

Quispamsis United Church

Lent: Ashes & Promises

April 3rd, 2022 - Fifth Sunday of Lent

Liturgical Colour: Purple

Presider: Rev. Richard

Musician: Stephen Alexander

Reader: Ben Alward

Centering Passage: *The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous. The Lord watches over the strangers; he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin. The Lord will reign for ever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the Lord!*

-Psalm 146:7-10

GATHERING TOGETHER

Welcome

Acknowledgement of Territories

Celebrations & Announcements

Lighting the Christ Candle

We light this candle as a reminded of the fire of Christ that yet burns in each of us. When we hear stories of injustice, may it kindle us to action. When we see a world broken by hate may we bring warmth and love. This light burns here today, and in us always.

Opening Music Nearer, My God, To Thee - arr. Lowell Mason

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):

On this journey through Lent, we have come now so close to the end, so close to the beginning.

We want to wave the palms, shout hosanna to our King, but today all we hear is the cry to crucify him.

We come together to hear of the story of humiliation and ridicule so that we can better understand the Gospel of hope and redemption.

Let us worship the One who turns darkness to light, tragedy to triumph, the one who turns the world upside down and shows us what the kingdom looks like.

Prayer of the Day

The crowd is a powerful thing, O God. A few placed words, words of passion, of anger, of fear, and many can be turned to hate and violence. Forgive us those times when we allow ourselves to go with the flow, letting fear guide us to say and do things that do not embody your love. Forgive us when we remain silent, allowing prejudice to be an acceptable part of the conversation. Give us courage to speak out. Give us the strength to stand up. Guide us as we strive to be bearers of your love to your children in this world. It is in Christ's name that we pray, stand, and speak.

AMEN

Hymn:

O Jesus I have Promised

VU 120

**O Jesus, I have promised
to serve you to the end;
remain for ever near me,
my Saviour and my friend:
I shall not fear the journey
if you are by my side,
not wander from the pathway
if you will be my guide.**

**O let me feel you near me:
the world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle,
the tempting sounds I hear;
my foes are ever near me,
around me and within;
but, Jesus, then draw nearer
and shield my soul from sin.**

**O let me hear you speaking
in accents clear and still,
above the storms of passion,
the murmurs of self-will;
O speak to reassure me,
to hasten or control;
now speak, and make me listen,
O guardian of my soul.**

**O Jesus, you have promised
to all who follow you,
that where you are in glory
your servant shall be too.
And, Jesus, I have promised
to serve you to the end:
O give me grace to follow,
my Saviour and my friend.**

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 all that we put ahead of you: power, wealth, things. We put our trust in all of these things because we feel some level of control over them. Often our pursuit of them is more important than our service to you and to your world.

We carry these ashes to remind us of our focus on - even worship of - worldly things.

Sharpen our focus on you, O God, for we long to worship you with our whole selves.

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 19:1-16a

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' and striking him on the face. Pilate went out again and said to them, 'Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him.' So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, 'Here is the man!' When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, 'Crucify him! Crucify him!' Pilate said to them, 'Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him.' The Jews answered him, 'We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God.'

Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, 'Where are you from?' But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, 'Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?' Jesus answered him, 'You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore, the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.' From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, 'If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor.'

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, 'Here is your King!' They cried out, 'Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!' Pilate asked them, 'Shall I crucify your King?' The chief priests answered, 'We have no king but the emperor.' Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

This is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Praise be to you, O Christ.

Message

Seeking Justice

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn:

Deep in our Hearts

MV 154 *QUC Recording*

**Deep in our hearts there is a common vision;
Deep in our hearts there is a common song;
Deep in our hearts there is a common story,
telling Creation that we are one.**

**Deep in our hearts there is a common purpose;
Deep in our hearts there is a common goal;
Deep in our hearts there is a sacred message,
justice and peace in harmony.**

**Deep in our hearts there is a common longing;
Deep in our hearts there is a common theme;
Deep in our hearts there is a common current,
flowing to freedom like a stream.**

**Deep in our hearts there is a common vision;
Deep in our hearts there is a common song;
Deep in our hearts there is a common story,
telling Creation that we are one.**

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):

You, O God, call us to live lives of righteousness, standing with those who are brought low, speaking out when corrupt power calls for silence. Bless these offerings given today, those through PAR, and all the gifts of time and talent that they might be a part of your kingdom building work. Bless us and empower us to be your hands and feet, bringing you light and love to places of darkness and hate. In the name of Christ, we offer this and all our prayers. AMEN

Prayers of the People & Lord's Prayer

Hymn:

Rejoice the Lord is King

VU 213

Rejoice, the Lord is King!

Your risen Lord adore!

**Rejoice, give thanks and sing
and triumph evermore:**

[Refrain:]

**Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice; again I say, rejoice!**

**Jesus the Saviour reigns,
the God of truth and love;
when he had purged our sins,
he took his seat above. [Refrain]**

**God's kingdom cannot fail;
Christ rules o'er earth and heaven;
the keys of death and hell
are to our Jesus given. [Refrain]**

**Rejoice in glorious hope,
for Christ, the Judge, shall come
to glorify the saints
for their eternal home:
We then shall hear the archangel's voice;
the trump of God shall sound, rejoice!**

SENDING FORTH

Commissioning (Responsive):

Don't let the crowd define the truth, because the Way, the Truth and the Life can speak for Himself.

As bearers of the Gospel, we go to stand with those who the mob casts down, to speak against those who spread prejudice and fear.

Take God's love in your hearts and share it with those who feel unloved. Take the peace of Christ in your hands and bring it to places of injustice.

Go with the Holy Spirit at your back to build the kingdom of God.

AMEN.

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 Trumpet Tune 'Bonduca' - Henry Purcell