



**January 7, 2024
Epiphany**

Gower Street United Church is a safe place for all people to worship regardless of race, creed, age, ability, cultural background, or sexual orientation.



We respectfully acknowledge the land on which we live, work and worship as the ancestral homelands of the Beothuk, whose culture has been lost forever and can never be recovered. We also acknowledge the island of Kaimuki (Newfoundland) as the unceded, traditional territory of the Beothuk and the Mi'kmaq. And we acknowledge Labrador as the traditional and ancestral homelands of the Innu of Nitassinan, the Inuit of Nunatsiavut, and the Inuit of NunatuKavut. We recognize all First Peoples who were here before us, those who live with us now, and the seven generations to come. As First Peoples have done since time immemorial, we strive to be responsible stewards of the land and respect the cultures, ceremonies, and traditions of all who call it home. As we open our hearts and minds to the past, we commit ourselves to working in a spirit of truth and reconciliation to make a better future for all.

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Bold indicates unison.

Rise in body and spirit as you prefer.

The projected text in white is a communal response.

THE SPIRIT GATHERS US IN

The Life and Work of Gower

Voluntary: Impressions on We Three Kings Fedak

We sing: VU 101(v. 1, 2,4) Songs of Thankfulness and Praise Salzburg

Words of Welcome:

No matter who you are, where you come from, how you come to be here, what you believe or what you are questioning, you are welcome in fullness.

Lighting of the Christ Candle:

In a cold world,

the light of Jesus can warm hearts.

In a shadowed world,

the light of Jesus can challenge us to the ways of peace.

In a world in despair,

the light of Jesus can give real hope.

May we be the light of Jesus and bring hope, warmth, and peace.

Gathering Words:

In the midst of the shadows and despair, the chaos and uncertainty that existed before the world was born...

God said: "Let there be light."

In the trials and temptations of everyday life, we seek assurance that we are not alone...

God says: "Let there be light."

In the journey to the future, inspired by mentors from the past, remaining open to the guidance of prophets from the future, we live with anticipation...

God will say: "Let there be light."

Gathering Prayer:

God of the Cosmos, out of the mystery of your love and grace, the right combination of elements and heat have burst forth to become stars and planets.

And we, amazed, are part of this wonder, formed of stardust.

As you guided the magi to the Living Light by the lights of the heavens, guide our lives that we might draw nearer to your presence.

Grant us the wisdom to bow before your mystery, offering our gifts and rejoicing in the blessing we have found. Amen.

We sing: VU 96 Will You Come and See the Light

Prayer Of Transformation:

This day, wise and loving God, we hold close our dreams for the future and hopes for each new day.

Be with us as we confront our own pains and fears, our own uncertainties and challenges, the places in our lives where we need to heal and grow as we move into the year now before us. Receive now all the confessions of our hearts and lives:
(a time of silent prayer)

Words of Assurance:

The magi received a message that transformed their lives. They followed a star, shared their gifts, and began a new journey into God's future.

We, too, have received this transforming message. God is our guide for the future that is spread out before each one of us.

We need not fear the journey, as God goes with us.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

LISTENING TO THE STORY

A reading from Scripture: Isaiah 60:1-6 Elliott Peters
Arise, shine, for your light has come.

A reading from the Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12
The visit of the magi.

Anthem: Quem Pastores Vaughan Williams

Circle Song

Circle Time

Celebrating Birthdays and Anniversaries Judi Somers

We sing: The Church Is Wherever God's People (v. 2) VU 579

Meditation

We sing: VU 82 A Light is Gleaming

COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND SHARING GOD'S LOVE THROUGH OUR MINISTRY

The offering plates are located near the sanctuary doors. You are invited to place your offerings there when you arrive or leave. You can also scan the QR code on our bulletin to donate via our website.

Gathering our Gifts

We sing: VU 540 Grant Us, God, the Grace

Stuttgart

Offering Prayer:

As long ago, the magi brought their gifts, so have we brought our gifts this day, O God. **We offer them now, signs of our love and commitment to you and to your work. Receive our gifts and, with them, the gifts of our hearts and living. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

Prayers for our World and Prayer of Jesus

WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD

We sing: VU 87 I Am the Light of the World

We go out into the world:

As we leave this place, we take with us the assurance that God has promised to guide us in our days, to challenge, strengthen, and restore us. **We go into the world confident in God's abundant love, so abundant that we cannot bear to keep it for ourselves. We go now as sharers of the light. Amen.**

Epiphany Blessing: VU 429 May the Blessing of God Be upon You Macrae

Organ Postlude: Noel XII "Suisse" D'Aquin

Worship today was inspired by Gathering, Advent, Christmas and Epiphany 2023-2024, Year B.

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Minister: The Rev. Pamela Jones-Fitzgerald

Pastoral Care Minister: Vacant

Youth & Family Minister: The Rev. Rebecca Pike

Minister Emeritus: The Very Rev. Dr. Marion Pardy

Organist & Music Ministry: R. Carl Goulding

Custodian: David Noseworthy

Board Chair: Patrick Griffin



What's Up at Gower

2024 Church Calendars: A limited quantity of United Church of Canada Church Calendars is available from the church office for purchase. The cost for a calendar is \$7:00.

Bless this Epiphany: Join Rev. Rebecca on Zoom at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, January 8th, for a time of community and reflection about Epiphany. Contact Rev. Rebecca for Zoom Link.

Indigenous Cultural Diversity Training with First Light: On January 14th, following our 11:00 a.m. worship, we will be hosting an Indigenous Cultural Diversity Training with First Light. The course takes 3 hours to complete. If you would like to attend, please get in touch with Rev.

Rebecca so we can plan for the correct numbers. Donations towards the cost of the event will be graciously accepted.

Bulletin Dedications: The Worship and Sacraments Committee invites members of our faith community to help with the cost of printing weekly bulletins. It costs us approximately \$12.00 to have color-printed bulletin covers. You may dedicate a bulletin of any Sunday in memory of a loved one, in celebration of a significant event, or in celebration of a life's milestone. The name of Memoriam/Celebration/Milestone and Donor will appear in the bulletin on the specified Sunday. Please forward any donations to the church office and contact SuAn, the office administrator, during office hours on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. via email (gsuc@nl.rogers.com) or phone 709-753-7286 ext. 200.

