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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)*

April 6, 2025- Fifth Sunday in Lent

### **GOD BRINGS US TOGETHER**

Prelude *Agnus Dei* (Georges Bizet)

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 Isaiah 51:4)

God says: "Listen to me, my people,

**and give ear to me, my nation;**

for a law shall go forth from me;

**and my justice shall be a light to the peoples."**

Opening Prayer (together)

**God of love, open our hearts, we pray, that we might feel your love.**

**Open our minds, we pray, that we might know  
your wisdom for us and the world.**

**Open our lives, we pray, that we might experience again  
your call for us to follow in the way of Jesus Christ, Amen.**

Hymn: 339 VU *When Morning Guilds the Skies*

Prayer of Confession (together)

**God of grace, we confess that we have a hard time believing  
the good news, much less living it out.**

**Past mistakes and failures, regrets and grievances, often haunt us.**

**We carry our sins, and the sins others have laid upon us, like heavy  
burdens which sap our energy and enthusiasm.**

**Help us, we pray, to accept the gift of new life you offer us in Jesus.**

**Refresh us with springs of living water, so that our parched lives  
may blossom in your renewing presence, Amen.**

Words of Assurance

Children's Time and the Lord's Prayer

Hymn: 365 VU *Jesus Loves Me*

### **GOD SPEAKS THROUGH SCRIPTURE**

Responsive Reading: Psalm 126 (p. 850)

First Lesson: Isaiah 43:16-21

Elliot Norman

Second Lesson: Philippians 3:4b-14

Paul Davie

Gospel: John 12:1-8

Anthem *God So Loved the World* (Sir John Stainer)

Sermon: "Extravagant Love"

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

Hymn: 117 VU *Jesus Christ is Waiting*

Offering Prayer

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: 149 VU *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*

Commissioning and Benediction

Choral Benediction: (967 VU Amen)

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

Postlude *Postlude No. 1* (Alexandre Boely)

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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 Joan Poole and Beryl Duggan

### **Scripture for Next Sunday**

Isaiah 50:4-9a • Philippians 2:5-11 • Luke 19:28-40

## **POSTCARDS UNITING CANADA**

Gillmore Park United in Richmond BC has invited us to join with them in exchanging postcards with United Churches in different parts of the country to help celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the United Church.

### **What will happen?**

We'll be matched with up to 30 other congregations. We'll get addresses and send them postcards and they'll send us postcards.

### **When does it happen?**

In early May we'll get our list of churches and addresses and mail away cards to them so everyone will have postcards in time for the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations in June.

### **Where do the cards come from?**

Postcards are meant to highlight either our church or the Antigonish area. Some people are buying them and others are making them!

### **What do you say on the postcards?**

Postcards should be brief, informative and personal. It would be nice to include one thing about our area, one about St. James, and one thing about yourself.

### **What will happen to the cards we receive?**

We're going to put the postcards on display for everyone to read as they arrive.

### **How do I take part?**

We need up to 30 people/families at St. James who want to send a card. If you're interested speak to Rev. Peter.

## THIS WEEK AT ST. JAMES

**Sunday, April 6**

11:45 am Guest speaker, Kathryn Anderson will share the story of Breaking the Silence coffee, as well as Guatemala's struggle for democracy and human rights. All are welcome!

**Tuesday, April 8**

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

**Wednesday, April 9**

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

**Thursday, April 9**

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

**Saturday, April 12**

12 pm- 2pm Daffodil Luncheon in the hall. Chicken Salad and Dessert. \$15 at the door. Come enjoy the food, tea and coffee, and the arrival of spring!

**The latest print issue of Connections**, our congregational newsletter, is available at the door and online. Thanks to everyone who contributed!

**Do pancakes after the Easter service sound good to you?** We're looking for some help again this year in making the pancake breakfast happen on Easter Sunday. If you can help please speak to Rev. Peter following service or this week at [minister@stjamesuc.com](mailto:minister@stjamesuc.com)

**Your kind donations** for the Antigonish Community Fridge and Pantry are greatly appreciated. Whenever you are able to do so, please place your donations in the donation box in the narthex. Thank you.

**Broadview Magazine Subscriptions.** If you are interested in renewing or subscribing to Broadview (which contains thoughtful articles on spirituality and the United Church) please contact the office before June

8<sup>th</sup> to take advantage of the group rate (\$30/year).

Your Social Justice Collective invites you to consider on 4 April, the **International Day for Mine Awareness & Action**, the recently expressed intention of the Finnish government to withdraw from the 1999 Ottawa convention, a landmark treaty that prohibited the use of anti-personnel mines. Several other countries, mostly bordering Russia, are considering following suite. Esther Major, Amnesty International's Deputy Director for Research in Europe, said: "The Finnish government's move to leave the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention is a disturbing backward step that further undermines the global consensus aimed at minimizing civilian harm during armed conflict." This day is also **National Refugee Rights Day** (why was 4 April, 1985 a milestone for refugee rights in Canada?) and the 7th is **World Health Day** – celebrating the theme of "Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures".

## HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES

April 13, 2025 Palm/Passion Sunday.

10:30 am We shout our Hosanna's and then gather to share the Lord's Supper.

April 17, 2025 Maundy Thursday

7:00 pm in the Hall. We remember and share the events in the Upper Room.

April 18, 2025 Good Friday

10:30 am We remember and recount the events of the Crucifixion.

April 18, 2025 Easter Sunday

6:30 am Easter Sunrise on the Bethany grounds. A pancake breakfast will follow back in the church hall.

10:30 am Easter Sunday service

## COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

The second last of the Winter/Spring Square Dance/Ceilidhs for 2025 will be held on April 13<sup>th</sup> from 1:30-4:00 a St. Ninian's Place. Featured entertainment will be Dara Smith-MacDonald, Natalie DeCoste, Junior Fraser, and Leona Williams. Admission is \$10 for adults, students by donation, and children free. A light lunch will be offered.

