

**Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Regional Councils
Congregation Service
Sunday, June 7, 2026**

**Prepared by Worship Planning Team of the Regional Meeting Planning Committee
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We Gather as God's People

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

On this Sunday morning members of our regional council gather at Mount Allison University for the Service of Celebration to conclude the annual meeting of our region and have been exploring the theme of Seeds of Faith, Roots of Change. The Youth@Region theme was Rooted.

Land Acknowledgement

This land on which we gather is traditional land of the _____ peoples. We worship the Creator on this land and acknowledge with respect the thousands of years of ceremony and relationship that are etched in footprint, fire and faithfulness on the soil and rock that surrounds us.

Lighting of the Christ Candle

As we light this Christ candle, we celebrate the light that guides us. This flame reminds us of Christ's presence, may this light shine through us as we step into the future with hope and love.

(Light the candle)

Hymn:

This is the Day

OR

More Voices 122

This is the Day

Voices United 412

Call to Worship

Leader: We gather as people who have been planted by God,

All: Rooted in faith, nourished by grace.

Leader: We come carrying seeds, seeds of hope for the future, seeds of justice, compassion and peace.

All: We come trusting that God is at work, even when growth is slow or hidden.

Leader: The Spirit calls us to tend what has been planted, to loosen the soil of our hearts, to welcome new life and new ways.

All: We worship the God who brings growth, who deepens our roots, and who makes all things new. Let us worship God together.

Opening Prayer

Loving and life-giving God, We gather today with grateful hearts, drawn together by your Spirit. In this time of worship, we pause to remember why we are here, to praise you, to seek your guidance, and to listen for your voice.

You are the One who plants seeds of hope in our hearts and in our communities. Even when the ground feels uncertain, you continue to sow possibilities for new life. Open our eyes today to see the seeds you are planting among us.

You are also the One who nurtures the roots of change. Deepen our faith, strengthen our courage, and ground us in your love so that we may grow as a church that reflects your justice, your compassion and your grace.

Let this time of worship renew us, unite us, and remind us that your Spirit is already at work, growing hope, and bringing transformation in ways we may not yet see. Unite us in your love, O God, trusting that the work you have begun in us will continue, In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.

Hymn: Soil of God, You and I

More Voices 174

Story for All Ages

Good Morning, Look at this tiny seed. (Hold up a small seed). It doesn't look like much, does it? It's small, plain, and quiet. But inside this little seed is something powerful.

This seed is like hope. Sometimes hope feels small. Maybe it's just a little thought:

"Things could get better."

"God is with me."

"I can try again."

(Place the seed in soil)

When we plant a seed, we can't see what's happening right away. It goes underground, into the dark. That's like when we're waiting, or when life feels hard. But even then, something important is happening.

Before anything grows above the ground, roots begin to grow underneath. Roots are hidden, but they are strong. They take in water and nutrients and help the plant stand tall.

That's like the way God works in us.

When we hold onto hope, God is growing something deep inside us, kindness, courage, patience, love.

Jesus often talked about seeds. He reminded us that even the smallest things, like a tiny seed of faith, can grow into something big and life-giving.

When we plant seeds of hope:

- A kind word
- A helping hand
- A prayer
- A moment of forgiveness

Those small actions can grow deep roots of change, in us and in the world around us.

So remember:

Even the smallest seed of hope, planted with love, can grow deep roots, and God can use it to change the world.

Dear God, thank you for seeds of hope. Help us grow strong roots. Fill us with your love. And use us to change the world. Amen

We Listen for God's Word

Scripture Reading

Psalm 126

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then it was said among the nations,
"The Lord has done great things for them."
The Lord has done great things for us,
and we rejoiced.
Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
like the watercourses in the Negeb.
May those who sow in tears
reap with shouts of joy
Those who go out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
carrying their sheaves.

Matthew 13:31-32

He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

Music Ministry (if you have special music this day)

Sermon: Seeds of Hope, Roots of Change

Voice One:

We gather today with a theme that is both gentle and bold: Seeds of Hope, Roots of Change. These are not quick words. They invite us to slow down, to notice what is growing beneath the surface. The church has always lived in seasons, times of planting, times of tending, times of harvest, and times of rest. Today, we stand in a season where seeds are being sown again, sometimes with trembling hands, sometimes with deep trust.

