**St.Andrews United Church**



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# March 5th, 2023

 Lent 2

 **WE GATHER**

**Welcome**

Welcome! As we come into this holy space
we ask for God’s blessing, only to find that the abundance of God’s love is already around us.
May God open our eyes to see the blessing of creation in the beauty all around us.
May God open our ears to hear the blessing of the word as it is proclaimed in story and song this day.
May God open our hearts to experience the blessing of faith through the gentle touch of a friend or the supportive smile of a stranger.
And open our doors, that we may become vessels of God’s blessing to a world still in need of salvation. Let us worship.

**Announcements**

**Acknowledging Our Kinship**

One: For thousands of years, First Nations people have walked on this land; their relationship with the land is at the centre of their lives and spirituality. We are gathered on their traditional territory and acknowledge their stewardship of this land throughout the ages. Help us to become better neighbours so that we might live together in better ways.

**All: For we are all kin in Christ, “All My Relations,” with each other and this earth, its waters, air, animals, and plants.**

**Extinguishing the Light**

**Sung Response** - “Throughout these Lenten Days” - 108 VU verse 2 only

**Call To Worship**

We come this day hoping to encounter Christ.
**We come with burdens and questions that only He can answer.**
May we open our hearts to Him.
**May our lives be healed and strengthened for service. AMEN.**

**Gathering Hymn - In the Bulb There is a Flower - 703 VU**

**Prayer of Confession**

Lord, we are such stubborn people. We want to know all the answers. We find it hard to place our trust even in your Son. When Jesus proclaims that we can have a new life, we want to know how this is possible. How can we get rid of the old burdens and difficulties and start over again? Wouldn’t it be just like climbing back into the womb to make a fresh start? How we have misunderstood what Jesus has said. New life is possible. We can place our trust in God’s healing care. Forgive us, and help us, gracious Lord. For we ask this in Jesus’ Name. AMEN.

**Words of Assurance**

New life is given to you. You can place your trust in God and follow God’s way. God is with you. AMEN.

**Young at Heart**

**Hymn - O Jesus I Have Promised 120 VU**

**WE LISTEN FOR GOD’S WORD**

**Scripture Reading - Genesis 12: 1-4a, John 3: 1-17**

**Meditation - You are a Promise**

**Hymn - Will You Come and Follow Me - 567 VU**

**WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD**

**Invitation to Offering**

Through this invitation to share our gifts, we acknowledge that God has blessed us abundantly, and that we are to be a blessing to the world. In the very act of giving, in every act of bestowing blessings on another, we find that we are blessed yet again. I encourage you now to enter fully into this amazing cycle of blessing.

**Offering Hymn - Praise God from Whom All Blessing Flow - 541 VU**

 Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

 praise God, all creatures high and low;

 give thanks to God in love made known:

 Creator, Word and Spirit, One.

**Offering Prayer**

**Generous God,
you shower us with gifts,
including the greatest gift of all,
your own Son, Jesus Christ.
In thanksgiving and praise,
we offer you our time, our money,
our very selves.
In these actions,
we proclaim our intention to be a blessing
in your world. Amen.**

**Prayers of Thanksgiving and Concern**

God of Abram and Nicodemus,

God of all of us who think we are

too old or too poor or too small or too weak or too busy,

God of all of us daunted by the sheer wonder

of the plan you lay out before us:

we come to you now, aware of all you have done for us,

            and yet still struggling with our doubts.

Birth us all anew, O God;

hear us and help us on our journey.

God of Abram and Nicodemus, we pray for this world

where so many wander homeless

not by choice, but out of necessity,

           where so many are looking

for milk and honey or a great Name to rescue them.

We pray for all the people in this world, especially . . .

We pray for the women and men who lay down their lives

for the safety of brothers and sisters and neighbors . . .

We pray for those who lead us . . .

Birth us all anew, O God;

hear us and help us on our journey.

[*Silence*]

God of Abram and Nicodemus,

            we pray for your Church . . .

Give us the courage to leave everything behind and follow you.

Give us the faith to act on what we do not understand.

Bless us to be a blessing to everyone in your Name.

Birth us all anew, O God;

hear us and help us on our journey.

[*Silence*]

Birth us all anew, O God.

Hear us and help us on our journey.

Help us to grow up again,

     to accept not only earthly things but heavenly things,

     to lift up your Son and be lifted up ourselves,

     to let your Spirit move us beyond our understanding.

God of Abram and Nicodemus and all of us,

            hear us and help us

even as surely as the Spirit blows among us,

            all for the sake of your dear Son,

            who taught us when we pray to say:

**Our Father, who art in heaven . . .**

**The Lord’s Prayer**

**Closing Hymn - O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee - 560 VU**

**Commissioning and Benediction**

Lord, as we go from this place, walk with us. Give us renewed confidence in your will and transform our lives that we may serve you better. AMEN.

## Announcements

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| *UPCOMING* March 9 -Board Meeting 10:30amMarch 9-Lenten Meditations10:30amMarch 9-Euchre 1:30pm |
| March 16-Chili Lunch 12pm-1pm, Tickets $15 Call for reservations 519-615-2325 |

** Lenten Meditations will take place every Thursday morning throughout Lent at 10:30am and will take about a half hour. Come and enjoy a period of quiet reflection and renewal. All are welcome.**



**St. Andrews will be offering a Chili Lunch on March 16, 2023, with musical entertainment to follow. Tickets are $15 and advance reservations are required, please call 519-615-2325. Menu includes Chili, Salad, Bun, Fruit Cup, Cookie, Beverage.**