

# Quispamsis United Church

*Lent: Chasing the Light*

*March 12, 2023 - Third Sunday of Lent*

***Liturgical Colour: Purple***

***Presider: Stephen Alexander***

***Musician: Angela Murphy***

***Reader: Heather Alward***

***Centering Passage:*** *You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.*

*Psalm 23*

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## GATHERING TOGETHER

**Lighting of the Christ Candle:** The light of Christ reveals who we are, but also the truth of the world around us. May this revealing light show us those things that we have been blind to - whether through intention or ignorance - and guide us to wholeness as a people, as creation

### Opening Music

#### Welcome & Lighting of Affirm Candle

Acknowledgement of Territories

Celebrations & Announcements

#### Introit:

Lord Prepare Me

MV 18 (X2)

**Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary**

**Pure and holy, tried and true**

**With thanksgiving, I'll be a living,**

**Sanctuary for you.**

#### Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

#### Call to Worship (Responsive):

Come, the banquet of hope and praise is ready.

**We come on your invitation, seeking to be fed.**

Feed on the love of God in Jesus Christ

**We come on your invitation, needing healing.**

Be healed by God's gracious mercy

**We come on your invitation, longing for forgiveness**

In Jesus' Name, you are loved, healed and forgiven.

**Praise be to God. Amen.**

### **Prayer of the Day**

Gracious God, in love You open wide the doors and welcome us into Your presence—  
saints and sinners alike. You spread a table before us, filled with the richest fare—  
a feast of love and mercy for the body and soul. We come with joy to meet You here,  
to eat and drink at Your table, to taste and see Your goodness, to celebrate Your grace and mercy  
in our lives. May Your Spirit inspire our praise and thanksgiving, our prayers and petitions as we  
worship together in Your presence. In the name of Jesus Christ, our host and Lord, Amen.

**Hymn:**

Praise With Joy the World's Creator

VU 312

**Praise with joy the world's creator,  
God of justice, love and peace,  
Source and end of human knowledge,  
Force of goodness without cease.  
Celebrate the Maker's glory,  
Power to rescue and release.**

**Praise the Son who feeds the hungry,  
Frees the captive, finds the lost,  
Heals the sick, upsets religion,  
Fearless both of fate and cost.  
Celebrate Christ's constant presence -  
Friend and Stranger, Guest and Host.**

**Praise the Spirit sent among us  
Liberating truth from pride,  
Forging bonds where race or gender,  
Age or nation dare divide.  
Celebrate the Spirit's treasure -  
Foolishness none dare deride.**

**Praise the Maker, Son and Spirit,  
One God in Community,  
Calling us to leave behind  
Faith's ghettos and obscurity.  
Thus the world shall yet believe  
When shown Christ's vibrant unity.**

## **Chasing the Light Liturgy (Responsive):**

As people born of the divine spark (...) that no darkness can overcome.

The journey through Lent is a path through light and darkness.

**Today we continue our journey, but the light is not as strong as it once was.**

What light there is warms us, welcomes us, reminds us that we are home.

**In God - through Christ - each of us and all of us are embraced and treated as precious, as honoured guests, as beloved children and kin.**

God's embrace envelopes the world, but our invitation often comes with strings.

*(put out candle)*

For those times where we have closed our doors to those in need of a home,

**for those times we have closed our hearts to those longing for love,**

for the invitations we have not extended because we thought it might change us,

**for the embrace we did not offer because we could not allow ourselves to see God's image in another,**

for the ways that we diminish the light of creation

**because we are too afraid, too selfish, too angry, we pray O God. Guide us by your light, even when all light seems to go out.**

*(silent reflection)*

## **Time for All Ages**

**Sung Prayer of Illumination:**

Open our Hearts

MV 21 (X2)

**Open our hearts, open our minds.**

**Open our lives to you, O loving God.**

**Reading:** Matthew 22:1-14

Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come. Then he sent some more servants and said, 'Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.' But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.' So the servants went out into the streets and

gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. He asked, 'How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?' The man was speechless. Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are invited, but few are chosen.

