

St. James United Church

Lenten Communion Service 2017: March 8, 15, 22, 29, April 5, 12

Minister: Rev. Pamela Jones-Fitzgerald
Minister of Youth/Christian Education: Susan Sheppard, DLM
Acting Minister of Visitation: Rev. Ettie Gordon-Murray

Please turn off your cell phone during the Service.

Gathering and Welcome

Silence

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Opening Responses:

Part A:

One: Thanks be to You, O God, that we have risen this day.

All: To the rising of this life itself

One: be the purpose of God between us and each purpose.

All: The hand of God between us and each hand, the pain of Christ between us and each love.

One: O God, who brought us to the bright light of this day.

All: bring us to the guiding light of eternity.

Part B:

One: Welcome to this holy place:

All: house of prayer for many people; home to all who come.

One: Welcome to this gathering place:

All: friend and stranger, saint and sinner in all who gather here.

One: Come with hope or hesitation; come with joy or yearning all who hunger, all who thirst for life in all its fullness.

All: Generous God and Generous Savior, touch us through Your spirit.

Call to Prayer:

One: We gather in God's name.

All: We claim Christ's promised presence.

One: My brothers and sisters, not out of dread and fear, but believing that God is faithful to forgive, let us rid ourselves of what we need to carry no longer.

Silence

Prayer of Confession and Restoration: Eternal God, Maker of the skies above, lowly Christ born amidst the growing earth, Spirit of life, wind over the flowing waters in earth, sea and sky, You are there. O hidden mystery, sun behind all suns, soul behind all souls, in everything we touch, in everyone we meet, Your presence is around us, and we give thanks. But when we have not touched but trampled You in creation, when we have not met but missed You in another, when we have not received but rejected You in the poor, forgive us, and hear now our plea for mercy.

Silence

Hear now the words of Jesus for all who are truly sorry and seek to renew their lives: *"Your sins are forgiven. Go in peace, come and follow me."*

Silence

All: Lead us now, O God, to acknowledge Your costly generosity by living as forgiven people, until heaven and earth rejoice and the whole earth cries *Glory!* through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading:

One: Let us prepare ourselves for the Word of God as it comes to us in the reading of Holy Scripture.

All: Our hearts and minds are open.

Scripture Reading

Song:

Jubilate, Servite

(Rejoice in God all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness)

Ju-bi-la-te De-o om-nis ter-ra. Ser-vi-te Do-mi-no in lae-ti-ti-a.

Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, in lae-ti-ti-a.

Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, in lae-ti-ti-a!

Affirmation of Faith: A New Creed

We are not alone; we live in God's world. We believe in God:

who has created and is creating,

who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit.

We trust in God. We are called to be the Church:

to celebrate God's presence,

to live with respect in Creation,

to love and serve others,

to seek justice and resist evil,

to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.

We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

Prayers of Intercession: It is in this mystery of communion with Christ that we pray for the Church throughout the world. We pray in particular for....
We pray for the people and for all communities of faith.....
We pray for the sick, the bereaved, the oppressed and the homeless. We pray in particular for....
We pray for the broken and torn fabric of the earth as it yearns for healing. We pray in particular for....
And because You are one with us, O Christ, enable us to share Your life with the world. And so we pray, in the words You have taught us:

All: Our Father....

Silent Prayer (If you feel called to light a candle or two please do so)

Song: *Ubi Caritas*
(Where charity and love are found, God himself is there)
Ubicaritas et amour, Ubicaritas Deus ibiest



The Invitation: The table of bread and wine is now to be made ready. It is the table of company with Jesus, and all who love Him. It is the table of sharing with the poor of the world, with whom Jesus identified Himself. It is the table of communion with the earth, in which Christ became incarnate. So come to this table, you who have much faith and you who would like to have more; you who have been here often and you who have not been for a long time; you who have tried to follow Jesus, and you who have failed; Come. It is Christ who invites us to meet him here.

The Story of the Last Supper: Blessed is our brother Jesus, who walks with us on the road of our world's suffering, and who is known to us in the breaking of the bread and the pouring of the wine.

After having blessed it, He broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, saying, *"This is my body, given to you."* In the same way He took wine and having given thanks for it, He poured it out and gave the cup to His disciples, saying, *"This is the new relationship with God, sealed with My blood. Take this and share it. I shall drink wine with you next in the coming Kingdom of God."* Let us pray together.

All: Loving God, through Your goodness we have this bread and wine to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. May we know Your presence in the sharing of this bread, so that we may know Your touch in all bread and all matter. We celebrate the life that Jesus has shared among His community through the centuries. We celebrate the life that Jesus shares with us now. Made one in Christ and one with each other, we offer these gifts and with them ourselves. We are a single, holy living sacrifice. Amen.

The Prayer of Consecration: Hear us, O Christ, and breathe Your Spirit upon us and upon this bread and wine. May they become for us Your body, vibrant with Your life, healing, renewing and making us whole. And as the bread and wine, which we now eat and drink, reminds us of You and Your ministry, may we in turn become whole, living and caring in the world.

The Communion: Look, the Body of Christ is broken for the life of the world. Here is the Christ coming to us in bread and in wine: the gifts of God for the people of God.

Sharing the Bread and the Wine

Sharing the Peace:

One: Many grains were gathered together to make this bread, many grapes were mixed to make this journey. So we who are many, and come from many places, are one in Christ. May the peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

You are invited to share the peace with one another.

Blessing:

One: May the everlasting God shield you east and west and wherever you go. And the blessing of God be with you. The Blessing of the God of Life be with you. The blessing of Christ be upon you.

All: The Blessing of the Christ of Love.

One: The blessing of the Spirit be upon you.

All: The blessing of the Spirit of Grace.

One: The blessing of God our Creator, Jesus our Friend and Savior and the Holy Spirit, love's power be upon you, now and forevermore.

All: Amen.

Closing song: *Jesus Remember me*

Je-sus, re-member me when you come in-to your Kingdom.
Je-sus, re-mem-ber me when you come in-to your Kingdom.

Dismissal:

One: Let us go into the world rejoicing. It is Christ who goes before us.

All: Thanks be to God. Amen.

*** Music for the Service is taken from the Book of Taize.*

***Service and Communion Liturgy has been adapted from the Iona Abbey Worship Book, the Iona Community, Glasgow, Scotland.*