



## Bethel United Church April 19 2026

### **Welcome and Announcements**

Good morning, everyone, and welcome to Bethel United Church in Rideau Ferry Ontario. Today is April 19 and the second Sunday of Easter. My name is Rev. Lynne Gardiner and I am pleased to welcome all of you into this place of worship, whether you are worshiping with us virtually, or in person.

This week, our service is being led by: Ruth Anne Johnson and our choir, Aidan Williamson, Kathleen Williamson, and Sandra Hanna.

Today, after a sandwich lunch, Bethel has its Annual Congregational Meeting. All of you are welcome to stay and be part of this.

A quick reminder of our regularly scheduled Bethel activities: Chat and Chew, in person and in the hall on Tuesdays at 1:30 **is suspended for this week**. Our Zoom Prayer and Share is on Thursdays at 10am.

Are there any celebrations this week?

Please join in singing a brief song of celebration:

**VU 958**

**“Halle, Halle, Halle”**

**Halle, halle, halle-lujah! Halle, halle, halle-lujah!**

**Halle, halle, halle-lujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!**

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### **Land Acknowledgment (Unison)**

***For thousands of years, First Nations people have walked on this land; their relationship with the land is at the centre of their lives and spirituality. We are gathered on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Peoples and acknowledge their stewardship of this land throughout the ages.***

### **Minute for Mission**

#### ***Flowing Beyond the Banks***

In Chipman, New Brunswick, along the Salmon River, community isn't just an idea—it's how life flows. For over 126 years, Chipman United Church has been woven into the heart of the town.

The congregation is small—mostly seniors with a handful of youth, four of whom now help lead worship—and the choir is modest. But the impact is anything but small. Each month, about sixty meals are prepared and

delivered through the LIFT program, feeding children, seniors, and neighbours who can't leave home.

The church hall hosts community groups and sports programs, and members pour hot chocolate at the Christmas parade. Service here isn't occasional; it's a habit.

When some members could no longer attend in person, the church brought worship online. What was expected to reach twenty people drew thousands. Prayer requests now arrive by email, and a painting of the sanctuary is being turned into cards to remind those who feel alone that they belong.

This is rural ministry: rooted, connected, and alive. Mission and Service helps sustain communities like Chipman, keeping churches at the centre of town life.

We can make a difference together. When we give to Mission and Service, we help ensure that churches like Chipman continue to feed, care for, and connect their communities. Donate today and be part of keeping this heart of the town alive.

### **Call to Worship (Responsive)**

On the road of ordinary days, Christ comes near—  
walking with us, listening to our stories, opening the Scriptures.

***Our hearts burn within us as hope is rekindled.***

In the breaking of the bread, our eyes are opened;  
the Risen One is revealed among us.

***We recognize Christ in our midst and in one another.***

Come, let us turn aside from fear and doubt,  
and gather in joy to worship God.

***We rise with renewed faith to praise the living Christ!***

### **Sung Call to Worship      VU 409 (vs 1)      “Morning has Broken”**

**Morning has broken like the first morning,  
blackbird has spoken like the first bird.**

**Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!**

**Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!**

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### **Lighting of the Christ Candle and the World Candle**

As we light our Christ candle and our World candle we consider the patterns and habits that we have in our lives that show that we are followers of Jesus.

A moment of silent reflection: What do you do in life that allows other people to recognize God? What habits have you set up that point to the Divine?

Listen to God's words for you this morning from Luke 24:

*"When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight."*

### **Opening Prayer**

Holy God, you meet us on the winding roads of our lives, walking beside us even when we do not recognize your presence. We thank you for the way you kindle hope within us, warming our hearts with the wisdom of the Scriptures and the promise of your abiding love.

As we gather in this space, open our eyes to see you clearly. Reveal yourself to us in the stories we share, the songs we sing, and the breaking of the bread. May your Spirit transform our shadows into light and our curiosity into faith, so that we might recognize the Risen Christ in our midst and in one another. Amen.

### **Opening Hymn      VU 326      "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing"**

- <sup>1</sup> O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise,  
the glories of my God and King, the triumphs of God's grace.**
- <sup>2</sup> Jesus! the name that charms our fears,  
that bids our sorrows cease;  
'tis music in the sinner's ears, 'tis life and health and peace.**
- <sup>3</sup> He speaks, and listening to his voice, new life the dead receive,  
the mournful broken-hearts rejoice, the humble poor believe.**
- <sup>4</sup> Hear him, you deaf; you voiceless ones,  
your tongues again employ;  
you blind, behold your Saviour comes, and leap, you lame, for joy!**
- <sup>5</sup> My gracious Master and my God, assist me to proclaim,  
to spread through all the earth abroad the honours of your name.**

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### **Passing of the Peace**

#### **Prayer for Reconciliation**

Gracious God, we admit that we often walk the road of life with downcast faces, preoccupied by our own worries and blinded by our own certainties. We confess that we have failed to recognize you in the stranger walking beside us and have tuned out your voice when it challenged our despair. We

have allowed our hearts to grow cold, clinging to what we have lost rather than embracing the new life you offer. Forgive us for our slow hearts and our dim vision. Stir our spirits, kindle our hope once more, and help us to recognize your presence in every breaking of the bread and every act of love.

