

Sunday March 2, 2025

We Gather In God's Presence

Prelude: "Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies" Johann G. Werner. Arr. by Cindy Berry

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

Jesus went to the mountain and was changed, transfigured;

but change is hard for us.

You call us, O God, to change our lives;

but change is hard for us.

You call us, O God, to change our hearts;

but change is hard for us.

You call us, O God, to change our thinking;

but change is hard for us.

Open our lives, our hearts, our thinking;

open us, O God, to your loving changes.

Hymn VU 82 "A Light Is Gleaming" Words and Music: Linnea Good, 1992, © 1992 Borealis Music.

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A light is gleaming, spreading its arms throughout the night, living in the light.

Come share its gladness, God's radiant love is burning bright, living in the light.

When light comes pouring into the darkest place,

it hurts our eyes to see the glow.

Sometimes a word of hope reminds us of our fears,

our memories and tears.

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms throughout the night, living in the light.

Come share its gladness, God's radiant love is burning bright, living in the light.

When night is round us and every shadow grows,

a star is there to light our way.

It tells a story of Jesus who came

near to say: God's light will ever stay."

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms throughout the night, living in the light.

Come share its gladness, God's radiant love is burning bright, living in the light.

And Jesus showed us a brighter path to walk.
He showed us things we hadn't seen.
Now we, like Jesus, can help creation shine,
and this will be a sign:

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms throughout the night, living in the light.

Come share its gladness, God's radiant love is burning bright, living in the light.

So let us live in the brightness God has giv'n,
and let us rise to see the dawn.

We trust that God is here asparkle and ablaze,
warming all our days.

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms throughout the night, living in the light.

Come share its gladness, God's radiant love is burning bright, living in the light.

Opening Prayer (*unison*)

God of life and love, we look for you on the mountaintops, when you are in the valleys where most of life is lived. We look for you in holy moments and traditions, when you are in the mundane. We look for you ruling from your throne, when you are serving the marginalized and the outcast. Come to us in our time of worship and lead us wither you would have us go. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Ministry of Music: "How Beautiful" Words and Music: Twila Paris. Choral Setting: Lloyd Larson

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 104 “We Have Come at Christ’s Own Bidding” Words: Carl P. Daw, Jr. 1988.

Music: Cyril Vincent Taylor, 1941. Words © 1988, Hope Publishing Co.

Music © 1942 Cyril Vincent Taylor, renewal 1970 Hope Publishing Co.

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We have come at Christ’s own bidding
to this high and holy place,
where we wait with hope and longing
for some token of God’s grace.
Here we pray for new assurance
that our faith is not in vain,
searching like those first disciples
for a sign both clear and plain.

Light breaks in upon our darkness;
splendour bathes the flesh-joined Word;
Moses and Elijah marvel
as the heavenly voice is heard.
Eyes and hearts behold with wonder
how the Law and Prophets meet:
Christ, with garments drenched in brightness,
stands transfigured and complete.

Strengthened by this glimpse of glory,
fearful lest our faith decline,
we like Peter find it tempting
to remain and build a shrine.
But true worship gives us courage
to proclaim what we profess,
that our daily lives may prove us
people of the God we bless.

We Open Ourselves to Receive God’s Blessings

Responsive Reading: Psalm 99

You rule with justice in delight and faithfulness maintain.

You reign, O God, and the peoples tremble,
you sit enthroned upon the cherubim, and the earth is quaking.

**You, O God, are great in Zion,
you are exalted over all the nations.**

Let them praise your great and awesome name:
holy are you and mighty, a ruler who delights in justice.

**You have determined what is fair,
you have done in Jacob what is just and right.**

You rule with justice in delight and faithfulness maintain.

Moses and Aaron were among your priests,
Miriam among those who called on your name;
they called to you, God, and you answered.

**In the pillar of cloud you spoke to them,
they kept your teachings and the law that you gave them.**

O God, our God, you answered them;
**to them you were a forgiving God,
though you punished their offences.**

Proclaim the greatness of God
and worship on God's holy hill;
for God, our God, is the Holy One.

You rule with justice in delight and faithfulness maintain.

Scripture: Luke 9:28-36 The Transfiguration

Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"—not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

*The other readings for this week are: **Exodus 34:29-35; 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2***

Meditation: "Beacons of Hope"

Hymn VU 460 "All Who Hunger" Words: Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1990; © 1991 G.I.A. Publications, Inc.

Music: William Moore, 1825; arr. David Kai, 1994. Arrangement © 1994 David Kai.

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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.

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving and The Lord's Prayer © 2025 Thom M. Shuman. Used by permission.

May the God of mountaintops be with you!

And also with you!

People of God, lift up your hearts to the One who calls to you.

We open our hearts to the One who invites us to listen.

