



## Bethel United Church Order of Service March 16, 2025 - Lent 2

### Introit

# LENT

### Welcome & Announcements

Good morning and welcome to Bethel United Church in Rideau Ferry, Ontario. Today is March 16<sup>th</sup>, the second Sunday in Lent. We welcome all of you into this place, whether you are worshiping with us in our sanctuary, or from home through our Live Streaming.

This week, our service is being led by: Ruth Anne Johnson and our choir, Aidan Williamson, Kathleen Williamson and Lynne Evans.

A quick reminder of our regularly scheduled Bethel activities: Chat and Chew on Tuesdays at 1:30 and our Zoom Prayer and Share at 10am on Thursdays.

If you have any questions about our weekly activities, you can access the calendar on our website: [www.bethelchurchrideauferry.ca](http://www.bethelchurchrideauferry.ca).

The calendar will appear on the first screen and has all of our activities listed.

Bethel's 2025 Lenten Project will provide support to the PSFDH Foundation's current campaign to raise money for the purchase of a new cataract microscope for the Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital.

The Perth & Smiths Falls District Hospital requires a new cataract microscope – a specialized medical instrument crucial for performing intricate and precise cataract surgeries – valued at \$363,833, to enhance their surgical capabilities.

An up-to-date cataract microscope will enable local specialists to perform surgeries with unparalleled precision, enhancing accuracy in lens replacement and reducing risks. It will also allow PSFDH ophthalmic surgeons to expand the spectrum of their surgical procedures in addition to cataracts.

### Ready for Pancakes?

The Bethel 2025 Pancake Breakfast will take place on Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup> from 8 - 11 a.m. (*Ontario Maple Weekend*). As always much help will be needed to promote and carry out this special community activity. Please sign the "Help Needed" sheet posted in the Hall and spread the word amongst family and friends about this upcoming and always popular event. We will again be partnering with Oliver's Mapleworks and serving their delicious maple syrup.

Are there any birthdays or other celebrations this week? Where have you seen God at work this week?

Please join in singing a brief song of celebration:

**VU 958**

**“Halle, Halle, Halle”**

**Halle, halle, halle-lujah! Halle, halle, halle-lujah!**

**Halle, halle, halle-lujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!**

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### **Land Acknowledgment (Unison)**

***For thousands of years, First Nations people have walked on this land; their relationship with the land is at the centre of their lives and spirituality. We are gathered on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Peoples and acknowledge their stewardship of this land throughout the ages.***

### **Mission and Service Story**

#### ***Building Climate Resiliency***

In areas where historically there has been little rain, now there are floods, and where there were floods, now there are droughts. That’s how Shadrick Chembe, the Monitoring and Evaluation Manager at Women for Change—an organization in Zambia that strives to improve conditions in rural communities by empowering women and girls—describes the changing climate in Zambia. Women bear the brunt.

“In Zambia, women are still responsible for collecting firewood and charcoal and making food. Now, because of climate change, they have to walk a longer distance to gather firewood. Charcoal is harder to get. That means it’s harder to make food. At the same time, women aren’t involved in the decision-making processes that impact this work,” explains Chembe.

Women for Change was established in 1992, and its long-standing partnership with the United Church stretches back to 1995. From the beginning, mobilizing communities to share ideas and best practices has been key to the work. Since its inception, 1,500 community groups have been established, with 25–40 people in each group and representatives from each forming associations. The groups discuss a variety of justice-related topics. Building climate resiliency by preparing for, recovering from, and adapting to drastically changing weather patterns is a priority.

Weather extremes due to climate change coupled with companies promoting seeds that only produce a single crop increasingly put people at risk.

"The majority of farmers are poor. They can't buy seeds, but companies have created seeds that force farmers to have to purchase them each year," says Chembe. "Groups discuss how they can save and share seeds, what they can plant with longer or shorter rains, and if there are traditional methods that can increase food production," he says, adding, "We are grateful for the United Church's support. The church has really been there for many years, helping us build awareness and resiliency. It's been a real partnership."

Your gifts through Mission and Service support long-term, life-changing work through committed partners like Women for Change. Thank you.

### **Call to Worship (Responsive)**

Pilgrims, we are invited to journey through this season of Lent

***towards the One who calls us each by a new name.***

Disciples, we walk with Jesus wherever he leads us,

***pulling our fears, our doubts, our longings behind us.***

Believers, we seek to trust the God who always surprises us,

***whose promises take on flesh and blood in the good news called Jesus.***

### **Lighting of the Christ Candle and the World Candle**

Today as we light our Christ Candle and our World Candle, we remember that Jesus called everyday people, fishermen, tax collectors and radicals to walk with him and be his friends.

*A moment of self-reflection:* Do we think of Jesus as a friend? Do we believe that we are Jesus's friends?

In the Gospel of John 15:13 we remember the words of Jesus who experienced death so that we could relate to the amazing love of God. "Greater love has no one than this, to lay down one's life for his friends."

