

March 20, 2022 - Third Sunday of Lent

We Gather In God's Presence

Lenten Liturgy Written by Jen Dresser, *Gathering*, Lent/Easter 2016, page 67. Used with permission.

Jesus entered the temple and saw how it was being used to oppress the people. Rock is used to build so many structures – physical and organizational – that separate people and keep life from touching us. We place our trust in structures rather than in God and in our relationships.

(rock is placed, candle is extinguished) The rock of trust.

May God's spirit walk with us.

Gathering In Song MV 90 "Don't Be Afraid"

Don't be afraid. My love is stronger, my love is stronger than your fear.

Don't be afraid. My love is stronger and I have promised,
promised to be always near.

Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation – see last page ...

Call to Worship

The invitation has been issued,

We are thirsty for justice.

The door has been flung open,

We hunger for peace.

The table is groaning,

Under the weight of God's grace.

Come, all who thirst and hunger for God's ways.

We gather as people of God's covenant.

Hymn VU 460 "All Who Hunger"

All who hunger, gather gladly; holy manna is our bread.

Come from wilderness and wandering. Here, in truth, we will be fed.

You that yearn for days of fullness, all around us is our food.

Taste and see the grace eternal. Taste and see that God is good.

All who hunger, never strangers; seeker, be a welcome guest.

Come from restlessness and roaming. Here, in joy, we keep the feast.

We that once were lost and scattered in communion's love have stood.

Taste and see the grace eternal. Taste and see that God is good.

All who hunger, sing together; Jesus Christ is living bread.

Come from loneliness and longing. Here, in peace, we have been led.

Blest are those who from this table live their lives in gratitude.

Taste and see the grace eternal. Taste and see that God is good.

Opening Prayer *(unison) (based on a prayer by Thom M. Shuman. ©2022. Used with permission.)*

Holy One, in grace you invite us to come and feast at your table, at no cost to us. You offer hope to the despairing, comfort to the broken, peace to the angry, contentment to all who respond to your invitation. Yet, when the thirsty come, we offer a glass of stagnant water; when the hungry come, we offer a single can from our overflowing pantry; when the lonely come, we cling to our clique; when the broken come, we offer an aspirin; and when the needy come, we have nothing to offer because we have spent all we have on frivolities or on amusing ourselves. Clearly our ways are not your ways. Forgive our foolishness. Fill the poverty of our spirits with the richness of your grace; feed our selfish hunger with the bread of compassion for those around us; pour the living waters of Jesus Christ into our hearts until they overflow with love for those with whom we share this world. Amen.

We Ask God's Blessing

Anthem: “

Time for the Young and the Young @



Hymn VU 520 “We Plough the Fields”

We plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land,
but it is fed and watered by your almighty hand;
you send the snow in winter, the warmth to swell the grain,
the breezes and the sunshine, and soft refreshing rain.

All good gifts around us
are sent from heaven above;
we thank you, God, O holy God,
for all your love.

You only are the maker of all things near and far;
you paint the wayside flower, you light the evening star;
the winds and waves obey you, by you the birds are fed;
much more to us, your children, you give us daily bread.

All good gifts around us
are sent from heaven above;
we thank you, God, O holy God,
for all your love.

We thank you then, O Maker, for all things bright and good,
the seed-time and the harvest, our life, our health, our food;
accept the gifts we offer for all your love imparts,
and, what from us you long for, our humble, thankful hearts.

All good gifts around us
are sent from heaven above;
we thank you, God, O holy God,
for all your love.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer

God of all seasons, in your pattern of things there is a time for keeping and a time for losing; a time for building up and a time for pulling down. In this holy season of Lent, as we journey to the cross, help us to discern in our lives what we must lay down and what we must take up; what we must end and what we must begin. Give us grace to lead a disciplined life, in glad faithfulness and with the joy which comes from a closer walk with Christ.

We pray for your church. May it serve the world as Christ served all whom he came into contact with, with unconditional love. This week we pray for College Avenue United Church in Woodstock, and their minister Pastor Lloyd Bennett.

We pray for the world leaders. May they listen for you, and lead all in your way of justice and righteousness.

We pray for the peoples of the nations, especially the people of the Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Ukraine. May you bless them.

We pray for those who mourn the loss of loved ones, especially the friends and families of:
May they wait upon you and find strength and comfort in you.

We pray for those who are ill or dying, awaiting medical intervention or recovering from treatment, especially Ron Dickie, Jack, Marlene, Scott, and Tucker, and their loved ones and caregivers and those known only in the silence of our own hearts.....

May they find healing and wholeness in you.

