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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)*

November 19, 2023- Twenty-Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

GOD BRINGS US TOGETHER

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Introit: (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)

We are rich, poor, struggling and secure

And God calls us all.

We bring our joy and sorrow, questions and wonders.

And God welcomes us all.

We offer our talents and our imperfections, our faith and our doubt.

And God loves us all.

Prayer of Approach (together)

Generous God, you call us to be disciples of Jesus and faithful stewards of your many gifts. Open our minds and hearts to a greater awareness and deeper appreciation of your countless blessings. Transform us through your Spirit that we might care for creation, serve others, and seek your justice as we follow in Jesus' way, Amen.

Hymn: 312 VU *Praise with Joy the World's Creator*

Children's Story and Lord's Prayer

Hymn: 222 VU *Come, Let Us Sing the Lord Our Song*

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH SCRIPTURE

Responsive Reading: Psalm 82 (799 VU)

First Reading: Isaiah 50:4-10

Barb Gardiner

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Christine Templeman

Gospel: Matthew 25:14-30

Anthem: *"I want to walk as a child of the light"* (Benjamin Harlan)

Sermon: "A Different Type of Judgement"

GOD CALLS US TO RESPOND

Hymn: 593 VU *Jesu, Jesu Fill Us With Your Love*

Minute for Social Justice

Offertory Sentence and Prayer

Offering 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: 507 VU *Today, We Are All Called to Be Disciples*

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

A warm welcome to everyone who is joining us for worship. May this time help you draw to 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.

The prayers and Christian sympathy are extended to the family and friends of *John Hugh Smith* who died earlier this week. His funeral was yesterday at St. Ninian's Cathedral. Please keep Barb, Bryan, Kevin, Bradley and all the family in your prayers during this difficult time.

Scriptures for Next Sunday

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 • Ephesians 1:15-23 • Matthew 25:31-46

Blessings

There are blessings
meant for you
to hold onto
clutched
like a lifeline
carried
like a candle
for a dark way
tucked into a pocket
like a smooth stone
reminding you
that you do not
go alone.

This blessing
is not those.

This blessing
will find its form
only as you
give it away
only as you
release it
into the keeping
of another

only as you
let it
leave you
bearing the shape
the imprint
the grace
it will take
only for having
passed through
your two
particular
hands.

THIS WEEK AT ST. JAMES

Sunday, November 19

11:30 am Church Council will meet in the Meeting Room.

Tuesday, November 21

10:00 am Bible Study in the parlour. Everyone is welcome!

10:00 am Hot Meal Program

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

Thursday, November 23

10:00 am Hot Meal Program

7:00 pm Senior Choir. New Members welcome!

Greeting at the door this Sunday is Sarah Armstrong

Today a drawing by local artist, Sara AvMaat, will be on display in the hall. It is inspired by her experiences in Israel/Palestine as an observer for the United Church. There will be several copies of her accompanying comments entitled "**Meditations on the Wall**" available for reading. Everyone is most welcome to examine both.

Are you interested in having your say on the new regulations for the Canada Disability Benefit? There's information on how to share your thoughts on this important policy on the bulletin board in the back hall.

UPCOMING AT ST. JAMES

Sunday, November 26

10:30 am We gather around the table to celebrate the Lord's Supper together.

Saturday, December 2

10:00 am Decorating the Sanctuary! Everyone is welcome to come and help as we trim the tree and place the lights in the church.

Sunday, December 3

10:30 am We start the four Sundays of Advent leading up to Christmas.

Roof Over Your Head The UCW is supporting a fundraising effort for this local non profit housing assistance program by taking orders for Mitchell's Soup Company dehydrated soup mixes. For more info, contact Joyce Hilling 902 870-9814 or Barb in the office.

Your Social Justice Committee asks you to mark the 20th, **Universal Children's Day** – a global observance that celebrates and promotes the rights and well-being of children worldwide. The 2023 theme is "Investing in our future means investing in our children". Also, the 25th is the **International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women**. There are five gender-related killings of women and girls every hour, generally by someone in their own family. Let's stop this clock and take action to end violence against women & girls now!

Stewardship Thought for this Week

Words matter. As do actions. We are challenged to match our actions and our words. If we speak out against injustice, then we act to bring justice to pass. If we call out for peace, then we work for peace for all people. If we recognize the needs around us, then we generously share.

Did you know? St. James is now able to accept electronic fund transfers (e-transfers) for your offering. How do you do it? Simply log into your bank/credit union and add "eft@stjamesuc.com" as a contact and then transfer your donation (we are set up for auto deposit so no need for questions or passwords). You can use e-transfers for a one time gift or set it up for regular donations. Best of all your gift helps us continue the work and ministry which happen at St. James!

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Saturday November 25th 10-2pm St. Martha's Regional Hospital Auxiliary Garage and Bake Sale John Paul Centre 308 Main Street. Donations accepted Friday Nov 24th from 930-4 at the John Paul Centre

Sunday, November 26th 9-12 Lions Pancake and Sausage Breakfast at the Lions Den 13 Highland Drive by donation to fund community needs.