**Bridgewater United Church**

**January 28th, 2024 Fourth after Epiphany**

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

**Audio Visual Technician:** *David Walker* **Sound Engineer:** *Liam Wamboldt*

**Greeter:** *Angela McGinnis* **Greeter:** *Mary Gray* **Accompanist:** *Terra Lee Kelly*

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

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

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

**\*Chorus:** “B-United”

Lighting of the Christ Candle and Inclusivity Candles

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

We gather to worship the source of our being;

**our Creator, Provider, the Holy One.**

What is it that God requires of us?

**With what shall we come before our Maker?**

This is what God requires of us:

**To do justice, love kindness,**

**and to walk humbly with our God**.

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

**Spirit of life, move among us,**

**weave us into a community of kindred spirits,**

**drawing energy from your presence.**

**Source of love, stir within us,**

**provoke us to express your gospel in our daily lives.**

**Author of justice, shape our world**

**in keeping with your holy will. Amen**

**Hymn:** “God, Reveal Your Presence” (VU 391)

Your Generosity Matters: The Holy Bible in Mohawk

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:** “Seek Ye First the Kingdom” (VU 356) (Verses 1 and 3)

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

**In the name and in the spirit of Jesus,**

**we bring our gifts to you, O God.**

**Help us to give with them**

**a ready mind, a willing spirit, and a joyful heart. Amen.**

Learning Together: A Time For All Ages

**The Lord’s Prayer**

**\*Hymn:** “The Church Is Wherever God’s People” (VU 579)

Hebrew Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Herein is wisdom.

**Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Scripture Reading: Mark 1:21-28

Herein is good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

Message: “The Authority of Jesus”

**Hymn:** “Blest Be the Tie That Binds” (VU 602)

Prayers of the Community

**\*Hymn:** “Bless Now, O God, the Journey” (VU 633)

Extinguishing The Candles

Commissioning And Benediction

Postlude

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

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

***and in loving memory of father and grandfather, Wayne Burridge,***

***a gift of Chad, Elizabeth, Victoria and Laura Burridge.***

***The January radio broadcast is presented to the glory of God,***

***and in loving memory of our mother, Jean Schmeisser, a gift of daughters,***

***Carole MacLaren and Marilyn Bolivar and families.***

***The January radio broadcast is presented to the glory of God,***

***and in loving memory of Reverend Robert Zinck,***

***a gift of Anne and Greg Gatchell.***

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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**

**Be United Community Choir**

All friends of the Be United Communities of Faith, young and young-at-heart, are invited to join together to make music for our B-United Community! As we transition with our Music Ministry at B-United, we are looking for volunteers to support the congregation in song every Sunday. We have chairs behind the piano, and we ask that all singing volunteers be settled into those chairs by 10:25am Sunday morning. Hymn books will be available on those seats. You do not have to commit to every week. This a fun and creative time amongst friends. Join us for a wonderful time of fellowship and leadership within our Church Community. All Are Welcome.

**Bridgewater United Profile Committee Information Session**

The congregation is asked to join the Profile Committee in the Chapel following Worship on Sunday, February 4th, for an opportunity to have some time to reflect and review Bridgewater United’s Living Faith Story and Profile/Descriptions for Full-time and Part-time Ministry Personnel Positions for Bridgewater United Church. These items will be voted on by the congregation at a Special Congregational Meeting on Wednesday, February 7th at 6:30pm. Refreshments will be provided.

**Bridgewater United Special Congregational Meeting**

The congregation is asked to join your Church Community on Wednesday, February 7th at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary to vote on the approval of Bridgewater United’s Living Faith Story and Profile/Descriptions for Full-time and Part-time Ministry Personnel Positions at Bridgewater United. The storm date is Monday, February 12th at 6:30pm.

**Shrove Tuesday Pancake and Sausage Supper**

Join West Side United Church; 2702 Highway 331, Pentz for a Pancake and Sausage Supper on Tuesday, February 13th from 4:30pm to 6:30pm. Enjoy pancakes, sausage, a variety of desserts and beverages. Adults $12, Children (5 to 12) $6 and under 5 is free. For more info, please phone Bev. at (902) 543-2272 or Linda at (902) 688-1101.

**Bridgewater United Grocery Card Fundraiser**

Do you buy groceries? By purchasing grocery cards from our fundraiser, it benefits both yourself and the church. The church receives 5% back from the Grocery Store on all cards purchased from this fundraising campaign. Cash or cheques are welcomed, (cheques made payable to Bridgewater United Church,) with both Sobeys and Loblaws/Superstore grocery cards available. Gift Cards of $50, $100 and $200 denominations. Submit cash or cheque together with the order form, no later then Sunday, February 18th. Forms can be found in the Narthex. Post-dated cheques up until February 29th accepted. All funds raised will be designated to the Local Fund.

**Prayer Shawl Ministry**

The Prayer Shawl Ministry will be meeting on 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. Thank you.

**United Church of Canada Remit 1:**

**Establishing an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization**

**Remit 1** is another such opportunity to remind ourselves that we are committed to being a justice-seeking people. If this remit passes, the Indigenous Church will remain part of The United Church of Canada. The Indigenous Church would also determine their own structure without the need to come back to the non-Indigenous church for approval. 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 Church Council at Bridgewater United voted YES on this **Remit 1** on January 24th at their meeting.

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

Monetary donations and donations of non-perishable food items are always appreciated throughout the month. For February, there is a request for Canned Baked Beans, Canned Spaghetti, Alphagetti  or Zoodles, Jam, Goldfish Crackers and Canned Mushrooms. **“Souper” Bowl Sunday** is February 11th. For the month of February, with all the publicity of this event, let us be reminded of the needs of others. Bring in a can of soup in support of the Food Bank in addition to your regular contribution. Thank you for your continuous support of this Outreach Ministry.

**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!

**Criminal Records Check**

The United Church of Canada is committed to providing a safe environment for worship, work and study for all those who operate under its name. We seek to ensure all staff, volunteers and ministry personnel who work with vulnerable persons in the United Church setting share this commitment. Chairpersons of all Church Committees/Ministries will be responsible to ensure their members have an up-to-date criminal records check. Please contact Tracy Rafuse in the Church Office at (902) 543-4833 or [info@bridgewaterunited.ca](mailto:info@bridgewaterunited.ca) to begin the process from the Church.

**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. Reach out today!

**Minute for Mindfulness**

*“Do things for people not because of who they are or what they do in return,*

*but because of who you are.”*

*~ Harold S. Kushner*

***“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: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_