

Quispamsis United Church

February 18, 2024 - *First Sunday in Lent*

Liturgical Colour: Purple

Presider: Rev Ian Manson

Director of Music: Stephen Alexander

Reader: Diane Tonge

Centering Reflection: *“Lent is a much-needed mentor in an age obsessed with visible, measurable, manageable, and tweetable increase, for it invites us to walk with Jesus and His disciples through darker seasons that we would rather avoid...”.*

- Alicia Britt Chloe

GATHERING TOGETHER

Opening Music & Time of Prayer and Candle Lighting

Lord, Hear Us Pray - Steven Scott

Welcome and Lighting of the Christ Candle

Lighting of Affirm Candle & Acknowledgment of Territories

Celebrations

Introit:

Gather Us In

MV 7

Gather Us in, ground us in you.

Gather us in, ground us in you.

Gather us in, gather us in.

Ground us, ground us in you.

Call to Worship (Responsive):

Lent is a time of repentance and reconciliation, of contemplation and renewal.

Lent is a time to face those habits and practices that hem us in and hold us back.

Lent is a time to acknowledge some of the temptations that confront us.

On this First Sunday in Lent, we gather to claim God’s liberating love for us and the world.

Let us worship God.

Prayer of Approach (Unison)

Faithful God, from the rush and distractions of our ordinary days, we seek the anchor of your grace and care. In a world filled with temptations, hold us in your steadfast love. Grant us courage, so that today's pressures do not overwhelm us. Reshape us in these days of Lent, and mould us anew in your image.

Opening Hymn:

**Throughout These Lenten Days and Nights
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.**

VU 108

**The pilgrim Christ, the Lamb of God,
who found in weakness greater power,
embraces us, though lost and flawed,
and leads us to his Rising Hour.**

**We bear the silence, cross and pain
of human burdens, human strife,
while sisters, brothers help sustain
our courage till the Feast of Life.**

**And though the road is hard and steep,
the Spirit ever calls us on through
Calvary's dying, dark and deep,
until we see the coming Dawn.**

**So let us choose the path of One
who wore, for us, the crown of thorn,
and slept in death that we might wake
to life on Resurrection Morn!**

**Rejoice, O sons and daughters! Sing
and shout hosannas! Raise the strain!
For Christ, whose death Good Friday brings
on Easter Day will rise again!**

A Time of Contemplation

Time for All Ages

Sung Prayer of Illumination:

Wonderful Words of Life
Speak them over again to me
Wonderful words of life
Let me more of their beauty see
Wonderful words of life
Words of life and beauty
Teach me faith and duty
Beautiful words, wonderful words
Wonderful words of life
Beautiful words, wonderful words
Wonderful words of life

Songs of the Gospel

Reading: Mark 1:9-15

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gift of Music

In Christ Alone

Message

Trials, Temptations, and Timeless Truths

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn:

VU 115

Jesus, Tempted in the Desert
Jesus, tempted in the desert,
lonely, hungry, filled with dread:
'Use your power,' the tempter tells him;
'turn these barren rocks to bread!'
'Not alone by bread,' he answers,
'can the human heart be filled.
Only by the Word that calls us
is our deepest hunger stilled!'

Jesus, tempted at the temple,
high above its ancient wall:
'Throw yourself from lofty turret;
angels wait to break your fall!'
Jesus shuns such empty marvels,
feats that fickle crowds request:
'God, whose grace protects, preserves us,
we must never vainly test.'

Jesus, tempted on the mountain
by the lure of vast domain:
'Fall before me! Be my servant!
Glory, fame, you're sure to gain!'
Jesus sees the dazzling vision,
turns his eyes another way:
'God alone deserves our homage!
God alone will I obey!'

When we face temptation's power,
lonely, struggling, filled with dread,
Christ, who knew the tempter's hour,
come and be our living bread.
By your grace, protect, preserve us
lest we fall, your trust betray.
Yours, above all other voices,
be the Word we hear, obey.

SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn:

VU 633

Bless Now, O God, the Journey
Bless now, O God, the journey
that all your people make,
the path through noise and silence,
the way of give and take.
The trail is found in desert
and winds the mountain round,
then leads beside still waters,
the road where faith is found.

Bless sojourners and pilgrims
who share this winding way,
whose hope burns through the terrors,
whose love sustains the day.
We yearn for holy freedom
while often we are bound.
Together we are seeking
the road where faith is found.

Divine Eternal Lover,
you meet us on the road.
We wait for lands of promise
where milk and honey flow.
But waiting not for places,
you meet us all around.
Our covenant is written
on roads, as faith is found.

Commissioning (Responsive):

As we begin our journey through the season of Lent,
let us remember the words of the prophet Micah:

What does the Lord require of us?

To do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.

Benediction

Choral Closing

We Shall Go Out With Hope

VU 586 vs. 1

**We shall go out with hope of resurrection;
we shall go out, from strength to strength go on;
we shall go out and tell our stories boldly;
tales of a love that will not let us go.
We'll sing our songs of wrongs that can be righted;
we'll dream our dreams of hurts that can be healed;
we'll weave a cloth of all the world united
within the vision of new life in Christ.**

Closing Music: Morning Song - Gordon Young