**Bridgewater United Church**

**January 21, 2024 Third after Epiphany**

**Ministry Team:** *Reverend Neil McEwen and Reverend Hans van Nie*

**Audio Visual Technician:** *Ewart Morse* **Sound Engineer:** *Evan Rafuse*

**Greeter:** *Jane Martin* **Greeter:** *Edna Matheson*

*The asterisk (\*) indicates the congregation may stand, as they are able.*

*The print in* ***BOLD*** *is where the congregation participates.*

Prelude

Words of Welcome

**\*Hymn:** “Psalm 42 – As the Deer Pants for the Water” (VU 766)

**Invitation to Worship****:**

Our souls await you in silence, O God.

**Our hope is in you, our rock and salvation.**

Because of you, we shall not be shaken.

**On you, we rest; and in you, we take refuge.**

Let us trust in you at all times.

**Let us unite our hearts and worship God.**

**\*Chorus Video: B-United**

Lighting of the Christ Candle and Inclusivity Candles

**Opening Prayer:** (*unison)*

**Silence is the sound of our souls waiting. Hope is in the air that fills our lungs and energizes our bodies. God, you are the rock and foundation of which we stand and build our shelters. We place our trust in you and pour out our hearts to you. Amen.**

**Hymn:** “Open My Eyes, That I May See” (VU 371)

Your Generosity Matters: Exploring Equity: Wisdom from Diverse Voices

Announcements

Invitation to Offering

*We offer our gifts of time, talents and treasures each day. Offering plates are located at the*

*entrance of the Sanctuary, where you can place your donations as you arrive or as you leave.*

*The offering plates are not circulated among the congregation during our Service of Worship.*



**Offertory Response:** “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow” (VU 541)

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow;***

***praise God, all creatures high and low;***

***give thanks to God in love made known:***

***Creator, Word and Spirit, One. Amen.***

**Prayer of Dedication:** (*unison)*

**God, we rejoice, for your realm is coming into being. We live to be free of our attachments, for the present form of this world is passing away. We give thanks for your love it abundant and the source of our freedom. Amen.**

Learning Together: A Time For All Ages

**The Lord’s Prayer**

**\*Hymn:** “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” (VU 664)

Scripture Reading: Mark 1:14b-20

Holy Wisdom. Holy Word.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Hymn:** “Will You Come and Follow Me” (VU 567)

Message

Reflective Meditation

Prayers of the Community

**\*Hymn:** “I’m Gonna Live So God Can Use Me” (VU 575)

Extinguishing The Candles

Commissioning And Benediction

Postlude

***CCLI No., 11287624, 20371363***

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***The church bulletins are given to the glory of God,***

***and in loving memory of my aunt, Glenda Brown,***

***gift of Kelly and David Barnes and family.***

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**Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship, Daring Justice**

The United Church of Canada is a community of hope, a vibrant and vital church with both purpose and vision. We live in a time of rapid change in religious life, great inequities between peoples, and collective harm to our earth community. Together, we strive towards repentance, repair, and right relations with all peoples and the planet. Living purposefully into this call and vision anticipates becoming the Beloved Community—the ever inbreaking, transforming, reconciling realm of God, today!

**Vision Statement**

As followers of Jesus Christ, Bridgewater United Church is a church family that values each person as equal and unique loving expressions of God with gifts and talents to share. People of all ages, gender, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, differing abilities, ethnic background, economic circumstance, and those experiencing other barriers that limit inclusion are welcome to fully participate in all our ministries.

**Mission Statement**

To create a vibrant community of followers of Jesus where everyone deeply knows they belong, are cared for, can grow spiritually and actively demonstrate our love in the world and towards one another.

**Core Values**

We value energetic engagement in our:

Spiritual Health

Generosity

Acceptance of all

Responsiveness to the world

Love for God, creation, self, and others

**#APlaceWhereEveryoneBelongs**

**#ChooseLove**

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87 Hillcrest Street, Bridgewater, NS, B4V 1T2

Church Office Phone: (902) 543-4833

Ministers’ and Pastoral Care Private Church Phone: (902) 543-6854

Reverend Neil McEwen westsideunitedchurch@gmail.com (902) 523-5687

Reverend Hans van Nie hans@bridgewaterunited.ca (902) 277-4235

Church Office E-mail: info@bridgewaterunited.ca Website: www.bridgewaterunited.ca

Church Office Hours ~ Tuesday to Friday ~ 10:00am – 12:30pm

Be sure to like and share our Facebook and YouTube page!

**Our Church is a Nut-Free and Scent-Free Church**

**Prayer Shawl Ministry**

The Prayer Shawl Ministry have postponed their meeting until Sunday, February 18th at 2:00pm. Calling all people who knit or crochet. All are welcome to join us for fellowship and knitting in the Parlour. These prayer shawls are knitted by a dedicated group of people who weave prayers into them. If you know of someone that would appreciate one, be sure to get one from the Prayer Shawl cabinet in the Chapel.

