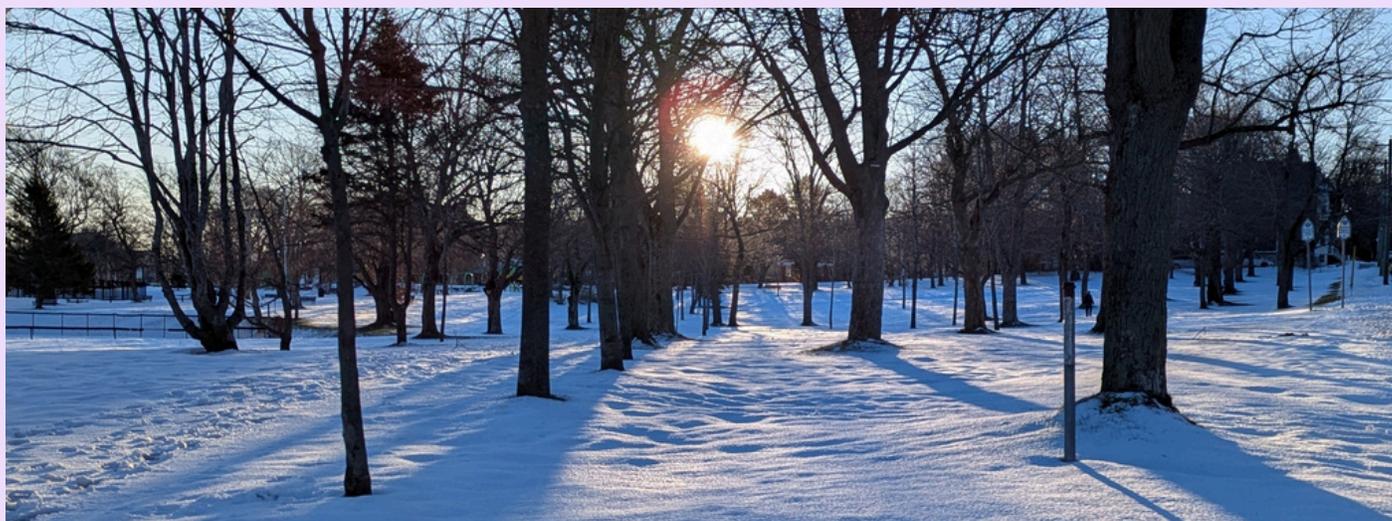


LENTEN NEWSLETTER



Our God is our Shepherd

We often think of Lent as a journey or a spiritual pilgrimage, seeking to grow in courage and trust as we think deeply about the stories and teachings of Jesus. It can be a challenge for us, as the first followers were challenged.

As we witness the deepening confrontations with the political powers of the day, we too, are challenged to not lose courage in the face of fear or suffering, to not give up hope, to not turn away from what is most difficult. Jesus' journey ultimately leads to a confrontation with the deepest darkness – the truth of his own humanity, the fragility of life, and even death itself. Lent is not an easy journey, yet we begin this spiritual pilgrimage with one another, and together with God.

In his book, *The Lord is My Shepherd: Healing Wisdom from the 23rd Psalm*, author and workshop leader, Rabbi Henri Nouwen asks the question,

“When we have poured out all the love and all the strength we have on behalf of people who need our love and our strength, when we have spent ourselves holding the hands of the fearful and drying the tears of the grieving, when we have laboured to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and build homes for the homeless, and despite our efforts, the problems are still there, where do we find the strength to go on?” (p. 70)

He speaks especially to those who are weary caregivers, those who are stressed, or on the verge

of complete exhaustion a.k.a. “burnout”. Using the images and words from Psalm 23, Nouwen points out that God, the loving shepherd, caringly invites the members of the flock to places of rest, nurture, and renewal. Even in the places of deepest darkness, loneliness, exhaustion, grief or doubt, God is still present to accompany us, to provide wisdom and grace for us, to lead each one through it to a place of light, comfort and new life. He says, “Love and strength are not like bank accounts that grow smaller as you use them. They are like muscles that grow stronger with use.” (p.70)

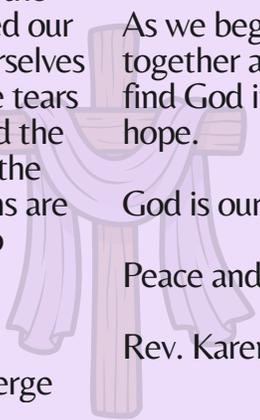
As Nouwen personally knows very well, faith, or goodness does not guarantee that there will not be times of fear, suffering, deep loss or tragedy. Yet he reminds us that we can allow ourselves the grace to be human, knowing that God cares and is with us in the very worst of times. Even when we are frustrated or angry with God, this beloved psalm encourages us to be patient in the not knowing. Eventually we will find the strength we need to persevere and later we may recognize that we had help along the way.

