

SEEKING GOD TOGETHER

PRELUDE Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy
(Franklin Ritter)

WELCOME & CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Acknowledgment of Territory/Every Child Matters
Paula Hanna

INTROIT God of Still Waiting (C.P.Daw Jr./A.V.Fedak)

CALL TO WORSHIP

As long nights give way to light
and winter sleep to fresh beginnings,
we come to worship
to be reminded of God's love for us.
Like the green shoots of renewed life,
stirring beneath the soil,
we welcome an awakening
of God's word in our lives.
Awake to the moving of God's Spirit
in creation, in the season of Lent
and in all time,
to bring care and our love
for the Earth, for its people,
and for one another.
Let us worship!

***HYMN** Sing Your Praise to God Eternal *insert p 7*

LENTEN CANDLE LITURGY

Kathryn & Owen Yearwood

On this fourth Sunday in Lent we remember with joy
that God's ways are not our ways and that God's ways
will challenge all our well-laid plans.
(Fourth candle is extinguished.)

God helps us to see what is really important.

Let us pray...

Compassionate God, help us to see with your eyes
And to love with your heart. Amen.

SUNG RESPONSE Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery
VU 121

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

FINDING GOD TOGETHER

SCRIPTURE Ephesians 2:1-10 p. 192 Pew Bible NT
(Saved by grace.) Joyce Hagarty

ANTHEM God So Loved the World (John Stainer)

GOSPEL John 3:14-21 p. 94 Pew Bible NT
(For God so loved the world.)

Come to the quiet...a time for reflection

SERMON Loving the World

***HYMN** My Love Colours Outside the Lines (G.Light)
MV 138

My love colours outside the lines, exploring paths that few
could ever find; and takes me into places where I've never
been before, and opens doors to worlds outside the lines.

My Lord colours outside the lines, turns wounds to blessings,
water into wine; and takes me into places where I've never
been before, and open doors to worlds outside the lines.

We'll never walk on water if we're not prepared to drown,
body and soul need a soaking from time to time. And we'll
never move the gravestones if we're not prepared to die,
and realize there are worlds outside the lines.

My soul longs to colour outside the lines, tear back the curtains,
sun, come in and shine; I want to walk beyond the boundaries
where I've never been before, throw open doors to worlds
outside the lines.

We'll never walk on water...

My soul longs to colour outside the lines, tear back the curtains,
sun, come in and shine; I want to walk beyond the boundaries
where I've never been before, throw open doors to worlds
outside the lines.

Reverie

SHARING GOD'S LOVE

OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO GOD

OFFERTORY Reverie (Noel Rawsthorne)

***DEDICATION** Christ Has No Body Now but Yours
MV 171 **Christ has no body now but yours,**
no hands but yours. Here on this earth,
yours is the work, to serve with the
joy of compassion.

***OFFERTORY PRAYER & Prayer Shawl Blessing**

PRAYER PRELUDE Let My Spirit Always Sing *MV 83*

**Let my spirit always sing, to your Spirit answering,
through the silence, through the pain know my hope
is not in vain, like a feather on your breath
trust your love, through life and death.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & LORD'S PRAYER

VU p.910

***HYMN** God, as We Rise to Leave *insert p 7*

***COMMISSIONING**

And now, may the God of creation
create in us new hope for the future.

**May the Christ of the common road
guide our every step,
and may the Spirit of Compassion
instill in us a deep sense of caring
for everyone we meet.**

SUNG BLESSING May the Love of the Lord *MV 218*

**May the love of the Lord rest upon your soul.
May God's love dwell in you, throughout every day.
May God's countenance shine upon you and be
gracious to you. May God's Spirit be upon you
as you leave this place.**

POSTLUDE An Ever Present Help *(Richard A. Williamson)*



MISSION AND SERVICE

Accompanying Grandmothers

In the Rift Valley of Kenya, 7 percent of the people who live there are HIV positive—nearly 900,000—and many will not survive.

Grandmothers whose children have died of AIDS are often left alone to care for their grandchildren, and to add insult to injury, their church community condemns them, leaving them without support as they raise their grandchildren.

Some pastors in the Rift Valley, as in many other places, believe and teach that faithful Christians cannot contract the disease and that it is a judgment from God—a disease for sexual sinners.

“The pastors had little information about HIV and AIDS; to them, and others in the community, it was a strange disease.... [They believed] HIV was a result of sexual sin and was a judgement from God for the sexually immoral,” writes Esther Mombo of the World Council of Churches.

In partnership with the United Church, Mombo and Pauline Wanjuru of St. Paul's University in Limuru, Kenya, led a series of workshops in one Rift Valley community that has been hit especially hard by HIV/AIDS. They invited grandmothers and pastors to connect and learn from each other.

One grandmother who attended the workshops was 70 years old. She had lost both her daughter and her son and was left to raise three grandchildren on her own. Instead of stepping up to help, her neighbours refused to visit her because they said her daughter and son had been sexually immoral. Her pastor wouldn't even attend her children's funerals because he didn't want to be seen associating with her family. When she went to church, the pastor preached about the punishment for sexual immorality.

At the workshops, this woman bravely told her story to the pastors who attended. She also shared with them how it felt to be shamed for loving her children and grandchildren. Another grandmother explained that her grandchildren were born with the virus and couldn't have been involved in any sexual immorality. Yet another spoke of God's love for everyone. Pastors listened and learned, and ended by making a commitment to extend compassion and offer pastoral care to the grandmothers. All of us know from our own life experience that when we know better, we do better. Your [Mission and Service](#) gifts gave these grandmothers the opportunity to help their pastors learn to do better by connecting their love for their grandchildren to God's love for all. Thank you.



The United Church of Canada acknowledges that its buildings and ministries, from coast to coast to coast, are on traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples.



AURORA UNITED CHURCH



An Affirming Congregation

Church Office 905-727-1935
www.auroraunitedchurch.ca

Rev. Lorraine Newton-Comar & Rev. Andrew Comar
Music Coordinator—Margaret Heney



Hill of Crosses-Jurgaiciai, Lithuania

LENT 4
March 10, 2024
11:00 AM

*When our broken love is the only love we can have,
we are easily thrown into despair, but when we can
live our broken love as a partial reflection of God's
perfect, unconditional love, we can forgive one
another our limitations and enjoy together the love
we have to offer. (Henri Nouwen)*

Sing Your Praise to God Eternal

Sing your praise to God eternal, sing your praise to God the Son, sing your praise to God the Spirit, living and forever One. God has made us, God has blessed us, God has called us to be true. God rules over all creation, daily making all things new.

Join the praise of every creature, sing with singing birds at dawn; when the stars shine forth at nightfall, hear their heavenly antiphon. Praise God for the light of summer, autumn glories, winter snows, for the coming of the springtime and the life of all that grows.

Praise God on our days of gladness for the summons to rejoice; praise God in our times of sadness for the calm, consoling voice. God our Maker, strong and loving, Christ our Saviour, Leader, Lord, living God, Creator Spirit, be your holy name adored!

God, as We Rise to Leave

God, as we rise to leave this shell of worship, called to the risk of unprotected living, willing to be at one with all your people, we ask for courage.

For all the strain with living interwoven, for the demands each day will make upon us, and for the love we owe the modern city, God, make us cheerful.

Give us an eye for openings to serve you; make us alert when calm is interrupted, ready and wise to use the unexpected; sharpen our insight.

Lift from our life the blanket of convention; give us the nerve to lose our life to others; be with your church in death and resurrection, God of all ages.

