

Quispamsis United Church

Lent: Chasing the Light

March 26th, 2023 - Fifth Sunday of Lent

Liturgical Colour: Purple

Presider: Rev. Richard Bowley

Director of Music: Stephen Alexander

Reader: Ben Alward

Centering Passage: *Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who live in it. Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy at the presence of the Lord, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.*

-Psalm 98:7-9

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 Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley - Traditional Spiritual

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):

We have come to this place because Christ has been calling to us

Feed the hungry, quench the thirsty, welcome the strangers.

Invited to be part of the building up of the kingdom, Christ calls to us

Clothe the naked, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned.

These are the ones that society forgets. These are the ones Christ calls us to serve.

These are our family. We come at Christ's call and are made whole in our service to one another.

We have come to this place because Christ has been calling to us

Let us answer the call in praise this day!

Prayer of the Day

God of all people, you have called us to walk humbly before you and to share in the struggle with the least of these, yet we have failed to live up to this call. Today, we come before you asking your Spirit to empower us to be agents of transformation for the world. Make us a chalice from which all the oppressed can find your living waters O God, you who call us to live a life of service, of humility, and of reconciliation with you, with creation, and with the world. AMEN

Hymn:

Where Cross the Crowded

VU 681

**Where cross the crowded ways of life,
where sound the cries of race and clan,
above the noise of selfish strife,
we hear your words of life again.**

**In haunts of wretchedness and need,
on shadowed thresholds, dark with fears,
from paths where hide the lures of greed,
we catch the vision of your tears.**

**The cup of water given for you
still holds the freshness of your grace;
yet long these multitudes to view
the strong compassion of your face.**

**O Jesus, from the mountainside
make haste to heal these hearts of pain;
among these restless throngs abide,
and tread the city's streets again,**

**till all the world shall learn your love
and follow where your feet have trod,
till glorious from your heaven above
shall come the city of our God.**

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 is not as strong as it once was.

In the face of gathering darkness, we are reminded of the shadow sides of our own lives,

and how we wrap ourselves in those shadows to avoid the risk of being vulnerable.

In grace, God sees through the shadows to who we are and calls us precious.

(put out candle)

For those times where we have withheld God's freely given grace from others,

for those times when we have not accepted that grace for ourselves,

for the limits or conditions that we place on receiving God's grace,

for our stubbornness that drives us to choose paths that lead away from God's embrace.

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 25:31-46

'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you

clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." Then he will say to those at his left hand, "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." Then they also will answer, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?" Then he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.'

This is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Praise be to you, O Christ.

Jammers Like a Healing Stream

Message Where is the Grace?

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn:

When I needed a Neighbour

VU 600

**When I needed a neighbour,
were you there, were you there?**

**When I needed a neighbour, were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter;
were you there?**

**I was hungry and thirsty,
were you there, were you there?**

**I was hungry and thirsty, were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter;
were you there?**

**I was cold, I was naked,
were you there, were you there?**

**I was cold, I was naked, were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter;
were you there?**

**When I needed a healer,
were you there, were you there?
When I needed a healer, were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter;
were you there?**

**Wherever you travel,
I'll be there, I'll be there;
wherever you travel, I'll be there.
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter;
I'll be there.**

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):

Bless, O Lord, our gifts of time, talent, and treasure. Use them and us to find new ways to reach out to those that the world has forgotten. As we strive to be kingdom builders in this place, open our eyes to see the ones who truly need your love and grace, and guide us to them. This we ask in the strong name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. AMEN

Jammers Glorious Unfolding

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:

All Glory Laud and Honour

VU 122

Refrain:

**All glory, laud and honour
to you, Redeemer, King,
to whom the lips of children
made sweet hosannas ring.**

**You are the King of Israel,
and David's royal Son,
now in the Lord's name coming,
our King and blessed one.**

**The multitude of pilgrims
with palms before you went;
our praise and prayer and anthems
before you we present:**

**To you, before your passion,
they sang their hymns of praise;
to you, now high exalted,
our melody we raise:**

**Their praises you accepted,
accept the prayers we bring,
great author of all goodness,
O good and gracious king. R**

SENDING FORTH

Commissioning (Responsive):

Christ is still calling us,

From prayer to action, from song to service, from worship to building the kingdom.

Be the hands and feet of God beyond these walls,

following the Holy Spirit wherever it might lead us.

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 O, 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

God Will Take Care of You - arr. Phillip Keveren