

St. James United Church

A Community of Friends in Faith

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

Celebration of Worship for March 17, 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 17, 2024: Fifth Sunday in Lent

Leading Worship: Rev. James Ravenscroft
Leading Music: Amy Dalziel, Bob Rose and Senior Choir
Ushers: Theresa Roberts-Morrissey, Bill Legge,
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 Inuktitut, French and Sinhalese.*

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" (MV 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:** "As the Sun with Longer Journey" (VU 111)

We Share with Love

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

MINUTE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT: *We reflect on ways that we can care for the environment, especially in response to climate change.*

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."*

Jer. 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12 (*Voices United p. 776*); John 12:20-33; Excerpt from *Roots of Buddhist Psychologist* by Jack Kornfield.

ANTHEM: "Lead me, Lord" S.S Wesley

REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

TIME OF QUIET REFLECTION

* **HYMN:** "Creating God, Your Fingers Trace" (*VU 265*)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND INTERCESSION

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

We Leave to Serve

* **HYMN:** "Be Thou My Vision" (*Voices United 642*)

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



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WiFi: StJamesGuest WiFi Password: StJamesUC

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Life and Work - March 17, 2024

Condolences to Jennie Burry and family, on the passing of her husband Peter on March 9th. Peter was also the father of Keith Burry and Heather Cutler. There will be a private family burial at a later date.

We gratefully accept the following donation to the Memorial Fund:

- * In Loving Memory of my Husband, from Sheila Wedgewood.
- * In memory of Mae Wilson from the UCW
- * In memory of Harvey Weir from Irwin and Marilyn Rees

We gratefully accept the following donation to the Memorial Fund:

- * In memory of Harvey Weir from the Guitar Group

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

Current vacancies:

Vice Chair (Council)

Secretary (Council)

Chair (Trustees)

Chair (Finance)

Secretary (Christian Education Committee)

Regional Rep. (we have one representative and one back up but can have four)

Cemetery Rep

Christian Education, Stewardship and Diversity all need general members.

If you would like to join the meeting via Zoom, we have attached the Zoom link and information below:

Topic: Annual Congregational Meeting

Time: Mar 17, 2024 12:00 PM Newfoundland and Labrador

Join Zoom Meeting by using this information below:

Meeting ID: 825 6762 8499

Passcode: 003488

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.

Easter Sunday Breakfast and Easter Egg Hunt - March 31: Once again the AOTS Men's Club will be hosting Breakfast Downstairs, Eggs, Toast, Jam, Juice, Tea and Coffee. Come for breakfast starting at 9:30 am. Enjoy your Breakfast before going upstairs for the Easter Sunday Service at 11:00 am. There will be a free will offering. In the Sanctuary there will be an Easter egg hunt for the young and the young at heart.

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!

To Ponder:

Do you remember Dr. Dolittle? I was envious when I watched Rex Harrison portray John Dolittle in the 1967 film. I thought, “I may not have a macaw, but my gerbil and I would have lots to talk about.” As I look back, I realize my desire was more than childhood fancy. It was rooted in a feeling that humans and animals are not fundamentally different. I learned in Sunday school how humans were created in God’s image and likeness, but without reference to how animals and humans were created on the same day. This suggests to me that we are different in degree, not in kind, a truth that is verified not just in Genesis 1 but also in the biological sciences. Yes, we are made in the image of God, but this teaching reminds us how we are called to use our spiritual capacity as caregivers with God of other animals as well as our whole ecosystem. So many people consider humans, the last to be created, as superior to the rest of the natural world, but there as Robin Wall Kimmerer notes in *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*, the Ojibway legend of Nanabozho suggests the opposite. When this prot-human first appears on a fully formed Earth, they realize that as the last “creature” to arrive, they have the least knowledge about how to live in their environment. Like Nanabozho, we need to learn from our older animal and plant siblings, taking time to listen to them. Perhaps we can be Dr. Doolittle after all.

- If you could talk to the animals, what would you want to learn from them?
- Does considering humans as the youngest species change how you look at the Creation story? What impact does that have for you?

Spiritual Practise:

If you are able, go for a meditative walk outside (or look out the window). It does not matter where you go or for how long, but walk with open attentiveness to your surroundings, especially to all of the creatures you see and hear along the way, be it a bird, a cat, an insect, or another human. If you prefer, sit outside with the same attentiveness. Pause with gratitude for all of the animal siblings that you met. If you can, walk the same route or sit in the same spot for a number of days, perhaps weeks. Note how this shifts your attentiveness.

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. We are looking for 6 people. 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.