

Penny Nelson

Gathering Song: MV 18 God Prepare Me to be a Sanctuary

### Announcements

#### Welcome:

**One:** Each new day reminds us of the light that dwells within us—the light God has placed deep within our hearts.

We light the Christ candle (*Elder lights Christ Candle*), remembering that we are made of light and love, remembering that we are called to bring light and love to others and the world.

We light the Peace candle (*Elder lights Peace Candle*) as a reminder that Jesus taught us to live in peace with all Creation. As the congregation of Knox United, we acknowledge that we live, work, worship and play within the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. As those who follow Jesus' path of peace,

**All: we commit ourselves to upholding the Treaties of Peace and Friendship so that we will live in a good way with all peoples, the land, the waters, and all of Creation, for we are all treaty people.**

**One:** We light the Affirmation Candle (*Elder lights Affirmation candle*) as a celebration of all the wonderful diversity in which God creates us and calls us good! In this community of faith, we celebrate that all are welcome in this place.

**All: All are welcome by God's grace.**

#### Call to Worship:

One: In our lives,

**All: We are surrounded by stories.**

One: In our worship,

**All: We bring our stories to God.**

One: In this time, our stories are framed—

**All: Our story is God's story, and God's story is ours.**

One: Through scripture and singing,

**All: God shines through our lives.**

One: Through stained glass and stitching,

**All: God shines through our lives.**

One: And, over the course of our years,

**All: like Christ, we grow in wisdom and stature.**

One: Let us settle into this time of growth together. Come, let us worship God.

#### Opening Prayer

One: Holy God, in the busyness of this time of year, we give you thanks for this time of worship. We thank you for drawing us here to make time for you.

**All: Bless us in this time of worship.**

**One:** Help us to clear our minds and schedules so we can focus on what is happening here and now. Help us to receive the words in the music, the message in the scripture, the hope within the prayers, and the joy in gathering.

**All: May we receive what is given this day.**

**One:** Some of us today bring sadness and worry. Some of us bring loneliness. Some of us bring regret. Some of us bring disappointment.

**All: Relieve us from the burdens we carry. Fill us with the substance we really need: your love, your wisdom, your hope, your forgiveness.**

**One:** Then send us out after worship, uplifted and renewed. May your Spirit fill us.

**All: Be with us in this time of worship. Be with us always. All of this we pray, in the name of your Child, Jesus. Amen.**

**Hymn:** MV 145 Draw the Circle Wide

Celebration Time

**Prayer of Illumination**

*Prayer of Illumination: Creating and Creative God, as light shines through a stained-glass window, we pray that you will illuminate the wisdom of this scripture reading for our day and age. Enlarge our vision and stretch our imagination, God, so we might see ourselves within your story, too. All of this we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

**Scripture:**

Luke 2: 41-52 read by Jennifer Williams  
Words of God that are still speaking.

**Thanks be to God!**

**Reflection:**

**Hymn:** Sacred Stories

**Offering Invitation:**

**One:** Just as each piece of coloured glass is added together to create one whole, beautiful window that portrays a story of Christ's life, we each offer our own unique gifts of time, talents, and finances to create the ministry of Knox United Church. Thank you for all the ways you add beauty, depth, and meaning to this ministry by following God's call in your life.

Offertory Hymn: The Doxology

**\*\* Offering Dedication:**

**All: Gracious God, receive all the gifts we offer this day. Through time, talents, and financial gifts, may your love and joy shine through our offerings and illuminate this world with hope. All this we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.**

**Ministry of Music**—“I Believe” (*soloist Jean Collier*)

**Prayers of the People**  
**The Lord's Prayer**

**Hymn:** VU 375 Spirit of Gentleness

**\*\*Blessing:**

One: As you leave this time of worship, may you remember that God's story is *your* story, and your story is God's. So, in the week to come, may the love of God, the passion of Christ, and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit shine through your life in all you say and do. And in this way, Christ's Way, may you be blessed to be a blessing. Thanks be to God. Amen!

**Parting Song:** Go Now in Peace

**OUR MISSION  
TO SHARE GOD'S LOVE  
BY LIVING THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS:  
showing mercy,  
promoting justice,  
offering forgiveness,  
acceptance, and hope.**

**Our Vision...**

We, the congregation of Knox United Church, publicly proclaim our commitment to become an open and welcoming community of faith. We declare that we welcome everyone regardless of age, race, ability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Everyone is welcome here.

Through the process of honouring diversity and challenging injustice with those who bear the weight of discrimination, we commit ourselves to openness, growth, education, love, and acceptance.

Christ's Disciples in Ministry: Everyone  
Minister of Worship, Outreach and Faith Formation: Rev. Penny Nelson  
Minister of Pastoral Care: Rev. Kym Burke  
Minister of Music & Dramatic Arts: John Lindsay-Botten  
Church School Superintendent: Lynne Stewart  
Youth Group: James O'Connell  
Pastoral Care: Olive McIldoon & Judy Hayes

567 Sackville Drive (PO Box 210) Lower Sackville, NS B4C 2S9

Office: 902.865.9216 Hall/Kitchen: 902.865.1603 Fax: 902.865.0599

In the case of pastoral emergency, please dial 902.865.2617

office: admin@knoxsackville.ca website: www.knoxsackville.ca facebook.com/knoxunited

+ Call to Worship written by Rev. Penny Nelson and John Lindsay-Botten while at Knox United Church, Lower Sackville, 2022. Used with permission; Opening Prayer adapted from prayer “Be With Us Always” written by Elaine Bidgood Sveet, First Lutheran, Rugby & Leeds, North Dakota. From <gatheringworship.ca>. Used with permission; Prayer of Illumination written by Rev. Penny Nelson while at Knox United Church, Lower Sackville, 2022. Used with permission (with inspiration from David Sparks’ “Broaden Our Horizon” prayer: <<https://gatheringworship.ca/prayer/broaden-our-horizon>>.); Offering Invitation, Offertory Prayer, and Blessing written by Rev. Penny Nelson while at Knox United, Lower Sackville, 2022. Used with permission.