This is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Praise be to you, O Christ.**

**Gift of Music** – The Wedding Banquet (I Cannot Come) – Senior Choir

**Message** Please RSVP

### **RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD**

**Hymn:**

As We Gather At Your Table

VU 457

**As we gather at your table,  
as we listen to your word,  
help us know, O God, your presence;  
let our hearts and minds be stirred.  
Nourish us with sacred story  
till we claim it as our own;  
teach us through this holy banquet  
how to make Love's victory known.**

**Turn our worship into witness  
in the sacrament of life;  
send us forth to love and serve you,  
bringing peace where there is strife.  
Give us, Christ, your great compassion  
to forgive as you forgave;  
may we still behold your image  
in the world you died to save.**

**Gracious Spirit, help us summon  
other guests to share that feast  
where triumphant Love will welcome  
those who had been last and least.  
There no more will envy blind us  
nor will pride our peace destroy,  
as we join with saints and angels  
to repeat the sounding joy.**

**How Can I Give?**

1/ If you have internet banking, you can E-transfer funds to QUC by sending the funds to [QUC@nb.aibn.com](mailto:QUC@nb.aibn.com). Do not forget to send a separate email with the answer to your security question.

2/ Go to [www.CanadaHelps.org](http://www.CanadaHelps.org) and search for Quispamsis United Church. You can give to the church by using your credit card. The address says Gondola Point, do not worry, that is us.

3/ Mail or deliver your giving's to our treasurer, Brion Crossman, 22 Country Crescent, Quispamsis, E2E 1T2

4/ You can sign up for a pre-authorized remittance (PAR) donation which comes out of your bank account or credit card once a month. You can cancel this at any time. Contact Brion Crossman at 849-6003 for details.

5/ if you come for in-person worship, there is a plate as you enter the church where you can place your offering.

6/ As we consider the greater work of the United Church consider giving to Mission and Service Fund through your regular offering or at <https://united-church.ca>

**Offertory Dedication Hymn:**

We give you but your own  
**We give you but your own,  
whate'er the gift may be;  
all that we have is yours alone,  
we give it gratefully.**

VU 542

**Prayer of Dedication (Unison):**

**We come to you this day, O God, offering all that we are. We bring to you our gifts of time, talent, and treasure, but we also offer up to you our sin, anger, and brokenness. Heal us with your grace, and bless us with your love so that we, with the gifts that we bring, may be a part of the building of your kingdom of peace and love. This we pray in the name of Christ our companion and our guide. AMEN**

**Prayers of the People & Sung Lord's Prayer**

**(VU 959)**

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins**

as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil,  
for the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever.

Hymn:

He Came Singing Love

VU 359

He came singing love and he lived singing love;  
he died singing love.  
He arose in silence.  
For the love to go on  
we must make it our song;  
you and I be the singers.

He came singing faith and he lived singing faith;  
he died singing faith.  
He arose in silence.  
For the faith to go on  
we must make it our song;  
you and I be the singers.

He came singing hope and he lived singing hope;  
he died singing hope.  
He arose in silence.  
For the hope to go on  
we must make it our song;  
you and I be the singers.

He came singing peace and he lived singing peace;  
he died singing peace.  
He arose in silence.  
For the peace to go on  
we must make it our song;  
you and I be the singers.

### SENDING FORTH

**Commissioning (Responsive):**

God calls us to step out in faith, to follow where He leads  
**even if what He calls us to do seems impossible.**

So let's go from here with courage,  
**trusting in God's presence and power, and eager to do God's will.**

## **Benediction**

May the blessing of God the Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer be among you and within you wherever you find yourself this week.

## **Choral Closing:**

Lead O, O Cloud of Presence

VU 421 (vs 3)

**Lead on O God of freedom, and guide us on our way,  
and help us trust the promise through struggle and delay.  
We pray our sons and daughters may journey to that land  
where justice dwells with mercy, and love is law's demand.**

## **Closing Music**