

(▲ Rise in body or in spirit)  
(Responses in bold)

## WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

Welcome & Theme Conversation

Acknowledging the Territory

Call to Worship

In a world that is lonely,  
**we will save a seat for you.**

In a world that is anxious,  
**we will light candles against the gloom.**

In a world that is weary,  
**we will sing songs of joy and truth.**

I am not alone.  
**We are not alone.**

For here in this place,  
God is weaving us together.  
**Light the candles! Sing with joy!**  
**We are a three-cord strand,**  
**not easily broken.**

Candle Lighting Liturgy

In a weary and worn world,  
how do we begin again?  
Where do we start?  
**Let us begin together.**  
**Let us begin arm in arm.**  
**Let us begin by holding each other up,**  
**instead of tearing each other down.**  
**Let us begin with words of peace.**

Yes, let us begin with peace.  
Today we light the candles  
of hope and peace.  
**May these lights remind**  
**us of what could be.**

**May these lights mark a new beginning.**  
**May peace flow like a river, and may it**  
**start with us.**

Arm in arm, hand in hand, side by side.  
**May we begin again. Amen**

Candle Lighting Song – As We Are Waiting

**As we are watching for a sign**  
**As we long for new life.**  
**We trust your word revealed to us**  
**An end to all earth’s strife.**

### Prayer of Confession & Words of Forgiveness

I have tried to make my own way.  
I have tried to lace my own shoes,  
to build my own house,  
to kindle my own faith.  
I have said a thousand times,  
“turn back,” as if I am fine on my own.  
But the days are long and I am forgetful.  
I need your help. Can you remind me?

**We will remind you**  
**of this everlasting truth:**  
**You are not alone.**  
**Where you go, God goes.**  
**You are held in grace.**  
**Trust in this good news.**

Thanks be to God! I remember. I believe.

**Now we need your help.**  
**We, too, have tried to make our own way.**  
**We have tried to lace our own shoes,**  
**to build our own houses,**  
**to kindle our own faiths.**  
**We have said a thousand times, “turn**  
**back,” as if we are fine on our own.**  
**But the days are long**  
**and we are forgetful.**  
**We need your help.**  
**Can you remind us?**

I will remind you of this everlasting truth:  
You are not alone.  
Where you go, God goes.  
You are held in grace.  
Trust in this good news.  
**Thanks be to God!**  
**We remember. We believe.**  
**Alleluia!**  
**Amen.**

▲ Hymn – We Are the Light – Tune 705

We are the light; we shine both near and far.  
We are the dust, expanding distant stars.  
We seek to be,  
God’s light throughout the earth.  
Let’s shine our light, let’s shine our light.

Sometimes we lose, our hope,  
our power, our way.  
Sometimes the world  
seems bleak in brightest day.  
We pray and yearn, yet even when we stray.  
We seek our God, we seek our God.

We thank our God,  
for faithful presence shown.  
We are reminded we are not alone  
God is our strength,  
our refuge and our home.  
We praise our God, we praise our God.

### LISTENING FOR GOD’S WORD FOR US TODAY

Ministry of Music – Dream a Dream

A Time of Wondering

Ancient Words

Ruth 1 & Ecclesiastes 4: 9-12

Reflection – Lean on Me

Reflective Music

## RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD

### THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

#### THE INVITATION

#### ▲ PASSING OF THE PEACE

▲ Communion Hymn  
Put Peace into Each Other’s Hands MV#173

Put peace into each other's hands  
and like a treasure hold it;  
protect it like a candle flame,  
with tenderness enfold it.

Put peace into each other's hands  
with loving expectation;  
be gentle in your words and ways,  
in touch with God's creation.

Put peace into each other's hands,  
like bread we break for sharing;  
look people warmly in the eye:  
our life is meant for caring.

As at communion, shape your hands  
into a waiting cradle;  
the gift of Christ receive, revere,  
united round the table.

Put Christ into each other's hands,  
he is love's deepest measure;  
in love make peace, give peace a chance  
and share it like a treasure.

Communion Prayer

Loving God, we come to this Table today  
longing for a new beginning.  
In a world that so often feels like it’s ending,  
we crave the hope of a new beginning.  
**We long to heal from the endings and**  
**crash landings of our hurting world**  
**and start again,**  
**rooted in your good news.**

So week by week, bit by bit,  
we return to your Word.  
Week by week, bit by bit,  
we return to each other.  
**Week by week, and bit by bit,  
we repeat the truths  
that we so often need to hear,  
trusting that  
by your grace,  
it is never too late to start again.**

So in this spirit of beginnings,  
we come to your Table.  
Once more we ask  
that you would meet us here.  
**Pour out your Spirit  
on this ordinary meal,  
that in this bread and cup we may  
glimpse a new day.**

May the sight of everyone  
being welcomed at this Table  
remind us that all are loved by you.  
**May the evidence that there is food for all  
remind us that no one  
is meant to go hungry.**

May the fact that our own sin,  
shame, and doubt do not keep us  
from this Table remind us  
that you welcome and love us as we are.  
And may all of these Communion truths  
serve as building blocks for a new day,  
for a new beginning.

**With hope in our hearts, we pray.  
With peace in our hearts, we gather.  
With trust in our hearts, we begin again.  
Meet us here.**

Allow this joyful feast  
to be the start of something new.  
**With joy and hope, we weave our voices  
together to pray the words your son  
taught us to pray, saying... Our Father...**

Breaking, Pouring, Sharing

**While communion is being shared,  
we will sing # 466**

***Eat this bread, drink this cup,  
come to me and never be hungry.  
Eat this bread, drink this cup,  
trust in me and you will not thirst.***

**Prayer After Communion**

**Nourishing God,  
sometimes we tell ourselves  
that too much has taken place  
to begin again.**

**We think the world is too far gone.  
We think we have made  
too many mistakes.  
We tell ourselves that we couldn't  
possibly begin again.**

**But then we come to this Table  
and all are welcomed,  
all are seen, all are fed.**

**And just like that, we have hope.  
Just like that, we begin again.**

**Thank you for the gift of this fresh start.  
Thank you for planting peace  
deep in our bones.**

**Thank you for reminding us that it's  
never too late to build your realm here.  
Amen.**

Invitation to Generosity  
& Prayer of Dedication

**THRESHOLD INTO GOD'S WORLD**

The Life and Ministry  
of the Faith Community

▲ Hymn – Draw the Circle Wide MV # 145

*Refrain*

*Draw the circle wide, draw it wider still.  
Let this be our song: no one stands alone.  
Standing side by side,  
draw the circle, draw the circle wide...*

God the still-point of the circle  
Round you all creation turns  
Nothing lost but held forever  
in God's gracious arms. R

Let our hearts touch far horizons  
So encompass great and small  
Let our loving know no borders  
Faithful to God's call. R

Let the dreams we dream be larger  
Than we've ever dreamed before  
Let the dream of Christ be in us  
Open every door! R

▲ Commissioning & Blessing

▲ Song of Dismissal  
Hope Shines Through MV # 220

Peace shines as a solitary star,  
Faith is the inner light,  
You and I together  
Mirror the Light of Lights,  
And illumine the pathway home.

**MUSIC TAKES US INTO THE WORLD**

Please note, our services are livestreamed  
and photographs may be taken.  
You are also welcome  
to take pictures and video.

*Liturgy – A Sanctified Art  
As We Are Waiting/We Are the Light  
~ Rev. Catherine MacDonald*

St. James United Church

United by Faith  
Strengthened by Friendship  
Building a Community of Love  
and Justice



December 8, 2024 @ 10:00 AM

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