

St. James United Church

A Community of Friends in Faith

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

Celebration of Worship for March 10, 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.

March 10, 2024: Fourth Sunday in Lent

Leading worship: Rev. James Ravenscroft
Leading music: Amy Dalziel, Bob Rose and the Senior Choir
Ushers: Geoffrey & Carol Pike, 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: *We offer greetings in Mik'mawi'simk, French & Pashtun.*

LIGHTING OF CHRIST CANDLE AND SHARING OF PEACE

We greet one another while respecting people's physical comfort.

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: "O Jesus, Think on Me" (VU 607 V. 1, 4)

MEDITATIVE CALL TO WORSHIP: *Each Sunday of Lent, we begin with a time of centering, reflectively listening to a sound from nature.*

CENTRING REFRAIN: "Be Still and Know" (More Voices #77)

OPENING PRAYER (*remain seated*)

Creative and Creating God,
we come together in stillness,
opening our hearts to your presence within us, between us,
within and beyond all of your creation as well.
Be with us in these Lenten days as we journey together
in the companionship of Jesus your Beloved Son,
in whose name we pray. Amen.

* **HYMN:** “O God, How We Have Wandered” (VU 112, v. 1, 3)

We Share with Love

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

MINUTE FOR DIVERSITY: *We reflect on ways that we can live into our commitment as an Affirming Ministry and so be inclusive of all people.*

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 “For the Gifts of Creation” Voices United 538.*

For the gift of creation, the gift of your love, and the gift of the Spirit by which we live, we thank you and give you the fruit of our hands. May your grace be proclaimed by the gifts that we give.

We Listen and Respond

PRAYER OF GRATITUDE AND OPENNESS

LEARNING TOGETHER

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

* **HYMN:** “Fairest Lord Jesus” (Voices United 341)

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

Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 107 (Voices United p. 831, Part 1); John 3:14-21;
Excerpt from *Journey of the Heart* by John Wellwood

ANTHEM: “Lead Me Lord” S.S Wesley

REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

TIME OF QUIET REFLECTION

PRAYER FOR OTHERS

We pray for others, especially those we feel may like to come to church.

* **HYMN:** “Come, Let Us Sing of a Wonderful Love” (VU 574)

PRAYERS OF CONFESSION AND INTERCESSION

THE PRAYER OF JESUS (*Voices United*, p. 921)

We Leave to Serve

HYMN: “O Jesus, I Have Promised” (*Voices United* 120)

SENDING FORTH

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

All: may we be blessed in also knowing Jesus more deeply.

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

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

SUNG BENEDICTION: “May God’s Sheltering Wings” (MV 214)

May God’s sheltering wings, her gathering wings protect you.

May God’s nurturing arms, her cradling arms sustain you,

And hold you in her love, and hold you in her love.

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;
Emergency Cellphone: 351-0983; Website: www.stjamesuc.org



@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. All music and lyrics, not in the public domain, are reproduced / broadcast under ONE LICENSE.

License #: #A-700000

Life and Work - March 10, 2024

We accept the following donation to the Memorial Fund:

* In Memory of Margaret Quick Babstock from her family. Loved and remembered.

We Accept the following donation to the Music Program:

* In Loving Memory of Harvey Weir from Wife, Gail Weir.

NOTICE: St James United Church Annual Congregation Meeting will be held Sunday, March 17 at noon in the Auditorium with a light lunch provided.

Reflective Thursdays at 12:30: Each Thursday throughout Lent, (Rev.) James will lead an informal communion service in the Fellowship Room. Communion is at 12:30PM, followed by the sharing of lunch. Bring a bag lunch if you wish and have lunch together!

AOTS Men's Club: The regular monthly meeting of the men's club will be held on March 20 with dinner served at 1:00 pm. New members are always welcome.

Rev. James Office Hours: Rev. James office hours are on Tuesdays from 1:00pm to 3:30pm and on Thursdays from 10:00am to 12:30pm.

Make Your Lent Green: This year we are using a green lens as we explore the readings for each Sunday in Lent. Why not make your whole Lent green? One way to do this is to follow the suggestions by A Rocha, a Christian environmental organization started in the UK. Here is a link to their UK website: <https://arocha.org.uk/go-green-for-lent/>

To Ponder: Each day of Lent the sun lifts higher in the horizon and gets noticeably stronger. This is why we call this season Lent, taken from Lencten, Old English for spring. This name is more astronomical than le Carême (French), based on the season's length, or Fastenzeit (German), from the practice of fasting. I like the connection to spring, even if it still feels so wintry here. It reminds me that this time of year is about growth, about spiritual renewal. I also like how it mirrors our experience of the sun as it brings rebirth after months of cold. It reminds me how connected everything is. Wind is generated by how our planet interacts with it, from breezes influenced by warming of the land to global winds generated by

the heat differential between parts of the globe. The sun is part of the water cycle that gives us rain and snow. Plants and animals rely on the sun to survive. The sun's heat and light are so important that we mimic them in our homes. We need all the elements working together for life to exist, and many of these are driven by the sun. No wonder the sun is a symbol of God's power and grace. This is one reason fire is used in so many religions. In Christianity, we light candles. As we seek to be the light of the world as Jesus tells us, perhaps in this we are to be like the sun, nurturing connections and helping life to grow.

