

Sunday March 15, 2026
Fourth Sunday of Lent

We Gather In God's Presence

Acknowledgement of the Land

Prelude: "Spirit of the Living God" Daniel Iverson. Setting by John Carter

Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation

Lenten Candle Liturgy:

Why do we put out this candle?

Fourth purple candle extinguished.

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 - "Christ is Made the Sure Foundation" VU #325

Words: Latin 7th century, translated by John Mason Neale. Music: Henry Purcel, adapted by Ernest Hawkins.

Descant: © 1974 W. Herbert Belyea

Words, Music: Public Domain.

Descant: W. Herbert Belyea

Christ is made the sure foundation,
Christ the head and cornerstone,
chosen of the Lord, and precious,
binding all the church in one,
holy Zion's help for ever,
and its confidence alone.

To this temple where we call you,
come, O Lord of hosts, today;
with your faithful loving-kindness
hear your servants as they pray,
and your fullest benediction
shed within its walls away.

Here bestow on all your servants
what they ask of you to gain,
what they gain from you for ever
with the blessed to retain,
and hereafter in your glory
evermore with you to reign.

Laud and honour to the Father,
laud and honour to the Son,
laud and honour to the Spirit,
ever three and ever one,
one in might, and one in glory,
while unending ages run.

Ω

Opening Prayer (in unison) A Lenten Prayer

**God of love, as in Jesus Christ you gave yourself to us,
so may we give ourselves to you,
living according to your holy will.
Keep our feet firmly in the way where Christ leads us;
help our lips speak the truth that Christ teaches us;
fill our bodies with the life that is Christ within us.
In his holy name we pray.
Amen.**

Anthem:

“Be Still and Know That I Am God”
Christopher Walker and Paul Freeburg, DC

Soloist: Jillian Laidlaw

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 “Open My Eyes that I May See” VU #371

Words, Music: Clara H. Scott 1895. Public Domain.

Open my eyes, that I may see
glimpses of truth thou hast for me;
place in my hands the wonderful key
that shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Open my ears, that I may hear
voices of truth thou sendest clear;
and while the wavenotes fall on my ear,
everything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my ears, illumine me,
Spirit divine!

Open my mouth, and let me bear
gladly the warm truth everywhere;
open my heart and let me prepare
love with thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my heart, illumine me,
Spirit divine!

Ω

We Open Ourselves to Receive God's Blessings

Responsive Reading: Psalm 23 God is my Shepherd

God is my shepherd

There is nothing I shall lack.

You, God make me lie down in green pastures,

you lead me beside peaceful waters;

you revive my spirit, you guide me in right pathways for your name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, you are with me,
your rod and your staff are my comfort.
You spread a table for me in the sight of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, my cup is overflowing.

Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
And I will dwell in God's house my whole life long.

Scripture: John 9: 1- 41

Sermon: "Restored"

Hymn Voices United "I Have Called You by Your Name" MV #161

Words and music: Daniel Charles Damon, 1995;
French trans. David Fines, 2006
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Carol Stream, IL 60188

I have called you by your name,
You are mine;
I have gifted you and ask you now
to shine.
I will not abandon you; all my promises are true.
You are gifted, called and chosen;
You are mine.

I will help you learn my name,
as you go;
read it written in my people, help them grow.
Pour the water in my name,
speak the word your soul can claim,
Offer Jesus' body given long ago.

I know you will need my touch as you go;
feel it pulsing in creation's ebb and flow.
Like the woman reaching out,
choosing faith in spite of doubt,
hold the hem of Jesus' robe, then let it go.

I have given you a name, it is mine;
I have you my Spirit as a sign.
With my wonder in your soul,
make my wounded children whole;
go and tell my precious people
they are mine.
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.

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**"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

Gracious God, you are our Lord. We are the people of your pasture, the sheep of your hand. As you have fed us by your mercy, may it be our daily bread to do your will. In Jesus' name. Amen

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 “God, Whose Almighty Word” VU #313

Words: John Marriott.

Music: Adapted from Felice de Giardini.

Public Domain.

God, whose almighty word
chaos and darkness heard, and took their flight,
hear us, we humbly pray, and where the gospel day
sheds not its glorious ray, let there be light.

Jesus, who came to bring
on your redeeming wing, healing and sight,
health to the troubled mind, sight to the Spirit-blind,
O now to humankind let there be light.

Spirit of truth and love,
lifegiving, holy dove, speed forth your flight;
move on the water's face, bearing the lamp of grace,
and in earth's darkest place let there be light.

Blessed and holy three,
glorious trinity, wisdom, love, might,
boundless as ocean's tide rolling in fullest pride,
through the world far and wide, let there be light.
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: "O God. Our Help in Ages Past" Arr. By Cindy Berry

Announcements:

Creation Connection How will we repent and change our ways as stewards of creation when caring for refugees who need safe harbour from the climate crisis runs up against the temptation to worship the false idol of "ownership of land"? (Gathering, Lent/Easter 2026, page 10, Used with permission.)

Living with respect in Creation for Lent? Consider participating in these Canadian initiatives.

<https://www.cpj.ca/fortheearth>

<https://easternsynod.org/call-for-climate-campaign-resources/>

<https://www.shiftaction.ca/>

Kitchen Conversations with the Moderator cont'd.

Videos will be posted on the United Church of Canada's YouTube channel
at <https://www.youtube.com/unitedchurchofcanada>

Lenten Study: As we journey toward Lent, the new Lenten devotional *Bless, Break, Share: Recipes for Faithful Living* invites you to a spiritual practice of reflecting on food and hunger. What do you hunger for? How do you feed others? What feeds your soul?

Lectionary Readings

Sunday, March 15, Fourth of Lent

1 Samuel 16: 1-13; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5: 8-14; John 9:1-41

Sunday, March 22, Fifth of Lent

Ezekiel 37: 1-14; Psalm 130; Romans 8: 6-11; John 11:1-45

Sunday, March 29,

Palm/Passion Sunday

Palms – Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29; Matthew 21: 1-11

Passion – Isaiah 50: 4-9a;

Psalm 31: 9-16; Philippians 2: 5-11; Matthew 26: 14-27:66 OR

Matthew 27:11-54

Maundy Thursday, April 2

Exodus 12: 1-4, (5-10), 11-14; Psalm 116: 1-2, 12-19;

1 Corinthians 11:23-26;

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

Good Friday, April 3

Isaiah 52: 13-53:12; Psalm 22; Hebrews 10: 16-25 OR

Hebrews 4: 14-16, 5:7-9;

John 18: 1-19:42

Sunday, April 5, Easter Sunday

(First of the season of Easter)

Acts 10: 34-43 OR Jeremiah 31: 1-6; Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24;

Colossians 3: 1-4 OR Acts 10: 34-43;

John 20: 1-18 OR Matthew 28: 1-10