

Quispamsis United Church

Lent: Ashes & Promises

March 27th, 2022 - Fourth Sunday of Lent

Liturgical Colour: Purple

Presider: Rev. Richard

Musician: Stephen Alexander

Reader: Bob Crowley

Centering Passage: *All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord, and all your faithful shall bless you. They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom, and tell of your power, to make known to all people your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendour of your kingdom.*

-Psalm 145:10-12

GATHERING TOGETHER

Welcome

Acknowledgement of Territories

Celebrations & Announcements

Lighting the Christ Candle

Truth is a light that shines in our hearts. It shows us the way and guides us through our lives. We light this candle as a symbol of Christ, the embodiment of truth. May he inspire us in this time and encourage us as we find our way on the road.

Opening Music Wondrous Love - arr. Hal Leonard

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):

We come today as we are; some of us overflowing with joy, some of us hurting, some of us tired, some of us feeling broken.

We come to have our hearts touched, to be inspired by God's Holy Word, to be strengthened by the community of faith.

We come that we may hear truth that changes our lives.

We come in response to God's call

We come to be the church in loving action sharing God's grace.

We come to worship, offering our prayers and praise.

Let us worship in Spirit and Truth!

Prayer of the Day

Help us today, O God. These days the word “truth” is thrown around so frequently, that we start to doubt everything, and are suspicious of everyone’s motives. Yet, we are easily taken in by the story we like the best. News we don’t like, we call fake. Stories we don’t believe, we call conspiracies. We stand looking over all of the opinions offered and ask with Pilate “what is truth?” Help us today, O God. Open our hearts to the movements of your Spirit that we might hear words of truth, not for the gain of one, but for the benefit of all. Help us to share that truth: that you love each and every one of us deeply and forever. Help others to hear that truth so that they know they are precious. Help us today, O God, as we continue the trial of Christ and come face to face with those times where we have ignored the truth of your presence. We offer this and all our prayers in his strong name. AMEN.

Hymn:

Each Blade of Grass

MV 37

**Each blade of grass, ev’ry wing that soars,
the waves that sweep across a distant shore,
make full the circle of God.**

**Each laughing child, ev’ry gentle eye,
a forest lit beneath a moon-bright sky,
make full the circle of God.**

**Each silent paw, ev’ry rounded stone,
the buzz that echoes from a honey’d comb,
make full the circle of God.**
**Each fire-brimmed star, ev’ry outstretched hand,
the wind that leaps and sails across the land,
make full the circle of God.**

**Each icy peak, ev’ry patterned shell,
the joyous chorus that the dawn foretells,
make full the circle of God.**

**Each cosmic hue, ev’ry creature’s way,
all form the beauty of this vast array,
making full the circle of God.**

LISTENING FOR TRUTH

Theme Conversation

Ash Liturgy (Responsive):

Throughout this season of Lent, we are all being asked to carry the ashes of last year’s Palm Sunday branches. When we waved those branches we were declaring our faith, our trust, and our dedication to Christ.

These ashes are a symbol of promises: promises made, promises kept, and promises broken. Let us come before Christ honestly and humbly.

We raised our palm branches in celebration of you,

and on those same leaves have written our sin and brokenness, despite your having broken into our lives to show us a new way.

We carry the ashes of those palm branches as a reminder.

These ashes remind us of our anger: anger towards the world, towards one another, towards you, O God. We have let our anger drive our reactions, and often we have left pain in our wake. When we do not get the answers that we want - that we think we deserve - from you, we turn you, run from you, hide from you.

We carry these ashes to remind us of our anger.

Calm our souls. Cool our anger, for we long for the peace that only you can bring.

For a moment, let us focus on these ashes, lifting our prayers for guidance and promises to follow to Christ.

