

St. James United Church

A Community of Friends in Faith

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

Celebration of Worship for January 14, 2024



The people of St. James United Church are eternal seekers who value diversity within our congregation, 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.

January 14, 2024: Second Sunday after Epiphany

Leading Worship: Rev. James Ravenscroft
Leading Music: Amy Dalziel, Bob Rose and the Senior Choir
Ushers: Michelle & Wayne Skinner, Marilyn Adams,
Jean Thompson and Susan Pike

*Please rise in body or in spirit where there is an *.
Print in **bold** indicates that the portion is read or sung by everyone.*

We Come to Worship

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND LIGHTING OF CHRIST CANDLE

*We offer greetings in M'ikmawi'simk, French and Igbo as we gather as a baptized community.
We light a 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.*

INTROIT: "Spirit Divine" (*Voices United 385, v. 1*)

CALL TO WORSHIP

Here we are, fellow travellers on the road,
gathered together to rest on our journey in faith.

**Here we pause to consider our hopes and concerns,
to bring them to Christ, our companion on the journey.**

He calls each of us by name, reassuring us in love
as we venture into a future yet unnamed.

**With him at our side, we live into God's tomorrow,
are loved into God's dreams for us and for the world.**

OPENING PRAYER (*in unison*)

**Holy One, whose very nature is wholeness and life,
we give thanks that we have been called together today,
people from different places, of varied gifts and beliefs,
with a multitude of ways of serving and loving,
but all named by you, called by you, loved by you.**

**Make us one, O God, as you and your Christ are one,
joined together in faith as we feast on the word,
upheld in grace as we share at your table,
blessed in hope as we journey in the light of your love. Amen.**

* **HYMN:** “Arise Your Light Is Come” (*Voices United 79*)

We Share with Love

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

OFFERTORY: *There are many ways to share financial gifts with St. James United Church. If you prefer not to place a contribution in the offering plate, you may contribute by pre-authorized remittance (PAR), via e-transfer (email treasurer@stjamesuc.org), sent through the website (www.stjamesuc.org), mailed to the church office or dropped into our secure mailbox. In whatever way you give, the community is grateful.*

* **PRESENTATION HYMN:** *We dedicate our offerings to the word of God’s love as we sing “When Heaven’s Bright with Mystery” VU 84, 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 Listen and Respond

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

LEARNING TOGETHER

We explore themes of the day in a manner that is accessible to all ages.

* **HYMN:** “I, the Lord of Sea and Sky” (*Voices United 509, verse 1*)

READINGS: *As each reading concludes, please say, “Thank be to God.”*

1 Corinthians 6:12-20; Psalm 139 (*Voices United, p. 861*);
John 1:40-51; “The Call” by Charlotte Mew

ANTHEM: “Lord Jesus Christ (Living Lord)” by Patrick Appleford

REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

* **HYMN:** “I Have Called You by Your Name” (*More Voices 161*)

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Jesus welcomed everyone to share meals with him,
revealing that all people shine with the light of God’s love.
We share this meal knowing that God’s light surrounds us.

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God be with you.	And also with you.
Open your hearts.	We open them to the Holy.
Let us give thanks.	It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is right to thank you, Creator God, for in the beginning you spoke and in a burst of light the universe was born. Countless stars and planets were formed and through the death of stars, the universe was gifted with elements that make life possible. We give thanks for that gift, nurtured in diversity on this our home.

We thank you especially for the gift of human life, each of us a spark of your light in the world. You made us to share in your life and so we have spirits that soar to ponder your love, minds that wonder how everything is made, hearts that reach out to connect with others and to share in community.

Yet we know that as much as these gifts have been a blessing, they have also been a source of hurt. We reached out, but only to those who looked and acted like we did; we pondered your love and judged the spiritual paths of others as suspect; we wondered about the world and harnessed its secrets for harm.

And so, you spoke your word once more to holy teachers and prophets, inviting us to ponder, to wonder, to reach out beyond our limits and see how your gifts are to be shared.

You called Abraham and Sarah to be parents of a nation; Moses, Miriam and Aaron to lead them to freedom; Isaiah to call them back to your way and Esther to risk her life for theirs. And from within this witness of your way, you called Jesus, in whom we see your love. With thanks for his life, we join in a 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 heav'n, creation sing your praise. And blessed is the one who comes and bears your name always!

With continued thanks, Saving God, we gather at this table to remember Jesus. In him your spark turned to flame as he revealed your hope, invited people to change in preparation for your coming kingdom; called others to share in his ministry of healing and love. In a special way, we remember how on the night before he died, he shared a meal with his friends.

While at table, he took some bread, blessed and broke it, then gave it to them, saying: Take, eat.

This is my body which is given for you. In the same way he took some wine and after giving thanks, gave it to them, saying: Take, drink. This is the promise of God in my life's blood. Do this in memory of me.

We remember and give thanks for his life, death and resurrection, as we wait in the power of his Spirit for a world reborn.

Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen, Christ will come again! X2

God of wisdom, open our hearts to the presence of your Spirit flowing within us and through these gifts. May we bear your presence in the world, sparks of your love wherever there is need.

May we be your light, responding to your call by sharing your truth, cultivating your peace, and living out your love.

Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory is yours, God most holy, now and forever.

Amen, amen, O Holy One, Hosanna and Amen. X2

SHARING IN COMMUNION

This is the Bread of Life and this is the Cup of Love.
Come and be nourished. **Thanks be to God.**

Everyone is welcome to share communion – all ages, beliefs, identities and life experiences. Come to the front to receive the bread and grape juice (in a glass). Consume both before returning to your pew. Please let us know if you need the gluten free option. If you're unable to come to the front, someone will bring communion to you.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**We give thanks, God of light,
that you have fed us at your table with the presence of Christ.
Strengthen our faith,
increase our hope and send us to shine in your love. Amen.**

We Leave to Serve

HYMN: "You Call Us Out" (*Voices United 569*)

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH:

As we go forth from here:
**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

Chair of Council:	Michelle Skinner
Minister:	Rev. James Ravenscroft
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

Office: 722-1881, x200; Email: info@stjamesuc.org;
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 @StJamesUCNL  @StJamesUnited  @stjamesuc

WiFi: StJamesGuest WiFi Password: StJamesUC

All worship services at St. James are Live Streamed via video for our online congregation. By participating in this service, you acknowledge that you may be visible on live broadcast or archived video.

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We accept the following donation to the Cemetery Fund:

* In loving memory of Husband Bas Jamieson from Lorna

2024 Church Envelopes: Your 2024 church envelopes are available to be picked up at the church during office hours or Sunday morning during service. You will notice that your envelope number might not be the same as last year and that is due to trying to condense the number of boxes that we have to purchase.

The Mens Club will meet on Wednesday January 17. Lunch to be served at 1:00 pm. New members always welcome.

Pub Theology: Thursday, January 18 at 7:00 pm, it's time for Pub Theology at the Guv'nor Pub. Come for a time of conversation about faith, spirituality and life's big questions. All are welcome!



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