

Saint James United Church

May 21st, 2017 – 6th Sunday of Easter

120 Chapel St. Woodstock, N.B. E7M1H1

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Minister: Rev. Debra Baker

Music Director and Organist: Amy Anderson

Admin. Assistant: Mary Wheelan C.D. Coordinator: Joan Hall

Ushers: Ray and Arlene Derrick, Carolyn Porter

Reader: Angela Young



Welcome all visitors and their families who may be worshipping with us this morning. We pray that you will feel at home here at Saint James and that you will feel the presence of God's Holy Spirit, as we worship. After the service please introduce

yourself to Rev. Debra,, sign our guest book at the back of the sanctuary and join us for Coffee, Tea and Fellowship in the Board Room.

WE GATHER

Prelude

Introit VU#370 – Send Your Holy Spirit

Welcome

Question to Ponder How do we know that God is with us?

Hayward House Recovery Centre's Mental Health T.O.P.I.C.S. is holding an event to spread awareness of mental health. We will be hosting Paul Levesque, a motivational speaker, who will talk about resilience and hope. He's a hockey player from Edmundston who was just about to sign a contract with the NHL when he had a bad car accident in the winter that put him into a coma and he didn't come out of it until spring. He had to re-learn absolutely everything; walking, talking; everyday life tasks. He could have given up right then and taken pity on himself but instead, he stayed optimistic and has come a long way as he can talk again, walk,... just about everything. He has even written a book called La Vie Continue (Life Continued), and it's currently only available in French but it will soon be available in English. This event is happening **May 23rd from 7pm-8pm.** Doors open at 6:30 pm and tickets are 10\$. They're available at Hayward House, Hairraisers and at the door. Attached is a poster to include in your bulletin. If you know of anyone that may benefit or be interested in this event we'd love to see them there!

Woodstock High School Choir Concert: Thursday, May 25th at 7 pm, at St. Gertrude's church, 103 Union Street, Woodstock. All are welcome to come and enjoy the music and energy in song from this talented group of young people.

CHECK BULLETIN BOARD

RUN FOR THE WORD 2017

Canadian Bible Society

DUO CANTILENA IN CONCERT May 26, 2017

Sally Wright, flute Steven Peacock, guitar

GO-GO EVENTS Bouncy Castle Event Packages

GOSPEL CONCERT Woodstock Baptist Church

Saturday, May 27th at 7 PM featuring "Side Effects",

Andrea Weston, Shelley Graham, and NB Country Music

Hall of Fame inductee Jack McAfee. Donations accepted for River Valley Cancer Support Group and Relay for Life.

DONATIONS

A Memorial Donation has been made to the Saint James Sunday School Fund in loving memory of Roy MacNally by Ann and Bob MacNally, Joan Hall, The UCW Unity Group, Lois Wright and Family.

A Memorial Donation has been made to the General Fund in loving memory of our mother, Phyllis Greer, from her sons and daughter.

A Memorial Donation has been made to the Youth Development Fund in loving of our mothers, Betty Bunting and Marion Reardon, by Robert and Marion MacFarlane.

A Memorial Donation has been made to the Children's Health Fund in loving memory of Ann Carr by Lana McKay.

A Memorial Donation has been made to the Children's Health Fund in loving memory of Roy MacNally by Lana McKay.

A Memorial Donation has been made to the General Fund in loving Memory of sweet, kind Mom, Donna Cogle. Always in my heart -Debby.

Call to Worship

ALL Sing: *Lord Jesus, breathe on me; give me strength today. Holy Spirit, work in me. For this I pray.*

God is with us in this place.

God is with us, and around us, and in us.

God dwells in us and we dwell in God.

God hears our prayers. God's love is constant.

ALL Sing: *Lord Jesus, breathe on me; give me strength today. Holy Spirit, work in me. For this I pray.*

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Prayer of Opening

We open our hearts to one another and, in these moments of stillness, become aware of the warmth, the breath, the life we share. The Spirit of Christ abides in the shared space between us. May we inhale deeply of this sacred presence and exhale words and actions of godly love. Amen.

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Hymn

VU#396 – Jesus, Stand Among Us

Story Time

Prayer of Confession and Words of Forgiveness

We are joined together by Christ's Spirit. Through this joining, we know Love and we are able to speak, and act, and be love.

Mindful of this Spirit, let us be aware of the faith we share and the strain that is sometimes part of our reality.

(time for silent confession)

Forgive us, God, when we fall short of the dream you have for us and the dream we have for ourselves. Refresh us with your spirit that we may again be free to love with all our heart. Amen.

Words of Forgiveness

God’s presence is in us, between us, and embracing us always. Through the unity of this Spirit, we are shaped into a community that lives to fulfill love’s expectations. We are a forgiven people.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

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WE LISTEN FOR THE WORD OF GOD

Anthem Follow the Way of the Lord

Scripture Acts 17:22-31 (*please participate by following along*)
Psalm 66, VU p.785, Parts Two and Three
1 Peter 3:13-22
John 14:15-21

Message

Music for reflection

Hymn MV#49 – When We Seek Language

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD OF GOD

Presentation of the Offering

Offertory *What can I do? What can I bring?
What can I say? What can I sing?
I’ll sing with joy. I’ll say a prayer.
I’ll bring my love. I’ll do my share.*

Offertory prayer

Here we offer our gifts to you, Giving God. Take them. Use them. Take us, and use us. May we be always your arms reaching out in love to a hurting world. Amen.

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Minute for Mission

Announcements

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Concern

The Lord’s Prayer VU#960

Closing Hymn VU#376 – Spirit of the Living God

Blessing and Sending Forth

Go into the world, into places both known and unknown. Find those who are feeling orphaned and abandoned, and remind them that God is always with them. And know that God will be with you always.