Voice Two:

Seeds are small. They rarely announce themselves. In our communities, hope often begins quietly, in a conversation over coffee, in a shared meal, in someone noticing a need and choosing to respond. Change doesn't usually arrive with fanfare. It comes when people stay, listen, and show up again and again.

Voice Three:

In the world, the language of hope can feel fragile. We are surrounded by news of division, violence, climate crisis, and displacement. And yet, even here, especially here, seeds are being planted. Movements for justice, acts of courage, and unexpected solidarities remind us that despair does not have the final word.

Voice Four:

And then there is the soil closest to us: our own lives. Each of us carries seeds within, questions, dreams, griefs, and longings. Change in the world and church is always mirrored by change within ourselves. Sometimes the hardest ground to tend is our own hearts.

Voice One:

The church is not new to change. From its earliest days, it has adapted, reformed, and reimagined itself. Still, change can feel unsettling. We remember full sanctuaries, familiar programs, and ways of being church that shaped us. Letting go can feel like loss, even when we know something new is needed.

Voice Four:

And yet, within us lives a quiet trust. We know that the church is more than buildings and budgets. It is people called together by love, shaped by grace, and sent into the world.

When one way of being church fades, another begins to emerge, often led by the Spirit in unexpected ways.

Voice One:

Seeds of hope are already present among us. They appear in small, faithful congregations who keep welcoming, even when numbers are few. They appear in lay leadership stepping forward with creativity and courage. They appear when we ask not, “How do we survive?” but, “Whom are we called to serve now?”

Voice Two:

From the community’s perspective, the church’s hope is felt when it shows up, not as an institution with answers, but as a neighbour willing to listen. When the church partners with others, opens its doors, and shares its space, roots begin to grow again, roots of trust.

Voice One:

The roots of change in the church are often invisible. They are found in prayer groups that persist, in councils and boards that wrestle faithfully with hard decisions, in congregations that risk trying something new. Deep roots do not prevent storms, but they allow us to withstand them.

Voice Three:

And when the church chooses hope over fear, generosity over scarcity, collaboration over isolation, it becomes a witness, not of certainty, but of faithfulness. In a world longing for meaning, that witness matters.

Voice Two:

Communities are shaped by relationships. Change does not happen because of a single event, but because of ongoing presence. In neighbourhoods where people feel unseen or forgotten, hope grows when someone stays long enough to learn names and stories.

Voice One:

The church’s calling in the community is not to be the centre of attention, but a steady presence. Sometimes that looks like hosting a food program. Sometimes it looks like offering space for support groups or cultural gatherings. Sometimes it is simply being open, physically and spiritually.

Voice Two:

Roots of change grow when partnerships replace competition. When churches, nonprofits, schools, and local leaders recognize they are tending the same soil, the work becomes shared. No one plants alone. No one bears the burden alone.

Voice Four:

This kind of rootedness requires patience. We often want immediate results, visible impact. But community change is slow. Trust grows at the pace of relationship. Hope deepens when people feel respected, not rushed.

Voice Two:

In communities facing poverty, isolation, or transition, seeds of hope may look modest: a weekly meal, a clothing program, a listening ear. But these seeds matter. They say, "You belong. You are seen. You are not alone."

Voice Three:

And when local communities flourish, the impact ripples outward. A rooted community becomes a sign of what is possible, a reminder that change does not always start in centres of power, but in shared commitment.

Voice Three:

The world's challenges are vast. It is easy to feel overwhelmed by their scale. Yet history teaches us that lasting change often begins small. Seeds planted by a few can transform the lives of many.

Voice Four:

Hope at the global level is sustained when we remember that our actions, though limited, are not insignificant. Every act of compassion participates in a larger story, God's story of reconciliation and renewal.

Voice Three:

Across the world, people are planting seeds of hope through advocacy, peacemaking, environmental care, and human connection. These efforts are not always celebrated. Sometimes they are resisted. But they persist because they are rooted in love.

