

February 26, 2023
First Sunday of Lent

We Gather In God's Presence

Prelude: "Saviour, Like a Shepherd Lead Us" with "He Leadeth Me"

William Bradbury Arranged by Cindy Berry

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

Moment of Silent Reflection

Hymn: VU 108 "Throughout These Lenten Days and Nights" vss. 1-5

Throughout these Lenten days and nights
we turn to walk the inward way,
where, meeting Christ, our guide and light,
we live in hope till Easter Day.

The pilgrim Christ, the Lamb of God,
who found in weakness greater power,
embraces us, though lost and flawed,
and leads us to his Rising Hour.

We bear the silence, cross and pain
of human burdens, human strife,
while sisters, brothers help sustain
our courage till the Feast of Life.

And though the road is hard and steep,
the Spirit ever calls us on through
Calvary's dying, dark and deep,
until we see the coming Dawn.

So let us choose the path of One
who wore, for us, the crown of thorn,
and slept in death that we might wake
to life on Resurrection Morn!

Lenten Candle Liturgy

*Written by Won Hur. **Gathering**, Lent/Easter 2023, pages 66-69. Used with permission.*

We suffer when we do not know who we are.

We are constantly tempted by the seduction of power, the glamour of wealth, and ego-gratifying attention.

We are drawn into these temptations because we forget who we are and whose we are.

When we forget that we are created in God's image,

we lose our connection to our soul and to our God.

Like fish out of water, we lose our connection to that which gives us life.

We then live with consequences, which are hard to bear, for ourselves, for our society,
and for our world.

The first candle is extinguished.

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.

Prayer (*unison*)

O God, we really do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from you. Feed us with your wisdom and your truth. Quench our deepest thirst to find the peace that you offer to us. In this journey of Lent, travel with us as we seek to find our true self, the self you have created us to be. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

We Are Blessed By God

Anthem: "Fairest Lord Jesus" Derek Hakes arranged by Craig Courtney

Time for the Young and the Young @ 

Hymn VU 641 "Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song"

Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey,
I'll tell everybody about you wherever I go:
for our life and our peace and our love is yourself.
Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey.

Lord Jesus, I'll praise you as long as I journey.
May all of my joy be a faithful reflection of you.
May the earth and the sea and the sky join my song.
Lord Jesus, I'll praise you as long as I journey.

As long as I live, Jesus, make me your servant
to carry your cross and to share all your burdens and tears,
for you saved me by giving your body and blood.
As long as I live, Jesus, make me your servant.

I fear in the dark and the doubt of my journey,
but courage will come with the sound of your steps by my side;
and with all of my brothers you saved by your love,
we'll sing to your dawn at the end of our journey.

Psalm 32

Refrain: Be glad in God, you righteous. Rejoice, O saints, rejoice.

Blessed are those whose offences are forgiven,
whose sin has been put away.

**Blessed are those to whom God imputes no guilt,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.**

Refrain: Be glad in God, you righteous. Rejoice, O saints, rejoice.

When I kept silence, my body wasted away,
while I groaned all the day long.

**For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;
my strength dried up as in a summer drought.**

Then I acknowledged my sin to you, my guilt I did not hide.

**I said: 'I will confess my sins to God';
and you forgave the guilt of my sin.**

Therefore let all the faithful pray to you in time of trouble;

when great floodwater rises, it shall not come near them.

You are a hiding place for me,

you will preserve me from trouble;

you will surround me with shouts of deliverance.

Refrain: Be glad in God, you righteous. Rejoice, O saints, rejoice.

I will teach you, and guide you in the way you should go.

I will keep you under my eye and instruct you.

Be not like a horse or mule, without understanding,

whose course must be checked with bit and bridle.

Many pains are in store for the wicked,

but whoever trusts in God,

is surrounded by steadfast love.

Refrain: Be glad in God, you righteous. Rejoice, O saints, rejoice.

Scripture: Matthew 4:1-11

The Testing of Jesus

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written,

'One does not live by bread alone,

but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

'He will command his angels concerning you,'

and 'On their hands they will bear you up,

so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'

Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' "

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."

Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

'Worship the Lord your God,

and serve only him.'

Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

*The other readings for this week are: **Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7; Romans 5:12-19***

Hymn VU 115 "Jesus, Tempted in the Desert"

Jesus, tempted in the desert, lonely, hungry, filled with dread:

'Use your power,' the tempter tells him; 'turn these barren rocks to bread!'

'Not alone by bread,' he answers, 'can the human heart be filled.

Only by the Word that calls us is our deepest hunger stilled!'

Jesus, tempted at the temple, high above its ancient wall:
'Throw yourself from lofty turret; angels wait to break your fall!'
Jesus shuns such empty marvels, feats that fickle crowds request:
'God, whose grace protects, preserves us, we must never vainly test.'

Jesus, tempted on the mountain by the lure of vast domain:
'Fall before me! Be my servant! Glory, fame, you're sure to gain!'
Jesus sees the dazzling vision, turns his eyes another way:
'God alone deserves our homage! God alone will I obey!'

