



St. James United Church



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

Celebration of Worship for March 23, 2025



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 23, 2025, Third Sunday of Lent

Leading Worship and Music: Rev. James Ravenscroft,
Paul Walsh, Amy Dalziel, and the St. James Guitar Group
Ushering: Damien Betts, Sasha Betts, Jean Thompson,
Marilyn Adams and Susan Pike

*Please rise as you are able where there is an * in the service.
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 share greetings in Inuktitut, French, German and English.

LAND AND KINSHIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

* **HYMN:** "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" (*Voices United 664*)

PRAYING IN THE GROWING SHADOW: *We extinguish another candle, acknowledging the coming dark. After, we pray the following:*

Loving Christ, as we continue on our way with you, our steps start to waver. We have not been walking for very long, yet feel our strength ebbing away. We wonder, will we have it in us to continue if we fall? But then we see your face, feel your strength. May we keep walking with you to the end. Amen.

SUNG RESPONSE: "Per Crucem"

**By your cross and all the wounds you suffered
(grant us freedom in your love, (x3) in your love.
By your holy, life-giving resurrection
(grant us freedom in your love, (x3) in your love.**

We Share in Love

OUR LIFE AND WORK

OFFERTORY: *There are many ways to give to St. James. You can place an offering in the plate, scan the QR code on the left, contribute via PAR, website (www.stjamesuc.org), e-transfer (email treasurer@stjamesuc.org), mail to the church office or drop in our secure mailbox. In whatever way you choose to give, the community is grateful.*



*** HYMN:** "Giver of the Perfect Gift" (Voices United #116, v. 4)

**Oh, may these our Lenten days,
blest by thee, with thee be passed,
that with purer, nobler praise
we may keep thy feast at last.**

PRAYER OF GRATITUDE

We Listen and Respond

LEARNING TOGETHER

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

*** HYMN:** "Three Things I Promise" (More Voices 176, v. 1-3)

TIME OF MEDITATION AND CONFESSION:

Meditating on an image of Simon of Cyrene assisting Jesus, we pause to name where we do and don't do the same, confessing our wrongdoings.

A stranger carries Jesus' cross...becomes a source of support.

As Simon came in from the field, he heard a commotion and ventured near. Little did he expect to be conscripted to help a man to his place of execution. How often does that happen to us? Caught up in circumstances, "helping" the powers that be, another cog in the machine of injustice. At least Simon brought comfort in an otherwise horrific situation. How often do we do the same? Or do we turn away, not wanting to "participate in injustice" and leave the person abandoned and alone. Spirit of mercy, be with us. May we do what we can to bring comfort to others. When we feel unsure how to respond, may we draw on the depths of your compassion and love to help us. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE AND SHARING PEACE

The sharing of peace ends with music from the Guitar Group.

READINGS: Isaiah 55:1-9 and Luke 13:1-9

* **HYMN:** “God of the Mountain” (*see projection*)

READING: Story of the Eyes Shut Dance (Excerpt from *Being Kin*)

REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

ANTHEM: “The Old Rugged Cross”

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We pray for the world and our community, including the concerns written on slips of paper as people arrived for worship.

THE PRAYER OF JESUS (A Latin American paraphrase)

Our Father & Mother who is in us here on earth, holy is your name, in the hungry who share their bread and their song. Your Kingdom come, which is a generous land flowing with milk and honey. Let us do your will, standing up when all are sitting down, and raising our voice when all are silent. You are giving us our daily bread in the song of the bird and the miracle of the corn. Forgive us for keeping silent in the face of injustice, and burying our dreams; for not sharing bread & wine, love & the land, among us, now. Don't let us fall into the temptation of shutting the door through fear, of resigning ourselves to injustice, of taking up the same arms as the enemy. But deliver us from evil. Give us the perseverance and solidarity to look for love, even if the path has not yet been trodden, even if we fail; so we shall have known your Kingdom which is being built forever and ever. Amen.

We Leave to Serve

* **HYMN:** “Just a Closer Walk with Thee” (*see projection*)

BENEDICTION AND SENDING

Be with us, Holy One, as we follow Jesus this Lent. Bless us with perseverance as we carry our crosses, with gentleness towards ourselves when we drop them, with strength to carry them again.

Be with us as we walk toward your Easter promise. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Life and Work - March 23, 2025

We accept the following donation to the Music Program:

- * In memory of Verna Howse from Doug and Joan Bursey and family.
- * In memory of Verna Howse from the Senior Choir

We accept the following donation to the Cemetery Fund:

- * In memory of Nina Abbott from Terry and Debbie Abbott.

We accept the following donations to the UCW:

- * In memory of Nina Abbott from Barbara Adams, Calvin Squires, Brenda & Mike Murray, and Bernadette Raymond.

Rev. James Office Hours: If you would like to see Rev. James, he is in the church office on Tuesdays between 10:00 am and 12:30 pm and on Thursdays between 1:00 pm and 3:30 pm. If he is not in during those times, he has been called out on an emergency. Should that happen, Stephanie can arrange an alternate time.

Prayers of the People: Throughout this Lent, we are making the Prayers of the People really of the people. Last season, we emphasized this by having the worship assistant pray the prayers (that Rev. James wrote). However, this season we will highlight this differently and invite you to let us know what you want prayed for. When you come into the church there will be slips of paper for you to write prayer intentions on and then they will be brought up to the front during the offering. Alternatively, email Rev. James with your prayer requests. james@stjamesuc.org

AOTS Advance Notice: The Men's Club will be holding their next Fish and Brewis dinner on Friday, April 25. Tickets available soon

Bible Study on the Significance of the Cross: We have two time slots for this study: Sundays at 12:45 in the library and Thursdays at 7 pm via Zoom. The next Sunday session will be March 30 (two weeks off for a Lunch n Learn on March 16 and our ACM on March 23). Thursday sessions will be March 13, 27, April 3 and 10. Use this link to join for this evening (March 13) and the other Thursdays:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82687492102?pwd=Y6ApjLJVjRx7dQEOI7gzU4zhkv7TOP.1>
Meeting ID: 826 8749 2102
Passcode: 674372

Lenten Prayer: Along with study, prayer is another important practice during Lent. To this end, Rev. James will be leading centering prayer on Thursdays at 12:15 pm. He will do so via Zoom. Centering prayer is a prayer of quiet and stillness. He will explain it more as part of the group practice.

Follow this link to take part:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82667792442?pwd=AMc6XzwxdKVpDcpiGlbRQoUHnXbhw0.1>

Meeting ID: 826 6779 2442

Passcode: 401894

UCW Spring Tea and Bake Sale: The UCW will be holding the Spring Tea and Bake Sale in the auditorium on *Saturday, April 12, 2025 from 2-4pm*. Tickets are \$10.00 and can be obtained from any UCW member. Tickets will also be available at the door We welcome any support you can give, baked goods or a monetary donation, all donations are gratefully appreciated, proceeds go to the life and work of the church. Contact Sheilah Beckett 709-726-7421 or Barbara Butt at 709-687-1041

"Happiness doesn't result for what we get, but from what we give"
~Author Unknown"

St. James United Church
330 Elizabeth Avenue

Spring Tea & Bake Stall

Sponsored by the UCW
St. James Auditorium

Saturday, April 12, 2025

Time: 2 – 4 pm Cost: \$10.00

