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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)*

January 25, 2026- Third Sunday after Epiphany

GOD BRINGS US TOGETHER

Prelude *Prelude* (Johann Gottfried Walther)

Welcome and Announcements

Introit: (79 VU Arise your Light Has Come vs1)

*Arise, your light is come! The Spirit's call obey;
show forth the glory of your God, which shines on you today.*

Call to Worship (responsive)

The Lord is our light and salvation.

We need not be afraid.

The Lord is the stronghold of our life

God will shelter us in times of trouble.

Wait for the Lord, be strong and take heart, wait for the Lord.

For Christ calls us and claims us as God's own.

Prayer of Approach (together)

Gracious God,

You are light in our darkness and love in our loneliness.

You shepherd us beside still waters, inviting us to new adventures.

You guide us along paths of justice and peace, building a new world.

You send your comfort and courage to relieve our sorrow and fears.

Call us once again, to know your promise and experience your grace

for we have gathered as your people in Jesus' name, Amen.

Hymn: 562 VU *Jesus Calls Us*

Children's Story and the Lord's Prayer.

Hymn: 570 VU *Jesus' Hands Were Kind Hands*

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH SCRIPTURE

Responsive Reading: Psalm 27 (754 VU)

First Reading: Isaiah 9:1-4

Wendy MacCaull

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Harley MacCaull

Gospel: Matthew 4:12-23

Anthem: *A Choral Benediction* (Don Besig)

feat. Michèle Ashby & Hope Graham

Sermon: "When Heaven Comes Near"

GOD CALLS US TO RESPOND

Hymn: 563 VU *Jesus, You Have Come to the Lakeshore*

Minute for Mission

Robert Smith

Offering Invitation and Prayer

Offertory Response (104 MV Know that God is Good)

*Know that God is good, know that God is good,
know that God is good, God is good, God is good.
C'est vrai: Dieu est bon! C'est vrai: Dieu est bon!
C'est vrai: Dieu est bon! Dieu est bon! Dieu est bon!*

Prayers of the People

Hymn: 606 VU *In Christ There is No East or West*

Commissioning and Benediction

Choral Benediction (79 VU Arise your Light Has Come vs4)

*Arise, your light is come! The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing; God's power will make us strong.*

Postlude *Jesus Christus, unser Heiland* (Dietrich Buxtehude)

A warm welcome to everyone joining us for worship. May this time draw you closer to God and your neighbour. We acknowledge that we gather in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People, and seek to be good neighbours to the First Nations.

*This bulletin is dedicated to the Glory of God and in loving memory of
Enid and James Davison by Fred and Sheila Davison*

Greeting at the door is Judi MacPherson

Storyteller at Children's worship is Linda MacDougall Penner

Coffee Hour Host is Cynthia Ross

The prayers and Christian sympathy of the congregation are extended to the family and friends of *Mora Wilson* who died earlier this week. Please keep her siblings, friends, and colleagues at St. Martha's Hospital in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. Visitation will be Saturday, January 31st from 10-12pm with the memorial service to follow at 1pm at C.L. Curry Funeral Home.

THIS WEEK AT ST. JAMES

Sunday, January 25

12:00 pm **North of Nowhere** Book Discussion. For those registered, sessions begin at 12 pm today after church.

Tuesday, January 27

11:00 am Community Hot Meal Program
2:30 pm Mediation Group

Wednesday, January 28

7:00 pm Choir practice

Thursday, January 29

11:00 am Community Hot Meal Program
7:00 pm Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Ecumenical Service at St. Ninian's Cathedral. All are welcome.

UPCOMING AT ST. JAMES

Sunday, February 8

10:30 am Our African Heritage Service.
11:30 am UCW gathering in Meeting Room

Sunday, February 22

10:30 am We gather around the table to share the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday in Lent.

The Social Justice Collective asks us all to commemorate **International Holocaust Remembrance Day** on the 27th. Also known as the International Day in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust, it is a memorial day commemorating six million Jewish Holocaust victims, the result of the genocide of one-third of the Jewish people along with

countless numbers of other minority groups, (homosexuals, Romas, people with disabilities, etc), by the Nazis between 1933 and 1945 – an attempt to implement its "Final Solution" to the Jewish question. It is important that we pray that such atrocities stop occurring.

The Church Council met last Tuesday via Zoom to review the Annual Reports for 2025 and to consider the budget for 2026. The Annual Reports and Financial Statements will be available in mid-February and the Congregational Annual General Meeting will be on Sunday, March 1st after morning worship and following a shared meal in the hall.

Just a reminder that because of policies in place at St. Martha's 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.

2025 Tax Receipts for donations made to St. James and St. David's by envelope or through PAR or EFT, will be available next Sunday. Just a reminder that the receipts this year will include donations made from March 1 until December 31 2025. That is because in early March 2025, following CRA instructions, we issued receipts for donations made in January and February of 2025 which could be used on your 2024 tax return. That was a one time change made because of the postal strike in late 2024.

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.

Scriptures Next Sunday

Micah 6:1-8 • 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 • Matthew 5:1-12

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lions Pancake and Sausage Breakfast on Sunday January 25 from 9-12 at the Lions Den on 13 Highland Dr. Donations at the door will assist a local family with medical needs.