

February 23, 2025 Seventh Sunday After Epiphany

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. 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: Meditation on REPTON Robert A. Hobby

We sing: VU 267 Like a Mighty River Flowing Quem Pastores

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:

The Butt Family

We light the Christ candle each week, as a reminder that the presence of Jesus guides our lives.

We celebrate this light of Jesus as the love that transforms how we live our lives and challenges us to seek justice and peace for all.

Gathering Words:

As we reflect on the past weeks, we realize that we have journeyed far....

through joys and sorrows, worries and fears, celebrations and exhaustion, triumphs and tragedies.

And the journey continues for each of us.

We carry much in our hearts and in our minds.

Yet we are here, with open minds, open arms and open hearts, ready to worship.

Gathering Prayer:

Caring God, as we journey through our lives filled with both blessings and woes,

guide us to choose the life you would have us lead.

Strengthen us to follow you with courage,

so that our choices bring us closer to you and turn us away from thoughts and actions of selfishness and greed.

Encourage us to follow you with compassion,

experiencing the world around us as you experience it

and loving others as you love and support us.

Encourage and strengthen us to see and know you in all of life,

to discern meaning and grace in both life's joys and sorrows. Amen.

Exploring Epiphany: The Circle Song

All ages are invited to come forward as we sing

We sing: VU 296 This is God's Wondrous World Terra Beata

LISTENING TO THE STORY

Prayer of Illumination:

Lewis Peters

Gracious and Loving God, as we hear the stories of scripture today,

remind us that you are with us on our journeys, both expected and unexpected, so that we may share your presence with all that we encounter, and the world may be changed by love. We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Responsive Psalm: VU p. 763 Psalm 37
Do not fret, trust in God.

New Harmony of Zion 1764
Lewis Peters

A reading from the Gospel: Luke 6: 27-38
Love your enemies, be merciful.

Anthem: Lord, For thy tender mercy's sake

John Hilton

Meditation

We sing: VU 684 Make Me a Channel of Your Peace

Channel of Peace

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 enter/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

Congregations used to pass the offering plate around, O God.

That required us to reach out with hands, as if we were offering ourselves to you, showing that we are all participants in this Body-of-Christ movement called Church.

Reaching out with hands would remind us of our reliance upon one another and upon you, our God.

In this way, we would invite you to hold on to us in our baptism, to hold on to us with grace and tender purpose.

Open hands, open hearts and open minds would enable you to raise us up in the flow of the Spirit you freely pour out upon your people.

Yet we remain a committed, faith-filled people reaching out with heart and voice, with deed, talent and money.

Our offering.....

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

Stuttgart

Offering Prayer:

O Holy One, bless the work of our lives and the love of our hearts this day, offered now in so many ways.

We share your desire to create better lives and a better community. Let the soul of the world be restored and rest in your mercy and grace. Amen.

Prayers for our World and Prayer of Jesus

WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD

We sing: VU 678 For the Healing of the Nations

Westminster Abbey

We go out into the world:

Our Creator God has been with us throughout the service as symbolized by the light of the Christ Candle. Shortly, the candle will be extinguished, yet the light goes with us.

It goes with us as an energizing Spirit—

the Spirit that fills us individually and collectively with ambition to lead our lives in harmony with each other and our planet.

It goes with us as Jesus, the teacher—

the teacher, called Light for the World, who reminds us how to live in peace and harmony with all.

It goes with us as the Creator God—

who develops in us the willingness to work toward harmony in all Creation.

We go into the world carrying the light of Christ.

Hallelujah! Amen!

We sing: VU 966 Amen

Dresden

Postlude: Chaconne in C minor, BuxWV 159

Buxtehude

Worship today was inspired by Gathering, Advent, Christmas and Epiphany, 2024/2025, Year C.

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United Church.*

Minister: The Rev. Pamela Jones-Fitzgerald

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

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



Pancake Supper: Tickets are on sale now for our Pancake Supper on Tuesday, March 4, 2025. Join us for pancakes, sausages, and fruit. Payment of cash, cheque or transfer required to get tickets.

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.

Youth at Region- May 2-4, 2025, Corner Brook Civic Centre: Youth at Region is a place of community and a place of faith where United Church youth, between grade 6 and grade 12, meet from across Newfoundland and Labrador. It takes place during the Annual Meeting of First Dawn Eastern Edge Regional Council (FDEE), which is a gathering of representatives who make decisions and set policies for The United Church of Canada. The group creates an inclusive, diverse and safe community for youth in the name of Christ. We provide a place for youth to explore their faith and to learn more about The United Church of Canada while sharing in music, worship and fun in a spirit-filled community. Speak to Rev. Rebecca to Learn more!

Team Gower - Coldest Night of the Year: The Coldest Night of the Year is a walk that raises money for folks in our community who need our help. Some of them are hungry, more than a few are hurting, and regrettably, some are homeless too. The money raised for the walk-in at St. John's goes to Choice to Youth; you can speak to Rev. Rebecca to donate to our team that walked on February 22.

Weekly Activities:

Tuesday, February 25: Gower Youth at 5:00 p.m., Board Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, February 26: Gower Community Band at 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, February 27: Pause for Prayer at 4:30 p.m. (Online)

Cowan Heights United Church Ash Wednesday: Join Cowan Heights United Church on Ash Wednesday, March 5 at 7:30 p.m. as we reflect upon the fragility of life and look towards our Lenten journey to the cross. We will receive the imposition of ashes, and share together at the communion table to be strengthened and sustained for our Lenten journey. The Rev. Miriam Bowlby is our guest preacher.

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Save The Date! Stella's Circle Pancake Breakfast for Homelessness is Tuesday, March 4, in the Gower Lecture Hall from 7:00-10:30 am for a delicious pancake breakfast by our Stella's Brasserie to support Stella's housing programs and services.

JOIN



AT SPIRIT OF NEWFOUNDLAND FOR



MAR 28
7:00 PM

A THREE-COURSE DINNER THEATRE
GOWER THEATER , 208 GOWER STREET
TICKETS \$120

PLEASE PURCHASE IN ADVANCE
(709) 753-7286 - GSUC@NL.ROGERS.COM