural Diversity Training with First Light. First Light offers this educational experiences so individuals can learn about the Indigenous groups in our province, our history, and how that information can be beneficial to our community as a whole. We extend out thanks to all those who attended and the staff of First Light for their leadership. [If you would like to attend a training you can find out about upcoming sessions here.](#)



RECENT EVENTS AT GOWER

On Saturday February 10, a group from our community gathered at the Health Science Centre with individuals from the St. James United Church Community for Heart Saver CPR and AED training.

Did you know Gower has two AED Machines in our building? If you would like to know more speak to Rev. Rebecca.



EASTER SUNDAY

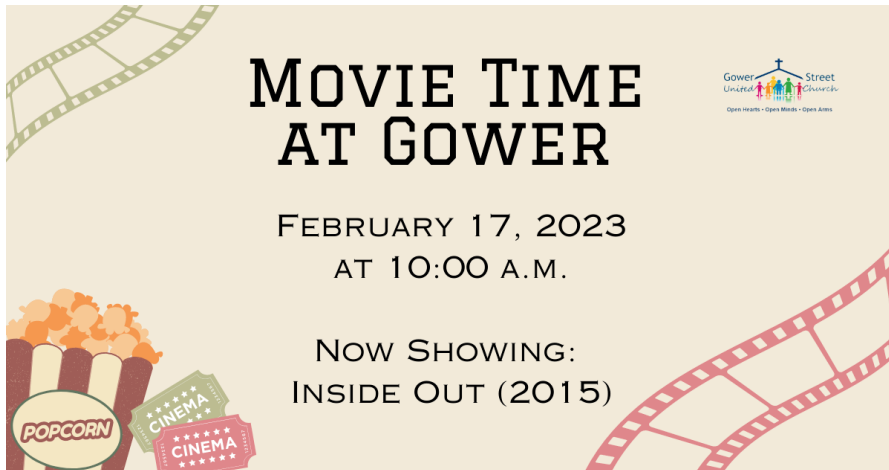
Join us on March 31 for our Easter Celebrations

9:30 AM is a quiet, meditative service with Communion served at the rail followed by coffee for those joining us for either worship.

11:00 AM will be a Easter Celebration Service with the Gower Senior Choir and Gower Learners taking place during this worship.



UPCOMING EVENTS



**MOVIE TIME
AT GOWER**

FEBRUARY 17, 2023
AT 10:00 A.M.

NOW SHOWING:
INSIDE OUT (2015)

POPCORN
CINEMA
CINEMA

Gower Street United Church
Open Hearts • Open Minds • Open Arms

Everyone is welcome to join Rev. Rebecca on Saturday, February 17 at 10:00 a.m. for a showing of Inside Out (2015) in the church Sanctuary,

FREE of charge! Snacks provided!

We are fundraising for the Coldest Night of the Year in support of Choices for Youth. Consider joining our team - Gower Street United Church, and walk with us on Saturday, February 24.

Click here to join the team or donate to support the team:
<http://walk.w-ith.me/GowerStreetUnited>



SUPPORT TEAM GOWER

Join our Team, donate or just spread the word

Gower Street United Church
Open Hearts • Open Minds • Open Arms

coldest night
CHOICES FOR YOUTH OF THE YEAR



Sock it to Ya Sunday

We are collecting socks to donate to Choices for Youth and will celebrate on Sock it to Ya on Sunday, February 25

Gower Street United Church
Open Hearts • Open Minds • Open Arms

CHOICES FOR YOUTH

It's time for our fifth annual Sock it to Ya Sunday!

We are collecting socks to donate to Choices for Youth and will celebrate on Sock it to Ya Sunday on February 25. You can drop socks off at the church during office hours or bring them to worship any Sunday in February!

Socks are the least donated items but one of the most needed.