

St. James United Church

A Community of Friends in Faith

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



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

In loving memory of:

Clyde Taylor

With love from Wife Helen, Sons Brian, Glen, Paul and Shelly,
Graham and Ross, Grandchildren Alex, Alicia, Amy and Chenna,
Great Grandson Uriah.

February 26, 2023: The First Sunday in Lent

Leading Worship: Rev. James Ravenscroft

Leading Music: Amy Dalziel, Bob Rose and Senior Choir

Ushers: Brenda Keller-Flight, Clyde Flight, Marilyn Adams,
Jean Thompson and Susan Pike

We Come to Worship

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND LIGHTING OF CHRIST CANDLE

We offer greetings in Innu-aimun, Yoruba and Korean as we gather as a spiritual community, lighting the candle as a sign of Christ's presence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF LAND AND KINSHIP

We give thanks for the land, for the Indigenous peoples who continue to steward it, and commit to be an inclusive community for all people.

INTROIT: "Forty Days and Forty Nights" (VU 114, v. 1)

WORDS TO CENTRE US: "I Am", John Clare (18th c. English poet)
Each week we listen to a work of poetry/fiction followed by silent reflection.

CENTRING HYMN: "Come and Journey with a Saviour" (seated)

**Come and journey with a Saviour
who has called us from our birth,
who has washed us in the waters,
and who loved us on the earth.**

**Refrain: Come and journey, come and journey
with a Saviour who has come.**

**We are all God's sons and daughters;
in the Spirit we are one.**

**Come and journey, journey inward,
come and seek him deep within,
where he meets us in our living,
in our striving and our sin.**

Refrain

OPENING PRAYER

We Share

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

A MINUTE FOR MISSION

We learn about a project that is supported by contributions to the Mission and Service Fund.

OFFERTORY: "Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery" (VU 121, v 4)

**Gentle Jesus, mighty Spirit, come inflame our hearts anew,
we may all your joy inherit (if we bear the cross with you x2)**

PRAYER OF CONCERN AND RELEASE

We pause to name our concerns for the world and to release them to God.

THE PRAYER OF JESUS (based on the spoken language of Jesus)

Name of names, our small identity unravels in you; you give it back as a lesson. Help us let go, clear the space inside, so your Name comes to live. Let your counsel rule our lives, clearing our intention for co-creation. Help us love beyond our ideals with acts of compassion for all. Give us the food we need to grow each day; untangle the knots within so we can mend our hearts' ties with others. Don't let surface things delude us, but free us from what holds us back. From you is born all will, from age to age renewed. Amen.

We Listen

HYMN: "Throughout These Lenten Days and Nights" (VU 108)

READINGS: Genesis 2:18-24 and John 1:29-39

ANTHEM: "I Lift Up Mine Eyes" by Allen Pote

MESSAGE: "Come and See"

We Respond

PREPARATORY REFRAIN: "Take, O Take Me as I Am" (MV 85)

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

One: Jesus shared meals with saints and sinners, the faithful and doubting, revealing God's healing and reconciling love to all.

All: As we prepare to share in this meal together, may we know that God's love and new life surround and renew us.

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

One: God be with you. **All: And also with you.**

One: Open your hearts. **All: We gladly open them to God.**

One: Let us give thanks. **All: It is good to give God praise.**

One: It is good to praise you, Holy God, as we gather around this and many tables seeking nourishment for the journey. You are a God of grace, bringing fresh insight in these days of renewal, helping us to discover anew your gift of relationship, a pledge of love given to our first parents and renewed again and again. No matter our failings, you consistently called us back, inviting us to repentance through your prophets and through Jesus offered a promise of forgiveness and new life. Grateful for your faithful love we join with all who have gone before us in their chorus of praise:

All: Holy, Holy, Holy, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the One who comes in your name. Hosanna in the highest.

One: Even now, you renew your pledge, Gracious God, in this sacred meal where we gather in remembrance of Jesus and all he did for us. We recall especially how on the night before he died, he gathered with his friends. He took bread and after sharing the blessing, gave it to them saying, "This is my body, given for you." In the same way at the end of the meal he took the cup, and gave it to them saying, "This is the cup of the new covenant in my life's blood. Whenever you do this, remember me."

Recalling his death and resurrection, affirming his promise of abiding presence, we proclaim the mystery of your love:

All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again!

Enlivening God, as we continue to celebrate his memory, we honour your abiding presence with us. Open our hearts to your Spirit with us and in this meal. May all who share this living bread and saving cup be renewed in your covenant and affirmed in your love. Creator God, we praise you, through Your Word made flesh, in the power of your life-giving Spirit, now and forever. **All: Amen.**

SHARING IN COMMUNION

One: This is the bread of life, may it bring strength for the journey.

This the fruit of the vine, may it remind you of the journey's purpose

This is the banquet of blessing, Christ with us in our sharing, bringing joy in anticipation of our journey's end. **All: Thanks be to God.**

There is a main station for bread and side stations with juice in small glasses. Please consume the bread and juice before returning to your pew. If you are unable to come forward, someone will bring communion to you once everyone else who wishes to has already received.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION:

Spirit of grace and blessing, in our sharing of bread and wine, you bring us nourishment for the journey. Strengthen us in these coming days and renew us in our dedication to you. Amen.

We Leave to Serve

HYMN: "O Jesus I Have Promised" (*Voices United 120*)

BLESSING AND 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.

POSTLUDE AND DISTRIBUTION OF ASHES

During the postlude, those who wish may come forward to have a small cross in ash traced on their forehead or hand as a way to begin Lent.

St. James United Church

Lead Minister:	James Ravenscroft, OM
Youth/Christian Education Minister:	Susan Sheppard, DLM
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

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