

St. James United Church

A Community of Friends in Faith

330 Elizabeth Ave, St. John's, NL A1B 1T9



The people of St. James United Church are eternal seekers who value diversity within our congregation, our city and all of society. We affirm each person's uniqueness and believe that all persons deserve to be valued, treated with equity, and respected. We are all children of God, walking many paths of spirituality.

Further, we proudly and publicly declare our commitment to practice radical hospitality and strive in every way to provide a safe and supportive place for all persons to participate in the worship and work of our church.

Guided by the teachings of Jesus, we embrace all persons, regardless of creed, race, age, ability, economic status, cultural and ethnic background, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or any other difference that has led to marginalization or oppression.

February 6, 2022, Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
(First Sunday of Black History Month)

Leading Worship: Rev. James Ravenscroft

Accompanist: Alba Chen

Music Leadership: Glen Warren

We Come to Worship

MUSICAL PRELUDE

WELCOME: *We extend greetings in Inuktitut, Mandarin Chinese and Tigrinya.*

LIGHTING OF CHRIST CANDLE

We light the candle as a sign of Christ's spirit both with and within us.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF LAND AND KINSHIP

We take time to give thanks for the land and the Indigenous peoples who continue to steward it; we also commit to be an inclusive community for all.

CALL TO WORSHIP *(inspired by Psalm 1)*

One: Blessed are they who do not listen to wayward advice,

All: but follow the way of God's guidance.

One: To meditate on God's teaching is like being planted near water,

All: a tree nourished by wisdom and strengthened in love.

One: Blessed are they who together are rooted in Christ.

All: In God's Spirit they will yield good fruit.

OPENING PRAYER

HYMN: "Take Time to Be Holy" *Voices United 672*

1 Take time to be holy, speak oft with your Lord;
abide in him always, and feed on his word.
Make friends of God's children, help those who are weak,
forgetting in nothing his blessing to seek.

2 Take time to be holy, let him be your guide,
and run not before him, whatever betide.
In joy or in sorrow, still follow the Lord,
and, looking to Jesus, still trust in his word.

3 Take time to be holy, be calm in your soul,
each thought and each motive beneath his control.
Thus led by his spirit to fountains of love,
you soon shall be fitted for service above.

We Share

OUR LIFE AND WORK

We acknowledge the connection between our work and our worship as we take time to announce what is going on in our congregation and community.

RECOGNITION OF OFFERINGS

We acknowledge the ways people contribute to the community of faith and wider community, especially by way of supporting St. James UC financially.

OFFERTORY PRAYER *(in unison)*

**Living Source from whom all kindness, mercy and justice flow,
we are grateful for your gifts,
the many ways we are strengthened in your grace.
And so we too give of ourselves,
sharing love in varied acts of kindness, mercy and justice,
trusting that your grace flows through them as a gift to others.
Bless then what we have given, and bless all of our lives,
that our words and actions may bring new life in your name.
We pray in the name of Jesus, your gift of the world. Amen.**

SOLO: "Take My Life and Let it be" (Frances Ridley Havergal)

We Listen

TIME OF CENTERING

We listen to a singing bowl, preparing our hearts to receive the day's readings.

READINGS: Luke 6:17-26 and 1 Corinthians 15:12-20

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

READING: “A Poem on the Assassination of Robert F. Kennedy” by Nikki Giovanni

MESSAGE: “In the Thick of Things”

HYMN: “Hope of the World” *Voices United* 215

1 Hope of the world,
O Christ of great compassion,
speak to our fearful hearts by conflict rent;
save us, your people, from consuming passion,
who by our own false hopes and aims are spent.

2 Hope of the world,
God's gift from highest heaven,
bringing to hungry souls the bread of life,
still let your Spirit unto us be given
to heal earth's wounds and end our bitter strife.

3 Hope of the world,
afoot on dusty highways,
showing to wandering souls the path of light:
walk now beside us lest the tempting byways
lure us away from you to endless night.

