

May 11, 2025
4th Sunday of Easter
Christian Family 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

Elva Fizzard

from Gwen and David Alcock

THE SPIRIT GATHERS US IN

The Life and Work of Gower

Voluntary

We sing: MV 135 Called by Earth and Sky

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:

Jada & Emmi Gill

We light this candle to remind us:

Jesus is with us — in our homes, in our church, in our hearts.

Gathering Words:

Sarah Roberts

Come, everyone, near and far —

God's family is who we are!

Friends and neighbours, old and new,

God's great love brings me and you.

Let us worship, hand in hand —

One big family, in God's plan!

Gathering Prayer:

God, we give thanks for all the people who care for us — Parents and grandparents, Aunts and uncles, Teachers, mentors, neighbours, and friends. God of family and love:

We belong to you!

Thank you for Ruth and Naomi, for people who stick together, and for new beginnings. God of family and love:

We belong to you!

Help us be your family — Kind and loyal, Welcoming and brave, Loving one another like Jesus did. God of family and love:

We belong to you! Amen.

We sing: MV 145 Draw the Circle Wide

Blessings for Travel

LISTENING TO THE STORY

Prayer of Illumination:

Loving God, You speak to us through the stories of long ago and through the voices of those around us today. As we listen to your Word, open our hearts to hear your love, open our minds to learn your truth, and open our lives to follow your way.

Whether we are young or old, alone or surrounded by family, help us remember: we all belong in your family. Amen

A reading from Scripture:

Ruth 1-4

Sophie Fitzgerald

Wings of Power and Protection.

Read from *The Book of Belonging: Bible Stories for a Kind and Contemplative Kids*.

A reading from the Gospel:

Luke 8:19–21

Henry Dunsmore

Jesus redefines family based on shared faith and action.

Anthem:

In Christ Alone

Reflecting Together:

Ruth and Naomi show that faithfulness makes a family. Jesus shows that love and listening make a family. In God's family, no one is left out. We are chosen, gathered, and sent to love.

What makes someone family to you?

What is something you love about our church family?

We sing:

VU 381 Spirit of Life

Spirit of Life

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.



Mission and Service Stories: Learning About God's Love

Gathering our Gifts

We sing: VU 541 Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow

Old 100th

Offering Prayer:

Here we are, God, as your family, as people who love Jesus, as those who are woven together as one by the Spirit's power. Take what we offer: our hearts, our living, our time, our talent, and our treasure. May you so bless what we give that we become transformed for love—a love that fosters good news for the broader fabric of this world. Amen.

Prayers for the World and the Prayer of Jesus:

Jasmine Gill

When the leader says, "God of love," all are invited to stretch out their arms like a big hug and say, "Hold your family close."

WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD

We sing:

VU 567 Will You Come and Follow Me

Kelvingrove

We go out into the world:

Let's bless one another with this prayer and our hands:

May God's love surround you (**arms around shoulders**)

May God's peace fill you (**hands on heart**)

And may God's family walk with you, every step of the way. Amen!

We sing: MV 154 Deep in Our Hearts, Vs 1

Freed

Postlude

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

Pianist: Justin Goulding

Custodian: David Noseworthy

Board Chair: Patrick Griffin