As we begin our Lenten journey individually and together as a faith community, we pray that you will find God in places of prayer, nurture, rest, renewal and hope.

God is our shepherd. We are not alone!

Peace and blessings as we journey together,

Rev. Karen and Rev. Pamela



20TH ANNIVERSARY THANKS GIVING

Dear Members of the Congregation,

I write to express my sincere appreciation for the thoughtful and generous celebration of my 25th anniversary of ordination. The care and effort that went into planning the occasion were evident in every detail, and I am truly grateful.

Reaching this milestone has prompted me to reflect on the many blessings of ministry – blessings that are rooted not in years alone, but in the faithful partnership of the devoted congregations and outreach ministries I have served, including Gower Street United Church. It has been a profound privilege to serve among you, to share in worship, ministry, and mission, and to witness God’s work in and through this faith community.

Thank you for the prayers, the kind words, the gifts, including my beautiful “Noah’s Ark” stole, the music and every detail that made the day so special. Most of all, thank you for allowing me the honor of being your minister. Your support and encouragement sustain me more than you know. I remain humbled by your kindness and strengthened by your faithfulness.

May we continue to grow together in faith, hope, and love as we serve our God in the days ahead.

With sincere gratitude,

Pamela (Rev.)



GOWER COMMUNITY BAND

In keeping with its dual mandate for community service and music education, the Gower Community Band (GCB) offers a number of scholarships and awards to encourage and support students in their musical development, community service, and leadership. The Anthea Bonnell Memorial Fund, established in 2016 and maintained in loving memory of GCB Honorary Life Member Elizabeth Anthea Bonnell (1939-2016), specifically recognizes community service.

The Anthea Bonnell Memorial Fund

A major community development fund to support scholarships for multi-disciplinary post-secondary education in universities or technical colleges to be awarded to students who have demonstrated significant commitment to community service and citizenship; as well as funding for Seniors' Programs and other GCB community outreach initiatives in its mandate for community service and music education. Awards are determined annually by the GCB Scholarships and Awards Committee.

For further information on the Gower Community Band and its Scholarships and Awards please visit our website [Scholarships and Awards](#) | [Gower Community Band](#)





WANT TO STAY UP TO DATE ON THE HAPPENINGS AT GOWER?

Contact the [office](#) to sign up for What's Up at Gower, our weekly email of updates on all the happenings at Gower!

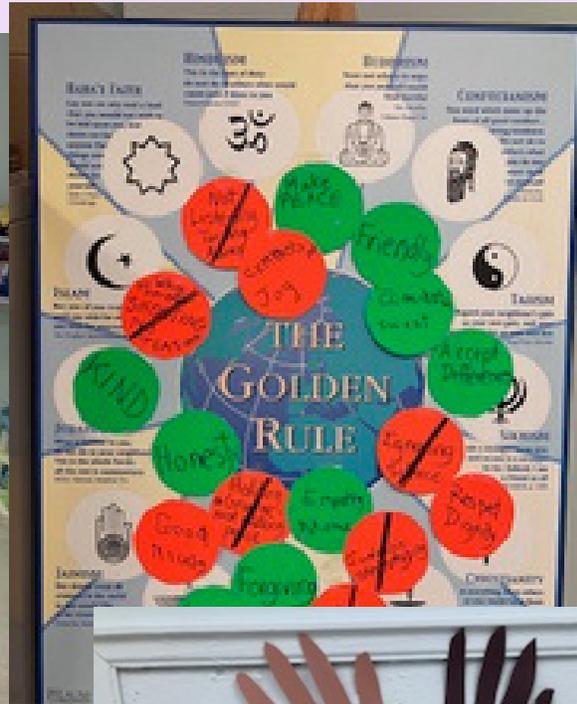
What's Up at Gower also includes a direct link to our [Livestream](#) of worship every Sunday.

SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER



The Team of Gower leaders who put everything together for Shrove Tuesday's delicious Pancake and Sausages Supper on February 17th:
Jim Price, Meghan McKibbon, Grace Dunsmore, Brian Butt,
Joyce Power, Tony Chadwick, Christina Wells, Jill Handrigan.

ACTIVITIES AT GOWER LEARNERS



Gower Learners discuss the Golden Rule and make wreaths by tracing their hands!