4 Hope of the world,
who by your cross has saved us
from death and dark despair, from sin and guilt:
we render back the love your mercy gave us;
take now our lives, with them your kingdom build.

5 Hope of the world, O Christ, o'er death victorious,
who by this sign did conquer grief and pain,
we would be faithful to your gospel glorious.
You are our Lord! You shall forever reign!

We Respond

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

GREAT THANKSGIVING PRAYER

One: God be with you. **All: And also with you.**
One: Open your hearts. **All: We open them to God.**
One: Let us give thanks. **All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

One: Eternal Creator, all you have made is beautiful and good.
We thank you for darkness and light, for growth and change,

for all that lies beyond our knowledge and imagination.
You alone are Wisdom's source, brought forth from you
long before the oceans were formed or the mountains set.
Delighting in all that was made, she continues to speak,
revealing that what we consider to be wise seems like folly to you.

Through Holy Wisdom, you reached out to us,
giving us your sacred teaching at Mount Sinai,
sending prophets to call us back to your way,
and in Jesus, the Word made flesh, speaking once more.
In him you embraced our struggle in all that he said and did.
And even though we rejected him, he continued to show your love,
opening his arms wide as the cross became Wisdom's tree of life.

And so we praise you, as we join your angels and saints in their song:

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.
All creation is full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the One who comes in your name. Hosanna in the highest.**

Living Source, we praise you for Jesus who on the night before he died,
shared a meal with his friends. He took bread, gave you thanks,
broke it and said "Take and eat. This is my body."
In the same way, at the end of the meal, he took a cup of wine.
He thanked you and gave it to them, saying:
"Drink this, all of you. This cup is the new covenant in my blood.
Whenever you do this, do it in memory of me."

And we do remember, delighting in the faithfulness of his life,
the sacrifice of his death, the wonder of the resurrection,
the promise of his abiding presence in a new community of hope.
And so we proclaim:

All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again!

Enlivening God, as we continue to celebrate his memory,
we honour your abiding presence with us.

Open our hearts to your Spirit with us and in this meal.
Brood over us that we may be one body in Christ,
called to be your people of truth and reconciliation.
May we walk in right relations with all your children:
as good stewards of creation, seekers of justice for all who are oppressed,
courageous bearers of your wisdom in all that we say and do.

We offer this act of praise and thanksgiving, Gracious God:
Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

All: Amen!

THE PRAYER OF JESUS

Please pray in your first language. A traditional version in English follows:

**Our Father, who art in heaven. Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

SHARING IN COMMUNION

I invite you to pick up the bread before you.
We share the bread of life, broken that we may know healing.
(Everyone eats their piece of bread.)

I invite you to pick up your cup.
We share the fruit of the vine, poured out that all may be reconciled.
(Everyone drinks their wine or juice.)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION *(in unison)*

**We give thanks Holy God for our gathering at your table.
May this wisdom feast continue to strengthen us as we go into the world
to walk in peace, love and a spirit of healing with all of creation.
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

We Leave to Serve

HYMN: "Go Forth for God" *Voices United* 418, verses 1, 2 and 4

1 Go forth for God, go to the world in peace;
be of good courage, armed with heavenly grace,
in God's good Spirit daily to increase,
till in the kingdom we see face to face.
Go forth for God, go to the world in peace.

2 Go forth for God, go to the world in love;
strengthen the faint, give courage to the weak;
help the afflicted; richly from above
his love supplies the grace and power we seek.
Go forth for God, go to the world in love.

4 Go forth for God, go to the world in joy,
to serve God's people every day and hour,
and serving Christ, our every gift employ,
rejoicing in the Holy Spirit's power.
Go forth for God, go to the world in joy.

BENEDICTION

MUSICAL POSTLUDE

St. James United Church

Lead Minister:	James Ravenscroft, OM
Youth/Christian Education Minister:	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Minister Emeritus:	Rev. Dr. Donovan Brown
Acting Music Director:	Bob Rose
Associate Music Director:	Alba Chen
Technology Support:	Jake Thompson
Office Administrator:	Tracy Bishop
Church Custodian:	Bruce Winsor