

**Sunday February 9, 2025
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany**

We Gather In God's Presence

Prelude: "Here I Am Lord, Lord" Don Schutte Setting by John Carter

Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation

Lighting the Christ Candle

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined.

Isaiah 9:2

Preparing Our Hearts for Worship

Call to Worship

By God's grace, we are who we are;

Imperfect people living in the presence of the divine.

By God's grace, we are who we are;

People called to follow where God will lead.

By God's grace, we are who we are;

People blessed, forgiven, called, made partners of by God.

Let us worship the Lord our God.

Hymn VU 245 "Praise the Lord with the Sound of Trumpet" Words and Music: Natalie Sleeth, 1975.

Words and Music © 1976 Hinshaw Music, Inc.

OneLicense.net A620168 CCLI 11438349

Praise the Lord with the sound of trumpet,

praise the Lord with the harp and lute,

praise the Lord with the gentle sounding flute.

Praise the Lord in the field and forest,

praise the Lord in the city square,

praise the Lord anytime and anywhere.

Praise the Lord in the wind and sunshine,

praise the Lord in the dark of night,

praise the Lord in the rain or snow or in the morning light.

Praise the Lord in the deepest valley,

praise the Lord on the highest hill,

praise the Lord, never let your voice be still.

Praise the Lord with the crashing cymbal,

praise the Lord with the pipe and string,

praise the Lord with the joyful songs you sing.

Praise the Lord on a weekday morning,

praise the Lord on a Sunday noon,

praise the Lord by the light of sun or moon.

Praise the Lord in the time of sorrow,
praise the Lord in the time of joy,
praise the Lord every moment, nothing let your praise destroy.
Praise the Lord in the peace and quiet,
praise the Lord in your work or play,
praise the Lord everywhere in every way!

Opening Prayer (*unison*)

Eternal Word, you call us who are lost and lonely. You call us out of our sin and our self-imposed exiles. You call us to leave behind all that we know, and trust in, and value. You call us to do difficult things and things that make no sense to us. You call us to the unfathomable depths of your divine mystery. For your call, your patience, and your caring we thank you and bless you; but your call comes to us as turtles in their shells. We feel comfortable and safe where we are, and we don't want to leave our comforts or our safety. We don't want to do difficult things; we want a life of ease. We want to do things that make sense to us; not wrestle with divine mystery. We want to stay in the shallows, not venture into the deep end of the pool. Be patient with us a little longer. Hold our hand as you lead us to deeper waters, and, as we learn to swim in them and enjoy them, grant us loud voices to call others to join us in our merriment. Amen.

Ministry of Music: "We Believe" Words: Don Besig and Nancy Price Music: Don Besig

A New Creed VU 918

We are not alone,
we live in God's world.

We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn VU 321 “Maker, in Whom We Live” Words: Charles Wesley, 1747. Music: George Job Elvey, 1868.
Words and Music in the Public Domain.

Maker, in who we live, in whom we are and move,
the glory, power, and praise receive for your creating love.
Let all the angel throng give thanks to God on high,
while earth repeats the joyful song and echoes to the sky.

Incarnate Deity, let all the ransomed race
render in thanks their lives to you for your redeeming grace.
The grace to sinners shown, you heavenly choirs proclaim,
and cry, “Salvation to our God, salvation to the Lamb!”

Spirit of Holiness, let all your saints adore
your sacred energy, and bless your heart renewing power.
No angel tongues can tell your love’s ecstatic height,
the glorious joy unspeakable, the beatific sight.

Eternal, Triune God, let all the hosts above,
let all on earth below record and dwell upon your love.
When heaven and earth have fled before your glorious face,
may all the saints your love has made sing everlasting praise.

We Open Ourselves to Receive God’s Blessings

Responsive Reading: Psalm 138

We worship in your holy place and praise you for your truth and grace.

I praise you, O God, with all my heart;
before the gods I will sing your praises.

**I bow down toward your holy temple
and praise your name for your love and faithfulness;**

for you have exalted your name
and your word above everything.

**On the day that I called, you answered me,
and put new strength in my soul.**

We worship in your holy place and praise you for your truth and grace.

All earth’s rulers shall praise you,
when they hear the words of your mouth.

**They shall sing of your ways, O God,
sing that your glory is great.**

For though you are high, you care for the lowly.

As for the proud, you humble them from afar.

We worship in your holy place and praise you for your truth and grace.

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve me;
you stretch out your hand against my enemies' rage;
your powerful hand delivers me.

You will fulfill your purpose for me.

Your love, O God, is eternal.

Do not leave unfinished the work of your hands.

We worship in your holy place and praise you for your truth and grace.

Scripture: Luke 5:1-11 **Jesus Calls the First Disciples**

Once while Jesus was standing beside the Lake of Gennesaret and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." Simon answered, "Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets." When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to burst. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus's knees, saying, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" For he and all who were with him were astounded at the catch of fish that they had taken, and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people." When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

*The other readings for this week are: **Isaiah 6:1-8, (9-13); 1 Corinthians 15:1-11***

Meditation: "Calling All Cads"

Hymn VU 563 "Jesus, You Have Come to the Lakeshore" Words and Music: Ceáreo Gabaráin, 1979.

Words and Music © Ceáreo Gabaráin, administered by Oregon Catholic Press.
Translation: Gertrude C. Suppe, George Lockwood, Raquel Gutiérrez-Achón, 1987.
Translation © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House
Harmony: Skinner Chávez-Melo, 1987. © 1987 Skinner Chávez-Melo
Licenses not available.

Please use hymn books.

We Respond To God's Grace

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

We don't give to God from the pittance that is left over after everything else we need and want is taken care of, but from the abundance which God blessed us with before anything else is considered.

