

# Westminster United Church

Order of Worship



March 31, 2019

Gathering Music

## Welcome and Announcements

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

## Entry into Lenten Celebration (Rex A.E. Hunt, *adapted*)

During our gathering here  
in this sacred Lenten time and place,  
may we greet one another with  
open hearts and minds.  
And may we inspire one another  
to consider new questions,  
to seek deeper meaning,  
and to cultivate both wisdom and compassion.

### *Quiet Reflection*

May this Lenten time together  
empower us to take new steps  
so that all our living is transforming,  
and the yearnings of our hearts become reality.

*The singing bowl is sounded three times...*

## An Act of Awareness for Lent (Rex A.E. Hunt, *adapted*)

For all that is our life we offer thanks and praise.  
For all life is a gift which we're called to use,  
in order to build up the common good...

### *Quiet Reflection*

May we know once again that  
we're not isolated beings  
but connected in mystery and miracle,  
to the universe,  
to this community,  
to each other.

## ★Opening Hymn MV 12 “Come Touch Our Hearts”

## A Lenten Conversation (by Wendell Berry)

“The Earth Story”

## ★Hymn MVU 135 “Called by Earth and Sky”

## A Litany “Life In All Its Fullness”

(N.S.D., Esdon, *edited & adapted*)

Bless you Wise and Holy One,  
for your down-to-earth vision  
of what human life can be.

**Bless you Wise and Holy One,  
for your call to life in all its fullness.**

When we honour who we are as easily as  
we're enthralled by what others want us to be

**Bless you Wise and Holy One.**

When we stop pursuing happiness  
and let it embrace us,

**Bless you Wise and Holy One.**

When we love not the hope of getting  
but for the joy of giving,

**Bless you Wise and Holy One.**

When love is not what-you-can-do-for-me  
but what-we-can-be-together,

**Bless you Wise and Holy One.**

When we choose our leaders not for their image  
but for their imagination,  
not for the political games they play  
but for the principles they live by,

**Bless you Wise and Holy One.**

When our economy thrives on expressing  
who we are,  
not on spending what we have.

**Bless you Wise and Holy One.**

When the Earth itself is our Sacred Sanctuary,

**Bless you Wise and Holy One.**

When we bite into theology's questions as readily as  
we swallow technology's answers,

**Bless you Wise and Holy One.**

When we celebrate today as NOT JUST all-we-have  
BUT all-we-need,

**Bless you Wise and Holy One,  
for calling us to life in all its fullness  
not just hereafter but here and now....**

*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 "*

**READINGS FOR THE 4th SUNDAY OF LENT**

From the Gospels *Mark 8: 31-38*

From the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament)

*Psalms 37, VU 763* (responsive)

From the 'New Testament'

"Seeing the Rainbow in Our Faces"  
(Rabbi Arthur Waskow, *Life Prayers*, p. 105)

**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 "*

**Centering Silence for Lent**

For a few moments, let us release ourselves  
from a world that is too noisy, too busy,  
too demanding.

For a few moments, let us release ourselves  
into the calm, still world that waits to receive us,  
where quiet is broken only by the sounds  
of our own making...

*Quiet Time*

Amen and Amen.

**Sermon**

Rev. Del Stewart

*" Re-Imagining Lent:  
Changing the Channel and Other Distractions "*

★Hymn VU 561 “ Take Up Your Cross ”

**Pastoral Prayers for Lent**

We have carried our joys and celebrations,  
our griefs and concerns,  
into this sacred time and place.  
So now, let us pause for a few moments  
to recall and reflect on those joys and burdens –  
and to focus our thoughts...

*Quiet Reflection and Focused Thoughts*

As one heart is lifted

**May we share its celebration.**

As one heart is burdened

**May we share the pain it knows.**

In the light and the beauty of the day

**We give thanks in awe and wonder.**

In the darkness and stillness of the night

**We dream of healing and hope.**

(Gretta Vosper)

We pray for others –  
for those unnamed or remembered –  
and in solidarity with those who do not have  
the freedom to express their celebration and  
mourning for fear of condemnation or discrimination.  
We pray, asking for them all that we would ask for  
ourselves. And in all our joys and all our concerns,  
may we be ever mindful of the Presence of the  
Sacred within us and among us, and see new  
possibilities for our own lives and all life on earth...

**The Lord’s Prayer** (unison)

**Presentation of Our Gifts and Offerings**

★Offertory Hymn VU 542

*“ We Give You But Your Own ”*

**Offertory Prayer**

★Closing Hymn VU 657 *“ He Leadeth Me ”*

★Parting Words (Bob Holmes/rhw, *adapted*)

As we prepare to depart from this sacred place  
let us resolve to take on this week’s life  
with renewed hope and imagination.

*Quiet Moments*

As the Spirit teaches inwardly,  
may we involve ourselves in the larger issues of life:

**Namely, those issues  
which make a compelling difference;  
those issues which create  
the good life for all humanity.**

*The singing bowl is sounded three times...*

★A Lenten Blessing (Bob Holmes rhw, *adapted*)

Go in courage and celebration!

As you journey, may the Holy Mystery of God be  
found along the road.

May the wonder of the costly love of Jesus  
embrace you.

And may the Living Spirit of Jesus  
bless and keep you always...

★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, April 7  
~ Fifth Sunday in Lent ~*

Isaiah 43: 16-21  
Philippians 3: 4b-14

Psalm 126  
John 12: 1-8

**Westminster United Church**

1680 Dougall Ave at Tecumseh Rd. W., Windsor, Ontario, N8X 1S3

Church Office Phone: 519-258-1471

*E-mail:* westmin@mnsi.net

Website: [www.westminsterunited.org](http://www.westminsterunited.org)

Facebook: WestminsterUnited Church

**Minister: Rev Del Stewart**