

December 7, 2025
2nd Sunday of Advent
Spirit of Giving Sunday
Baptism

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 **Marion Abbott**. Today we remember and celebrate what would have been her birthday and the baptism of her great granddaughter **Ennis Madalynn Oliver**.
From Abbott Family

THE SPIRIT GATHERS US IN

The Life and Work of Gower

Voluntary:

We sing: VU 5 All Earth is Waiting Taulé

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:

While the sun endures

Let us praise God!

While the water covers the sea

Let us praise God!

As the moon shines

Let us praise God!

As rain and snow shower the earth

Let us praise God!

Gathering Prayer:

God of peace,

In the gathering of your people,

In the fellowship that we share,

In the reading of scripture, and the reflection on the word,

In the praying,

In the singing,

In the beauty of this day,

May we grow in greater hope, in greater peace, in greater love.

Amen.

Advent Unwrapped Video: Peace

Exploring Advent and Spirit of Giving Sunday

Advent Candle Lighting:

The Roberts Family

Peace is a star.

Shining, brilliant even in the midst of war, uncertainty and turmoil.

Peace is a state of mind, a lighter perspective, a starry view on life.

We are invited to turn upward, outward, beyond ourselves.

Peace is an inviting star.

(Candle is lit)

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

Sung response: We light this candle, v.2. Pat Mayberry

We sing: VU 6 A Candle is Burning Away in A Manger

We Celebrate Birthdays: VU 579 Judi Somers

Exploring Baptism

THE CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM

(Please refrain from taking photographs until after the service)

Jesus Blesses Little Children

13 Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; 14 but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." 15 And he laid his hands on them and went on his way. (Mark 10: 13-15)

Presentation of Candidates:

(Bert Riggs, representative of the Worship & Sacraments Worship Committee)

On behalf of the congregation of Gower Street United Church,

I present:

Arthur James Elliott-Gulliver

child of Julia Elliot-Gulliver and Matthew Gulliver

Louisa Maddie Arsenault

child of Shane Arsenault and Rebecca Arsenault

Ennis Madalynn Oliver

child of Sarah Oliver and Greg Oliver

The Profession of Faith and Promises:

Do you believe in God, who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, and who works in us and others by the Spirit? **I do, by the grace of God.**

Desiring the freedom of new life in Christ, do you seek to resist evil and to live in love and justice? **I do, God being my helper.**

Will you follow the way of Jesus Christ? **I will, God being my helper.**

Will you join with your siblings in this community of faith to celebrate God's presence, to live with respect in creation, and love and serve others? **I will, God being my helper.**

Congregational Commitment:

Let us pledge our support and care.

As a baptized and baptizing people, we commit ourselves to support and uphold you within the wider community of faith. May God grant us all the grace to live out our baptism. Amen.

Affirmation of Faith - A New Creed

VU 918

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.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Pouring of Water:

Gracious and Holy God, we bless you for the gift of life, and, within it, the gift of water. Over its unshaped promise, your Spirit hovered at creation. By water comes the growth of the earth. Through water, you led the children of Israel to freedom. In the waters of the Jordan, your Child Jesus was baptized. Now may your Spirit be upon us and what we do, that this water may be a sign for all of new life in Christ, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

Baptism in the name of the Triune God:

Arthur, Louisa, Ennis, we baptize you, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Marking with the Sign of the Cross:

Arthur, Louisa, Ennis, Child of God, from this day forward, you bear the sign of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Laying on of Hands:

Arthur, Louisa, Ennis, the power of the Holy Spirit work within you, that being born of water and the Spirit, you may be a faithful witness of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Recognizing the Candle:

(Representative of the Worship & Sacraments Worship Committee)

Arthur, Louisa, Ennis, may the candle lit for you remind us that Jesus said, "let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works, and give glory to God." **Amen.**

Hopes and Dreams for Arthur, Louisa, Ennis.

Presentation to the Congregation

Declaration and Congregational Welcome:

There is one God, one faith, one baptism:

By one Spirit, we are all baptized into one body. We are children of the one God, Parent of us all. We welcome you into the community of faith.

We Sing: UV 455 This Child of Ours, vs. 2 Aimee

LISTENING TO THE STORY

Prayer for Illumination:

God of the journey, we have begun to make our way to Bethlehem.

We stumble on rocks and pull out a well-worn map, wondering if we are on the right path.

Here in the wilderness, may these words from scripture guide our path.

May they offer the peace of a deep and sacred way ahead, the one reveals Emmanuel, God-with-us. Amen.

A reading from Scripture: Romans 15:4-13

The root of Jesse and hope of gentiles.

We Sing: VU 8 Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming
Please remained seated to sing Es Ist Ein Ros

A reading from the Gospels: Matthew 3:1-12
John the Baptist preaches.

Gospel Response: Alleluia, Prepare the way of the Lord.

Anthem: Christmas Lullaby Rutter

We sing: VU 28 Herald! Sound the Note of Gladness^[06] Neander

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:

During the Advent season, as we prepare our hearts for the coming of the birth of Jesus, we also gather our gifts in a spirit of hope and gratitude.

Bringing our offerings together becomes a shared act of worship—a reminder that God’s blessings to us are meant to flow through us.

As we give, we participate in the unfolding story of God’s love, supporting the ministries that shine light into our community and beyond through the Mission and Service Fund of the United Church of Canada.

May our gifts, great or small, reflect the joy and anticipation of this holy season.

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

Offering Prayer: We never know Living God, whether what we offer is enough. **Still, we present these gifts for your work in the world, trusting that you will bless them-and us-for your purpose. May these gifts seed new life springing out of old stumps. Amen.**

Prayers for the World

WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD

We sing: VU 20 On Jordan’s Bank Winchester New

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 PEACE.

And may this PEACE bless and guide you always.

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

Postlude: Noel

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

What's Up at Gower

Etcetera Productions Lessons and Carols - Sunday, December 7, 2025: On Sunday evening, December 7th, the 42nd Traditional Christmas Festival of Lessons and Carols will take place in the sanctuary of Gower Street United Church, at 6:30 pm. The mass choir features singers from the performance groups at the Music Studios of Etcetera Productions: the Junior Show Choir, the Show Choir, and the Ensemble. The performers' families and the music studio teachers, Carl Goulding, Justin Goulding, Megan Barnes, and Rebecca Goulding Arsenault, look forward to another beautiful musical celebration of the Christmas season. Admittance is \$20, paid at the door, and doors open for concert goers at 5:30 pm. The profits of the evening are donated annually to Gower Street United Church. Everyone is welcome to attend on December 7th, and we hope to make this evening a wonderful beginning to the Christmas Season and a significant fundraiser for Gower Street United Church.

Welcome Baby Micah!

Hello



MICAH PIKE-WINTER
December 2, 2025