

March 30, 2025 Lent Four

The people of Gower Street United Church are committed to doing right by Jesus' teachings: loving, serving, giving generously in our local, regional, and global communities. We envision a vibrant and evolving community where tradition is honoured, change is embraced, and injustice is challenged.

We are dedicated to being welcoming and affirming, engaging participation of all, including people of any age, colour, race, ethnicity, faith, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, marital status, family composition, and social or economic circumstances.



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.

THE SPIRIT GATHERS US IN

The Life and Work of Gower

Voluntary: Prelude in D Minor J S Bach

We sing: VU 227. For the Fruit of All Creation Ar Hyd Y Nos

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:

The old has passed away; the new emerges.

We celebrate the promises of God that shower our lives. We shall not fear, for Christ is by our side. Each of us here, and each person throughout the world, is invited to reflect God's glory. We worship God.

Gathering Prayer:

O God, sometimes life's events call for extravagance, and sometimes they call for restraint. Sometimes they call for thrift, and other times they call for abandon. Help us in our discernment so that we can respond to life's events in ways that are both faithful and life-giving, ways that show others and ourselves that you are present in all events, even if we cannot feel you there. Show us your way through the wilderness. Amen.

Fourth Candle of Lent:

Meghan McKibbon

On the fourth Sunday of Advent, we lit a candle to welcome the love that can bring us together and make us whole. We rest in the glow of that candle now.

(a moment of silence)

As we hold this dream of love tightly to us, we acknowledge how hard it is to recognize this love as being lived out as fully and unconditionally as it should.

We grieve the places where indifference and hatred are so overwhelming that love doesn't get a chance to be experienced by those who need to know it is for them, too. Our hearts break at how love is withheld and denied from those who need it most. As the shadows of Lent surround us, we extinguish our candle of love, just for today, as we seek to break down all barriers that exist between us and love.

(candle is extinguished)

Choral Response: Drop, Drop Slow Tears

Gibbons

Exploring Lent

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

St. Margaret

Prayer Of Transformation and Words of Assurance

LISTENING TO THE STORY

Prayer of Illumination:

Meghan McKibbon

Holy One, as we receive these words of scripture, open our hearts and spirits so we might be willingly shaped for your purposes, by the power of your living Word. Amen.

A reading from Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5: 16-21

Anyone in Christ is a new creation.

A reading from the Gospel: Luke 15: 11-32

The prodigal son; the prodigal father.

Response: VU 118 Wonder and Stare

Iona Community

Anthem: Lord, For Thy Tender Mercy's Sake

Hilton

Meditation

We sing: VU 663 My Faith Looks Up to Thee

Olivet

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

You can offer your financial gifts to Gower Street United Church in many ways.

As you enter/leave the sanctuary, there are offering plates where you may lay your offerings.

You can also continue to drop off offerings in the secure mailbox outside the church office or you can donate via E-Transfer, using the email address gsuc@nl.rogers.com.

You can also scan the QR code on your mobile device to be brought directly to our website page.



Gathering our Gifts

We sing: VU 293 We Praise You, Creator (v.1)

Lyons

Offering Prayer:

We bring these gifts to you, O God, in response to your love and grace at work in our lives. We wish to participate in your purpose to offer healing and love to all people. We pray that these gifts will be used faithfully and well in this community of faith and in the world through Mission and Service. Strengthen us so that we may offer our lives to your work. Amen.

WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD

We sing: VU 716 How Can I Keep from Singing

How Can I Keep from Singing

We go out into the world:

Let us go forward into the uncertainties of life.

Let us be open to the guidance of the Spirit.

Let us go forward certain that God will calm our spirits as we confront our fears.

Let us go forward knowing that we are not alone. Thanks be to God. Amen.

We sing: Soli Deo Gloria

Postlude: Adagio in g minor

Albioni

Worship today was inspired by Gathering, Lent/Easter 2025, Year C.

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Minister: The Rev. Pamela Jones-Fitzgerald

Youth & Family Minister: The Rev. Rebecca Pike-Winter

Minister Emeritus: The Very Rev. Dr. Marion Pardy

Organist & Music Ministry: R. Carl Goulding

Custodian: David Noseworthy

Board Chair: Patrick Griffin