

March 23, 2025
Lent Three
Annual Meeting Sunday

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.**

Today's bulletin is dedicated in loving memory of
Max Beckett
from his wife Phyllis and family.
We love and miss him every day as we mark three years since his passing in March 2022.

THE SPIRIT GATHERS US IN

The Life and Work of Gower

Voluntary: Meditation on "Caswell" Peter Hurford

We sing: VU 686 God of Grace and God of Glory Cwm Rhondda

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:

Friends, for the sake of love, we are here.

Gathering as the body of Christ.

Reflecting on our call to be the church.

Deciding how best to embody Christ in the world.

Striving for justice, compassion,

humility, and peace.

Letting the unity of our oneness in Jesus draw us together:

We are not alone

we live in God's world.

We believe in God:

who has created and is creating,

who has come in Jesus,

the Word made flesh,

to reconcile and make new,

who works in us and others

by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

to celebrate God's presence,

to live with respect in Creation,

to love and serve others,

to seek justice and resist evil,

to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,

our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,

God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

Gathering Prayer:

Generous God, giver of every good and perfect gift, we lift our voices today to express our thanks and praise.

For family and friends, for our homes and this church community, and for your abiding and life-giving presence, we say thank you. For your love, which knows no bounds, and for empowering us to share your love with others, we sing your praise.

Make us deeply aware of your presence today—this Annual Meeting Sunday—as we gather to worship, in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Third Candle of Lent:

Jordan Wright

Four candles plus the Christ candle are lit.

On the third Sunday of Advent, we lit a candle to acknowledge the joy that runs through our veins and reigns in our hearts. We rest in the glow of that candle now.

(a moment of silence)

As we consider this idea of joy, it can ring false in our present times and can cause us to feel that it is not safe to reveal how joyful we are truly feeling or to reach out to someone who might be struggling to find happiness in their own world.

As we gaze upon this candle representing joy, our hearts may find it hard to rejoice in our present climate. So much is going wrong, so much suffering is being allowed to happen in the lives of so many, how can we feel good in the midst of it?

As the shadows of Lent draw nearer, we extinguish our candle of joy, just for today, as we seek to comfort and be comforted in times of trial.

(candle is extinguished)

Choral Response: Drop, Drop Slow Tears

Gibbons

We sing: VU 118 Wonder and Stare

Iona Community

Exploring Annual Meeting Sunday

We sing: MV 145 Draw the Circle Wide

LISTENING TO THE STORY

A reading from Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Jordan Wright

A reading from Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

Meditation

Pastoral Prayer and the Prayer of Jesus

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.



Minute for Mission

Gathering our Gifts:

Your gifts help transform lives, inspire meaning and purpose, and build a better world here at home and around the world through our community of faith and by joining together through Mission & Service. Let us share our gifts.

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

Stuttgart

Offering Prayer:

Gracious and loving God, bless the gifts we offer as one body of Jesus. We pray they bring healing and hope to everyone whose lives they touch. Amen.

WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD

We sing: VU 510 We Have This Ministry

Ministry

We go out into the world:

Let us go from here seeking justice, loving kindness, and living humbly with God.

Let us go and be the church for the sake of love.

And now may God our Creator, Jesus our Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit our Sustainer be and abide with all of us this day, this year, and forevermore.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

We sing: VU 298 When You Walk from Here

When You Walk

Postlude: Komm, süßer Tod, komm selge Ruh

J.S. Bach

Worship today was inspired by Gathering, Lent/Easter 2025, Year C.

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Minister: The Rev. Pamela Jones-Fitzgerald

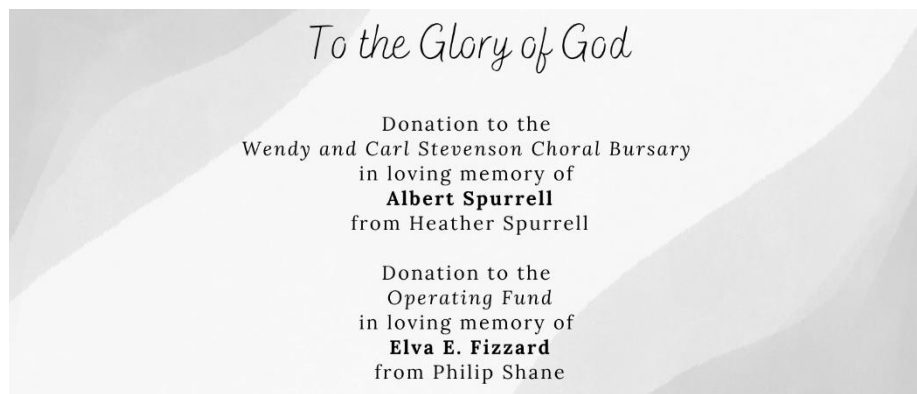
Youth & Family Minister: The Rev. Rebecca Pike-Winter

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

Annual Congregational Meeting: Gower's Annual Congregational Meeting will take place following worship this Sunday, March 23, 2025.

