

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 5, 2023: The Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Leading Worship: Rev. James Ravenscroft
Leading Music: Amy Dalziel,
and New Found Sound Women's A Capella Choir
Ushers: Bill & Cindy Pike, Marilyn Adams,
Jean Thompson and Susan Pike
Reader: Jennifer Whitfield

We Come to Worship

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND LIGHTING OF CHRIST CANDLE

We offer greetings in M'ikmaw'i'simk, Tamil and Spanish as we gather as a spiritual community, lighting the candle as a sign of Christ's presence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF LAND AND KINSHIP

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

HYMN: "Let Us Build a House" (*More Voices 1*)

CALL TO WORSHIP (*inspired by Psalm 112*):

One: We come together to celebrate the gift of being God's children.

All: In faith, hope and trust we come together to worship.

One: We come together to seek wisdom in God's word.

All: With trust we come to listen for God's steadfast love.

One: We come together to sing, to pray, to support each other.

All: In confidence we gather to rest in holy grace.

OPENING PRAYER

Holy Light, shining in us in hope and love,
we pray for your abiding goodness.

May the same faith that drew us here be evident in our lives, the light of your love made present through our hands
and through our hearts. We pray in the name of the One
we call the light of the world. Amen.

ANTHEM 1: "Amazing Grace"

We Share

OUR LIFE AND WORK: *We share what is going on in our community*

OFFERTORY: "When Heaven's Bright with Mystery" (*VU 93, v 4*)

When heaven's bright with mystery and stars still lead an unknown way, when love still lights a gentle path when courts of power can hold no sway, there with the Magi let us kneel, our gifts to share, God's world to heal.

We Celebrate

WELCOME OF NEW MEMBERS

We welcome Karen Brown, Glenn Burry, Randy Butler, Lloyd Hillyard, Marilyn Pardy and David Tucker as members of SJUC by profession of faith and transfer of membership from other United Church congregations.

Commitment of Incoming Members

Congregational Commitment: ... **As your siblings in Christ, we rejoice in your gifts. We pledge to you our love and support. With God's help, we will together live out the mission and ministry of Christ's church.**

Profession of Faith (A New Creed, Voices United p. 918)

Official Welcome (and Presentation of Bible and Membership Certificates) ... **Welcome Karen, Glenn, Randy, Marilyn, Lloyd and David, as members of St. James, members of this family in faith.**

HYMN: "God Says" (*More Voices 172*)

We Listen

PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND ILLUMINATION

READINGS: 1 Corinthians 2:1-12; and Matthew 5:13-20

ANTHEM 2: "Do Lord"

MESSAGE: "The Meaning of Light"

We Respond

HYMN: "As We Gather at Your Table" (*Voices United 457*)

WELCOMING ALL 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 good to give thanks and praise.**

One: It is good to thank you, Eternal Creator. All that you have made is beautiful and good: darkness and light, growth and change. So much lies beyond the scope of our knowledge and imagination, for you alone are Wisdom's source. Brought forth from you long before the oceans were formed, or the mountains set, she speaks in every age, revealing how our wisdom seems like foolishness to you.

Through her you reached out to us at Mount Sinai to reveal your sacred teaching, sent prophets to call us back to your way, and in Jesus, the Word made flesh, embraced our struggle, showing us your love even when we rejected him and nailed him to a tree.

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

All: O holy, holy, holy Lord, O God of time and space. All earth and sea and sky above bear witness to your grace. Hosanna in the highest heav'n, creations sings your praise. And blessed is the One who comes and bears your name always. (MV 203)

It is good to praise you, Living Source, especially as we remember Jesus, who transformed the cross into Wisdom's Tree of Life. We recall how on the night before he died, he shared a meal with friends. He took bread, gave you thanks, broke it and gave it to them saying: "Take and eat. This is my body, given for you." 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 life's blood. Whenever you do this, do it in memory of me."

And we do remember, praising you for the faithfulness of his life, the sacrifice of his death, the wonder of the resurrection, the promise of his abiding presence. And so we proclaim:

**All: Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen,
Christ will come again! (x2) (More Voices 204)**

Enlivening God, as we continue to celebrate his memory, we honour your 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 any and 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, all glory and honour is yours
O God of Wisdom, now and forever.

All: Amen, amen, O Holy one! Hosanna and Amen! (x2) (MV 205)

THE PRAYER OF JESUS (The Lord's Prayer)

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy king-dom 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 COMMUNION

One: This is the bread of life, broken to give life to the world.
This the fruit of the vine, love poured out that all may truly live.
This is the banquet of blessing, Christ among us in our sharing.

All: Thanks be to God.

There is a station for bread and side stations with juice in communion glasses. Please consume the bread and juice before returning to your pew. If you are unable to come forward to share in communion, someone will bring it to you once everyone who wishes to has received.

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: "We Are Marching in the Light of God" (*Voices United 646*)

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH:

One: As we go forth from here:

**All: may we be strong in spirit,
courageous in will, and gentle of heart.**

One: Each day may our actions be:

All: rooted in wisdom, nurtured by hope, and open to love.

One: May we meet others as we would wish to be met:

**All: with a heart of compassion,
in a spirit of healing, and grounded in joy.**

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:	Bob Rose
Technology Support:	Jake Thompson
Office Administrator:	Stephanie Harnum
Church Custodian:	Bruce Winsor

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