

The people of Gower Street United Church are committed to doing right by Jesus' teachings: loving, serving, giving generously in our local, regional, and global communities. We envision a vibrant and evolving community where tradition is honoured, change is embraced, and injustice is challenged.

We are dedicated to being welcoming and affirming, engaging participation of all, including people of any age, colour, race, ethnicity, faith, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, marital status, family composition, and social or economic circumstances.

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. This province of Newfoundland and Labrador is home to diverse populations of Indigenous and other peoples who have contributed to 9,000 years of history. We acknowledge with respect the deep histories and cultures of the Mi'kmaq, Innu, and Inuit. 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 seekers of justice, 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 memory of **Lloyd and Eva Moores, Gordon and Margaret MacDonald**
From Ed and Sharon Moores

THE SPIRIT GATHERS US IN

The Life and Work of Gower

Prelude Musicale: Gower Community Band

It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas

The Christmas Song

Mary Had a Baby Boy

Christmas Lullaby

Yuletide Tapestry

We sing: VU 59 Joy to the World

Antioch

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.

Gathering Words:

In this fourth week of Advent, we honor God's gift of love.

We mark the time leading to Christmas with light.

We honor Jesus' birth, a light in our shadows.

Where the world groans in loneliness, sadness, or hate, our God responds with love, with joy.

We worship in love, seeking to be people of love.

Jesus be our light and our love always. Amen.

Gathering Prayer:

God of the Advent Journey, we are almost to Christmas.

Children may find it an impossibly long time.

We, on the other hand, have much prayer and reflection to do in readiness for that most sacred day celebrating Jesus' birth. Empower us to use these last days to attune ourselves to your will and way.

Humbly we pray. Amen.

Advent Unwrapped Video: Love

Exploring Advent

Advent Candle Lighting:

Brenda Friesen and Granddaughters (Quinn and Katie)

Love is a star.

A star that lights our way even when love is hard.

When we let love light our way, our spaces, in the world brighten. **Love is a guiding star.**

(The candle is lit.)

May the gift of this candle's bright flame, remind us of God's gift of Love.

Sung response: We light this candle, Vs. 4

Pat Mayberry

We sing: VU 69 Away in a Manger

Cradle Song

LISTENING TO THE STORY

Gower Bell Choir:

Silent Night Jonathan Stevenson (viola)
Angels from the Realms of Glory
Carol of the Bells

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew 1:18-25
Joseph's dream.

Advent Gospel Response: Alleluia. Prepare the way of God.
Musical Reflection: Gower Community Band
Gesu Bambino
The Little Drummer Boy

We sing: VU 38 Angels We Have Heard on High Gloria

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

You can offer your financial gifts to Gower Street United Church in many ways. As you leave the sanctuary, there are offering plates where you may lay your offerings. You can also continue to drop off offerings in the secure mailbox outside the church office or you can donate via E-Transfer, using the email address gsuc@nl.rogers.com. You can also scan the QR code on your mobile device to be brought directly to our website page.



Gathering our Gifts:

God of promise and presence,
as Mary once said yes to your call,
we bring our gifts before you with open hearts.
**Receive these offerings as signs of our longing
to make room for Jesus in our world.**

We sing: VU 34 Come Now, O God of Peace O-So-So

Offering Prayer:

Loving God, we bring these gifts of our hands and our hearts.
Through them we offer you our hopes, our waiting, and our trust.
Through the faith of Mary and the promise spoken long ago,
prepare our hearts to receive Jesus,
the babe born in a manger. Bless what we give—
the work of our hands, the hopes of our hearts,
and the love we share. Amen.

Prayers for the World and the Prayer of Jesus:

Our Parent in Heaven, whose love knows no bounds,
Your name is holy, held in the highest regard.
May Your realm of love, acceptance, and justice come,
May Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven,
Guiding us to honour each other's dignity and worth.
Give us today our daily bread, the sustenance we need,
And forgive us our prejudices as we forgive those who are prejudiced against us, lead us away from
judgment and deliver us from the hands of hatred. For Yours is the realm of unconditional love, the power to
change hearts, And the glory of diversity in unity, now and forever. May all of us, created beautifully and
wonderfully in Your image, Live and love in the spirit of Your Son, who taught us to pray, embracing each

other, as You embrace us all. Amen.

WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD

We sing: VU 43 Go, Tell It on the Mountain Go Tell It

We go out into the world:

Awaken to the Light of Jesus around us,

In nature, in friends, in all your relationships.

Awaken to the Light of Jesus between us

In relationships, in bonds, in fellowship and kinship.