(moment for reflective silence)

Sung Prayer of Illumination:
Recording

Tree of Life

VU 121 (vs 4) QUC

**Gentle Jesus, mighty Spirit,
come inflame our hearts anew,
we may all your joy inherit
if we bear the cross for you,
if we bear the cross for you.**

Reading: John 18:28-40

Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate went out to them and said, 'What accusation do you bring against this man?' They answered, 'If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you.' Pilate said to them, 'Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law.' The Jews replied, 'We are not permitted to put anyone to death.' (This was to fulfil what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' Jesus answered, 'Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?' Pilate replied, 'I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?' Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom

were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.’ Pilate asked him, ‘So you are a king?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.’ Pilate asked him, ‘What is truth?’

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, ‘I find no case against him. But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?’ They shouted in reply, ‘Not this man, but Barabbas!’ Now Barabbas was a bandit.

This is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Praise be to you, O Christ.

Message

Seeking the Truth

RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD

Hymn:

I love to tell the Story

VU 343

**I love to tell the story
of unseen things above,
of Jesus and his glory,
of Jesus and his love.
I love to tell the story,
because I know 'tis true;
it satisfies my longings
as nothing else could do.**

Refrain:

**I love to tell the story;
'twill be my theme in glory
to tell the old, old story
of Jesus and his love.**

**I love to tell the story;
'tis pleasant to repeat
what seems, each time I tell it,
more wonderfully sweet.**

**I love to tell the story,
for some have never heard
the message of salvation
from God’s own holy Word. [Refrain]**

**I love to tell the story,
for those who know it best
seem hungering and thirsting
to hear it, like the rest.
And when, in scenes of glory,
I sing the new, new song,
'twill be the old, old story
that I have loved so long. [Refrain]**

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. Do not forget to send a separate email with the answer to your security question.

2/ go to 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/ 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.

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

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

Offertory Dedication Hymn:

For All Your Goodness

VU 549

**For all your goodness God, we give you thanks,
Thanks for the food we eat and for the friends we meet,
And each new day we greet, we give you thanks.**

Prayer of Dedication (Unison):

We thank you, O God, for the truth: that you love us deeply and forever. In response to that love, we offer our true selves. We pledge to speak the truth of your love to a world that is longing to be loved. We will share the gifts that you have given us so that we, the extension of your arms, may embrace your people. Bless all that we bring, our time, talent, and treasure. Use them and us for the healing of creation and for the building of your kingdom. We offer this and all our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ, the way, the truth, and the life. AMEN

Prayers of the People & Lord's Prayer

Hymn:

Christ is made the sure foundation
Christ is made the sure foundation,
Christ the head and cornerstone,
chosen of the Lord, and precious,
binding all the church in one;
holy Zion's help for ever,
and its confidence alone.

VU 325

To this temple where we call you,
come, O Lord of Hosts, today;
with your faithful loving-kindness
hear your servants as they pray,
and your fullest benediction
shed within its walls always.

Here bestow on all your servants
what they ask of you to gain;
what they gain from you for ever
with the blessed to retain,
and hereafter in your glory
evermore with you to reign.

Laud and honour to the Father,
laud and honour to the Son,
laud and honour to the Spirit,
ever three and ever one,
one in mighty, and one in glory,
while unending ages run.

SENDING FORTH

Commissioning (Responsive):

In Christ, we have a living embodiment of the truth of who God is and what love means.

This is the truth that we are to live by, the truth that does not deny life and love but gives it in abundance.

So go into our world to bear this truth in your living,

We will go to live as Christ: sharing God's love, seeking God's justice and offering God's mercy to the whole world.

With God's love, Christ's grace and the Holy Spirit's power,
we go into the world and change it forever!

Benediction

Continue this journey - this path to the cross - inspired by God, encouraged by Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Choral Closing:

Tree of Life VU 121 (vs 5)
**Christ, you lead and we shall follow,
stumbling though our steps may be,
one with you in joy and sorrow,
we the river, you the sea,
we the river, you the sea.**

Closing Music

March - B. Yarnold