



St. James United Church



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

Celebration of Worship for March 30, 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 30, 2025, Fourth Sunday of Lent

Leading Worship and Music: Rev. James Ravenscroft,
Sarah Norman, Amy Dalziel, Bob Rose, the Senior Choir
Ushering: Harve and Paul Diamond, 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 Innu-aimun, French, Twi and English.

LAND AND KINSHIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

* **HYMN:** "O God, How We Have Wandered" (*Voices United 112*)

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

Compassionate Christ, we take another step with you on this dusty road to Calvary, overwhelmed at this injustice that you are facing, conscious too that you are not the first to bear a cross like this, won't be the last to bear the weight of a world too addicted to violence. Though we teeter, we pray that we will not fall but keep walking your gentle way of love. 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

OFFERING: *There are many ways to financially support St. James. You can place your contribution in the plate, scan the QR code on the left, donate via PAR, website (www.stjamesuc.org), e-transfer (email treasurer@stjamesuc.org), or mail to the church office. However you choose to support St. James, the community is grateful. Tax receipts available by request.*



* **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 Jesus' meeting the women of Jerusalem as he walks to Calvary, we confess our wrongdoings and ask forgiveness. Image used by permission: Margaret Adams Parker

Jesus stops...he reaches out to them with compassion and love.

The women grieve for Jesus, weeping for the injustice they witness and he offers comfort in return, knowing too well the injustices they faced every day, injustices against women and children that never seem to end. For millennia women and girls have been less valued, so we ignore domestic violence, blame women when they're assaulted, accuse transwomen of the very violence they're subjected to, pay less for work of equal value, deny access to education. The list goes on. How long will we turn our gaze from the many injustices unfairly borne by women, girls and gender-nonconforming people? Spirit of mercy, be with us. May we no longer tolerate gender based injustice, and instead restore balance in our world. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE AND SHARING PEACE

The sharing of peace is drawn to a close with “When We Are Living

READINGS: Joshua 5:9-12 and Luke 15:1-3 and 11b-32

* **HYMN:** “Just as I Am” (*Voices United* 508)

READING: Leonardo Boff, *Holy Trinity, Perfect Community*, trans. Phillip Berryman (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), xv–xvi

REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

ANTHEM: “In the Shadow of the Tree” (*Patrick J. Liebergen*)

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:** “Bless Now, O God the Journey” (*Voices United* 633)

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

We accept the following donation to the Cemetery Fund:

* In memory of Winnie & Bert Penney and Emma & Bill Drodge from Glenys and Gordon Drodge.

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

Lost and Found: There were two different sets of keys left here at the church with two keys on each set. One set has a key with Medeco engraved on the key and a possible house key. The other set has one key that looks to be a mailbox key and a possible house key with Lotto 649 key chain. Please call or email the church office if either of these sets are yours. info@stjamesuc.org

Rev. James New 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.

Upcoming Taizé Prayer Service: This coming Wednesday (April 2) at 6:30pm. A time of readings, singing and silent reflection.

InsideOUT LGBTQIA+ Spirituality Gathering - Sunday, April 6, 2025: InsideOUT is an LGBTQIA+ an opportunity to explore the intersection between queerness and spirituality. Held in the Quadrangle Outreach Room at 7:30PM

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

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

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. Thursday sessions will be April 3 and 10.

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.

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