

Westminster United Church

Order of Worship



March 24, 2019

Gathering Music

Welcome and Announcements

(★ invites people to stand as they are able; **people's part in bold type**)

Entry into Lenten Celebration (Bob Holmes, *adapted*)

Come into this gathering.
May this time together be creative of a new
outreach of trust and confidence
so that life can be lived to the full...

Quiet Reflection

An Act of Awareness for Lent (C.O. Dame, *adapted*)

May our time together renew our hope.
May the stories we share refresh our courage.
May the songs we sing lift our spirits.
May the words we speak invigorate us.
May the touch of hands, the sound of laughter,
the sight of faces new and familiar,
restore our faith...

The singing bowl is sounded three times...

An Opening Prayer for Lent

(Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer/wsj, *adapted*)

Remind us, O Spirit,

Life is worth living.

Remind us, O Creativity,

The struggle for justice is worth undertaking.

Remind us, O Compassion,

Love and action are one.

May it be so. Amen.

★**Opening Hymn VU 574**

“Come, Let Us Sing of a Wonderful Love”

A Conversation

“What words do you use to describe God?”

★**Hymn VU 600** *“When I Needed a Neighbour”*

A Celebration of Our Lenten Faith

(Kate Compston/sco, *adapted*)

Living and Beckoning Spirit of Jesus,
you call us out of our comfortable ghetto of ‘us’
and ‘them’ to risk discipleship without walls.

**You call us into a world-wide fellowship
where God is worshipped above all other.**

You call us into a world-wide fellowship
where prayer is offered night and day.

**You call us into a world-wide fellowship
where we can share what we are
with others who love you.**

You call us into a world-wide fellowship
where each person has something to give
to the whole.

**You call us into a world-wide fellowship
where compassion and respect
shape our mission and ministry.**

Living Spirit of Jesus, keep on beckoning us out of our safe havens into your rich fellowship of challenge and reconciliation, faith and hope...

Moments of Quiet Contemplation...

Sharing the Peace

May a heart of peace rest with you.

And also with you.

Choral Response MV 18 (sung twice)

“ Lord, Prepare Me to Be a Sanctuary ”

**Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary,
pure and holy tried and true;
with thanksgiving,
I'll be a living sanctuary for you.**

READINGS FOR THE 3rd SUNDAY OF LENT

From the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament)

Isaiah 55: 1-9

From the Gospels *Luke 13: 1-9*

From the 'New Testament'

“ Grounded Faith ”

by Henry Nelson Wieman
in Outstretched Wings of the Spirit p. 17

“ Resting in the Grace of the World ”

– a poem by Wendell Berry
in Earth Prayers p. 102

Reflections on Today's Readings

Let us recognize the seeds of truth and wisdom in these readings.

**May these seeds of truth and wisdom
be planted in the fertile soil
of our imaginations...**

Choral Response MV 79

(refrain only)

“ Spirit, Open My Heart ”

**Spirit, open my heart
to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love,
in receiving and in giving.
Spirit, open my heart.**

Centering Silence for Lent

Life is full of mysteries. So, while we are here in this sacred place, let us open ourselves to contemplating the Holy Mystery we have named “God”. But let us never confine our contemplation to this building alone.

**May we delve into contemplating that
Holy Mystery here, but find it everywhere...**

Silence

May we be enfolded in the depths of love – renewed...refreshed...restored...and saturate with unending peace.

Amen and Amen.

Sermon

Rev. Del Stewart

“ Re-Imagining Lent:

*A New and Necessary Apprehension
of “ Repent or Perish ” ”*

★Hymn VU 229

“God of the Sparrow ”

Lenten Prayers

“Letting Go – A New Corporate *CONFESSION*”(Rev. Dawn Hutchings,
Holy Cross Lutheran Church,
New Market, ON, *adapted*)

GOD - MYSTERY DIVINE - creatively active for billions of years in this emerging universe, comes to expression in us. In the PURE-LOVE-that-we-call-GOD, we live and move and have our being. In, with, through and beyond us, that PURE LOVE can be generous, loving, creative, happy, delighted, sad and disappointed.