When we face temptation's power, lonely, struggling, filled with dread,
Christ, who knew the tempter's hour, come and be our living bread.
By your grace, protect, preserve us lest we fall, your trust betray.
Yours, above all other voices, be the Word we hear, obey.

Meditation: "The Body of Jesus"

We Respond To God's Grace

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

Extravagant God, in the desert times of our lives you give us not all that we want, but all that we truly need. There are those in this world who have more than they need, and those who have not what they need. In offering our gifts, we express our commitment to your way, redistributing your abundance so that all have what they need. In offering our gifts, we seek to bring justice, hope and true peace to all peoples. Our tithes and offerings will be received.

Offertory Hymn VU 218 "We Praise You, O God"

We praise you, O God, our Redeemer, Creator;
in grateful devotion our tribute we bring.
We lay it before you; we kneel and adore you;
we bless your holy name, glad praises we sing.

Prayer of Dedication

Gracious God, bless and transform all that we offer: our faltering steps, our brokenness, our hope, our risking, our hearts, that your covenant may be written on our hearts and that we may be a blessed and transformed people of your covenant. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer (VU 959)

Jesus, you refused to turn stones into bread. Save us from using our power, however little, to satisfy the demands of selfishness in the face of the greater needs of others.

Jesus, you refused to leap from the temple top. Save us from displaying our skills, however modest, to win instant popularity in the face of nobler calls on our abilities.

Jesus, you refused to bend your knee to a false god. Save us from offering our devotion, however weak, to cheap or easy religion in the face of the harder path on which you bid us to follow you.

Jesus, you came to serve not only the children of Abraham, but all children of God. This week we pray for the people Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and for all who face adversity due to disaster, whether natural or of human origin.

Jesus, you came to comfort the bereaved, like the friends and families of John Broomfield, Patsy Sherriff, and Lyle Quackenbush. Help us offer comfort to them in your name.

Jesus, you came to heal the sick and dying, like Rev. Grafton Antone, Rev. Jim Evans, Butch Hoxar, Mary Kaiser... and their loved ones and caregivers, and those known only in the silence of our hearts... Help us to bring them to a place of wholeness in your name.

Jesus, give us wisdom to discern evil; and in the face of all that is deceptively attractive, help us, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to choose the will of God, and so we sing:

**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 forever.
Amen.**

Hymn VU 113 "To the Desert Jesus Came"

To the desert Jesus came, to wrestle and to seek God's way.
Sun and moon rose high above to watch him as he'd fast and pray.
Together through the valley, the tempter led him around.
Together through the valley, so Jesus answers found.

Like the Hebrews long ago who ventured through the desert sand,
did he find a rock of faith, where streams of living waters ran?
Together through the valley, so shall we make our way.
Together through the valley, we'll walk for forty days.

In the desert we may find the mystery of who we are,
following a faithful God, so very close and yet so far.
Together through the valley, we'll gather our dreams in prayer,
together through the valley, and find God's presence there.

From the ashes to the hill, we'll travel on our Lenten road.
Hand in hand we'll cross this sand, and share each other's heavy load.
Together through the valley, we'll watch the changing sky.
Together through the valley, as Easter's dawn draws nigh.

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 season of Lent.
Amen.**

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.

Postlude:

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALL:

You're invited to a free screening of 'SAFE' on Monday, March 6 at the Hyland Cinema in London, or Monday, March 13 at the Galaxy Cinemas in St. Thomas. 'SAFE' is a documentary that features Indwell tenants and their stories with hope-filled solutions to homelessness.

You'll be inspired! Reserve your seat at indwell.ca/events.

Warning: some strong language and mature subject matter.

In response to the devastating earthquakes in Türkiye and northern Syria, The United Church of Canada is working with partners in the Middle East Council of Churches, ACT Alliance, the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, and the Humanitarian Coalition to show tangible support for the people of Türkiye and Syria. To contribute to the United Church response, you can mail a cheque to:

The United Church of Canada
Philanthropy Unit - Emergency Response
3250 Bloor Street West, Suite 200
Toronto, ON M8X 2Y4

Please be sure to note "Emergency Response—Türkiye" on the face of your cheque.

Or, go online to:

<https://www.gifttool.com/donations/Donate?ID=1955&AID=2274&PID=6564>

Part Two of our study “The Heart of Christianity” runs Tuesdays at Two for the seven weeks of Lent, from February 21 until April 4 inclusive. We will plan to meet in person at Dorchester United Church, with a zoom link for those not comfortable or able to attend in person. If you are interested in joining this study, please contact Rev. Mark. (Please read Chapter 7 The Kingdom of God: The Heart of Justice, for the 28th)

DORCHESTER:

St. Peter's Anglican Church is hosting the World Day of Prayer on Friday, March 3.

This year the women of Taiwan prepared the service.

Service at 1 p.m. with a video to follow and coffee and fellowship in the lower church hall.

UNION:

Broadview subscriptions are to be renewed by March 31. Please let Roberta Gillard know if you do not wish to continue receiving this magazine. The group rate for each subscription is \$25.

Outreach for February – Port Stanley and Sparta Food Bank (personal hygiene products)

Lectionary Readings for next week:

(March 5, Second Sunday of Lent)

Genesis 12:1-4a; Psalm 121; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17