- What impact does the sun have in your life, emotionally, physically, or spiritually?
- Have you considered how the sun is part of many interrelated processes on the planet? How might that knowledge affect your reading of Bible verses that refer to the sun?
- How might you be like the sun, or like fire, in your own life?

Spiritual Practise: Light a candle some time this week. Do so in a dark room if you can. Notice what happens to the dark as the flame is first lit. What would happen if we didn't have light and the heat that it generates. Pray with gratitude for these gifts of the sun, these gifts of God.

Support our Music Program Challenge: The congregation has been challenged by one of our regular financial givers to raise money dedicated to our music program at St. James. They will match donations to a total of \$500.00. They encourage other members to consider a special contribution to support the music enjoyed during our services. Council is currently considering the budget for 2024 and special contributions, in addition to your regular annual financial gift, will help considerably in this process. Please make a donation to this worthy cause and identify it as "Music Program Challenge". Let's watch the total grow as we record it weekly.

Looking for Friends: Are you a younger person and missing your Nan? Are you a bit older and would appreciate a surrogate uncle or sibling? Then look no further. We are looking to connect some of our more senior members with people who will give them a call, stop by for a visit, be a friend. If this interests you, contact Stephanie at info@stjamesuc.org.

Volunteer Opportunity: Are you someone who tries to make sure everyone is included? Do you believe strongly in St. James as a congregation where people of all identities, backgrounds, sexualities and experiences belong? Then you should consider joining our Diversity Committee. Please contact Paul Walsh at jpaulwalsh1209@yahoo.com

UCW Spring tea:

St. James United Church
330 Elizabeth Avenue



Saturday, April 20, 2024

Time: 2 – 4 pm Cost: \$8.00

Co-Conveners:

Barbara Butt: (709) 687-1041

Sheilah Beckett: (709) 726-7421

Tickets: May be purchased at the door. Please contact the church office for more information.

Social Action and Outreach Group to provide meals to people that are housing insecure: St. James has been asked to join other churches and community groups to provide a hot meal once a day, in rotation, to the five homeless people who remain in the encampment in Bannerman Park. They've hardly had a hot meal this year! **We will need volunteers** to buy meals, or to prepare meals in our church's kitchen. We also need **donations of money and groceries**. Processes will be worked out according to our resources. If you can help in any way, please contact the church office at: info@stjamesuc.org or (709) 722-1881 ext. 200

Want to donate online this morning?

Scan this QR code with your phone and it will take you to our website. Then click "Donate". Thank you for your support.



stjamesuc.org

The Affirm Committees of Gower Street and St. James United Churches invite you to our education session on Gender Inclusive Curricula.

March 14TH, 5 PM TO 7 PM at St. James United Church

Over the past year, protests and counter-protests have erupted across Canada in response to new developments around gender inclusive curricula. In September, 2023 the "1 Million March 4 Children", saw people across the country take part in a protest they say aims to protect children from "premature sexualization and potential harmful indoctrination". Counter-protesters, including United Church leaders, challenged the movement stating that it promoted "misinformation, intolerance and hate toward the 2SLGBTQIA+ community". In St. John's No Space for Hate NL, a local pro 2SLGBTQIA+ group organized a counter-protest. Clergy from Gower and St. James joined with clergy from other United Churches and hundreds of other people in the wider St. John's area in support of inclusion, LGBTQ+ rights, and safe school spaces.

We know that there is misinformation, confusion, and concerns from many, both in our church communities and in the broader society about gender inclusive curricula. To address and reflect on some of these questions, the Affirming committees from Gower Street and St. James United are holding a joint education event on **March 14th from 5-7 at St. James United Church**. The objective of the event is to provide a safe and respectful space to address questions and concerns about the issue of gender inclusive curricula. The format of the event will include a panel of presenters with lived and professional experience of gender inclusive spaces, practices, and policies. The panel will be facilitated by **Liz Ohle** – founding member of Out in Faith NL.

Panelists include:

- **Trent Langdon** – Guidance Counsellor and President Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
- **Laurabel Mba** – Community Activist and NL Human Rights Commission 2022 Award Nominee
- **Hilary Hennessey** – N.L. Human Rights Commission, Disability and Education Advocate
- **Nathalie Brunet** – retired educator

A light meal will be provided. Please RSVP to Gail at gwideman@mun.ca by **Monday March 11th** so that we are able to prepare adequate food and accommodate any dietary limitations.