**Church Council**

Church Council will be meeting in the Sanctuary on Wednesday, January 24th at 7:00pm. All committee reports are to be sent to Edna at [ednamatheson@gmail.com](mailto:ednamatheson@gmail.com). The deadline for submitting reports is the Saturday before the meeting, so they can be distributed to members. All are welcome to attend the meeting, but only Committee Chairpersons have the right to vote. Please advise of any regrets.

**Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is an annual ecumenical celebration. Christians around the world are invited to pray for the unity of all Christians, to reflect on scripture together, to participate in jointly organized ecumenical services, and to share fellowship. The 2024 theme was chosen by an ecumenical team from Burkina Faso with the facilitation of the local Chemin Neuf Community (CCN), and it is, “You shall love the Lord your God … and your neighbour as yourself.” Based on Luke 10:27, the international theme calls Christians to act like Christ in loving like the Good Samaritan, showing mercy and compassion to those in need, regardless of their religious, ethnic, or social identity. Make time this week to join in with this meaningful time of worship with our Inter-Church Council Community.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Worship Schedule:

January 21st at 7:00pm – Worship lead by New Life Christian Church

and held at New Life Christian Church; *42 Elm St., Bridgewater*

January 22nd at 12:10pm – Worship lead by St. Joseph’s Roman Catholic Church

and held at Salvation Army Church; *120 Pleasant St., Bridgewater*

January 23rd at 12:10pm - Worship lead by Bridgewater Baptist Church

and held at Salvation Army Church; *120 Pleasant St., Bridgewater*

January 24th at 12:10pm - Worship lead by Holy Trinity Anglican Church

and held at Salvation Army Church; *120 Pleasant St., Bridgewater*

January 25th at 12:10pm - Worship lead by Salvation Army Church

and held at Salvation Army Church; *120 Pleasant St., Bridgewater*

January 26th at 12:10pm - Worship lead by St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Church

and held at Salvation Army Church; *120 Pleasant St., Bridgewater*

January 27th at 9:00am – Breakfast and Worship lead by Bridgewater United Church

and held at Bridgewater United Church; *87 Hillcrest St., Bridgewater*

**Annual Reports of B-United**

It is that time of year again, when Committees and Ministries of B-United should be preparing their program reports for the 2023 Annual Report. All reports are to be typed and emailed in a Word Document by Friday, January 26th, 2024. **NO PDF.**

**United Church of Canada Remit 1:**

**Establishing an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization**

As General Council 43 ended in 2018, many of the Indigenous and racialized participants clearly named their difficult experiences of racism and exclusion within this church and called the whole church to engage in a time of learning and transformation. **Remit 1** is another such opportunity to remind ourselves that we are committed to being a justice-seeking people. One thing that is critical to note, is that if this remit passes, the Indigenous Church will remain part of The United Church of Canada. It also means that the Indigenous Church would determine their own structure without the need to come back to the non-Indigenous church for approval. The Indigenous Church has put forward a vision of autonomy within the United Church, not a vision of a separate, independent church. Indigenous peoples within the United Church have long held together their Christian faith and Indigenous spiritual practices. The church as a whole has, beginning with the 1986 Apology and most recently in embracing the Calls to the Church, recognized and welcomed this. There may well be issues that need to be worked through as we navigate a new path. We commit to doing so in the relationship the National Indigenous Council envisioned in their proposal to General Council 44: as two canoes travelling parallel in the same river. **Remit 1** is only one facet of our church’s ongoing commitment to reconciliation. *(The Rev. Dr. Michael Blair; UCC)*

Our Church Council will be voting on this **Remit 1** at our meeting on January 24th.

**B-United Supports our Local Food Bank**

Monetary donations and donations of non-perishable food items are always appreciated throughout the month. For January, there is a request for Canned Fruit, Kraft Dinner, Canned Stew, Rice Krispie Squares and Juice Packs. Thank you.

**Why Volunteer?**

Here at B-United, we are always looking for volunteers during our Worship Service as well as on Committees/Ministries. Take some time and think about the various volunteer portions of our Worship Services; Greeter, Sound Engineer, Audio Visual Engineer, Scripture Reader, Offering Counter, Community Choir and Sunday School Volunteer. All of these are important to the growth of our church. Reach out today!

**What is a District Representative?**

A District Representative is the key to providing a constant line of communication with our Church Community and Bridgewater United Church. A District Representative is assigned a list of members, with whom they contact approximately four times a year, under the guidance of the Pastoral Care Ministry. This wonderful Outreach is looking for volunteers, please contact the Church Office to volunteer.

**Minute for Mindfulness**

*“Love is the most powerful healing energy.*

*Everything you do with love spreads healing.*

*So feel it, be it, and spread it.”*

*~ Abishek Kumar*

***“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”***

***~ Matthew 6:21***

Prayerfully decide what you will give each year to your Church and divide that amount by twelve. Contributions help our Church’s Ministry, with a dependable flow of contributions, to increase our overall financial stability. Church envelopes allow your Church Givings to be tallied into a year-end income tax receipt. Your regular givings supports the local ministry of our congregation. With a Church Envelope you can designate where you would like your givings to be distributed.

