



Rev. Peter Smith (Clergy), Carolyn Curry (Organist)
May MacKenzie (CE Dir), Chad Brazier (Custodian)
Barb Shea (Secretary) office@stjamesuc.com
197 Main St, Antigonish, NS B2G 2B8
(902) 863-2001 www.stjamesuc.com

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 9, 2025- First Sunday in Lent

GOD BRINGS US TOGETHER

Prelude

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- from Joel 2:13)

Let us rend our hearts and not our garments;

Let us turn back to the Lord our God.

For God is gracious and compassionate,

long-suffering, and abounding in love.

Opening Prayer (responsive)

God of the wilderness, as we follow Jesus into the unknown,

may we recognize temptation when it comes.

God of the desert, as we hunger along the way

may it be your bread we eat.

God of grace, as we are surrounded by angels and wild beasts

may it be you alone we worship. Amen.

Hymn: 223 VU *Eternal Unchanging*

Prayer of Confession (together)

O God, we confess that we are afraid of what we might have to give up or change when we enter your presence. In our reluctance, we miss opportunities for your grace to touch us and others. Forgive us that we might be healed; forgive us that we might be restored; forgive us that we might be born again through Jesus Christ, Amen.

Words of Assurance

Children's Time and the Lord's Prayer

Hymn: 377 VU *Holy Spirit, Hear Us*

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH SCRIPTURE

Responsive Reading: Psalm 91 (p. 807 VU)

First Lesson: Deuteronomy 26:1-11

Linda MacDougall Penner

Second Lesson: Romans 10:8b-13

Brenda Rose

Gospel: Luke 4:1-13

Anthem *Lonesome Valley* (Jay Althouse)

Sermon: "Finding Our Way"

GOD CALLS US TO RESPOND

Hymn: 664 VU *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*

Minute for Mission

Paul van de Wiel

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: 469 VU *We Gather Here*

Sacrament of Holy Communion (see insert)

Hymn: 481 VU *Sent Forth by God's Blessing*

Commissioning and Benediction

Choral Benediction: (967 VU Amen)

A-men, a-men, a-men

Postlude

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 Glenna Quinn and Diane Therikauf

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

Scripture for Next Sunday

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18 • Philippians 3:17-4:1 • Luke 13:31-35

Ecumenical Statement Shows Solidarity with Palestinian and Israeli Partners

Statement urges justice, accountability, and reinforcing rights of all civilians to life, and freedom from violence and discrimination.

KAIROS Canada and its member churches and agencies—including the Anglican Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, Mennonite Central Committee of Canada, The Presbyterian Church in Canada and The United Church of Canada—issued an ecumenical statement urging justice, accountability, reinforcing all civilians’ rights to life, and to freedom from violence and discrimination.

“We join the voices of those in the region and others in Canada and internationally in urging the Canadian Government to support a ceasefire and a negotiated resolution to this violence,” the statement says. “The international response must comply with international humanitarian law. We urge Canada to take leadership in calling for a corridor to provide humanitarian relief to Gaza.”

The statement supports those made by the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem, the World Council of Churches, Diakonia and Amnesty International in response to the spiraling violence and war crimes against Palestinian and Israeli civilians. It also includes calls to action to the Government of Canada, all people of goodwill and Minister of Foreign Affairs Melanie Joly.

Read the statement in English and French. (Link can be found on our website at “Links for March 9, 2025”)

THIS WEEK AT ST. JAMES

Sunday, March 9

- 10:30 am We gather around the table and celebrate the Lord's Supper together.
11:30 am UCW gathers in the Meeting Room

Tuesday, March 11

- 11:00 am Community Hot Meal Program
2:30 pm Meditation Group in the Parlour. Contact Fran for more information 902 870-1198.
4:00 pm Finance and Stewardship in the Meeting Room
6:30 pm Worship Committee via Zoom

Wednesday, March 12

- 10:00 am United Church worship at the Maples
11:00 am United Church worship at the RK MacDonald

Thursday, March 13

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

Connections, our congregational newsletter, is looking for submissions of articles, pictures, and other things of interest. Submissions can be emailed to bredarannerose@gmail.com or to the church office. Remember the deadline is Saturday March 15th at noon.

