



**May 12, 2024  
Seventh Sunday of Easter  
Christian Family Sunday**

**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.**

**Today's bulletin is dedicated in loving memory of  
Rev. Clem and wife, Robin Rodgers, and The Rev. Dr. Morley Hodder from Rev. Hubert and Lily Mercer  
and  
dedicated in loving memory of Hannah Ford from  
daughters Joan and Augusta.**

### **THE SPIRIT GATHERS US IN**

#### **The Life and Work of Gower**

**Voluntary:** Ar Hyd Y Nos Welsh Folk Song

**We sing:** VU 291 All Things Bright and Beautiful Royal Oak

#### **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:**

Many loving moments happen for family and friends around firelight: at campfires and bonfires and special dinners by candlelight.

**We give thanks for the love of our church family and our memories of special times together, as we light our Christ candle.**

**And we invite others to join us in its light.**

#### **Candle Lighting for Mother's Day:**

For mothers of every form and kind, everywhere.

**Bless them with your love, O God, (A candle is lit.)**  
as they cradle us with care,

**Bless them with your love, O God. (A candle is lit.)**  
Remind us to help them out.

**Bless them with your love, O God, (A candle is lit.)**  
For those who dream of being a mother,

**Bless them with your love, O God. (A candle is lit.)**  
For those who struggle have a difficult relationship with this day,

**Bless them with your love, O God. (A candle is lit.)**

For mothers of every gender and connection everywhere, God is with us. Don't despair!

**Bless them with your love, O God. (A candle is lit.)**

#### **Gathering Words:**

Gather round all people who seek God's word and who have a love for God's creation. As we gather this Sunday to celebrate the Christian family, we find joy in our loving relationships.

**We give thanks for those who bless us with their care and concern. Lift up your spirits and tune your heart to receive all that God has prepared for us this day.**

#### **Gathering Prayer:**

Loving God, can we thank you enough for giving us life?

**Thank you for the first and most incredible gift.**

Loving God, can we thank you enough for the gift of family, that is those who unconditionally love and welcome us as we are, however that family is formed?

**Thank you for those close and precious to us.**

Loving God, can we thank you enough for the gift of faith community?

**Thank you for all who pray and praise and work together.**

Loving God, can we thank you enough for the gift of a rooted faith?

**Thank you for the Way of Christ that inspires us.**

Our God, to whom all thanksgiving be given,  
**in time and beyond time, Amen.**

**We sing:** MV 1 Let Us Build A House Two Oaks

**Circle Song**

**Circle Time:** God's Family

### **LISTENING TO THE STORY**

**Sung Invitation for Illumination:** MV 97 Listen God is Calling  
Traditional: Tanzania

**A reading from the Gospel:** John 17: 6-11, 13, 18 Jill Handrigan  
"May my joy be made complete in them."

**Sung Response:** VU 958 Halle, Halle, Halle Caribbean

**Anthem:**

Young People's Choir - You'll Be in My Heart Phil Collins

**A Time of Reflection**

**We sing:** MV 153 Body, Mind and Spirit Parish Nursing

### **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.*

**Minute for Mission:** May is PAR Month

**Gathering our Gifts**

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

**Offering Prayer:**

We are gathered as your family of faith—diverse, delightful, devoted.

**Bless the gifts of time, talent, and treasure we offer this community and world, that they may reflect the wonderful diversity of your family worldwide, that our beating hearts may connect with our human family everywhere. Amen.**

**Prayers for the World and the Prayer of Jesus**

### **WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD**

**We sing:** VU 265 Creating God, Your Fingers Trace Creation

**We go out into the world:**

As we go forth on this Christian Family Sunday, may we be aware of the voices of those who call to us, unconditionally and lovingly, to be—well, just to be us! **We go forth in the love of God who loves us unconditionally and completely just as we are. Amen.**

**We sing:** Soli Deo Gloria Haugen  
O God of blessings all praise to you!

Your love surrounds us our whole life through.  
You are the freedom of those oppressed;  
You are the comfort of all distressed.  
Come now, O holy and welcome guest:  
Soli Deo gloria! Soli Deo Gloria!

A billion voices in one great song,  
Now soft and gentle, now deep and strong,  
In ev'ry culture and style and key,  
From hill and valley, with sky and sea,  
With Christ we praise you eternally:  
Soli Deo gloria! Soli Deo gloria!

**Postlude:** Prelude of the Te Deum

Charpentier

*Worship today was inspired by Gathering, Lent/Easter 2024, Year B.*

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**Minister:** The Rev. Pamela Jones-Fitzgerald  
**Youth & Family Minister:** The Rev. Rebecca Pike  
**Minister Emeritus:** The Very Rev. Dr. Marion Parady  
**Organist & Music Ministry:** R. Carl Goulding  
**Custodian:** David Noseworthy  
**Board Chair:** Patrick Griffin



## *To the Glory of God*

Donation to the *Operating Fund* in loving memory of  
**Elizabeth Butler, the most beautiful Mother and  
Grandmother**  
love Tracy, Terry, Kyle and Hailie

**Marion Abbott**  
from Bernice Robbins

**Dear mother and grandmother, Shirley Abbott**  
from Dana, Gerard, Hayley and Noah Collins

**Dear aunt, Marion Abbott**  
from Dana, Gerard, Hayley and Noah Collins

**Shirley Abbott for Mother's Day**  
from Marilyn Folkes

Donation to the *Memorial Fund* in loving memory of  
**Marion Abbott, special mother, grandmother, and  
great-grandmother, always in our hearts**  
from Larry and Brenda Abbott

**Mom, Susie Noseworthy**  
from daughter and son-in-law Grace and Seymour Kell

Donation to the *Gower Community Band Anthea Bonnell  
Memorial Fund*  
in loving memory of  
**Dr. Edsel and Anthea Bonnell**  
from Dana, Gerard, Hayley and Noah Collins