



**February 18, 2024
Lent One
Communion**

Gower Street United Church is a safe place for all people to worship regardless of race, creed, age, ability, cultural background, or sexual orientation.



We respectfully acknowledge the land on which we live, work and worship as the ancestral homelands of the Beothuk, whose culture has been lost forever and can never be recovered. We also acknowledge the island of Kaimuki (Newfoundland) as the unceded, traditional territory of the Beothuk and the Mi'kmaq. And we acknowledge Labrador as the traditional and ancestral homelands of the Innu of Nitassinan, the Inuit of Nunatsiavut, and the Inuit of NunatuKavut. We recognize all First Peoples who were here before us, those who live with us now, and the seven generations to come. As First Peoples have done since time immemorial, we strive to be responsible stewards of the land and respect the cultures, ceremonies, and traditions of all who call it home. As we open our hearts and minds to the past, we commit ourselves to working in a spirit of truth and reconciliation to make a better future for all.

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Bold indicates unison.
Rise in body and spirit as you prefer.
The projected text in white is a communal response.

**Today's bulletin is dedicated in memory of
Claude Robbins (June 24, 1931 - Feb 21, 2021)
from the Robbins Family**

THE SPIRIT GATHERS US IN

The Life and Work of Gower

Voluntary: Gottes Zeit ist die Allerbeste Zeit, BWV 106 J S Bach

We sing: VU 114 Forty Days and Forty Nights Heinlein

Words of Welcome:

No matter who you are, where you come from, how you come to be here, what you believe or what you are questioning, you are welcome in fullness.

Gathering Words:

We have come together this morning for renewal.

We have come together in worship and as a community of faith.

This is a time of reflection and stillness.

It is the first Sunday in Lent—the season for journeys of the heart.

Close your eyes. Be still. Listen.

We are entering a holy time.

The Lenten candles have been lit, but over the next six weeks the light will slowly fade into darkness.

For we are retelling the story of Jesus' journey over these next weeks. We are moving towards the time of God's revelation in the death and rising of Jesus.

It is a story of the amazing transformation of death into life, of endings transformed into beginnings, and of dead-ends which become a source for new possibilities.

Silent Pause

First Candle of Lent:

Jordan Wright

This is the sacred center of our faith—the truth made manifest in Jesus Christ—that God is in each and every one of us, quietly transforming us and the world.

In his pain and suffering, Jesus speaks to every pain and loss you have endured and offers you the promise of transformation.

It is an ancient story, but it still has the power to reveal, to heal, and to redeem.

Jesus is at the heart of our faith, in the depth of our souls.

Jesus is waiting for us, inviting us to leave ordinary time and follow along with him on the journey that brought him to the Cross.

Listen in silence, for Jesus is calling you.

(Silent time.)

As we extinguish this light, we acknowledge the darkness and pain of injustice in the world.

(A candle is extinguished.)

Choral Response: Drop, Drop Slow Tears

Gibbons

Let us pray:

Loving God, as we journey through this holy season of Lent, **give us strength and courage to make the changes that are needed in our lives. Open our hearts and minds to your steadfast presence and help us to put our trust in you. Amen.**

We sing: MV 115 Behold, behold I Make All Things New Iona Community, Scotland

Prayer Of Transformation:

Are you paying attention, God? **We call on you.**

Words of Assurance:

On the journey of Lent, we seek a spirit of discernment and wisdom.

On the journey of Lent, we move toward relationship with God.

So follow Jesus and know new life. Seek the Spirit and know new insight. Move toward God and know grace. You are forgiven. **Amen.**

LISTENING TO THE STORY

Lenten Lamentation:

The Book of Lamentations invites us to pay attention to the grief of others, to open our hearts to those who suffer. It also summons us to attend to our own sorrows and to express them freely in prayer. God wants to hear what is real in our lives, including our struggles and disappointments. The book of Lamentations deepens our experience of Lent by encouraging us to grow in the freedom to share all that we are with God.

Choir Response: Bless the Lord my Soul

A reading from the Gospel: Mark 1: 9-15

The baptism, temptation, and mission of Jesus.

We sing: Bless the Lord my Soul

Anthem: Pie Jesu (from Requiem)

Fauré
solo: Megan Barnes

Meditation

We sing: VU 581 When We Are Living

Somos Del Senor

COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND SHARING GOD'S LOVE THROUGH OUR MINISTRY

The offering plates are located near the sanctuary doors. You are invited to place your offerings there when you arrive or leave. You can also scan the QR code on our bulletin to donate via our website.

Gathering our Gifts

We sing: VU 537 Your Work, O God, Needs Many Hands (V. 1) Kilmarnock

Offering Prayer:

Loving God, we come before you today in humility. Acknowledging the gifts you give us. We ask that you now receive our gifts, the fruits of our labors and our hearts. May they be used to glorify your name. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table:

Welcome, friends! We meet with the spirit of the Creator at the great feasting table. The Holy One who walked with our ancestors walks with us now in this season of winter.

