

March 28, 2024
Maundy Thursday

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

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

THE SPIRIT GATHERS US IN

Voluntary:

We sing: VU 658 O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go St. Margaret

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:

Jesus said: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. As I have loved you, you also should love one another." (John 13:34)

Gather us in your spirit of deep love this night.

Not only gather us, but build up in us the depth of your love;

a love that chooses forgiveness over retaliation,

a love that chooses to give over taking,

a love that chooses to be wide rather than narrow.

Build up the strength of your selfless love within us, as we worship.

Prepare us for all the opportunities to give ourselves away in your name. Amen.

Gathering Prayer:

O God of dark and light, of hope and deep sorrow,

we draw close to an ending tonight. We are all aware of that. But we are also aware that you are the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end. You are with us always. Open our hearts, our senses, our lives to become aware of what you are doing in this moment. Amen.

We sing: VU 142 Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross

Prayer Of Transformation:

Gracious God, we feel the soaking, sinking presence of stress and strain.

We feel it in our lower backs, our headaches, and in our hurting feet. We feel more bunioned than blessed, harried than happy, and more alone than adequate.

So tonight, we pray that, in these feelings which mark our humanity, we will find your divinity.

Fill every word and silence in our worship.

Round off every thought and action tonight, that we may sense you wiping away all that makes worried and tired. **Amen.**

Words of Assurance:

Because God's love is great, **we are forgiven.**

Because God's forgiveness is firm, **we are free.**

As God's creation, healed, forgiven, and loved, **let us be at peace. Let us live with grateful joy. Glory to God! Glory to God!**

We sing: VU 133 Go To Dark Gethsemane

Redhead No. 76

LISTENING TO THE STORY

We sing: VU 118 Wonder and Stare

Responsive Psalm: Psalm 116
How can I repay you, O God?

VU p. 836
Angeline Anstey

A reading from Scripture: 1 Corinthians 23-26
An account of the Last Supper.

We sing: VU 118 Wonder and Stare

Meditation:

The Rev. Kathy Brett

We sing: VU 436 Abide with Me

Eventide

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:

You are invited on this night not only to give your money, but to offer your very selves. And in the sacrifice and the giving, we will be part of life and hope for others.

All the donations from this service will go to support new refugees to Newfoundland via the Association for New Canadians.

We sing: VU 315 Holy, Holy, Holy (v. 4)

Nicea

Offering Prayer:

Humble God, we gather tonight to eat and drink, to be nurtured by food and fellowship, as Jesus has invited us to do. **May we be food and drink and nurture for one another as we reach out beyond these walls. Bless the work of our hands and our hearts. Amen.**

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

We sing: VU 467 One Bread, One Body

Tonight, Jesus invites us to participate in a new ritual –

to see the bread that we might have at any given meal, and notice in it that our brokenness is known by our loving God.

To encounter in the wine,

an opportunity for deep renewal through the forgiveness of our sins.

“Take and eat,” Jesus said. “Take and drink,” he offered.

And when he broke and poured Jesus foretold his own body breaking in the painful truth of humanity’s capacity to oppress, and his own life, found in God’s powerful resilient love.

We come as people of God and disciples of Jesus to taste, smell, drink, and notice this holy offering of bread and cup.

Jesus took some bread and tore it in pieces. “The bread of life,” he said. Then Jesus lifted the cup and held it up: “drink this wine,” he said, “my body, my blood, my life broken for you and poured out for all.” **We come as disciples of Jesus, taking, eating, drinking this holy offering of bread and cup.**

Jesus, that servant heart shattered and dispersed amongst us, that love for the world. **That living word, distributed around the universe. His strength, his honour, his energy and compassion. Given, offered, laid bare for us, waiting for the taking, for the eating and drinking.**

“Do this and remember me,” Jesus said. “celebrate my life, my death, my resurrection. This is the new agreement between the Creator and God’s creation. Eat and drink, remember and remind one another.”

“Take this bread,” Jesus said, “drink this wine.”

We sing: MV 203 Sanctus and Benedictus

And so we come together, **as we are, strong and weak, clear-sighted and muddled, hungry and thirsty for answers, for solutions, for a way forward, for righteousness. In faith, hope, and love.**

We remember Jesus’ integrity unto death.

We remember the Easter hope of resurrection.

We remember the promise of compassion and justice.

