

Sunday March 8, 2026

Third Sunday of Lent

We Gather In God's Presence

Acknowledgement of the Land: For thousands of years, First Nations people have walked on this land; their relationship with the land is at the centre of their lives and spirituality. We are gathered on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron, Anishinabeg, Haudenosaunee, and Lunaapeewak peoples and acknowledge their stewardship of this land throughout the ages.

Prelude: Thee Lord's My Shepherd (in a setting of G. F. Handel's LARGO from XERES) Jessie Seymour Irvine Arr. Cindy Berry

Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation

Lenten Candle Liturgy:

Why do we put out this candle?

Preparing Our Hearts for Worship

Call to Worship

Lent is a time of repentance and reconciliation, risk and renewal.

It is a time to face all that holds us back.

We gather to give voice to all that harms us and those around us.

We acknowledge our abuse of power and the harm that we do to others and to the earth.

We gather to claim God's liberating love in the face of all the feelings of despair, fear and anger that we know.

Come let us worship God.

Hymn Voices United # 409 Morning Has Broken

Words: Eleanor Farjeon Music: Gaelic melody, harm. Alec Wyton Used by permission

Morning has broken like the first morning,
blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!
Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!
Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven,
like the first dewfall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,
sprung in completeness where God's feet pass.

Ours is the sunlight! Ours is the morning
born of the one light Eden saw play!
Praise with elation, praise every morning,
God's recreation of the new day!

Ω

Opening Prayer

Creating God, still Center of all that you have made, we come to you in this season of turning and returning. We do not know how to seek you with our whole hearts, but we know that you are our source and our destiny. In the midst of our lives, we return to you, we turn toward you. We thank you that you receive even the broken heart, the troubled conscience and the conflicted spirit. Amen.

Anthem: “A Heartsong Blessing” Words based on the poem “Resolution Blessing” by Mattie J.T. Stephanek. January, 2003 in “Reflections of a peacemaker “ (Andrew’s McMerl, 2005) Music by Joseph M. Martin.

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 Voices United # 582 There’s A Spirit In The Air

Words: Brian Wren Music: John Wilson Words, Music 1979 Hope Publishing Company

There's a spirit in the air,
telling Christians everywhere:
'Praise the love that Christ

revealed, living, working in our world.'
Lose your shyness, find your tongue,
tell the world what God has done:
God in Christ has come to stay.
Live tomorrow's life today!

When believers break the bread,
when a hungry child is fed,
praise the love that Christ revealed,
living, working in our world.
Still the Spirit gives us light,
seeing wrong and setting right:
God in Christ has come to stay.
Live tomorrow's life today!

When a stranger's not alone,
where the homeless find a home,
praise the love that Christ revealed,
living, working, in our world
May the Spirit fill our praise,
guide our thoughts and change our ways.
God in Christ has come to stay,
live tomorrow's life today.

There's a Spirit in the air,
calling people everywhere:
praise the love that Christ revealed,
living, working, in our world.
Ω

We Open Ourselves to Receive God's Blessings

Responsive Reading: Psalm 95 Voices United page 814

**O come, let us sing to God,
let us shout with joy to the rock of our salvation.
Let us come into God's presence with thanksgiving;
let us joyously shout to God with songs of praise.**

**For you are a great God,
high sovereign above all gods.
In your hand are the depths of the earth;
to you belong the heights of the mountains.
The sea is yours, for you made it;
your hands also formed the dry land.
You are indeed our God;
we are your people, the flock that you shepherd.**

O that today you would listen to

**God's voice;
'Do not harden your hearts as at Meribah,
as on that day at Massah in the wilderness;
when your forebears tried me, and
put me to the test,
though they had seen my works.**

**Forty years I loathed that generation, and said,
'They are a people whose hearts are perverse,
for they give no heed to my ways.'
Then, I vowed in my anger:
they shall not enter my rest.'**

Scripture: Romans 5: 1 – 11

**Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:
By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of
God.**

**And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;
And patience, experience; and experience, hope:**

**And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost
which is given unto us.**

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

**For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to
die.**

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

**For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being
reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus
Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.**

*You can read the full text
on Bible Gateway.*

Sermon: Hope That Does Not Disappoint

Hymn Voices United # 652 Be Still, My Soul

Words: Katharine von Schlegel Music: John Sibleus Arrangement John Knox Press

Be still, my soul, for God is on your side;
bear patiently the cross of grief or pain.
Trust in your God, your saviour and your guide,
who through all changes faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul, your best, your heavenly friend
through stormy ways leads to a peaceful end.

Be still, my soul, your God will undertake

to guide the future surely as the past.
Your hope, your confidence let nothing shake;
all now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul, life's tempests still obey
the voice that once the waves' wild fury stayed.

Be still, my soul, the hour is hastening on
when we shall be forever in God's peace;
when disappointment, grief and fear are gone,
love's joys restored, our strivings all shall cease.
Be still, my soul, when change and tears are past,
all safe and blessed we shall meet at last.
Ω

We Respond To God's Grace

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

See how the fields are ripe for harvest! Already, God is gathering fruit for eternal life. With rejoicing, let us offer our lives to the Lord. Our tithes and offerings will be received.

Offertory Hymn: VU 129 vs. 5 "Said Judas to Mary" Words and Music: Sydney Carter, 1964.

Words and Music © 1964, 1969 Hope Publishing Co., Stainer & Bell Ltd.

OneLicense.net A620168 CCLI 11438349

"The poor of the world are my body," he said,
"to the end of the world they shall be;
the bread and the blankets you give to the poor
you'll know you have given to me," he said,
"you'll know you have given to me."

Prayer of Dedication

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer

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 pray:

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,

for ever and ever. Amen.

Closing Hymn Voices United # 642 Be Thou My Vision

Be thou my vision, O joy of my heart;
naught be all else to me save that thou art,
thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, my calm in all strife;
I ever with thee, and thou in my life;
thou loving parent, thy child may I be,
thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.

Be thou my battle shield, sword for the fight
be thou my dignity, thou my delight,
thou my soul's shelter, thou my high tower;
raise thou me heavenward,
O power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor vain empty praise,
thou mine inheritance, now and always;
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,
great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.

Great God of heaven, after victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O ruler of all.

Ω

Commissioning and Benediction

May the hands that hold the stars and moons and planets in place also hold us in love and grace as we go out to the world. May God be with you in your challenges and your celebrations. Go out to the world sustained by God's loving embrace. Amen.

Sung Response: VU 961 "Let us, O God, Depart In Peace" George Whelpton, in the Public Domain.

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: Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart.

Morcambre Frederick C. Atkinson Setting by John Carter