

Corner Brook United Church

19 Park Street, Corner Brook, NL A2H 2W8

Phone: 634-5301

Email: ucadmin@nl.rogers.com

Website: www.firstunitedcb.com

Minister:	Rev John van Vliet
Minister Emeritus:	Rev Clayton Parsons
Music Director:	Jennifer Billard
Office Staff:	Cathy Quigley

Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday 10 am – 2 pm

We're able to receive bulletin info until **Wed. at 1 pm**

Rev van Vliet's email is firstministercb@gmail.com

His phone is **632-7129**. He tries to take Fridays off.

Washrooms:

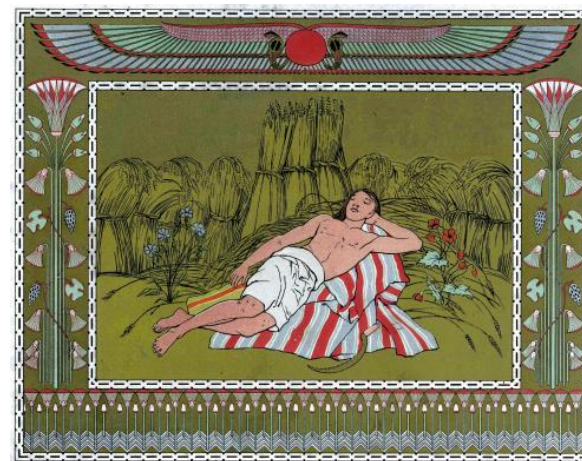
Upstairs: through the door to the right of the stage

Downstairs: the exit between the two coat racks

CBU strives to be a **scent free** facility.

Corner Brook United Church

August 9, 2026



Joseph and the wheat stalks, 1869
by Owen Jones



Joseph and the stars, sun and moon, 1869
by Owen Jones

August 9, 2026

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Silent Prayer

Call to Worship: (adapted from Psalm 40)

L: I put all my hope in the Lord. He leaned down to me; he listened to my cry for help.

P: He lifted me out of the pit of death – out of the mud and filth – and set my feet on solid rock.

L: He put a new song in my mouth – a song of praise for our God. Many will learn of this and be amazed.

P: Those who put their trust in the Lord, who pay no attention to the proud or to those who follow lies – they are truly happy!

L: So I look to God. Don't hold back any of your compassion from me. Let your loyal love and faithfulness always protect me,

P: Because countless evils surround me. Favour me Lord, and deliver me! Lord, come quickly and help me!

L: Let those who want to do me harm be thoroughly frustrated and humiliated.

P: But let all who seek you celebrate and rejoice in you. Let those who love your salvation always say, "The Lord is great!"

Hymn: *It's a Song of Praise to the Maker* MV 30

Message: Joseph part I

Oh, how the mighty have fallen
(reading through Genesis 37 – 39)

Hymn: *Out of the Depths, O God...* VU 611

Offertory Hymn: *We Give You ...* VU 542

Offertory Prayer

Community Prayer/LORD's Prayer

Hymn: *Go Forth for God* VU 418

Blessing

Postlude

Our choir and coffee hour volunteers are on a well-deserved break over the summer. Both will resume in September.

Memorials

In loving memory of our parents, Pauline & Roy
Howell by Laurie & Andrew Philpott

In loving memory of our Grammy & Grandfather by
Scott (Michaela), Brad (Denicia) & Ty

In loving memory of our parents, Pauline & Roy
Howell by Brent & Sharon

In loving memory of our grandparents by Meaghan
(Yannick) & Ally (Kyle)

An interesting debate within the Joseph story...

Over the past few decades the Joseph story has been taken up by LGBTQ-friendly theologians who claim that Joseph was gay.

First of all, there's the 'evidence' of the multicoloured, or fancy coat. But as we go through the story we'll see that this probably didn't have as much to do with personal fashion preferences as with making a class distinction between those who did manual labour, and those who didn't.

There's also a reference in Genesis 39: 6 that's often translated into English as Joseph being "well-built and handsome" – but which uses Hebrew word endings that may align more closely with the word "pretty."

And there's the story of Joseph rejecting the advances of Potiphar's wife. Of course, this *could* be because he wasn't interested in women – but I think it's more likely that he was conscious of the fact that sleeping with his boss' wife would have meant the death penalty if discovered. Also, it might be intended to show that Joseph was a highly principled man who didn't sleep around.

I'm not saying that the idea of Joseph being gay is impossible. Every society through history has had people who didn't align with a two-gendered social model, based on traditional gender roles. But, in my opinion, the biblical evidence regarding Joseph's sexuality is fairly thin, and firmer evidence is needed before reaching that conclusion.

Ishmaelites or Midianites?

There's a bit of controversy surrounding the description of Joseph's sale into slavery. By way of a quick reading Genesis 37 appears to frame Ishmaelites and Midianites as being the same group. But while they were closely related, they weren't actually the same tribe of people.

You may remember the story of Abraham and Hagar and their son Ishmael – who went on to become the forefather of the Ishmaelites. (And the purported father of Arabs, and hence the spiritual father of all Muslims.) Meanwhile, Midianites were descended from another of Abraham's wives, Ketura. So both peoples descended from Abraham, albeit in different ways. Yet Genesis 37 does seem to use the names alternatively.

But you could also read ch 37 v 28 and come to the conclusion that the brothers *intended* to sell Joseph to a group of passing Ishmaelites they saw in the distance. But while they were waiting for the Ishmaelites to arrive a group of Midianites also passed by, noticed Joseph in the pit and hauled him up – and that it was the Midianites who actually sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for 20 pieces of silver. If this latter version is true then it makes the story all the more sad for the brothers, because not only do they commit the great sin of selling their brother off into slavery, but they possibly didn't even profit from it.

In the end, the method of Joseph's enslavement doesn't really matter. Only that he ended up as a slave in Egypt.