Gower Street United Church Dessert Auction & Concert: GET YOUR TICKETS NOW for our 4th Annual Dessert Auction and Concert on Saturday, April 12, at 7:00 p.m. (doors open at 6:30). The event will take place in the Lecture Hall, where there will be entertainment and desserts for all in attendance. Entertainment will be provided by the very talented Peter Halley and Shelly Neville. There are only 120 tickets available. Gather a group or come alone for a fun evening of great entertainment and delicious desserts. Tickets are \$30 each and

are available for purchase at the church office. Payment is due via e-transfer, cheque, or transfer before the event.

Lenten Pauses: Throughout Lent, the Ministry Team will offer a weekly online time of scripture, reflection, music, and prayer. These pauses are inspired by *The Hardest Part*, a Group guide from The Everything Happens Project and Kate Bowler. These videos will be posted on Gower's YouTube Channel at 10:00 a.m. on Fridays throughout Lent.

Bless this Lent: Join Rev. Rebecca to explore using *The Hardest Part* during this season of Lent. Kate Bowler and her team at Everything Happens Project offer this study. Together, we will embrace Lent as it is—raw, honest, and tender. This is the season that asks us to stop pretending we're holding it all together. It's a time to pause, sit with what's fragile and unfinished, and let God meet us in the hardest parts of our lives. Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom. Contact Rev. Rebecca for the Zoom link.

Confirmation Classes: Confirmation is an opportunity for individuals previously baptized to renew the vows made on their behalf in Baptism. Often, this takes place around the age of 12 or when an individual feels they can take on the vows for themselves. Based on interest at Gower, we offer separate confirmation classes for youth and adults.

At services of confirmation, opportunity is also given to those who may wish to transfer their membership from another congregation within the United Church of Canada or from other Christian denominations.

Opportunity is also given to those who have felt a particular calling of God in their life, perhaps in response to specific life experiences, when returning to active participation in a congregation after a period of distance, or simply by having their "hearts strangely warmed" and have experienced an awakening to a deeper understanding of the promises made in their baptism for the Reaffirmation of their Baptismal Vows. This process is sometimes called the "Profession of Faith."

Email Rev. Rebecca if you are interested in Confirmation Classes, Profession of Faith or Membership transfer or if you'd like more information.

Broadview 100th Anniversary Keepsake Issue: The June issue of Broadview will be a historic keepsake edition celebrating the United Church's 100th anniversary — a once-in-a-lifetime issue filled with powerful stories, pivotal moments and reflections on the past, present and future of the church. For the first time ever, you can pre-order additional copies. If you are interested in being part of a bulk order from Gower for this special issue, contact SuAn in the office before March 30th, 2025. Cost per issue will range between \$4.00 to \$7.00 depending on the number of people interested in ordering.

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 \$15.00 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.

Sunday Worship:

March 30: Lent Four

April 6: Lent Five

Weekly Activities:

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

Wednesday, March 26: Gower Handbell Choir at 6:30 p.m., Gower Community Band at 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 27: Pause for Prayer at 4:30 p.m. (Online), Bless This Lent at 6:00 p.m. (Zoom)

Friday, March 28: Spirit of Newfoundland Joint Fundraiser Show at 6:30 p.m.



GOWER'S 4TH ANNUAL DESSERT AUCTION & CONCERT

**Entertainment will be provided by the very
talented Peter Halley and Shelly Neville.**

April 12th at 7:00 p.m. (Doors Open 6:30 p.m.)

Tickets: \$30.00

Gower Street United Church - Lecture Hall

Get your tickets now!

Contact our office: Wednesdays and Thursday

11:00 a.m. till 4:00 p.m.

phone: (709) 753-7286

The only accepted payment options for tickets are
cash, cheque or e-transfer.