Voice One:

The church's global witness is strongest when it listens as much as it speaks. When it stands alongside those who are marginalized, rather than speaking for them, it honours the dignity of all people.

Voice Three:

Roots of change in the world are nourished by solidarity. When we recognize that our lives are connected, to the earth, to distant neighbours, to future generations, we begin to act differently. Stewardship replaces exploitation. Compassion replaces indifference.

Voice Two:

And hope grows when people believe that change is possible. Not all at once. Not everywhere. But somewhere. Always somewhere.

Voice Four:

Change in the church, community, and world ultimately asks something of us personally. What seeds are we willing to plant in our own lives? What habits, assumptions, or fears need to be loosened so that new growth can occur?

Voice One:

Spiritual growth often requires surrender. Like seeds buried in the ground, we must trust that what feels like loss may actually be transformation. This is not easy. Growth rarely is.

Voice Four:

Hope within ourselves grows when we make space for prayer, reflection, and honest conversation. When we allow ourselves to be learners again, open to new perspectives, new relationships, new callings.

Voice Two:

Change within us also shows itself in how we relate to others. Are we willing to listen more deeply? To disagree respectfully? To act with generosity even when it costs us something?

Voice Three:

The world is shaped by people who believe their lives matter, who know their actions are part of something larger. When we root ourselves in that truth, we become agents of hope.

Voice Four:

And we remember that we do not grow alone. God tends us patiently, faithfully, season by season. Even when we feel dormant, the work continues beneath the surface.

Voice One:

Seeds of hope have been planted, in the church, the community, the world, and within ourselves.

Voice Two:

Roots of change are growing, sometimes slowly, sometimes quietly, always with intention.

Voice Three:

We may not see the full harvest, but we trust the One who gives the growth.

Voice Four:

So we go forward with courage and compassion, committed to tending the soil entrusted to us.

All Voices:

May we be faithful planters, patient tenders, and joyful witnesses to the hope God is bringing to life among us. Amen.

We Respond to God**Offering Invitation**

Let us continue to grow as we offer our gifts to the work of the church. Let us join together in our morning offering.

Offertory Hymn:
What Can I Do?
OR
We Give You But Your Own

More Voices 191

Voices United 542

Presentation of the Offering

Generous and Loving God, we ask you receive these gifts, and the gifts offered by PAR and e-transfer, gifts of our hearts and hands. May these gifts be used for ministry in your name. Amen.

Prayers of the Community

God of seeds and seasons,
we thank you for the faithful witness of your people,
for congregations and communities who have tended the soil of ministry
through prayer, service, and perseverance.

We pray for the church in this region:
for leaders and volunteers, clergy and laity,
for those who plant and those who water,
for those who wait and those who wonder.
Give wisdom where decisions are needed,
and courage where change is required.

We pray for congregations feeling weary or discouraged,
where the ground feels hard
or the harvest uncertain.
Remind us that roots grow deep in hidden places
and that you are at work even when we cannot see it.

We pray for our communities and our world,
where so many long for hope,
for justice to take root,
for peace to be nurtured,
for reconciliation to grow where there has been division.
Make us faithful sowers of your love.

We pray for ourselves as we gather to discern, plan, and dream.
Plant in us humility, patience, and trust.
Help us release what must be let go
and embrace the new life you are calling forth.

All these prayers we offer to you,
O God who brings the growth,
in the name of Jesus,
our living root and source of hope. Amen.

Hymn:
My Love Colours Outside the Lines
OR
May the God of Hope Go With Us

More Voices 138
Voices United 424

We Go Forth to be God's People

Commissioning

Go now as people who have been planted in Christ.
Tend the seeds of hope God has placed in your care.
Stay rooted in love,
open to change,

and trusting in the Spirit's work.
May God who gives the growth bless you and keep you.
May Christ, the true vine, strengthen your roots.
May the Holy Spirit send you forth
to bear fruit for the life of the world.

Go in peace,
to love and serve.
Amen.

Sung Blessing: Choose what is familiar for your Community of Faith

Postlude