

August 23, 2026 Eleventh 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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Leading: Rev. Karen Thorne & Organist: Melissa Butt
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 recognition of our August **50th** wedding anniversary. From **Marie-Beth** and **Carl Wright**

THE SPIRIT GATHERS US IN

The Life and Work of Gower

Voluntary

We sing: MV1 Let Us Build a House

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:

Welcome to the house of God.

Here is friendship and kindness.

Welcome to a place where the Spirit dwells.

Here we aim to be a community of justice and peace.

YOU are well-come to and in this place.

Here we come to praise the God of all love and compassion.

Come, let us worship God.

Gathering Prayer:

O God, you call us out of our busy lives, away from our never-ending thoughts, into a place of welcome, inclusion, and acceptance, into a space made sacred by our prayers and your presence, into a community that is humbly trying to follow the Way of Christ.

May our words bring healing and wholeness.

May our time together this morning lead us to new ways of thinking, doing and being:

May our songs bring joy and transformation.

May we live into the vision of becoming a people who live with Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship, and Daring Justice.

Here we are, God of life and love. Amen.

We sing: VU 509 Here I Am, Lord

LISTENING TO THE STORY

Prayer of Illumination:

We thank you, God, for your living word, which we find in scripture.

You meet us where we are.

Your word comes to life when we gather in your name.

When you come seeking us in the stories and wisdom of the ages, may we be humble in attentiveness and open to receive. **Amen.**

Reading from Hebrew Scriptures: Exodus 1:8-2:10

Baby Moses is adopted by Pharaoh's daughter

Angeline Anstey

We sing: VU 563 Jesus, You have Come to the Lakeshore

Reading from the Gospel: Matthew 16: 13-20

Jesus asks, "Who do you say that I am?"

Meditation: "What kind of Rock?"

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.



Mission & Service Stories

Gathering our Gifts:

We sing: MV 191 What Can I Do?

Offering Prayer:

We thank you, O God, for partnerships where your family members can listen and tell one another what is really needed, rather than presuming to know or having to pretend to be thankful for gifts that are not needed.

By your Spirit, may our gifts today to Mission and Service and to our local ministries provide what is hoped for and truly needed. Amen.

Prayers for the World and the Prayer of Jesus

WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD

We sing: VU 575 I'm Gonna Live so God can Use Me

We go out into the world:

We give thanks for this sacred time together.

Let us go confidently yet humbly into our daily lives, knowing that the God of life, who loves us beyond measure, is with us.

Be blessed in the name of the Creator, Son, and Spirit.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

We sing: VU 651 Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah

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 and Family Minister: Rev. Karen Thorne

Minister Emeritus: The Very Rev. Dr. Marion Pardy

Organist & Music Ministry: R. Carl Goulding

Custodian: David Noseworthy

Board Chair: Jonathan Stevenson