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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 16, 2025- Second Sunday in Lent

### **GOD BRINGS US TOGETHER**

Prelude *Be Not Afraid*

Introit: (108 VU Throughout these Lenten Days and Nights v 1)

*Throughout these Lenten days and nights  
we turn to walk the inward way,  
where, meeting Christ, our guide and light,  
we live in hope till Easter Day.*

Call to Worship (responsive)

Come aside for a while to the house of the Lord,  
**to the holiness of God's presence,**  
to the instruction of God's word,  
**to the wonder of God's love**

Prayer of Approach (together)

**God ever creating, ever loving, ever leading:  
when things feel chaotic, your stillness is peace;  
when around us there are lies and uncertainty, your word is truth;  
when we are paralysed by fear and anxiety, your way is freedom;  
when we feel bereft and alone, your presence is love;  
Gather us close to you, we pray,  
and teach us again of your grace and hope, Amen.**

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

Prayer of Confession (together - from an ancient Irish litany)

O Heavenly Father of the poor and the yearning  
**Open our eyes to see where we have been blind.**  
O Christ of the lost and the despairing  
**Open our ears to hear where we have been deaf.**

O Spirit afire with love and mercy  
**Burn away our sins and set us aflame  
to be beacons of your grace in this world, Amen.**

Words of Assurance

Children's Time and the Lord's Prayer

Hymn: 356 VU *Seek Ye First*

### **GOD SPEAKS THROUGH SCRIPTURE**

Responsive Reading: Psalm 27 (p. 754 VU)

First Lesson: Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

Fred Davison

Second Lesson: Philippians 3:17-4:1

Bill Marshall

Gospel: Luke 13:31-35

Anthem *Take My Yoke Upon You* (J.Paul Williams/Douglas Nolan)

Sermon: "The Depth of God's Love"

### **GOD CALLS US TO RESPOND**

Hymn: 626 VU *I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say*

Minute for Social Justice

Offertory Response (540 VU Grant Us, God, the Grace of Giving)

*Grant us, God, the grace of giving, with a spirit large and free,  
that ourselves and all our living we may offer faithfully.*

Prayers of the People

Hymn: 238 VU *O Lord My God*

Commissioning and Benediction

Choral Benediction: (967 VU Amen)

*A-men, a-men, a-men*

Postlude

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**A warm welcome** to everyone 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.

**Coffee Hosts** this morning are Judy McCarron and Bethalee Cooper.

**Scripture for Next Sunday**

Isaiah 55:1-9 • 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 • Luke 13:1-9

**Hope in Action**  
**A Mission and Service Story**

After the initial response,  
and after headlines fade away,  
the emergency and urgency remain.

When we hear of a global emergency, our minds often jump to “How can we help?” Your gifts to Mission and Service enable partners to immediately get to work providing crucial basic needs: food, water, shelter, and medication. But after the initial response, and after headlines fade away, the emergency and urgency remain.

After the immediate shock fades, people living in the wake of a disaster can have difficulty imagining what life will look like down the road. In these times, hope is an essential, powerful force that gives us the motivation to move forward and inspires us to keep going.

Two years after the February 2023 earthquakes, people in Syria are still experiencing the devastating aftermath, exacerbated by civil war and other natural disasters. And Mission and Service partner the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) continues to be hard at work providing hope. From retrofitting buildings and providing medical equipment to education and trauma healing, MECC is dedicated to sustainable relief. In Aleppo, MECC rehabilitated four schools before the academic year began in September 2023, providing children with a safe place to learn.

Thank you for supporting the work of our Mission and Service partners. Your generosity is a beacon of hope during challenging times.

## THIS WEEK AT ST. JAMES

**Tuesday, March 18**

- 11:00 am Community Hot Meal Program
- 2:30 pm Meditation Group in the Parlour. Contact Fran for more information 902 870-1198.
- 7:00 pm Church Council via Zoom

**Thursday, March 13**

- 11:00 am Community Hot Meal Program
- 7:00 pm Choir practice

**We have a new publication!** A fun WELCOME packet written for those new and curious about our services at St James. This light green booklet takes you lightly through a regular service along with providing contact information. Please keep it in mind for those you know who are new and curious. It will be in the Narthex along with the Newsletter and other timely notices.

**The Church Office** will be open this week on Tuesday and Thursday, and Friday morning from 10 am-12 pm. Messages are checked regularly.

**Income Tax Receipts** for February 2025 are available in the narthex.

**The prayers and Christian sympathy** of the congregation are extended to the family, colleagues and friends of *the Rev. Kendall Harrison* who died last week. Kendall was the Personnel Minister for the Maritime Conference for many years and was Regional Minister for Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Regional Council (NB and PEI) at the time of his death. (The link for Kendall's obituary will be on the website under Links for March 16, 2025). Please keep his family as well as the staff and ministers he worked with in your prayers during this time.

Another busy social justice week! The 21<sup>st</sup> is the **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**. Unfortunately, this continues to be a pressing issue globally, with far-reaching consequences that hinder social cohesion and impede the realization of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This day is a reminder of our collective responsibility to combat racism, promote tolerance, and strive for a more equitable world. The 22<sup>nd</sup> is **World Water Day**. This year's theme is 'Glacier Preservation'. Glaciers are critical to life – their

meltwater is essential for drinking water, agriculture, industry, clean energy production and healthy ecosystems. And don't forget **Earth Hour** on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. From 8:30 > 9:30 pm please turn off all the electrical appliances, lights, etc that you can. Join in solidarity with Mother Nature around the world!

**Did you know?** St. James accepts electronic fund transfers (e-transfers) for your regular offering and for occasional donations. How do you do it? Simply log into your bank/credit union and add "[eft@stjamesuc.com](mailto: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). Yes, it is that simple to do! Best of all your gift helps us continue the work and ministry which happen at St. James!

## COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Sunday March 16th 2 - 5PM** St. Patrick's Social, with the Ceilidhmen \$15/Admission at Door, Fire Hall, 432 Marsh Rd, Cape George Hosted by North Shore Ladies Auxillary.

**There will be a Family Square Dance** at the St. James Church Hall from 6-9PM on Saturday March 22. John Pellerin, Jason Roach and Mary Beth Carty will provide the tunes. Suggested Donation: \$5-\$15. No experience necessary! The UCW will run a canteen by donation towards the purchase of new coffee urns and other kitchen necessities. Please spread the word!

**With hopefully good weather on our side** we are presenting the third of our Winter/Spring Square Dance/Ceilidh series at St Ninian's Place on Sunday, March 23, 2025, from 1:30 - 4:00 pm. Featured performers will be Brian and Abby MacDonald, Junior Fraser, and Leona Williams. Adults - \$10.00; Students by donation; children free. All ages welcome. Light lunch provided

**Catholics at X and Flourish at X** present a ceilidh on Friday, March 28, 2025, from 8:00 - 11:00 pm, at St Ninian's Place to provide a Social evening of dance, music and fellowship for students and townspeople alike. All are welcome. Light lunch provided. Admission by donation. Featured performers are : Colin Rankin, Junior Fraser, and Leona Williams and some surprise student musicians.

