

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.

April 16, 2022, The Easter Vigil

Leading: Rev. James Ravenscroft; Susan Sheppard, DLM

Preaching: Rev. Oliver Dingwell

Accompanist: Amy Dalziel

Music Leadership: Glen Warren and Glenda Winsor

Ushers: Jean Thompson, Robin Bartlett and Paul Walsh

We Come In Sorrow

WELCOME

OPENING READING: M. Guite, "XIV Jesus is laid in the tomb"

TIME OF SILENT REFLECTION

HYMN: "O God, Why Are You Silent?" *More Voices* 73, v 1, 4

OPENING PRAYER

We Remember Our Story

RECALLING SALVATION HISTORY

Reading #1: Selected verses from Genesis 1

Response: "This is God's Wondrous World" *Voices United* 296, v 1, 2

Reading #2: Selected verses of Genesis 8 and 9

Response: "My Life Flows On" *Voices United* 716, v 1, 4

Reading #3: Selected verses of Exodus 14 and 15

Response: "Lead on, O Cloud of Presence" *Voices United* 421, v 1, 2

Reading #4: Selected verses of Ezekiel 36

Response: "As the Deer Pants" Psalm 42, *Voices United* p. 766

We Celebrate With Hope

PROCESSION AND LIGHTING OF THE EASTER FIRE

EASTER GOSPEL: John 20:1-3 and 10-18

PROCESSION INTO THE SANCTUARY

EXSULTET (Easter Song of Praise) (with *Voices United* 179)

Hallelujah, hallelujah, give thanks for the Risen Christ.

Hallelujah, hallelujah, give praise to God's name.

READING: Romans 6:3-11

MESSAGE: Rev. Oliver Dingwell

We Respond In Faith

RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL FAITH

Do you believe in God, who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus the word made flesh, and works in us and others through the Spirit? **(I do, by God's grace.)**

Will you follow in the way of Jesus, living with respect for all creation, loving and serving others, seeking justice and resisting evil? **(I will, by God's grace.)**

Will you proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope, and join with others to make known God's reign?
(I will, by God's grace.)

Renew your baptism and be thankful!

Following the renewal, the congregation is sprinkled with water as a reminder of their baptism. Everyone sings "Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!" (Voices United p. 958)

OFFERTORY

We present our gifts and give thanks that they will be used in God's service.

PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

Christ is risen! **Christ is risen, indeed!**

Open your hearts. **We open them to God.**

Let us give thanks. **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

One: Hallelujah! and praise to you, Ever-Living God, creator of heaven and earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When your people turned away

from you, you remained steadfast and constant. You saved them from the flood, putting a rainbow in the sky as a sign of your love.

You delivered Israel from captivity, claiming them as your own and setting before them your way of life and blessing.

Through them you have blessed all nations. Grateful for this constant love we join your angels and saints in a song of praise:

**All: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the One who comes
in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!**

One: Hallelujah! and praise to you, God of our salvation, for your Son, Jesus Christ. You affirmed him as your beloved and through the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection, gave birth to your Church, establishing a new covenant by water and the Spirit, your people born anew to a living hope. Called to embody his constant love in the world, we remember how on the night before he died, Jesus took bread and after giving thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take, eat. This is my body, given for you." In the same way he took the cup, saying: "Take, drink. This is my blood poured out for you. Whenever you eat and drink, remember me." Hallelujah! and praise to you, Redeeming God. We do remember, grateful that on the day of his resurrection, Jesus was recognized by his disciples in the breaking of the bread, and that even today he comes to meet us as we share this meal together. With joy we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Open our eyes then O God, to the presence of your Holy Spirit,

here with us and within these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be for us the body and blood of Christ, and by that your Spirit we may be one with Christ and with one another. Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory is yours, God most Holy, now and forever. **Amen.**

Adapted from a prayer written by Oliver Dingwell, Easter 2018, Great Thanksgiving Inspired by At Your Table, United Methodist Church, 1981

THE PRAYER OF JESUS (in unison)

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, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

SHARING IN COMMUNION

There is a central station to receive bread (served with tongs), and two side stations to receive juice served in communion glasses.

COMMUNION HYMN: "We Gather Here" *Voices United 469*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION (in unison):

Holy God, here at this table your promise of new life is made tangible. We have tasted your nourishing presence and welcomed you into our lives. Strengthened by this gift of grace, send us now to proclaim your resurrection: to feed others as we have been fed, to forgive others as we have been forgiven, to love others as we have been loved, for the sake of Jesus, the Risen One. Amen.

We Leave to Serve

CLOSING HYMN: "Christ Is Alive" *Voices United 158*

SENDING FORTH AND BENEDICTION

One: Risen with Christ

All: we know the reassurance of God's presence.

One: Risen with Christ

All: we accept the challenge to walk in God's way.

One: Risen with Christ

All: we are proof that God's life will never die.

One: So, go forth in joy! Christ is Risen!

All: Christ is risen indeed! Hallelujah!

MUSICAL POSTLUDE

Offering at Today's Service

All the offerings at the Holy Week Services will be forwarded to the Mission and Services Fund in support of Ukraine.

The invasion of Ukraine is costing precious lives and creating a humanitarian crisis as people flee to safety. The United Nations reports that a growing number of over a million people, displaced from their homes, are seeking refuge in neighboring countries. Many have lost friends, loved ones, and property; struggle to meet their basic needs, and face an uncertain future. United Church Mission & Service partners are responding to the rapidly unfolding crisis.

