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Our Mission as a congregation: *Love the Lord Your God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence and energy and love your neighbour as yourself. (Mark 12:19-21 MSG)*

March 19, 2023 - Fourth Sunday of Lent

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Introit: (400 VU Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying)

***Lord, listen to your children praying,
 Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
 Lord, listen to your children praying,
 send us love, send us power, send us grace!***

Call to Worship (responsive)

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Lord Jesus, you opened the eyes of the man born blind, you revealed yourself to him as Savior.

We, blind like, extend our hands to you and pray.

Behold the shadows that descend on our minds; enlighten us and save us.

Send your Holy Spirit upon us.

May he illumine the eyes of our hearts so that we also might recognize you as Savior.

May we see clearly the love of the Father for each of us.

Come, let us worship the Lord our God. Amen.

Prayer of Approach (together)

Gracious and loving God of wilderness, as we devote these forty days to you. Shape us by your Holy Spirit into the image of Christ our Lord. May we be ready, by your grace, to confront the power of death with the promise of eternal life. Joined together in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all majesty and honor are yours almighty God forever and ever. Amen.

Hymn: 87 VU *I Am the Light of the World*

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

Children's Time and the Lord's Prayer

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH SCRIPTURE

Responsive Reading: Psalm 23 (p. 749 VU)

First Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Epistle: Ephesians 5:8-14

Holy Gospel: St. John 9: 1-41

Anthem *The Lord's My Shepherd*

Sermon: "I Am the Light of the World"

Choir

GOD CALLS US TO RESPOND

Hymn: 445 VU *A Little Child the Saviour Came*

Minute for Social Justice

Michèle Ashby

Offertory Sentence

Offertory Prayer

Offertory Response (VU 55 In the Bleak Midwinter)

What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb. If I were a wise man, I would do my part, yet what I can I give him – give my heart.

Prayers of the People

Hymn: 266 VU *Amazing Grace*

Commissioning and Benediction

Choral Benediction (124 MV Glory to God in the Highest)

Glory to God in the highest and peace to God's people on earth.

Glory to God in the highest and peace to God's people on earth.

Let us go in the peace of Christ.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Postlude

A warm welcome to everyone who is joining us for worship. May this be a time for us to draw closer to each other and God. We recognize that we gather in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People, and we seek to be good neighbours to the First Nations.

This morning we welcome to the church through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism Annie Geneva Ryan, daughter of Meagan and Eric Ryan.

Thank you to Rev. Doug Stewart who is leading our service of worship this morning.

Next Sunday the Social Justice Committee will be conducting the service at St James. We will be celebrating Earth Day one month early! So if you have any pussy willows, or similar harbingers of spring that you could share to decorate the church, please feel free to bring them in that day. Thank you.

Rev. Peter is on sabbatical until March 27, 2023. During that time Rev. Doug Stewart (revdoug@stjamesuc.com) will be pastoral charge supervisor and Rev. Meredith Marple will be available for pastoral care and emergencies (revmeredth@stjamesuc.com or 902-863-0452).

THIS WEEK AT ST. JAMES

Tuesday, March 21

11:00 am The Community Hot Meal in the Hall.
3:00 pm Meditation Group in the Meeting Room.
7:00pm Council Meets on Zoom

Thursday, March 23

11:00 am The Community Hot Meal in the Hall.
7:00pm Choir Practice in the Sanctuary.

Upcoming at St. James Saturday, April 1st UCW Daffodil Tea, 2-4 pm. Sandwiches and Sweets (vegan avail.) \$12 at the door. Easter Bonnets welcome. Donations of uncut squares from the congregation are needed and would be greatly appreciated.

This is a busy **Social Justice** week. The 20th is the International Day of Happiness – find some joy and spread happiness around you. A simple smile goes a long way! The very next day is the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination – this year’s theme is “Stand Up Against Racism”. Unfortunately, racism is still prevalent in our society. Don’t just be against it, speak up! Lead by example, let fairness and respect for human rights guard your every action. And March 22nd is World Water Day, it celebrates water and raises awareness about the 1 in 4 people – 2 billion worldwide – who lack safe drinking water! And please observe Earth Hour on March 25th from 8:30 pm to 9:30 pm. Turn off all the electronics that you possibly can - give Mother Earth a little break!