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

March 14th is celebrated in the United Church as **National Affirming / PIE Day** – a special day to celebrate the full inclusion of 2SLGBTQIA+ people in faith communities and beyond. It reminds and challenges us to continue widening our welcome and using the concept of PIE Day to embody love and celebrate gender and sexual diversity in all its forms. In addition to being delicious, **PIE = Public, Intentional, and Explicit**. Your Social Justice Collective invites you to feel free to take your appropriate “gender sticker” from the bowls in the church entrances and join us after the service in the hall for some delicious pie!

Celebration of Holy Communion
for the First Sunday of Lent
St. James United Church, March 9, 2025

The Lord be with you,

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts,

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and good to give God thanks and praise

Eternal God, we thank you that in the quiet of the dark nights you are there. When the noise has hushed and the fevered pace of life has chilled you draw us close and tell us that there is more than what we see.

“Be still and know that I am God.”

When we cannot see an end to our troubles and are uncertain about what tomorrow will bring, you show us that change is possible. As the land rests under chill of winter and cold permeates the land and we worry, you remind us that there is a plan and a purpose.

“There is a time for everything under heaven.”

In our distress you comfort us with peace and hope. As we look to the future with anxiety, you whisper about the possibility which is ours. When we dare to dream, you encourage us with glimpses of your vision and tastes of your promises.

“With Christ all things are possible.”

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might;

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest!

Bless'd is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest!

Loving God, you lead us to the table that you have prepared for us. On the table you offer us bread to build up our strength and drink as a sign of your grace. You invite us to set aside everything that would stop us from seeing and knowing the beauty and joy around us. You offer us these gifts and invite us to be your people.

“We are more than conquerors through him who loved us.”

As we take this bread and break it, we remember that on the night before Jesus died he took bread, broke it and offered it to his followers. He told them it was his body broken for them.

We remember Jesus' death upon the cross.

As we share this cup, we remember that on the night before he died Jesus took the cup and offered it to his followers. He told them it was his blood through which a new promise was being sealed.

We remember Jesus rising from the grave.

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Gracious God, let your Holy Spirit move among us and transform these gifts and our lives. Allow us to see the eternal, experience the extraordinary, and be filled with your love once again. For we are your people and have come at your bidding in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen. Amen. Amen*

Sharing of Bread and Cup

Prayer after Communion (together)

Gracious God, for the bread of life and for the cup of salvation we thank you. Allow us to go forth from this table and live as your holy people, trusting in the power of your Holy Spirit and walking in the way of Jesus Christ, Amen.

This prayer is from *All Things are Ready* by Peter Andrew Smith © 2007 CSS Publishing. Used by Permission.

Thanks to everyone for their prayers, condolences, and messages following the death of my mother. Your care and support has meant the world to us during this time.- Rev. Peter, Meredith, and Hope.

Clergy visits 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 at St. Martha's.

St James is a busy and active church not just on Sunday but through the week. As well as our church community there are exercise groups, girls guides, AA and other regular users of our building. So if you have a group or committee that is looking to meet please remember to contact the office to reserve your space.

Did you know? PAR (Pre Authorized Remittance) is as easy to start as one-two-three. 1) Ask to sign up at the church office. 2) Fill in the amount you want to give each month. 3) Know that each month your gift goes to help the church do God's work here in Antigonish and around the world! If you are interested in PAR speak to Pamela Cunningham or drop by the church office.

St James' Prayer Circle is a small group of folks who believe in the power of prayer. We are happy to pray for individuals and situations upon request. If you'd like to join us or if you would like to bring forward a prayer request, please speak to Michèle Ashby after church or call her at 232-3473. All matters are kept strictly confidential.

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

Tuesday, April 8th 7PM North Shore Voluntary Fire Department AGM at Fire Hall, 432 Marsh Rd, Cape George