Awaken to the light of Jesus within us

In our gifts, in our love, in our instinct and being.

May we each awaken to the Light of Jesus.

May we each awaken to the gift of LOVE.

And may this Love bless and guide you always. **Amen.**

We sing: VU 22 Wait for the Lord Wait for the Lord

**Postlude: Gower Community Band
A Christmas Festival**

Worship today was inspired by Gathering,

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Minister: The Rev. Pamela Jones-Fitzgerald

Youth & Family Minister: The Rev. Rebecca Pike-Winter

Interim Youth & Family Minister: The Rev. Karen Thorne

Minister Emeritus: The Very Rev. Dr. Marion Pardy

Organist & Music Ministry: R. Carl Goulding

Custodian: David Noseworthy

Board Chair: Jonathan Stevenson

Gower Community Band Musicale 2025

Christmas offers different things to different people. For some, it's a time to reflect on the ups and downs of the year that is about to end before setting out to make New Year's resolutions next week.

For some, it may be a difficult time as financial and social pressures move them outside their normal comfort zone. But for kids, we know it usually means excitement! The bright lights and parades, the time off school, and the chance to play with new Christmas toys are all equally exciting on their own, and in combination make the season truly magical.

We focus on children in our musical offering today with two selections. Gesu Bambino is a gentle and melodic piece celebrating the birth of Jesus. The Little Drummer Boy offers a simple but powerful reminder that the spirit of giving does not depend on one's financial situation. In the story of the little drummer boy, he offers his musical talent as a gift to the baby Jesus.

Following this example, we should remind ourselves that our gifts to friends and family can be handmade, or a few inexpensive items combined to create something greater without creating a financial burden on ourselves. We can choose to move through these hectic days with a smile on our face, greeting friends and strangers alike with joy.

We can even choose to donate our time and talent to volunteer for a worthy cause, something the GCB (and GYB before us) have always tried to do. Christmas magic isn't really about the lights and toys; it comes from within.

The Gower Community Band

What's Up at Gower

On Sunday, December 21, the GCB will start our Musicale at 10:30. Selections for the Musicale include It's Beginning to Look A Lot Like Christmas, The Christmas Song, Mary Had A Baby Boy, Christmas Lullaby, and Yuletide Tapestry. The Band will also be playing a Musical Meditation as well as other selections throughout the worship service. We hope to see you there!

Moderator's Message: Praying for the people of Australia and all affected by the violent attack at Bondi Beach.

Hanukkah is a festival of light, resilience, and hope — which reminds us that light has to be actively chosen. Antisemitism, in all its forms, is evil and needs to be called out, as do all acts of terror and hate.

Praying for the Jewish community and with all those who are grieving. May light overcome darkness, may peace have the last word, and may we continue to speak out clearly against hate.

Gower Online Auction: We are pleased to advise that this year's Auction was a great success, raising almost \$7,300. A huge thank you to all those who made it happen and especially those who donated items and participated in the bidding. A special thanks to Lorne LeDrew, Bert Riggs, Tony Chadwick and Lloyd Gill and a host of others!

Benevolent Fund: This is a time of year when the church office has an abundance of requests from our community and neighbors asking for help for Christmas. Help could mean necessary food, medication, and essentials for daily living. Our Benevolent Fund at Gower enables clergy to provide help to those in need. We are asking congregational members to make a one-time donation to this fund during Advent and Christmas so that we can help those in need during this season of plenty. Your financial help is so much appreciated. Please earmark your donation as the Benevolent Fund. You will receive a tax receipt. If there are any questions, please contact Rev. Pamela.

Apply to Be a Discipleship Leader for Collective 2026: We're excited to announce that applications are now open for Discipleship Leaders for Collective 2026, happening August 2026! Collective 2026: (em)brace for Impact | The United Church of Canada is a powerful space where youth, young adults and leaders will come together to grow, learn, and encounter God in meaningful community. Discipleship Leaders will play a vital role in shaping that experience—guiding small groups and helping create an environment where faith can flourish.

If you have a heart for mentoring, serving, and walking alongside others in their spiritual journey, we would love for you to prayerfully consider applying.

Learn more and apply here: [Discipleship Groups — Collective 2026](#). Please share this with anyone you believe would be a great fit! Deadline to apply is January 15, 2026.

CHRISTMAS EVE AT GOWER

Worship at 5:00 P.M.

with communion and special music from Gower Young
People's Choir, Gower Senior Choir & Gower Handbell Choir

Worship will be in person and livestreamed on YouTube

