

SEEKING GOD TOGETHER

PRELUDE Récit de Nazard (Louis-Nicolas Clérambault)

**WELCOME & CONGREGATIONAL LIFE
LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE**

**Acknowledgment of Territory/Every Child Matters/
Rainbow Candle of Inclusion** Louise Procter Maio

INTROIT Dust and Ashes Touch Our Face
(Brian A. Wren/Ron Klusmeier)

CALL TO WORSHIP (From Sanctified Art)

The good news of the gospel is:

**manna in the desert,
water turned into wine,
love after loss,
forgiveness after pain.
The good news of the gospel is:
release for the captive,
hope for the hopeless,
mourning turned to dancing,
and strangers turned to friends.**

So come on in.

There's no time to waste!

This surprising good news is here for you.
Let us worship this good-news God.

***HYMN** As the Sun with Longer Journey p. 7

CALL TO CONFESSION Nancy Kerswill

You may have heard, “All is fair in love and war,”
or “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.”
But God says, “Forgive seventy times seven.”
God says, “I am slow to anger and abounding in
steadfast love.”
God says, “Turn the other cheek.”
God’s mercy catches us by surprise.
So with wonder and gratitude, let us go to God in prayer.
Let us be surprised by God’s grace all over again.
Friends, let us pray:

(The first Lenten candle is extinguished.)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Loving God, somewhere along the way we picked up
the message that in order to be faithful, we have to be
serious. We have to pray on our knees without
ceasing. We have to be somber in worship and quiet
in our studies. We have to check our wiggles *and* our
questions at the door.**

**But then you say the kingdom of God is like a
mustard seed—unruly and untamed.**

**You turn water into wine—surprising
and extravagant.**

And all of a sudden, we wonder:

Can we be like that mustard seed?

Can we be faithful and unruly?

Can we be playful and curious?

Can we be messy and still be yours?

We know the answer already.

The Spirit whispers: *of course, of course, of course.*

Forgive our doubt.

Pull us closer into your embrace.

With faith like a mustard seed, we pray.

Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

God’s grace is wild and unruly.
God’s mercy is abundant and surprising.
God’s love is expansive and unending.
So if you ask, “Holy One, am I forgiven?”
the answer is and always will be:
of course, of course, of course.
This is the good news of the gospel.
Thanks be to God! Amen.

SUNG RESPONSE Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery
(VU 121)

**Tree of Life and awesome mystery, in your death we
are reborn, though you die in all of history, still you
rise with every morn, still you rise with every morn.**

TIME FOR ALL AGES

FINDING GOD TOGETHER

RESPONSIVE READING Psalm 32 p. 7
Joan Brownlow

ANTHEM Lonesome Valley (arr. Gilbert M. Martin)

GOSPEL READING Matthew 4: 1-11

REFLECTION Mirror, Mirror Rev. Linda Wheeler

***HYMN** Spirit of the Living God p. 8

SHARING GOD’S LOVE

OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO GOD

OFFERTORY Midnight in the Garden (Jason Krug)
EmBellished Handbell Ensemble with Joanne Banfill, piano

***DEDICATION** Take, O Take Me as I Am (Bell/Maule)
 (MV 85) **Take, O take me as I am;**
summon out what I shall be;
set your seal upon my heart and live in me.
(sing twice)

***OFFERTORY PRAYER & Prayer Shawl Blessing**

We do not live on bread alone, but by your Word, loving God. May that Word fill our hearts and our hands, all that we have, and all that we are, that it may be a blessing in your world. In Jesus' name, we ask it. Amen.

PRAYER PRELUDE Lord, Listen to Your Children
 (Ken Medema) VU 400

Lord, listen to your children, praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us power, send us grace!

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

***HYMN** O Jesus, I Have Promised p. 8

***BENEDICTION AND COMMISSIONING**

As we travel this Lenten pathway, we journey together, a community of faith.

As we travel this Way of Jesus, we journey together, but also alone.

Let us go into God's world, practising our faith,

living Christ's call to love God with all that we are, to love our neighbour as we love ourselves.
 Let us go into God's world
 knowing we are never alone. Christ's peace, the Creator's love, and the breath of the Holy Spirit go with us. Amen!

***SUNG BLESSING** Take Up His Song (MV 213)
 Take up his song of love and go into the world. Take up his song of love in every moment. In every moment of the journey, we're laying down our lives; lay them down, in love, lay them down, and take up his song.

POSTLUDE Caprice sur les Grands Jeux
 (Louis-Nicolas Clérambault)

An affirmation of faith

Written by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed

I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.
It sounds like welcome and feels like home.
It sounds like laughter and feels like mercy.
It sounds like love and feels like a seat at the table,
so I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.
I have seen it alive in the world.
And even when my heart aches, even when wars rage,
even when mercy feels out of reach,
I remember the one who welcomed the children
and led with nonviolence.
I remember the one who cared for the vulnerable
and inspired those around him.
I remember that the good news really is good news,
for I have seen it alive in the world.
Thanks be to God! Amen.



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

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Rev. Tim Dayfoot & Rev. Linda Wheler
 Music Coordinator—Margaret Heney





Lent 1

**February 22, 2026
 11:00 AM**

As the Sun with Longer Journey **VU 111**

As the sun with longer journey melts the winter's snow and ice,
with its slowly growing radiance warms the seed beneath the earth,
may the sun of Christ's uprising gently bring our hearts to life.

Through the days of waiting, watching in the desert of our sin,
searching on the far horizon for a sign of cloud or wind,
we await the healing waters of our Saviour's victory.

Praise be given to the Maker of the seasons' yearly round:
to the Speaker through the Spoken in their living Breath of love as the ever turning
seasons roll to their eternal rest.

Psalm 32 **VU 759**

Refrain: Be glad in God you righteous. Rejoice, O saints, rejoice.

Blessed are those whose offences are forgiven, whose sin has been put away.

**Blessed are those to whom God imputes no guilt, and in whose spirit there is
no deceit. R**

When I kept silence, my body wasted away, while I groaned all the day long.

**For your hand was heavy upon me day and night; my strength dried up as in a
summer drought.**

Then I acknowledged my sin to you, my guilt I did not hide.

I said: "I will confess my sins to God"; and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

Therefore let all the faithful pray to you in time of trouble;

when great floodwater rises, it shall not come near them.

You are a hiding place for me, you will preserve me from trouble;

you will surround me with shouts of deliverance. R

I will teach you, and guide you in the way you should go.

I will keep you under my eye and instruct you.

Be not like a horse or mule, without understanding,

whose course must be checked with bit and bridle.

Many pains are in store for the wicked,

but whoever trusts in God, is surrounded by steadfast love. R

Spirit of the Living God **VU 376**

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Melt me, mould me, fill me, use me.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the living God, move among us all; make us one in heart and mind,
make us one in love: humble, caring, selfless, sharing.

Spirit of the living God, fill our lives with love.

O Jesus, I Have Promised **VU 120**

O Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
Remain forever near me, my Saviour and my friend;
I shall not fear the journey if you are by my side,
Nor 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.