Amen.

Choral Postlude VU#958 – Halle, Halle, Halle

Postlude

† † † † † †

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BIBLE STUDY GROUP Rev. Debra is holding a 6-week study group on Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. It began on May 10, 2017. We will be looking at the Trinity this time. All are welcome!

LENTEN CHALLENGE During Lent as a congregation let's pledge to walk to Jerusalem from Saint James. That's 8942 Km. We have a lot of walkers here all we need to do is keep track of our km. and report in once a week during lent. A tally sheet will be posted on the Bulletin Board. The person with the most km. will receive a special prize. **TRAVEL LOG** The week of May 14 - 444.9 Km. We have gone 5,681.3 Km and have reached dry land. **With the enthusiasm we have decided to continue this journey until we get there. Keep Walking.**

COFFEE HOUR This year we will be serving coffee and tea after church and if you wish to bring a snack to share, please feel free to do so. We still need volunteers for setup and cleanup. Thank you.

CONFIRMATION AND MEMBERSHIP Anyone interested in becoming a member of Saint James United Church, either through confirmation or transfer of Membership, please let Rev. Deb know. **We will receive the new members on June 4th, 2017.**

UPPER ROOMS FOR MAY AND JUNE have arrived and located at the back of the church. **WE ALSO HAVE LARGE PRINT.** (Cost 3.00.)

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FUND We have a new Youth Development Fund which donations would be greatly appreciated.

CAMP GRAMMIE See bulletin board and brochures.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Acts 17:16-34

Narrator: So Paul found himself alone for some time in Athens. He would walk through the city, feeling deeply frustrated about the abundance of idols there. As in the previous cities, he went to the synagogue. Once again, he engaged in debate about Jesus with both ethnic Jews and devout Greek-born converts to Judaism. He would even wander around in the marketplace, speaking with anyone he happened to meet. Eventually he got into a debate with some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. Some were dismissive from the start.

Philosophers (two centre aisles): **What's this fast-talker trying to pitch?**

Others (balcony): **He seems to be advocating the gods of distant lands.**

Narrator: They said this because of what Paul had been preaching about Jesus and the resurrection. This stirred their curiosity, because the favorite pastime of Athenians (including foreigners who had settled there) was conversation about new and unusual ideas. So they brought him to the rock outcropping known as the Areopagus, where Athens' intellectuals regularly gathered for debate, and they invited him to speak.

Athenians (two side aisles): **May we understand this new teaching of yours? It is intriguingly unusual. We would love to know its meaning.**

Paul: Athenians, as I have walked your streets, I have observed your strong and diverse religious ethos. You truly are a religious people. I have stopped again and again to examine carefully the religious statues and inscriptions that fill your city. On one such altar, I read this inscription: "TO AN UNKNOWN GOD." I am not here to tell you about a strange foreign deity, but about this One whom you already worship, though without full knowledge.

This is the God who made the universe and all it contains, the God who is the King of all heaven and all earth. It would be illogical to assume that a God of this magnitude could possibly be contained in any manmade structure, no matter how majestic. Nor would it be logical to think that this God would need human beings to provide Him with food and shelter – after all, He Himself would have given to humans everything they need – life, breath, food, shelter, and so on. This God made us in all our diversity from one original person, allowing each culture to have its own time to develop, giving each its own place to live and thrive in its distinct ways. His purpose in all this was that people of every culture and religion would search for this ultimate God, grope for Him in the darkness, as it were, hoping to find Him. Yet, in truth, God is not far from any of us. For you know the saying, “We live in God; we move in God; we exist in God.” And still another said, “We are indeed God’s children.” Since this is true, since we are indeed offspring of God’s creative act, we shouldn’t think of the Deity as our own artifact, something made by our own hands – as if this great, universal, ultimate Creator were simply a combination of elements like gold, silver, and stone. No, God has patiently tolerated this kind of ignorance in the past, but now God says it is time to rethink our lives and reject these unenlightened assumptions. He has fixed a day of accountability, when the whole world will be justly evaluated by a new, higher standard: not by a statue, but by a living man. God selected this man and made Him credible to all by raising Him from the dead.

Narrator: When they heard that last phrase about resurrection from the dead, some shook their heads and scoffed, but others were even more curious.

Others (balcony): We would like you to come and speak to us again.

Narrator: Paul left at that point, but some people followed him and came to faith, including one from Areopagus named Dionysius, a prominent woman named Damaris, and others.

1 Peter 3:13-22

¹³Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? ¹⁴But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, ¹⁵but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; ¹⁶yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God’s will, than to suffer for doing evil. ¹⁸For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, ²⁰who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. ²¹And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you – not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

John 14:15-21

¹⁵“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. ¹⁷This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

¹⁸I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. ¹⁹In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. ²⁰On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.”

Scripture Readings for Sunday, May 28, 2017

Acts 1:6-14; Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35; 1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11;
John 17:1-11

DATES TO REMEMBER

- May 21 Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.
Sunday School
Coffee, Tea and Fellowship in Board Room
- May 23 Games 1:00 p.m.
Sparks / Pathfinders 6:30 p.m.
- May 24 Study Group “The Trinity” 10:00 a.m.
Quilting 1:00 p.m.
Choir 7:15 p.m.
- May 28 Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.
Sunday School
Sunshine Singers
Soup, Rolls and Fellowship in C.E. Centre

SCENT FREE ENVIRONMENT: *A few of our congregation members have been experiencing problems due to perfumes in the church. We have tried to maintain a Scent Free Environment within Saint James United Church. We would like to remind everyone to please consider this request and refrain from wearing perfumes.*

If you have noticed someone missing from our congregation, please contact them by phone or visit them in person. You may be their “angel.”