We gather all of these prayers together in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, and who taught us to pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be your name.**

**Your kingdom come, your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

God offers all that we need, at no cost, with no strings attached. May we, made in God's image, do likewise, offering what we have and who we are, with no strings attached.

Offertory Hymn VU 542 "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.

Offering Prayer

Holy One, accept and bless all that we offer. Use it to slake the thirst of parched souls, and sate the hunger of empty bellies, heal the broken, provide hope for the despairing, and welcome the stranger as family who has been away for too long. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

We Listen For God's Word

Scripture: Isaiah 55:1-9

An Invitation to Abundant Life

Ho, everyone who thirsts,
 come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
 come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
 without money and without price.
Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
 and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
 and delight yourselves in rich food.
Incline your ear, and come to me;
 listen, so that you may live.
I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
 my steadfast, sure love for David.
See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
 a leader and commander for the peoples.
See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
 and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,
 for he has glorified you.
Seek the LORD while he may be found,
 call upon him while he is near;
let the wicked forsake their way,
 and the unrighteous their thoughts;
let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them,
 and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
 nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
 so are my ways higher than your ways
 and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Responsive Lesson: Psalm 63

You are my God, I long for you from early morning.
My whole being desires you like a dry, worn, waterless land.
My soul thirsts for you.

**In the sanctuary let me see
 how mighty are your works;
your constant love is better than life itself,
and so I will praise you.**

I will give thanks as long as I live;

I raise my hands in prayer.

**My soul will feast and be filled,
and I will sing and praise you.**

As I lie in bed, I remember you, O God;

I think of you all night long,

for you are my constant help.

In the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.

I cling to you; your hand keeps me safe.

*The other readings for this week are: **1 Corinthians 10:1-13; Luke 13:1-9.** You can look them up on www.biblegateway.com and search for the passage.....in any translation you prefer (ie. King James - KJV, NKJV, NRSV, etc.)*

Hymn VU 266 "Amazing Grace"

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
'tis grace that brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
this word my hope secures;
God will my shield and portion be
as long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
bright shining as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we'd first begun.

Meditation: "R.S.V.P."

We Depart With God's Blessing

Hymn VU 578 "As a Fire Is Meant for Burning"

As a fire is meant for burning with a bright and warming flame,
so the church is meant for mission, giving glory to God's name.
Not to preach our creeds or customs, but to build a bridge of care,
we join hands across the nations, finding neighbours everywhere.

We are learners; we are teachers; we are pilgrims on the way.
We are seekers; we are givers; we are vessels made of clay.
By our gentle, loving actions, we would show that Christ is light.
In a humble, listening Spirit, we would live to God's delight.

As a green bud in the springtime is a sign of life renewed,
so may we be signs of oneness mid earth's peoples, many-hued.
As a rainbow lights the heavens when a storm is past and gone,
may our lives reflect the radiance of God's new and glorious dawn.

Commissioning and Benediction

May the blessing of God **give us strength for the journey;**
May the Spirit of wisdom **give us vision for the road;**
May the love of Christ **make us caring companions,**
As together we go forth in this Lenten time. **Amen.**

Sung Response: VU 961 "Let Us, O God, Depart in Peace"

Let us, O God, depart in peace, who in your name are gathered here.
Disclose the brightness of your face, and be forever near.

Announcements.....

ALL:

Bridges Out of Poverty

Bridging Poverty and Privilege... *growing life-changing relationships*

Six Wednesdays: April 27 to June 1, 2022 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. EST / 10:00 a.m. - noon PST

What if our response to poverty went beyond charity? What if we grew intentional friendships with our neighbours who are living in poverty? What if your church community could start a ministry that will make a tangible impact on poverty in the place you live? Explore how this can happen in weekly gatherings of food, fun, and storytelling while learning together how to bridge poverty and privilege.

Register for this program at united-in-learning.com

UNION:

March Outreach: St. Thomas Elgin Food Bank suggestions: canned brown beans, pasta sauce and dry noodles, canned chili, stew, soups, jam and peanut butter. You may deposit these items in the box at the back of the sanctuary, or send a monetary donation to St. Thomas Elgin Food Bank, P. O. Box 20025, St. Thomas, ON, N5P 2X3

DORCHESTER:

Central Board will meet on Tuesday, March 22 at 7 p.m.. Please have committee reports to Karyn by March 16 so she has time to prepare and send the consent docket prior to the meeting.

There will be a short congregational meeting following worship on March 27 to approve the selection of chair of the board.

Lectionary Readings for next week: (February 27, Fourth of Lent)

Joshua 5:9-12; Psalm 32; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21; Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

