

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.

This bulletin is dedicated in loving memory of brother
E. Desmond Butt, P. Eng.,
(April 14, 1948 - March 5, 2018)
From sisters Glenda Winsor and Gloria Le Feuvre and families.

March 6, 2022, First Sunday in Lent

Leading Worship: Rev. James Ravenscroft
Accompanist: Amy Dalziel
Music Leadership: Glen Warren

We Come to Worship

MUSICAL PRELUDE

LIGHTING OF CHRIST CANDLE

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

WELCOME: *We extend greetings in Inuktitut, Hindi and German.*

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.

CENTRING REFRAIN: "Be Still and Know" *More Voices 77*

Be still and know that I am God.
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OPENING SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Each Sunday we try a different practice to centre us. Today we use a finger labyrinth. Slowly trace the path with your finger to focus yourself.



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OPENING PRAYER *(in unison)*

God of desert and oasis, of journey and destination, with your chosen people and your chosen Son, we wander in this time of reflection and renewal. Be with us in these days, that we may open our ears to hear your wisdom, open our eyes to capture your vision, and open our hands to be people of service and healing. We pray in the name of Jesus, the One who walks with us on our way. Amen.

HYMN: "Jesus, Tempted in the Desert" *Voices United 115*

1 Jesus, tempt in the desert,
lonely, hungry, filled with dread:
“Use your power,” the tempter tells him;
“turn these barren rocks to bread!”
“Not alone by bread,” he answers,
“can the human heart be filled.
Only by the Word that calls us
is our deepest hunger stilled!”

2 Jesus, tempted at the temple,
high above its ancient wall:
“Throw yourself from the lofty turret;
angles wait to break your fall!”
Jesus shuns such empty marvels,
feats that fickle crowds request:
“God, whose grace protects, preserves us,
we must never vainly test.”

3 Jesus, tempted on the mountain
by the lure of vast domain:
“Fall before me! Be my servant!
Glory, fame, you’re sure to gain!”
Jesus sees the dazzling vision,
turns his eyes another way:
“God alone deserves our home!
God alone will I obey!”

4 When we face temptation’s power,
lonely, struggling, filled with dread,
Christ, who knew the tempter’s hour,
come and be our living bread.
By your grace, protect, preserve us
lest we fall, your trust betray.
Yours, above all other voices,
be the Word we here, obey.

We Share

OUR LIFE AND WORK

We acknowledge the connection between our work and worship as we 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

SOLO

We Listen

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: *We take time to acknowledge the places and situations in our lives where we need healing and forgiveness.*

SUNG VERSION OF PSALM 51

According to thy steadfast love have mercy, Lord on me;
in thy compassion great, blot out all my iniquity.

Wash me from sin; completely cleanse me from iniquity,
for my transgressions I confess; my sin I ever see.

For thou desirest truth, O Lord, within the inward part;
thy wisdom, Lord, then may I learn; oh teach my secret heart.

Purge me with hyssop; make me clean and whiter than the snow;
thy joy and gladness let me hear; thy healing let me know.

Blot out all my iniquities; thy face hide from my sin;
create in me a clean heart, Lord, a spirit right within.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

READINGS: Deuteronomy 26:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13

From *The Seven Story Mountain* by Thomas Merton

CENTRING REFRAIN: "Be Still and Know" *More Voices 77*

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MESSAGE: "Wrestling with Meaning"

We Respond

HYMN: "Let Us Break Bread Together" *Voices United 480*

Let us break bread together on our knees,
let us break bread together on our knees.

Let us drink wine together on our knees;
let us drink wine together on our knees. **R**

Refrain:

When I fall down on my knees,
with my face to the rising sun,
Oh, Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us praise God together on our knees;
let us praise God together on our knees. **R**

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

One: Jesus shared meals with saints and sinners, the faithful and doubting, revealing God's healing and reconciling love to all.

