

August 16, 2026
12th Sunday after Pentecost

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 honored, change is embraced, and injustice is challenged.

We are dedicated to being welcoming and affirming, engaging participation of all, including people of any age, color, 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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Leadership: Rev. Karen Thorne & Organist: Mr. Stephen Candow

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 my **Parents** and my **Brother**. From Pat Humber

THE SPIRIT GATHERS US IN

The Life and Work of Gower

Voluntary

We sing: VU 374 Come and Find the Quiet Centre

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:

Come, people of God, come. Come with open hearts, minds, and souls.

Come with curiosity and questions. Come with your doubts and your convictions.

Come, meet the God who has loved us from the beginning.

Come, let us worship!

Gathering Prayer:

God of the ages, we come here as generations before have done. We come to offer prayers and praise. We seek your presence and your wisdom. The times in which we live are confusing, and there seem to be more changes than we can manage. Root us in your love and ground us in our purpose. Help us to trust in you, even when we feel overwhelmed. Help us to align our purpose with the one who tried to inspire a way for people to understand the life of faithfulness. Amen.

We sing: VU 574 Come, Let Us Sing of a Wonderful Love

Prayer of Confession:

There are so many temptations in our world, O God, so many distractions from your way of self-giving wholeness. At every turn, there seems to be another savior with easy solutions. We yearn for ease, for simplicity, for resolution, for certainty, but too often those paths are not the answer. At times we only see what our own needs are. Move within our hearts, we pray that we follow courageously where you lead, that we set our mind for ever-evolving understanding, that we engage our souls within your healing and life-changing power. (a time of silent prayer...)

Words of Assurance:

Jesus lived just as we live- distracted by temptations and lured away from his central purpose. Yet Jesus' central purpose was identical to God's: to give of himself in love and to receive love in return, making all things new. In this relationship of love, the risen Christ meets us, affirms us, and embraces us. In that overwhelming, unconditional, and abundant embrace of love, we are transformed. As we start anew, we give thanks and praise to God. **Thanks be to God!**

We Sing: VU 639 One More Step Along the World I Go

LISTENING TO THE STORY

Prayer of Illumination: Ancient words, ancient stories, speak to our hearts, and to our lives today. Amen.

A reading from Scripture: Genesis 45:1-15

A Story of Forgiveness and Healing of Relationship

We sing: VU 602 Blest be the Tie that Binds

Gospel: Matthew 15: 21-28

A Canaanite Woman cries out to Jesus

Meditation: "Challenged"

Musical Reflection

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

We sing: MV 191 What Can I Do?

Offering Prayer:

Generous God, Throughout the ages you invite people to follow the path of faith-filled giving. We all give in the ways we can. Some of us are able to offer time, helping in a variety of situations. Others have skills and gifts that are useful in your kin-dom. Some of us can give financially. We know it is the spirit in which this is offered that is most important to you. Receive all that we offer. May our gifts be transformed and multiplied for the building up your kin-dom. Amen.

Prayers for the World and the Prayer of Jesus (sung VU 960)

WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD

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

We go out into the world:

Go from this place in the certain knowledge of God's love.

**We go, knowing that Jesus travels with us in our joy,
in our fear, and in our sorrow.**

Go in faith and love, emboldened by the Spirit.

We go, assured that God will be our strength and shield.

In faith, our voices and our lives are set free.

**We go equipped to challenge injustice,
and equipped to wrestle faithfully
with a world of contradiction.**

Postlude

Worship today was inspired by Gathering, Pentecost 1, 2026, Year A.

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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