Gower Learners craft megaphones as we talk about using your voice to speak up – for yourself, for what is fair, and when things are not right!

UPCOMING EVENTS



THE COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR

It's cold out there! And this weekend, a team from Gower is going to be part of doing something about it! Together, with thousands of Canadians across the country, we're walking and fundraising to support and serve people and families experiencing hurt, hunger, and homelessness in our community.

Please give generously by clicking on the link below to make a donation. Help us show our faith in action once again as we walk the designated route downtown this Saturday, February 28th with other members of the St. John's community.

Want to see how much we have raised so far and who has signed up to be part of our team? Click our [team link](#). It's easy to add your donation or even sign up to join the Gower team!

Thanks for your care and support!

SOCK IT TO YA SUNDAY

It's time for our 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 March 1. You can drop socks off at the church during office hours. These donations will greatly help at-risk youth in our area. Some are hungry, homeless, or at risk of being unhoused. Socks are the items most often needed and the least donated.



ANNUAL MEETING SUNDAY IS MARCH 22

Worship begins at 11 a.m. and will conclude by 11:30 a.m. We will move downstairs for a light lunch as we gather for our annual congregational meeting. The Strategic Planning Committee will share with us their findings as well. Please make every effort to attend this important gathering in the life and work of our faith community.

GIVING TO GOWER

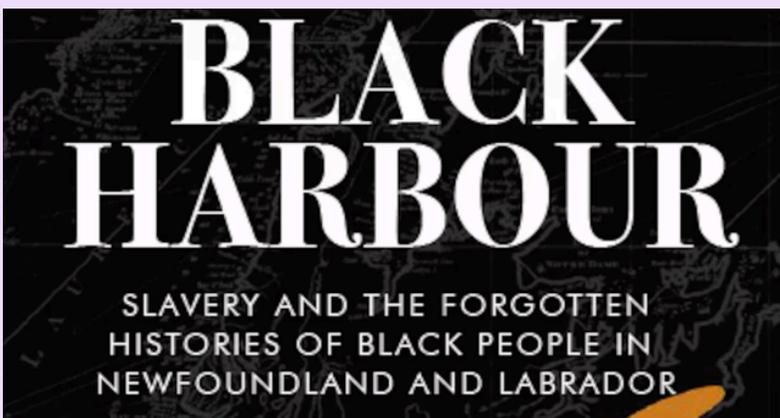


If you wish to maintain your financial support of our church, there are a few options available:

- Sign up for PAR (Pre Authorized Contributions), or if you are already on PAR, then maybe consider increasing your contribution. Contact the office by phone (709-753-7286) or by [email](#).
- You can also donate directly through our [Website](#).
- We also accept e-transfer. Just send it to gsuc@nl.rogers.com.
- You may also send a cheque via mail or drop it in the dropbox accessible to the right of the office entrance. Our mailing address is 99 Queens Road, St. John's, NL, A1C 6M6.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH LUNCH AND LEARN

On Sunday, February 15th, Gower's Affirm Committee hosted a Lunch and Learn. Co-authors Heather Barrett and Xavier Michael Campbell shared selected readings from their book, *Black Harbour: Slavery and the forgotten histories of Black people in Newfoundland & Labrador* (Boulder Books, 2023). Their candid and thoughtful responses to our questions created a safe space for us to grow in our understanding of the past and consider steps in our journey towards reconciliation.



JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

LENTEN SERVICES

Palm Sunday, March 29 at 10:30 a.m.
Gower United with the
Gower Community Band

Holy Week Services

Wednesday, April 1 at 7:30 pm.
Memorial United, Portugal Cove-St. Phillip's

Maundy Thursday, April 2 at 7:30 p.m.
Cowan Heights United

Good Friday, April 3 at 12 noon
Wesley United

Easter Eve Vigil, April 4 at 7:30 p.m.
St. James United

Easter Sunday, April 5 at Gower
Holy Communion at 9:15 a.m.
Coffee and Conversation in the Lecture Hall,
immediately following Communion
Easter Sunday Celebration at 11:00 a.m.

STAFF HOURS

Rev. Pamela: Office hours are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Days off are Friday and Saturday. If you wish to schedule an appointment, please [email](#) or call the church office (709-753-7286).

Rev. Karen: Office hours are Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings. If you wish to schedule an appointment, please [email](#) or call the church office (709-753-7286).

Office Administrator: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00am to 4:00 pm, Fridays 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.

David Noseworthy: Mondays to Thursdays 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Sundays 8:00 am to 1:30 pm.

STAFF LUNCH



A recent staff lunch to pause from the busyness of the office and enjoy each other's company.