### **Opening Prayer (Together)**

***Jesus Christ, presence of peace in the storms and conflicts of life, source of calm amidst our troubles and anxieties; in your liberating power the fearful find courage, the oppressed find release, the indebted find forgiveness, the lowly are lifted up, the mighty are levelled down. Come to us now in your power and in your peace. Amen.***

**Opening Hymn**      **MV 135**      **"Called by Earth and Sky"**

**Chorus**    **Called by earth and sky, promise of hope held high.  
This is our sacred living trust, treasure of life sanctified,  
called by earth and sky.**

**1**    **Precious these waters endless seas, deep ocean's dream,  
waters of healing, rivers of rain, the wash of love again. *Chorus***

**2**    **Precious this gift the air we breathe, wind born and free.  
Breath of the Spirit blown through this place,  
our gathering and our grace. *Chorus***

**3**    **Precious these mountains, ancient sands; vast fragile land.  
Seeds of our wakening, rooted and strong.  
Creation's faithful song. *Chorus***

**4**    **Precious the fire that lights our way, bright dawning day.  
Fire of passion, sorrows undone, our faith and justice one. *Chorus***  
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**Passing the Peace**

**A Prayer of Lenten Forgiveness (Together)**

***Almighty and ever living God, you invite us deeper into your world,  
your people, your Lent. May this time be one of outward focus;  
seeking you in those we often ignore. Help us live a Lent focused on  
freedom, generosity, forgiveness and encounter. Give us hearts  
hungry to serve you and those who need what we have to give.***

*- Author Unknown*

**Theme Conversation**

***What are some of the storms that we can encounter in life?***

**Our Scriptures Today**

Matthew 14: 22-33

Matthew 8: 23-27

**Reflection**

***"How to Get Through Your Storm"***

**Hymn**

**VU 675**

***"Will Your Anchor Hold"***

**1**    **Will your anchor hold in the storms of life?  
When the clouds unfold their wings of strife,  
when the strong tides lift and the cables strain,  
will your anchor drift or firm remain?**

**Refrain** We have an anchor that keeps the soul  
steadfast and sure while the billows roll,  
fastened to the rock which cannot move,  
grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love!

**2** It will surely hold in the straits of fear,  
when the breakers tell that the reef is near;  
though the tempest rave and the wild winds blow,  
not an angry wave shall our bark o'erflow. *Refrain*

**3** It will surely hold in the floods of death,  
when the waters cold chill our latest breath;  
on the rising tide it can never fail  
while our hopes abide within the veil. *Refrain*

**4** When our eyes behold, through the gathering night,  
the city of gold, our harbour bright,  
we shall anchor fast by the heavenly shore,  
with the storms all past for evermore. *Refrain*

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### **Invitation to the Offering**

As we come into our time of offering, we give thanks to God for the privilege of being able to share our finances, time and talents in order to build God's Kingdom here on earth.

### **Offering Music**

**Offering Response      VU 542      "We Give You But Your Own"**  
**We give you but your own, whate'er the gift may be;  
all that we have is yours alone, we give it gratefully.**

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### **Offering Prayer (Together)**

***For the blessings of this and all our days, we thank you, gracious God. Accept, we pray, not just this money but also our lives freely offered in gratitude for all you have done for us. Use them both, in this place and wherever you might take us. Amen.***

### **Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer**

(Rev. Dave Prayer)

Today, we have special prayers for:

Leona	Connie	Janet
Joy	Manfred	Chris
Helene	Rev. Lynne	Carol
Liam	Shannon	Dick
Maddi	Doreen	Grant
Joanne	Thelma	
Abby	Betty	

And together as a community we pray the prayer that Jesus taught us, saying, **Our Father...**

**Closing Hymn      VU 217      “All Creatures of Our God and King”**

**<sup>1</sup> All creatures of our God and King,**

**lift up your voice and with us sing:**

**hallelujah, hallelujah!**

**Bright burning sun with golden beam,**

**soft shining moon with silver gleam,**

**sing praises, sing praises,**

**hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!**

**<sup>2</sup> O rushing winds and breezes soft,**

**O clouds that ride the winds aloft,**

**sing praises, hallelujah!**

**O rising morn, in praise rejoice;**

**O lights of evening, find a voice:**

**sing praises, sing praises,**

**hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!**

**<sup>3</sup> Earth, ever fertile, day by day**

**brings forth rich blessings on our way:**

**sing praises, hallelujah!**

**The flowers and fruits that verdant grow,**

**let them God's glory also show:**

**sing praises, hallelujah!**

**hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!**

**<sup>4</sup> And everyone of tender heart,**

**forgiving others, take your part:**

**sing praises, hallelujah!**

**All who long pain and sorrow bear,**

**praise God and yield up all your care:**

**sing praises, hallelujah!**

**hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!**

**5 Let all things their Creator bless,  
and worship God in humbleness:  
sing praises, hallelujah!  
Praise God eternal, praise the Son,  
and praise the Spirit, three in one:  
sing praises, hallelujah!  
hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!**

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### **Living Our Faith This Week**

When the storms of life hit you hard, I encourage you to find a quiet place and read through both Psalm 23 and the storm story in Matthew 8. Be reminded that you are not alone in the boat during the storm. The source of peace that is the Holy Spirit is with you. As Jesus was in the boat with the disciples, the Spirit is with us in the storm. Find comfort in that promise.

### **Commissioning and Benediction**

#### **Sung Benediction**

**Go now in peace, never be afraid,  
God will go with you each hour of everyday.  
Go now in faith, steadfast strong and true,  
Know God will guide you in all you do.  
Go now in love, and show you believe.  
Reach out to others, so all the world can see.  
God will be there, watching us in love.  
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.  
Amen. Amen. Amen**

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