The springtime edition of Connections is sprouting! The committee is looking for your submissions. Share your stories by submitting a one or two paragraph bit to be printed in the next issue. **Submit stories by email at: stjamesconnections@gmail.com by March 31st.**

St James UCW Bursary Interested applicants should submit a letter to St James United Church directly. The letter should indicate the applicant's connection to St James and their plans for the upcoming academic year (community college, university, etc.). Preference will be given to confirmed members of St James United Church. It should also be noted that this is not a scholarship nor an award of merit, however applicants may choose to include any information that they think might be relevant to the selection committee. The selection committee is three members - the minister, representative from St. James UCW and a representative of children's worship program. Application deadline is **April 15**. The successful applicant will be notified at graduation, and the congregation will be notified in the bulletin following graduation, in late June. Submit letters of application to office@stjamesuc.com or mailed to St. James United Church, P.O. Box 1178 Antigonish NS B2G 2L6.

Emergency Warming Shelter – For future reference, (no immediate action required!), St James is compiling a list of interested volunteers who might be able to assist in some way with staffing an emergency warming shelter. This would probably not be at St James itself, but another central location in Antigonish. What might be required? People to help cook, clean, provide various items, (snacks, hygiene supplies, blankets +), and general “staffing”. None of this will happen in the near future. Various organizations are working toward having something in place for any emergencies that might occur such as extreme weather events, flooding, major power outages, etc. Obviously people’s circumstances may change before the need actually arises, but if you think you might be interested, please give your name and contact information to either Patsy in the church office, (email: sjuantigonish@gmail.com or phone, 902-863-2001) or Tim Hinds, (870-2858), or Michèle Ashby, (232-3473) – who will be helping to coordinate a list for future use.

Now is the time to renew or to begin your subscription to Broadview Magazine. If purchased through St. James your one year membership to Broadview is only \$25.00. To order, complete the information on the

special envelopes that are available in the Narthex and put in the Offering Box, drop it in the mail slot or bring to the church office.

St. James Hasty Notes “Sunday Morning” with the etching by A.W. Syperek ‘95 are available at the Church Office. The cost is \$10.00 for a pack of 5.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Seedy Sunday event at the Antigonish Farmers Market today, going on until 1 pm.

Lunchtime conversation, will take place on Food Security, tomorrow Monday, March 20th, 12 to 1 pm. Meet the organizers of Antigonish's Food Pantries and share your ideas on this topic.

Celebrate Spring! Join us for a family-friendly spring craft day. Saturday, March 25, 3:00 - 4:00 at St. Paul’s Anglican Church, 96 Church Street. Snacks provided. Free. Everyone welcome! For more info call: 902-863-5089 or email: rector3harbours@gmail.com

Heating Assistance Rebate Program helps low-and moderate-income Nova Scotians with the cost of home heating. Rebates are \$1,000 for each household. You can apply until 31 March 2023. For more information phone: 902-424-5200 Toll-free: 1-800-670-4357 or go to the website: novascotia.ca/apply-heating-assistance-rebate-heating-assistance-rebate-program

The North Shore Fire Hall (Civic 432 Marsh Road, rte. 337 in Cape George, Antigonish Co.) is hosting a Pancake & Sausage Fundraiser for a local family in time of need on Sunday March 26th, 2023, from 10am to 1pm. Laura Lee Landry-Rudolph who has recently been diagnosed with Cutaneous T-Cell Lymphoma also known as Mycosis Fungoides. The buffet style brunch will include Tea, Coffee, Juice and fresh muffins. Takeouts are also available (902-863-5720.) COST: Adults \$10, Children \$6 or by donation. 50/50 draw on site. Storm date: April 2nd There is a