

Quispamsis United Church

Lent: Chasing the Light

April 2nd, 2023 - Palm Sunday

Liturgical Colour: Purple

Presider: Rev. Richard Bowley

Director of Music: Stephen Alexander

Reader: Sue King

Centering Passage: *Save us, we beseech you, O Lord! O Lord, we beseech you, give us success! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. We bless you from the house of the Lord. The Lord is God, and he has given us light. Bind the festal procession with branches, up to the horns of the altar. You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God, I will extol you. O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures for ever.*

-Psalm 118:25-29

GATHERING TOGETHER

Lighting of the Christ Candle: The light of Christ reveals who we are, but also the truth of the world around us. May this revealing light show us those things that we have been blind to - whether through intention or ignorance - and guide us to wholeness as a people, as creation.

Opening Music All Glory, Laud and Honour - Hal Leonard Publishing

Welcome & Lighting of Affirm Candle

Acknowledgement of Territories

Celebrations & Announcements

Introit:

Lord Prepare Me

MV 18 (X2)

Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary

Pure and holy, tried and true

With thanksgiving, I'll be a living,

Sanctuary for you.

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Call to Worship (Responsive):

In the streets there is a murmur

Come and see

In the streets people gather

Come and see

In the streets the excitement grows

Come and see

As God's people we now gather

We come to see the king of kings, and follow in his way.

Prayer of the Day

God of life and hope, we remember this day how you entered into the Holy City, stirring up peoples hope and excitement that you Holy One were leading them to liberation. We gather today with the same hope that you will take the stagnated places of our lives and the death dealing forces of this world and over turn them. Inspire us through the Holy Spirit to be part of the healing and renewal that sets the world free. This we pray, as we lift high our palms to welcome you, the king of kings. Amen.

Hymn:

I heard the voice of Jesus Say

VU 626

**I feel the winds of God today; today my sail I lift,
though heavy oft with drenching spray and torn with many a rift;
if hope but light the water's crest, and Christ my bark will use,
I'll seek the seas at his behest, and brave another cruise.**

**It is the wind of God that dries my vain regretful tears,
until with braver thoughts shall rise the purer, brighter years;
if cast on shores of selfish ease or pleasure I should be,
O let me feel your freshening breeze, and I'll put back to sea.**

**If ever I forget your love and how that love was shown,
lift high the blood-red flag above; it bears your name alone.
Great pilot of my onward way, you wilt not let me drift;
I feel the winds of God today; today my sail I lift.**

LISTENING FOR TRUTH

Chasing the Light Liturgy (Responsive):

As people born of the divine spark, (...) the divine spark that cannot go out, that no darkness can overcome.

The journey through Lent is a path through light and darkness.

Today we continue our journey, but the light has all but gone out.

What remains is meant to remind us of love, the love that God has for us, and for each other.

We allow ourselves to believe that love is as fragile as this flame: easily snuffed, quickly lost.

God's love for us is eternal and unconditional. Christ's love for us is bold and brave. But our love, for God, for Christ, for one another often has restrictions and limits that we set, and that love wilts before it has a chance to grow.

(put out candle)

For those times when we limit the love that we are called to share,

for those times when we have called ourselves unworthy of your unconditional love,

for the hate that we allow to grow in our hearts where love should flourish,

for the grudges that stand as barriers between us and full and loving relationships with you and with one another,

for the ways that we diminish the light of creation

because we are too afraid, too selfish, too angry, we pray O God. Guide us by your light, even when all light seems to go out.

(silent reflection)

Time for All Ages

Sung Prayer of Illumination:

Open our Hearts

MV 21 (X2)

Open our hearts, open our minds.

Open our lives to you, O loving God.

Reading: Matthew 21:1-17

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, "The Lord needs them." And he will send them immediately.' This took place to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, 'Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.' The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!'

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, 'Who is this?' The crowds were saying, 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.' Then Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold doves. He said to them, 'It is written, "My house shall be called a house of prayer"; but you are making it a den of robbers.'

The blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he cured them. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the amazing things that he did, and heard the children crying out in the temple, 'Hosanna to the Son of David', they became angry and said to him, 'Do you hear what these are saying?' Jesus said to them, 'Yes; have you never read, "Out of the mouths of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise for yourself"?' He left them, went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.

This is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Praise be to you, O Christ.

Gift of Music He Came Riding On a Donkey - Senior Choir

Message What Kind of King?

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn:

Hosanna, Loud Hosanna
Hosanna, loud hosanna
the happy children sang;
through pillared court and temple
the lovely anthem rang:
to Jesus, who had blessed them,
close folded to his breast,
the children sang their praises,
the simplest and the best.

VU 123

From Olivet they followed
'mid an exultant crowd,
the victory palm-branch waving,
and singing clear and loud;
the Lord of earth and heaven
rode on in lowly state,
content that little children
should on his bidding wait.

**"Hosanna in the highest!"
That ancient song we sing,
for Christ is our Redeemer;
earth, let your anthems ring.
O may we ever praise him
with heart and life and voice,
and in his humble presence
eternally rejoice!**

How Can I Give?

- 1/ If you have internet banking, you can E-transfer funds to QUC by sending the funds to QUC@nb.aibn.com. Do not forget to send a separate email with the answer to your security question.
- 2/ Go to www.CanadaHelps.org and search for Quispamsis United Church. You can give to the church by using your credit card. The address says Gondola Point, do not worry, that is us.
- 3/ Mail or deliver your giving's to our treasurer, Brion Crossman, 22 Country Crescent, Quispamsis, E2E 1T2
- 4/ You can sign up for a pre-authorized remittance (PAR) donation which comes out of your bank account or credit card once a month. You can cancel this at any time. Contact Brion Crossman at 849-6003 for details.
- 5/ if you come for in-person worship, there is a plate as you enter the church where you can place your offering.
- 6/ As we consider the greater work of the United Church consider giving to Mission and Service Fund through your regular offering or at <https://united-church.ca>

Offertory Dedication Hymn:

We give you but your own
**We give you but your own,
whate'er the gift may be;
all that we have is yours alone,
we give it gratefully.**

VU 542

Prayer of Dedication (Unison):

With our palms raised, we lift our gifts to you, O God, the source of all light, life, and love. Bless and use our time, talent, and treasure, we pray, for the building up of your kingdom. We offer this and all our prayers in the strong name of Christ, our brother, our king, our saviour. AMEN

Prayers of the People & Sung Lord's Prayer

(VU 959)

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil,
for the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and for ever.**

Hymn:

**Ride on! Ride on in Majesty!
Ride on! Ride on in majesty!
Hark! all the tribes hosanna cry;
O Saviour meek, pursues thy road
with palms and scattered garments strowed.**

VU 127

**Ride on! Ride on in majesty!
In lowly pomp ride on to die;
O Christ, thy triumphs now begin
o'er captive death and conquered sin.**

**Ride on! Ride on in majesty!
The wingèd squadrons of the sky
look down with sad and wondering eyes
to see the approaching sacrifice.**

**Ride on! Ride on in majesty!
In lowly pomp ride on to die;
bow thy meek head to mortal pain,
then take, O God, thy power, and reign.**

SENDING FORTH

Commissioning (Responsive):

Inspired by your word and life you call us

To stop being a bystander and join in your work

Through your spirit you drive us and inspire us

So we lay down our plans and our fear and join you

Into the world you call us

Though the road will not be easy we follow where you lead

For as we journey with you we find liberation and new life for all.

Benediction

Go from here to walk the Lenten road knowing the Grace of Christ attends you, the love of God surrounds you and the Holy Spirit will guide and empower you today and always.

Choral Closing:

Lead On, O Cloud of Presence

VU 421 (vs 3)

**Lead on O God of freedom, and guide us on our way,
and help us trust the promise through struggle and delay.
We pray our sons and daughters may journey to that land
where justice dwells with mercy, and love is law's demand.**

Closing Music

Palm Sunday Postlude - Hal Leonard Publishing