All: **As we prepare to share this meal together, may we know that God's love and new life surround and renew us.**

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

One: God be with you. **All:** **And also with you.**

One: Open your hearts. **All:** **We gladly open them to God.**

One: Let us give thanks. **All:** **It is good to give thanks and praise.**

One: It is good to praise you, Holy God, as we gather around this and many tables seeking nourishment for the journey. You are a God of grace, bringing fresh insight in these days of renewal, helping us to discover anew your gift of relationship, a pledge of love first given to Adam and Eve, and renewed again and again from Abraham, Sarah, Hagar and their descendants through to Moses, Miriam and Aaron when you led the people out of Egypt. No matter our failings, you consistently called us back, inviting us to repentance through your prophets and through Jesus offered a promise of forgiveness and new life. Grateful for your faithful love we join with all who have gone before us in their song of praise:

O Holy, Holy, Holy God, O God of time and space.

All earth and sea and sky above bear witness to your grace. Hosanna in the highest heaven, creation sings your praise. And blessed is the One who comes and bears your name always.

One: Even now, you renew your pledge, Gracious God, in this sacred meal where we gather in memory of Jesus and all he did for us. We remember especially how on the night before he died Jesus gathered with his friends to mark the festival of Passover. As countless generations had done before them, they celebrated the power of your saving love. There Jesus took bread and after sharing the blessing, gave it to them saying, "This is my body, given for you." In the same way he took the cup, and gave it to them saying, "This is the cup of the new covenant in my blood. Whenever you do this, remember me."

Recalling his death and resurrection, affirming his promise of abiding presence, we proclaim the mystery of your love:

All: Sing Christ has died, and Christ is risen, Christ will come again! Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen, Christ will come again! (*More Voices 204*)

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. May all who share this living bread and saving cup be renewed in your covenant and affirmed in your love. Creator God, we praise you, through Your Word made flesh, in the power of your life-giving Spirit, now and forever.

All: Amen, Amen, O holy One, Hosanna and Amen. Amen, Amen, O Holy One, Hosanna and Amen.

THE PRAYER OF JESUS (*based on the spoken language of Jesus*)

Name of names, our small identity unravels in you; you give it back as a lesson. Help us let go, clear the space inside, so your Name comes to live. Let your counsel rule our lives, clearing our intention for co-creation. Help us love beyond our ideals with acts of compassion for all. Give us the food we need to grow each day; untangle the knots within so we can mend our hearts' ties with others. Don't let surface things delude us, but free us from what holds us back. From you is born all will, from age to age renewed. Amen.

SHARING IN COMMUNION

I invite you to pick up the bread. We share the bread of life. May it bring strength for the journey ahead. (*Everyone eats the bread*)

I invite you to pick up your cup. We share the fruit of the vine. May it bring joy in anticipation of your journey's end. (*Everyone drinks the wine or juice*)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION:

Spirit of healing and grace, in our sharing of bread and wine, you bring us nourishment for the journey, renewing us in body and in spirit. Strengthen us in our wandering and bring us to your promised home. Amen.

We Leave to Serve

HYMN: "Bless Now, O God, the Journey" *Voices United 633*

Bless now, O God, the journey
that all your people make,
the path through noise and silence,

the way of give and take.
The trail is found in desert
and winds the mountain round,
then leads beside still waters,
the road where faith is found.

Bless sojourners and pilgrims
who share this winding way,
whose hope burns through the terrors,
whose love sustains the day.
We yearn for holy freedom
while often we are bound.
Together we are seeking
the road where faith is found.

Divine Eternal Lover,
you meet us on the road.
We wait for lands of promise
where milk and honey flow.
But waiting not for places,
you meet us all around.
Our covenant is written
on roads, as faith is found.

BENEDICTION

One: As we go from here in this time of self reflection,

All: may we be blessed in seeking to know Jesus more deeply.

One: May we follow along the path he has walked before us,

All: arriving at Easter in a spirit of renewed love and joy.

MUSICAL POSTLUDE

St. James United Church

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