We don't give to God begrudgingly, but gladly, because we believe in God's mission of justice and equity for all. Our tithes and offerings will be received.

Offertory Hymn VU 81 “As with Gladness Men of Old” **vs. 3** Words: William Chatterton Dix, ca. 1858.

Music: Conrad Kocher, 1838. Adapted William H. Monk, 1861.

Words, Music and Adaptation in the Public Domain.

As they offered gifts most rare at that manger crude and bare,
so may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin’s alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to you, our heavenly King.

Prayer of Dedication

Generous God, through Jesus you lavish abundant life on us. We seek to acknowledge this abundance by sharing not only our money, but our lives as well. Bless these gifts that they may serve your mission. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord’s Prayer

Loving God, your patience with us is beyond our capacity to imagine. Your desire for us to hear and respond to your beckoning and to be one with you is unfathomable. The blessings you offer to us are unbelievable. We cannot hope to understand you, all we can do in our humility is to bless you and give you thanks.

Passionate God, as you hold our lives in your compassionate embrace, we cry out for wholeness. We cry from the depths of our pain, our sorrow, our hatred, our frustration, our anger. We cry out for ourselves, for those we love, for those we hate, for those who hate us, for all the world. May your healing presence transform our lives. May your loving presence be a comforting reality for all those who find themselves in despair, lost or alone. May your transforming presence create generosity in place of greed, harmony in place of hatred, and everlasting justice where evil now reigns.

Holy God we bring before you the people and places that need your healing, loving, transforming presence: Your church, may it be a place of refuge and transformation for all.

All the peoples of this world. May we all learn to respect one another, and Your creation. Especially we pray this week for the people of Andorra, Italy, Malta, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, and Vatican City.

Those who mourn a loss in their lives.

All who are ill or dying, awaiting medical intervention or recovering from treatment, especially Butch, Christa, Christina, David, Kurt, and their loved ones and caregivers, and those known only in the silence of our own hearts.....

All this we pray in the name of the One who taught us to pray, saying:

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

Thy kingdom come,

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

**For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Hymn VU 608 “Dear God, Who Loves All Humankind” Words: John Greenleaf Whittier, 1872..

Music: Frederick Charles Maker, 1887. Words and Music in the Public Domain.

Dear God, who loves all humankind,
 forgive our foolish ways;
 reclothe us in our rightful mind;
 in purer lives thy service find,
 in deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard,
 beside the Syrian sea,
 the gracious calling of the Lord,
 let us, like them, without a word
 rise up and follow thee.

O sabbath rest by Galilee!
 O calm of hills above,
 where Jesus knelt to share with thee
 the silence of eternity,
 interpreted by love!

Drop thy still dews of quietness
 till all our strivings cease;
 take from our souls the strain and stress,
 and let our ordered lives confess
 the beauty of thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
 thy coolness and thy balm;
 let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
 speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
 I still small voice of calm!

Commissioning

May the grace of God, **deeper than our imagination;**
 The strength of Christ, **stronger than our need;**
 And the communion of the Holy Spirit, **richer than our togetherness,**
Guide us and sustain us today, and in all our tomorrows.

Response: VU 298 “When You Walk from Here” Words & Music: Linnea Good, 1991.

Words & Music © 1991 Borealis Music. OneLicense.net A620168

When you walk from here, when you walk from here,
 walk with justice, walk with mercy, and with God’s humble care.

Postlude: “Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee” (In a setting of J.S. Bach's, Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring)
 John B. Dykes. Arr. Cindy Berry.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held following worship on Sunday, March 2.

Something Sacred—Lenten Study 2025. Tuesdays, March 11 - April 15, 2025 1:00-2:00 p.m. ET

In this six-week series, join Rev. Stephen Fetter and people from across the country to explore some of the readings from Something Sacred, our new devotional resource. Join us as we explore how music unveils something awesome, something more, something faithful, something honest, something grace-filled, something hopeful, something sacred. Register on CHURCHx.ca

Flourishing: Antler River, Western Ontario Waterways, and Horseshoe Falls Regional Councils

Spend a day with the Moderator, engaging in reflection and energizing activities towards dream-oriented actions for our churches and communities.

Saturday, February 22, 2025, 9:00 am to 4:30 pm (local time).

9:00am -9:30am Registration and coffee/tea

9:30am – Welcome and Introductions

In person at:

Avondale United Church, 194 Avondale Ave., Stratford, ON N5A 6N4

All around the world – from universities to the United Nations, from corporations to community organizations – people are talking about flourishing. Rooted in belonging, flourishing means living with purpose and joy, and bringing bold collaborative solutions to our world's challenges.

The Moderator, the Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne, wants to bring that conversation to The United Church of Canada. She invites us to connect to one another in hope, with a deep conviction by a belief that, despite all the challenges of church life in this day and age, we can move from despair to transformation – from languishing to flourishing.

Is your church flourishing?

(Perhaps that's the wrong question.)

Is your church contributing to the flourishing of your community?

How might we truly be a flourishing church in the world? How might we live in deep spirituality, bold discipleship and daring justice, linked from coast to coast to coast in ministry that transforms us and the world around us?

To register, go to:

<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=qLUYz3gmEUCTEhXw9xV1dC15iUSbxN1CqdLiNwjtK9RURTKxNDVFTEtIQ1BFT0hHQkxFRFIT1MyTC4u&route=shorturl>

OR, go to:

www.arwrcucc.ca and go to the UPCOMING EVENTS CALENDAR (under EVENTS), scroll down to February 22, and click on the poster, then scroll down to the link that says **CLICK HERE TO REGISTER Flourishing Workshop**

LECTIONARY READINGS: February 16 – Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

Jeremiah 17:5-10; Psalm 1; 1 Corinthians 15:12-20; Luke 6:17-26