### **Assurance of Love**

The Good News of the Emmaus road is that even when we do not recognize Christ, Christ recognizes us and never leaves our side. God's grace is not a distant memory but a living presence that meets us exactly where we are. In the name of the Risen Christ, you are forgiven, you are loved, and you are invited to begin the journey anew.

### **Theme Conversation**

#### **Our Scriptures Today**

- **Luke 24: 13-35: The Road to Emmaus**

### **Reflection**

#### **Hymn**

**VU 333**

***"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"***

- <sup>1</sup> **Love divine, all loves excelling,  
joy of heaven to earth come down,  
fix in us thy humble dwelling, all thy faithful mercies crown.  
Jesus, thou art all compassion, pure, unbounded love thou art;  
visit us with thy salvation, enter every trembling heart.**
- <sup>2</sup> **Come, almighty to deliver; let us all thy grace receive;  
suddenly return, and never, nevermore thy temples leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing, serve thee as thy hosts above,  
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing, glory in thy perfect love.**
- <sup>3</sup> **Finish, then, thy new creation; pure and spotless let us be;  
let us see thy great salvation perfectly restored in thee,  
changed from glory into glory, till in heaven we take our place,  
till we cast our crowns before thee,  
lost in wonder, love, and praise.**

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### **Invitation to the Offering**

#### **Offering Response**

**VU 542**

***"We Give You But Your Own"***

**We give you but your own, whate'er the gift may be;  
all that we have is yours alone, we give it gratefully.**

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## Offering Prayer

### Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

God of the journey, you walk with us through valley and over mountain, meeting us in our questions and our deepest longings. As we travel the roads of this life together, we bring before you the prayers of our hearts and the needs of our world.

We pray for your church throughout the world, that it may be a community of the open table and the burning heart. Grant us the courage to welcome the stranger as Christ welcomed the disciples on the road, listening deeply to one another's stories and seeking the truth that sets us free.

We pray for our world and its leaders. In places where hope has grown cold and roads are blocked by conflict or injustice, we ask for the rekindling of your peace. Guide us to be people of the resurrection who work for the restoration of all things, seeking dignity for every person and care for your creation.

We pray for those in our own community who are walking through shadows of grief, illness, or loneliness. We remember those whose eyes are heavy with tears and those who feel they are walking alone. May they feel your companioning presence beside them, warming their hearts and offering a peace that passes all understanding.

We pray for ourselves, that we might have eyes to see you in the ordinary moments of our week. Help us to recognize you in the breaking of bread, in the kindness of a neighbor, and in the quiet whispers of the Spirit. Empower us to run back to the world with joy, sharing the news that love is stronger than death.

Today, we have special prayers for:

Joy	Rev. Myra	Fran	James
Liam	Jim	Chris O.	Bob
Shirley	Bev	Leah	Brynnley
Abby	Kim	Serge	Kim P.
Janet	Dianne	Grace	Sandy
Carol	Rae	Lainey	Ellen & Art

And as a community we pray the prayer that Jesus taught us, saying:

***Our Father....***

***Refrain***

**Called by earth and sky, promise of hope held high.  
This is our sacred living trust, treasure of life sanctified,  
called by earth and sky.**

**<sup>1</sup> Precious these waters, endless seas, deep ocean’s dream,  
waters of healing, rivers of rain, the wash of love again. *Refrain***

**<sup>2</sup> Precious this gift, the air we breathe; wind born and free.  
Breath of the Spirit, blow through this place,  
our gathering and our grace. *Refrain***

**<sup>3</sup> Precious these mountains, ancient sands; vast fragile land.  
Seeds of our wakening, rooted and strong,  
Creation’s faithful song. *Refrain***

**<sup>4</sup> Precious the fire that lights our way, bright dawning day.  
Fire of passion, sorrows undone, our faith and justice one.**

**Called by earth and sky, promise of hope held high.  
This is our sacred living trust, treasure of life sanctified,  
called by earth and sky, called by earth and sky,  
called by earth and sky.**

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**Living our Faith this Week**

This week consider the habits and routines in your life. Are there habits that allow people to see God when they are with you? What can you cultivate in your life so that people can trust your way of being?

**Commissioning and Benediction**

**Sung Benediction**

**Go now in peace, never be afraid,  
God will go with you each hour of everyday.  
Go now in faith, steadfast strong and true,  
Know God will guide you in all you do.  
Go now in love, and show you believe.  
Reach out to others, so all the world can see.  
God will be there, watching us in love.  
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love. **Amen. Amen. Amen****

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