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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)*

October 22, 2023- Twenty Second Sunday After Pentecost

## GOD BRINGS US TOGETHER

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Troint: (42 MV Praise God for this Holy Ground)

***Praise God for this Holy Ground,  
place and people, sight and sound.***

***Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!  
God's goodness is eternal!***

Call to Worship (responsive)

Let us sing to the Lord a new song.

**We will join together to proclaim the goodness of God.**

Let us declare God's marvelous deeds among all the people;

**We will share the story of our faith with the world.**

Let us praise God in the way we live each day.

**We will show the power of God's grace in our lives.**

Prayer of Approach (responsive)

**God of Grace, we know that you have chosen us,  
but we often forget that you have also chosen others.**

**You call us to be imitators of Christ,  
yet many times we are imitators of the world.**

**You challenge us to turn from our idols,  
but we are tempted to turn back to them again and again.**

**Rescue us, Lord, from ourselves. Show us your way.**

**Guide our every action, that we may live as you call us to live  
through Jesus Christ, Amen.**

Hymn: 288 VU *Great is Thy Faithfulness*

Children's Story and Lord's Prayer

Hymn: 356 VU *Seek Ye First*

## GOD SPEAKS THROUGH SCRIPTURE

Responsive Reading: Psalm 98 (p. 818 VU)

First Reading: Isaiah 45:1-7

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Gospel: Matthew 22:15-22

Anthem: *Thanks Be to God* (Marty Haugen)

Youth and Senior Choir with Chad Brazier (guitar)

Sermon "Finding the Better Way"

Hope Smith  
Jonathan Davie

## GOD CALLS US TO RESPOND

Hymn: 120 VU *O Jesus, I Have Promised*

Minute for Mission

Pamela Cunningham

Offertory Sentence

Offertory Response (538 VU For the Gift of Creation)

***For the gift of creation, the gift of your love,  
and the gift of your Spirit by which we live,  
we thank you and give you the fruit of our hands.  
May your grace be proclaimed by the gifts that we give***

Prayers of the People

Hymn: 244 VU *Sing Your Praise to God Eternal*

Commissioning and Benediction

Choral Benediction (Praise God for this Holy Ground)

***Though praise ends, praise is begun,  
where God's will is gladly done.  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!  
God's goodness is eternal!***

Postlude

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**A warm welcome** to everyone who is joining us for worship. May this be a time for you to draw closer to God and your neighbour. 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.

## Scriptures for Next Sunday

Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18 • 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8 • Matthew 22:34-46

## **Rooted in Truth, Compassion and Justice:**

### **A Prayer for Peace when Words Fail**

(From the World Council of Churches  
in response to recent events in Gaza and Israel)

Words fail to convey how heavily the stories of violence and despair emerging from our screens weigh on our hearts. Yet we recognize that in this case, remaining silent is itself a form of violence.

Along with countless others around the world, we share the outrage, grief, and sense of helplessness recent events have awakened.

May we look to the Holy Spirit when we feel helpless, when we do not know what to pray, when words fail to contain the groaning of lament.

May those of us who may be distant from these unfolding events seek to bear witness to the reality of injustice, oppression, violence, and historical complexity rather than turn away.

May we not harden our hearts to the cries of the victims.

May we remember that peace, to be restorative, must be rooted in truth and built on justice while also embracing the way of love.

May we not ignore the necessary foundation of human rights: that we are all made in the image of God.

May we pray for endurance to continue the long road of peace and restoration that calls us to take responsibility for past injustices and repent of any complicity in oppression.

May we never fail to recall that even in the midst of violence, we can call for adherence to international humanitarian law.

May we acknowledge the painful complexity of forgiveness and reconciliation.

May we commit ourselves and one another to not cease labouring for peace and justice.

May we hold space not merely for sorrow, but also hope and peace that transcend the sum of present circumstances.

Prince of Peace, come quickly. **Amen**

## THIS WEEK AT ST. JAMES

**Sunday, October 22**

11:30 am Info Fair - Today is the day! Please stay to see what fun there is waiting for you! Each active group at St James will display and also welcome your engagement. Snacks aplenty!

**Tuesday, October 23**

10:00 am Hot Meal Program  
3:00 pm Meditation Group in Meeting Room. For more information, call Fran @ 902- 863-3546

**Wednesday, October 25**

11:00 am United Church Worship at the RK (this is the alternate date because of the restrictions at the Rk earlier in the month).

**Thursday, October 26**

11:00 am Hot Meal Program  
7:00 pm Senior Choir. New Members welcome!

**Greeting at the door** this Sunday is Pat Workman

**Visiting at St. Martha's.** Just a reminder that because of policies in place at the hospital that patients or their families have to request visits from clergy. If you are in the hospital and would like a visit from Rev. Peter please call 902-863-2859 or tell one of the staff or chaplains at St. Martha's.

## UPCOMING AT ST. JAMES

**United Church Women** "UCW" will be meeting Sunday, November 5<sup>th</sup> after church and that all are welcome

**St. James UCW will be holding their HOLLY TEA and SALE** on SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18. We will need several dozen volunteer workers on the day of the sale as well as a couple of days prior. If you can help in any way, please contact Barbara Gardiner at 863-1641 as soon as possible. We are now accepting your donations for the Christmas Room, the Silent Auction, Jewelry and the New-To-You table (NO BOOKS OR YARD SALE ITEMS. Items must be new or just like

new). Your contributions will be gratefully received Monday to Friday from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. until Friday, Nov. 10. Please use the back door of the church.

**The 2024 United Church Calendars are ready to be ordered.** Orders are being taken and should be placed by November 1. Please contact Barb in the office if you would like to order one, or Sheryl Chapman 902 863-6409

**October 17th was the International Day for Poverty Eradication**, a day aiming to promote understanding and dialogue between those living in poverty and wider society. "Dignity for all in practice." is the 2023 theme. Those living in extreme poverty include many working in the "informal economy" – unprotected by the Canadian Labour Code. They often have no choice but to endure unacceptable employment situations. Despite working long hours, often at multiple jobs, they may be unable to earn enough to support themselves and their families, and are forced to make difficult decisions about whether to prioritize food, accommodations, fuel or medications.

Please take a look at the United Church's related prayer at [united-church.ca/worship-special-days/international-day-eradication-pov-erty](http://united-church.ca/worship-special-days/international-day-eradication-pov-erty).

## COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

**There will be Free Recreation Transit for Saturdays in October!** Dial-a-ride services with Antigonish Community Transit will be free of charge for all Saturdays (7th, 14th, 21st, 28th) in the month of October for specified times to recreation locations around Antigonish. Also please note that any one can request other recreation destinations that may not be listed here. All bookings and specific questions should be directed to Antigonish Community Transit at (902) 867-0411. Please see the poster for further details.

**Lions Pancake and Sausage Breakfast** on Sunday October 29 from 9-12 at the Lions Den on 13 Highland Dr Ext. donations at door will aid families in need at Christmas.