**God loves in us; God cares through us;
God laughs in us; God cries in us.**

As we open ourselves to the power of the PURE-LOVE-that-is-GOD in and around us, we often cling to our desire for control, our self-centered nature, and our fears.

**Together in the presence of MYSTERY
and to one another, we confess that our
failures have too often defined us.**

By the power of the Living Spirit of Jesus who lives and breathes in, with, through and beyond us, we can let go of all that separates us from LOVE and one another.

**Together, we confess our sorrow for the limits
we have put on LOVE’s Spirit at work in us.**

**We confess that we often fail to live in ways
that foster our relationship with MYSTERY
and with one another.**

In Jesus of Nazareth we have met the one whose life teaches us to act justly, walk humbly, love selflessly, expand our notions of neighbour, love our enemies, care for creation, and forgive as we are forgiven.

**As Jesus has urged, we freely let go of
our fear and open ourselves to the
Spirit’s power to heal our relationships...**

Quiet Reflection

From the teachings of Jesus we have learned the healing power of compassion,

**And so we freely let go of our own arrogance,
our tightly held grudges, our temptation to
seek revenge and our desire for victory.**

In Jesus’ teaching, life and death we have seen the power of grace.

**In and through the Living Spirit of Jesus,
we open ourselves to the powers of mercy
and compassion as we begin the hard work
of forgiving ourselves, our neighbours and
our enemies.**

Quiet Reflection

In Jesus, LOVE’s power to forgive is realized. May LOVE continue to find generous and courageous expression in, with, through and

beyond us as we forgive ourselves, our neighbours and our enemies. Breathe deeply of the Living Spirit of Jesus as you continue LOVE's reconciling work! Let the Reign of God – the Reign of the ONE-WHO-IS-PURE-LOVE - evolve in, with, through, and beyond us.

**Let us give life to: the-LOVE-that-Is-God,
and the peace and power of the Living Spirit
of Jesus, now and always...**

Quiet Reflection

The Lord's Prayer (unison)

Presentation of Our Gifts and Offerings

★**Offertory Hymn VU 542**

“ We Give You But Your Own ”

**We give you but your own,
what e'er the gift may be;
All that we have is yours alone,
we give it gratefully.**

Offertory Prayer

★**Closing Hymn VU 238**

“ How Great Thou Art ”

★**Parting Words** (Gary Kowalski, *adapted*)

As we prepare to depart from this sacred place
let us resolve to embrace the wonder of this week
with expectation and imagination,
with faith to face our challenges,

with love that casts out fear,
with rejoicing for the gift of today,
and with hope to trust tomorrow...

The singing bowl is sounded three times

★**A Lenten Blessing**

(Dorothy McRae-McMahon, *adapted*)

Go in courage and celebration!
Throughout this Lenten Season,
may all the faces of the Holy God
be turned toward you in love.
May the Cosmos, and the Earth itself,
speak to you of its creativity.
And may who we are, each and all,
be honoured in our authentic journeys...

★**Choral Response VU 148**

(sung twice)

“ Jesus, Remember Me ”

**Jesus, remember me
when you come into your kingdom.
Jesus, remember me
when you come into your kingdom.**

Postlude

*Lectionary Readings for Sunday, March 31
~ Fourth Sunday in Lent ~*

Joshua 5: 9-12

Psalm 32

2 Corinthians 5: 16-21

Luke 15: 1-3, 11b-32

Roast Beef Dinner

Westminster United Church

1680 Dougall Ave at Tecumseh Road West

Friday, March 29, 2019

5:00pm to 7:00pm

Tickets:

Adults ~ \$15.00 in advance or \$17.00 at the door

Children (under 12) ~ \$6.00

Price includes:

*roast beef, mashed potatoes, coleslaw, carrots, beans,
buns, juice, coffee, tea and dessert.*

Take-out available



Please call the church office at 519-258-1471 to reserve tickets

Westminster United Church

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