Beloved of God, offer praise to the One who is with you in this moment.

Our voices unite in thanking our God who loves us.

Overshadowing chaos, you spoke, Awesome Creator, and mountains were topped with mist, singing brooks meandered through fields. Created in your image, we had the audacity to demand our way, tempted by sin and death who came to us masked as life and joy. You did not turn your face away, sending the prophets into all those ordinary places we lived to call us back to you. Though they spoke boldly of your hope, we did not listen to a single word. So you sent Jesus, your glory, to become flesh and blood so we might be reshaped as your beloved children.

With those in every time and place, with those gathered here, at this moment, we sing of our joy to you:

Holy, holy, Holy! God who listens to our cries! All creation trembles with hope and joy.

Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the One who comes with words of life.

Hosanna in the highest!

Holy are you, Wonders of wonders, and your Beloved reigns in peace. He set aside his glory to load us down with the riches of your grace and peace. He silenced our silly complaints, so we might hang on to every word of hope, of joy. He went to the cross, ripping the mask off death, so we could see the face of an empty threat.

As we celebrate your naming him your Chosen, as we prepare to listen to him with our lives, we speak of that mystery we call faith:

Christ died, to pull aside the curtain of death;

Christ was raised, to reveal the promise of new life;

Christ will come, to show us the face of God

As we gather around your Table, pour out the blessings of your Spirit, transforming the simple gifts into that grace which changes our lives. As we feed upon the Word which is broken for us, we would go forth to speak boldly: reading a story to a lonely child, advocating for the voiceless, telling your good news to those who wander in despair. As your Cup of peace fills us, we would go out into the world, learning that where we do justice for the oppressed and rejected, we find ourselves in your presence.

As we give voice to our fears and our dreams, we pray also for our brothers and sisters in your creation.

We pray for the people of France, Germany, and Monaco. We pray for those who mourn a loss in their lives. We pray for those who are injured or ill, especially Christa, Christina, David, Jack, Kurt, and their loved ones and caregivers and those known only in the silence of our hearts....

When all time comes to an end and we are gathered in your glory with our sisters and brothers around the Feast of Grace and peace, we will sing your grace forever and ever, God in Community, Holy in One, even as we pray the words you taught us:

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 sins,
 as we forgive those who sin against us;
 and lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
 For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,
 for ever and ever. Amen.

Prayer after Communion

We give thanks, almighty God, that bread broken brings wholeness; that wine poured out replenishes; that time spent with the Risen Christ and with one another is both gift and grace. Amen.

We Respond To God's Grace

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

God offered us the gift of life. Jesus offered us his life. We offer God what we can, our lives, our time, our gifts and skills, and our resources, that we too might offer light and hope in the darkness of this world. 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

Jesus, you came to bring light to a world of darkness. Accept the gifts we offer. May they be used to offer hope, shining light into the dark corners of this world, transforming life for all. In your name we pray. Amen.

Hymn VU 413 "O Splendour of God's Glory Bright"

Words: Ambrose of Milan, ca. 374; trans. composite, *Rejoice in the Lord* 1985.

Music: Trier ms. 15th C. Adapted by Michael Praetorius, 1609;

harmonized George Ratcliff Woodward, 1902

Words, Music, Adaptation in the Public Domain.

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O splendour of God's glory bright,
 from light eternal bringing light;
 O light of life, light's living spring,
 true day, all days illumining:

come, Holy Sun of heavenly love,
pour down your radiance from above,
and to our inward hearts convey
the Holy Spirit's cloudless ray.

O joyful be the passing day
with thoughts as clear as morning's ray,
with faith like noontide shining bright,
our souls unshadowed by the night.

O Christ, with each returning morn
your image to our hearts is born;
O may we ever see anew
our Saviour and our God in you!

Commissioning

May the One who shakes the heavens and the earth,
The One who came to challenge and to heal,
The One whom death could not contain,

**Grant us the courage to go into the world
to transform lives and to transform our society.**

May it be so.

Amen.

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Annual Congregational Meeting and appointing a new trustee will be held following worship TODAY.

Ash Wednesday, March 5 we will be hosting St. Peter's Anglican church for a joint service at 12 noon.

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

Being Christian: Baptism, Bible, Eucharist, Prayer – Lenten Book Study. Thursdays, March 6-27 7:00 p.m. We are invited to join our Anglican neighbours at St. Peters for their Lenten book study, written by the former Archbishop of Canterbury. You can order the book online at Thrift Books or Amazon.

LECTIONARY READINGS:

March 5, 2025. (Ash Wednesday)

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; or Isaiah 58:1-12; Psalm 51:1-17; 2 Corinthians 5:20*b*-6:10;
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

March 9, 2025 (First Sunday of Lent)

Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16; Romans 10:8*b*-13; Luke 4:1-13