Our God will walk with our children for years to come. In the very air that we breathe, in the sound of whistling wind, and the slap of the waves on the shore,
we give you thanks for your presence.

In the sound of children's laughter and in the songs of our elders,
we give you thanks for your presence.

Lift up your broken hearts:

We lift them up to God!

Let us honour our Creator.

It is right to honour God.

It is right to honour God and to give our thanks.

We give our thanks to God.

The Great Thanksgiving:

We bless you for all your gifts. You brought creation to birth and sent prophets to awaken us to your great dream - a dream in which everyone is treated with dignity and love, justice and mercy, honour and hospitality.

We praise you for elders and prophets, visionaries and leaders, teachers and preachers, all who have shared the great truth of your love. We praise you for our brother Jesus, love in human form, who showed to us in womb and tomb, in cradle and cross, in tenderness and compassion, your great heart of love.

With the flying ones, the swimming ones, the four-legged ones, and the crawling ones, with rocks and trees, mountains and plains, with all creation, we humans raise our voices to you as we sing:

We sing: MV 203 Holy, Holy, Holy

As we gather at this feasting table, we remember that on the night before he died, Jesus feasted with his friends. He took a loaf of bread, thanked you as we have thanked you, broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying: "Take, eat. This is my body, given for you. Whenever you feast together, remember me." ‘

Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks, passed it to his friends, saying: "Drink! This cup is the promise of God. Whenever you drink together, remember me." Remembering your boundless love shown to us in Jesus Christ, we offer you our praise as we proclaim the great mystery of our faith:

We sing: MV 204 Memorial Acclamation

Holy Spirit, unite us at this feast, and may it strengthen us to live the resurrected and reconciled life of Christ in creation.

Prayers for our world and the prayer of Jesus

We sing: MV 205 Great Amen

Words of Institution:

Christ's body broken and healed for you.
The cup of rich blessing poured out for you.

Welcome to the Table

All things are now ready. Come to the table with all your kin and share with all in need, the gift of healing for those of us in pain, the gift of reconciliation for those of us estranged, the gift of assurance for those of us in doubt, and the gift of hope for those of us in tears. May we who share these gifts, share Christ with one another and with all our kin.

Sharing of the bread and the cup

We sing: VU 457 As We Gather at Your Table

Beach Spring

Prayer after Communion:

Eternal and Gracious One, though we live in a world of need,

here we have tasted your goodness and hungered for a world more just.

Though afflicted by brokenness and division,

here we have heard your call to be a people of healing community.

Though daily we touch our limits,

here we have received the fullness of your grace.

Send us forth, O God, in faith, in hope, and in love. **Amen.**

WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD

We sing: VU 288 Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Faithfulness

We go out into the world:

As we go, let us remember: Our loving God sees us and know us, in all sorrows and pain.

God knows our desires to be open to God and to live with hope the life God has given us.

May love, grace, and peace follow us through the week until we gather here again to receive God's word.

We go in the knowledge that the breath of God is blowing all around us and enfolding us sagely in love. Amen!

Lenten Blessing: VU 572 Send Me, Lord

Thuma Mina

Organ Postlude: Adagio in g minor

Albinoni

Worship today was inspired by Gathering, Lent 2024, Year B, and Lenten's Lamentation from Worship in the City, Prayers and Songs for the Urban Settings by Nancy Elizabeth Hardy.

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Minister: The Rev. Pamela Jones-Fitzgerald

Pastoral Care Minister: Vacant

Youth & Family Minister: The Rev. Rebecca Pike

Minister Emeritus: The Very Rev. Dr. Marion Pardy

Organist & Music Ministry: R. Carl Goulding

Custodian: David Noseworthy

Board Chair: Patrick Griffin



To the Glory of God

Donation to the *Operating Fund*
in honour of and memory of
brothers and parents
from Pat Humber

Donations to the *Memorial Fund* for our
A Celebration Of Faith: Hymns For Choir
and Congregation
in loving memory of **precious family
members and friends**- gone from our
sight but never from our hearts
from Elsie & Brian Doyle

What's Up at Gower

Our winter Peace Of Mind Pop-Up – Contemplative Workshop on Anxiety Management - is this Tuesday, February 20 at 11:00 am in the Council Room. Pet rocks are welcome. We look forward to seeing you there. Donation basis (cash, cheque or e-transfer), with all proceeds going to Choices for Youth, our winter fundraiser.

Sock it to Ya Sunday: It's time for the fifth annual Sock it to Ya Sunday! We are collecting socks to donate to Choices for Youth. We celebrate Sock it to Ya during worship on Sunday, February 26. You can drop socks off at the church during office hours or bring them to worship any Sunday in February! Socks are the least donated items but one of the most needed.

Lenten Pauses: Throughout Lent, the Ministry Team will offer a time of scripture, music, and prayer online weekly. These videos will be posted on Gower's YouTube Channel at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesdays throughout Lent.