Pastoral Prayer

We sing: VU 960 The Prayer of Jesus

These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

Solo: Behold the Wood

Dan Schutte
Soloist: Tony Chadwick

Prayer after Communion:

Gracious Jesus, **we thank you for this meal.**

Though we too betray, **you meet us here and love us still.**

Though we too deny, **you wash our feet and offer your serving heart.**

Though we too abandon, **you feed us nourishment divine.**

Though we struggle to find our way, **you gather us together in peace and reconciliation.**

Though we fall asleep when you need us most, **you awaken in us the spirit of compassion again and again.**

We thank you, Loving Friend, for this meal, and for your kind renewal of our spirits. **Bless our partaking this night, we pray. Amen. (Silence)**

WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD

We pray:

Holy One, once we were disciples, imagining ourselves becoming leaders; now, we are servants.

Once we were devoted, confident, utterly sure of ourselves, our capacities, and the direction of our lives; now, we are unsure, shaken, afraid.

Beloved God, once we were followers, true and sincere; tonight, we are scattered by our fears and weaknesses in every possible direction.

Do not abandon us to this deep night. Stay with us as we struggle to stay with you. Amen.

The Stripping of the Church

We go out into the world:

United by this Holy Meal and this night of remembrance,

we go out in thankfulness, for all God has given for us. We go out, committed to forever growing in our faith and grateful for God's gift. Amen.

We sing: VU 135 Beneath the Cross of Jesus

St. Christopher

You are invited to leave the sanctuary in silence.

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Minister: The Rev. Pamela Jones-Fitzgerald
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



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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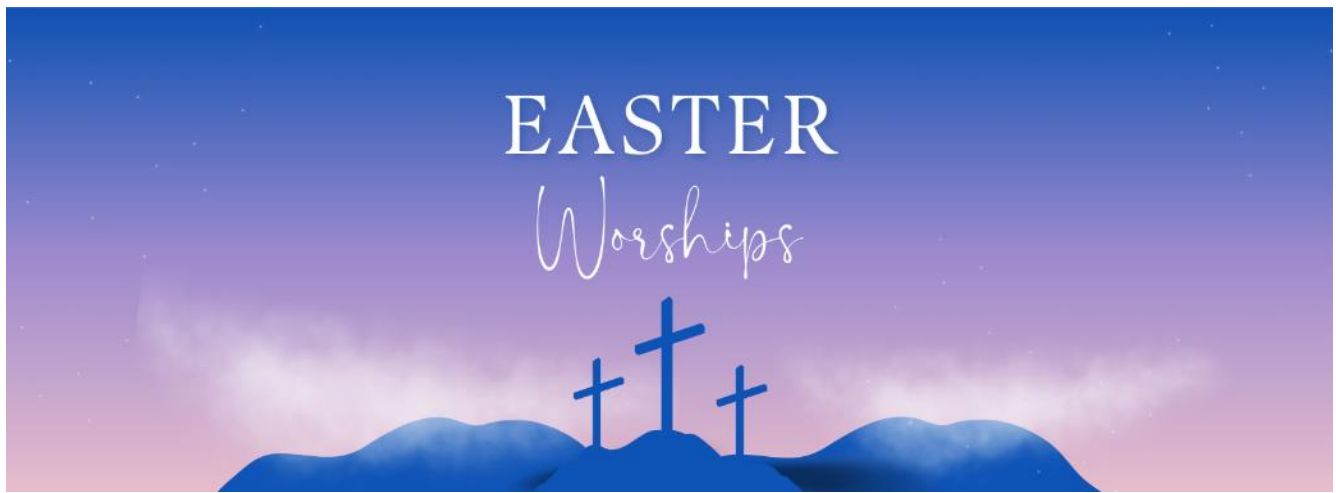
Holy Week
WORSHIPS

Good Friday - March 29
WESLEY UNITED CHURCH
12:00 P.M.

Easter Vigil - March 30
ST. JAMES UNITED CHURCH
7:00 P.M.



Gower United Church
Street Church
Open Hearts • Open Minds • Open Arms



All are welcome to our Easter Sunday Celebrations!

9:30 a.m.

Contemplative Worship with soft music, the Sacrament of Holy Communion and prayer.

10:00 a.m.

Easter Sunday Coffee hosted by the Worship and Sacraments Committee in the Lecture Hall.

11:00 a.m.

Easter Sunday Worship with the Bell Choir, Young People's Choir, Gower Senior Choir, Special Music, Liturgical Dance and Parade of Butterflies!