

▲ Rise in body or in spirit/  
Responses in bold

Gathering Music

Welcome

Introductions

Theme Conversation

Acknowledging the Territory

**CROSSING THE THRESHOLD OF LENT**

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Jesus said, "Follow me."  
**And I said, let me get ready.**

Jesus said, "follow me."  
**And I said, just one minute!**

Jesus said, "Follow me."  
**And I said, I'll be there soon!**

The invitation is simple,  
but the work is hard.  
**Jesus, forgive my delay.**  
**I want to follow you.**  
**Turn my intentions into actions.**  
**Show me the way.**  
**Amen.**

Words of Forgiveness

▲ We Sing – Tree of Life # 121

Opening Prayer (Together)

**Holy God,**  
**Your invitation is simple.**  
**You lean in close.**  
**You say our name.**  
**With joy in your voice,**  
**you invite us to follow.**  
**But the noise**  
**of this world is distracting,**  
**and we are afraid,**  
**so we get stuck somewhere between**  
**our head and our heart.**  
**We get stuck somewhere between**  
**our intent and our action.**  
**So today we pray,**  
**speak to us again.**  
**Tell us the story.**  
**Invite us to follow.**  
**Speak once more,**  
**of good news**  
**that will not leave us alone.**  
**Speak to us again,**  
**for we are listening.**  
**Amen.**

**Marking Crosses**

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Ministry of Music

Lord Be With Us On This Day

Call to Worship (Responsive)

Here in this place,  
we can ask big questions.  
**Who is my neighbor?**  
**How can I help?**  
**What do I have to learn?**  
**Where is God in it all?**

Here in this place,  
we can ask big questions.  
**So may we listen. May we learn.**  
**May we stay curious,**  
**and may we look for God.**  
This is our invitation to lean in.  
**Let us worship our holy God.**

▲ We Sing – Loving God's World

Loving God's world,  
this is our sacred calling.  
Loving God's world,  
this is our sacred song.  
Loving God's world,  
even anxious and worried.  
Jesus is with us and keeps us strong.

Loving God's world,  
neighbours around the wide earth.  
Loving God's world,  
neighbours across the lane.  
Loving God's world,  
strangers and siblings all one.  
Jesus is with us each step of the way.

Loving God's world,  
praying for those close to us.  
Loving God's world,  
praying for those far away.  
Loving God's world,  
connected through calm and chaos.  
Jesus is with us and lights our way.

Loving God's world,  
this is our sacred calling.  
Loving God's world,  
this is our sacred song.  
Loving God's world,  
it's the only way forward.  
Jesus is with us and we belong.

Prayer for Illumination (Together)

**Gracious God,**  
**We love to ask you questions.**  
**We love to throw**  
**our wonderings at the sky,**  
**to bring our curiosity to your feet,**  
**to examine, beseech,**  
**and imagine all day long.**  
**But when the answers come,**  
**we don't always like what we hear.**  
**Awaken a curiosity in us.**  
**Awaken a penchant for listening,**  
**and make room in our spirits**  
**for your Word to land.**  
**With hope we question,**  
**we wonder, we dream, we listen.**

*Silent prayer...*

**We turn to you,**  
**knowing that you understand us,**  
**forgive us,**  
**and love us like a Mother,**  
**and so we pray**  
**with confidence and faith,**

**Our Father, who art in heaven**  
**Hallowed be thy name**  
**Thy kingdom come, thy will be done**  
**On earth, as it is in heaven.**  
**Give us this day our daily bread**  
**And forgive us our trespasses**  
**As we forgive those**  
**who trespass against us.**  
**And lead us not into temptation**  
**But deliver us from evil:**  
**for thine is the kingdom,**  
**the power and the glory,**  
**for ever and ever.**  
**Amen**

## LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

Ancient Words – Luke 10:25-37

A Time of Wondering

Reflection

Reflective Music

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

▲ We Sing – I Saw a Stranger

Tune – I Feel the Winds of God # 625

I saw a stranger on the road  
in need of help and care  
No clues to their identity,  
just human flesh laid bare

A thought had fluttered through my mind:

“Is this one of my own?”

My tribal mind made me forget that  
they're bone of my bone

I laid there desperate by the road  
in need of help and care  
As one by one they passed me by,  
too busy or too scared

Then one approached and my first  
thought was “Do they mean me harm?”  
To my surprise they met my eyes and  
held me in their arms

In our embrace the memory  
returned from Eden's dust  
Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh,  
my kin whom I can trust  
The artificial walls we build  
around the tribes we claim  
Make us forget the gospel truth:  
“Beloved” is your name

## ▲ Affirmation of Faith

My friends, if God asked you,  
“Who is your neighbor?”  
what would you say?

**We would say,  
every child, every person,  
every weeping willow,  
and every morning lark.  
Every freckled face,  
every wrinkled pair of hands,  
every tail-wagging dog,  
and every crisp ripe apple.**

**We would say,  
we are connected—  
to one another,  
to all of God's creation.  
There are no strangers  
in God's house.  
We are all family here.**  
I think God would delight in that answer.

For it is said,  
“You shall love the Lord your God  
with all your heart,  
with all your soul,  
with all your strength,  
with all your mind,  
and you shall love  
your neighbor as yourself.”

**We believe.  
Help our unbelief.  
Amen.**

Mission and Service Stories

Invitation to Generosity  
& Prayer of Dedication

Prayers of the People

## THRESHOLD INTO GOD'S WORLD

Life and Ministry  
of the Faith Community

▲ We Sing  
When I Needed a Neighbour # 600

▲ Commissioning & Blessing

▲ We Sing – God Be With You

**God be with you till we meet again;  
loving counsels guide, uphold you,  
may the Shepherd's care enfold you;  
God be with you till we meet again.  
Till we meet, till we meet,  
till we meet at Jesus' feet.  
Till we meet, till we meet,  
God be with you till we meet again.**

*Liturgy – A Sanctified Art  
I Saw a Stranger – A Sanctified Art  
Loving God's World – Rev. Catherine MacDonald*

*Note, our services are livestreamed and photos may  
be taken. You are welcome to take photos and video.*



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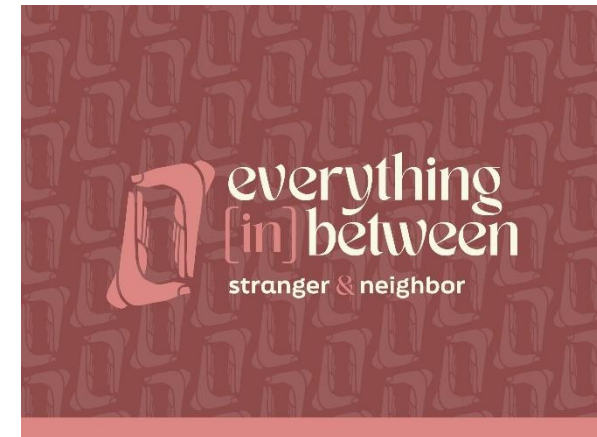
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# St. James United Church

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



March 9, 2025 @ 10:00 AM

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