

St. James United Church

September 3, 2017/13th Sunday after Pentecost

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

**Please remain seated comfortably until invited to stand.
Please turn off your cell phone during the Service.**

Musical Prelude

Acknowledgement of Country/First Peoples

Welcome & Life & Work of St. James



Entry into the Celebration

Lighting of the Community Candle

Passing the Peace of Christ:

One: Rejoice, for you are standing on holy ground.

All: Praise the Lord!

One: May a heart of peace rest with you.

All: And also with you.

(You are invited to share the peace with your neighbours.)

Gathering Words:

One: God calls us from a burning bush.

All: We are standing on holy ground!

One: The Spirit calls us to proclaim God's name to all generations.

All: We are standing on holy ground!

One: Jesus calls us: "Come and follow Me."

All: We are standing on holy ground!

Opening Prayer: (together) Surprising God, You have an uncomfortable habit of showing up where we least expect You: in a burning bush, in the face of an enemy, in a livestock feed trough, on a rough wooden cross. Turn our lives upside down with Your radical love. Help us fully embrace Your surprises, even as we revel in the joy of being fully embraced by Your all-encompassing grace and mercy. Amen.

Hymn: *As a Fire Is Meant for Burning* 578
(to the tune of *Come and Find the Quiet Centre*, #374)

Children's Time and Celebrations

Hymn: *I Have Called You by Your Name* MV161

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

Offertory Hymn: *Spirit, Open My Heart*

Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.

As You love, may I love, in receiving and in giving, Spirit, open my heart.

Offertory Prayer: (together) Dear God, we offer You now these gifts. Take our money and use it to bring comfort to those in need. Take our service and use it to bring justice to those who are oppressed. Take our witness and use it to bring good news to those who hunger for hope. Amen.

Silence

Scripture Readings

Old Testament:

Exodus 3: 1-15

Moses encounters the burning bush.

Solo: Hannah Sheppard, French Horn

Gospel:

Matthew 16: 21-28

Take up the cross and follow Me.

Hymn: *I, the Lord of Sea and Sky* 509

Meditation

Prayer

Closing Hymn: *I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say* 626

Parting Words: (responsive)

One: We are called to join the adventure of living a passionate life.

All: So may we be carried past the boundaries and near horizons of our life's small dreams.

Benediction followed by Musical Postlude