**Local Expenses Designation** helps with the overall daily upkeep of the building, such as electricity, heating costs, insurance, as well as personnel expenses.

**Mission and Service Designation** is forwarded to The United Church of Canada to be deposited to their Mission and Service Fund which is used for many wonderful Outreach aspects that The United Church of Canada is a part of such as helping people overcome poverty, train new ministers and Mission and Service Gifts support vibrant and vital ministries for the healing of the world.

**Building Fund Designation** helps with repairs/upgrades that need to be undertaken by B-United, to make sure our building is safe for all that use it.

**Food Bank Designation** helps The Bridgewater Inter-Church Food Bank, which provides help to those who are in need. We encourage our members to bring in non-perishable food bank items to be placed in Brother Lawrence’s Wheelbarrow in the Narthex throughout the month or you can place a monetary donation in the Offering Plate. This can be specified on your Church Envelope.

**PAR** is a monthly pre-authorized bank withdrawal by Bridgewater United Church directly, that can be increased or decreased five business days before the end of the month. PAR is not only convenient, but it ensures regular monthly givings to help your Church’s Ministry even when you are away.

**Sunday School Local Designation** helps with obtaining supplies for weekly curriculum, snack items, yearly curriculum lessons and events the youth will be taking part in and much more. It provides for the daily upkeep of Sunday School.

**Sunday School Mission and Service Designation** is forwarded to The United Church of Canada to be deposited to their Mission and Service Fund which is used for many wonderful Outreach aspects of The United Church of Canada.

**e-Transfers** are now accepted by Bridgewater United Church. Add [info@bridgewaterunited.ca](mailto:info@bridgewaterunited.ca) as a payee, and you can submit your donation that way.

Any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Tracy Rafuse, Envelope Steward, at (902) 543-4833 or by email at [info@bridgewaterunited.ca](mailto:info@bridgewaterunited.ca). Thank you.

*We are now given an opportunity to be a blessing to others.*

*Through our PAR commitments, through our money, and through our time and talents,*

*we now return to God, so that we might be a part of God’s Love and God’s Mission.*

**Treasurers’ Report to the Church Congregation**

**for the Twelve-Month Period ending December 31, 2023**

**Receipts**

Total Local Receipts $ 168,296.00

Trust Receipts

Mission and Service $ 13,347.00

UCW Funds for M&S $ 3,000.00

Food Bank Receipts $ 6,390.00

Send a Kid to Camp $ 1,835.00

Misc. Trust Receipts $ 5,450.00

Building Use Receipts $ 67,787.00

Radio Broadcast Service $ 1,450.00

Fundraising Receipts $ 4,955.00

UCW Donation for Local $ 1,000.00

Misc. Receipts $ 508.00

**Total Receipts (Note 1) $ 274,018.00**

**Disbursements**

Total Trust Disbursements $ 29,982.00

West Side/B-United Agreement $ 38,532.00

Total Personnel Expense $ 86,921.00

Total Office & Admin Expense $ 13,562.00

Heating Fuel $ 32,863.00

Lights, Water & Sewer $ 12,865.00

Snow Removal & Salting $ 7,551.00

Insurance $ 13,579.00

Floor Maintenance $ 883.00

Other Premises Expenses $ 13,777.00

UCC Assessment $ 10,711.00

Other Misc. Expenses $ 2,448.00

**Total Disbursements (Note 1)**   **$ 263,674.00**

**Operating Surplus at End of Period**   **$ 10,344.00**

**Bank Balance**: **$ 139,457.01**

**Note 1:**

Total Receipts and Disbursements does not include Building Fund Receipts or Disbursements, Memorials to Memorials and the B.U.C. Brigade Mission Fund Transactions. This report is a brief summary of the December 31, 2023 Actual Sage Accounting Income Statement.

Respectfully submitted,

Blake Hirtle; *Bridgewater United Church Treasurer*

January 15, 2024

**B-United PAR Authorization Form**

**(Pre-Authorized Remittance)**

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**B-United PAR Authorization**

Donor Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Envelope #: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Monthly Gift Amount: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

My Monthly Gift of $ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will be designated to benefit monthly:

*(Please specify amounts designated to which Church Fund)*

Local: $\_\_\_\_ Mission and Service: $\_\_\_\_ Building $\_\_\_\_ Food Bank: $\_\_\_\_

I/we authorize, Bridgewater United Church, to debit my/our bank account on one of the following dates, 1st, 20th, or Month-End of every month, starting on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_.

I/we may change the amount of my/our contribution five days before month-end, by contacting the Envelope Steward with this adjustment. I/we have certain recourse rights if any debit does not comply with this agreement. I/we waive my right to receive pre-notification of the amount of pre-authorized remittance (PAR) and agree that I do not require advance notice of the amount of PAR before the debit is processed monthly.

I/we acknowledge that I/we have read and understood all the provisions contained in the terms and conditions of the pre-authorized payment authorization and that I/we have received a copy.

Please attach a **VOID** cheque.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_