

The Glebe-St. James United Church

First Sunday in Lent

February 22, 2026

Gathered by God

PREPARING OUR HEARTS FOR WORSHIP

Juliet's Waltz

Flute: Liz Elton

Clarinet: Stephen Brooks

WELCOME

Pam Fitch

In the name of the Holy Mystery,
who is Wholly Love,
we welcome you to Creator's House.

Thanks be to God!

Good morning and welcome, everyone, to our worship service at Glebe-St. James United Church in downtown Ottawa on Sunday, February 22nd..

My name is Pam Fitch and I am the past chair of the church council.

We're so glad you're here today. Whether you're a first-time guest or a longtime member, whether you are joining us in person or online, we hope you feel at home. This is a place of faith, love, and community. Glebe-St. James is an Affirming Community of Faith in the United Church of Canada We are committed to creating a safe and inclusive environment where people of all ages, backgrounds, and identities feel loved and supported. Thank you for being here.

Friends, note who is seated near you, introduce yourself and invite them to join us for a time of fellowship in Fraser Hall after the service. We also encourage everyone to wear a name tag – they are available at the entrances to the church. Our newer members have told us how important it is to feeling welcome to get to know each other by name. And as I get older, I find it useful for those “senior moments” when I can't recall the names of the people I already know!

If you are new to Glebe-St. James and want more information, just fill out one of the green cards that are available near the entrances, place it on the offering plate or give it to one of the greeters and they will pass it into the office.

Today's worship service bulletin can be found on the GSJ website, along with a link to this week's announcements and a "donate" button to make your offering. If you are here in person, you can share your offering in the service, either in the collection plate, by e-transfer or through our website – the QR code, found on the back of the pews, will take you to the website.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This is a busy community, and lots is going on. I will just highlight a few announcements, but you will find a more complete list on our website and scrolling on the screens here in the sanctuary before and after our service.

Our Annual Congregational Meeting will happen next Sunday, March 1st. If we have your e-mail on our distribution list you will likely have a copy of the handouts already. If not, there are copies in the Narthex or send Jennifer an e-mail and she will send you the handouts electronically.

After the meeting we will have a pot luck luncheon. If your last name starts with the letters A through M, please bring a side dish (appetizer, salad, bread). N through Z – please bring a main dish. Choir members are asked to bring desserts.

Trustees: In accordance with the provisions of the United Church of Canada Manual, Glebe-St James Council is making the following nominations to the Glebe-St James Board of Trustees for consideration at the 2026 Annual Congregational Meeting.

- That Margaret Torrance be reappointed as a member of the Board of Trustees for a one-year term ending at the 2027 Annual Congregational Meeting
- That Dudleigh Coyle, Jennifer Johnson and Jim Louter be re-appointed as members of the Board of Trustees for a 5-year term ending at the 2031 Annual Congregational Meeting
- That Louise Archer be appointed as a member of the Board of Trustees for a 5-year term ending at the 2031 Annual Congregational Meeting

And now, let's acknowledge the land on which our sanctuary stands.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

David Brown

Still my soul, calm my roaming mind.
Give me peace, may my heart unwind.
Let me stay, your beloved guest.
Take my fear, make my worry rest.
What I hold, let me give to you.
Aid my strength when my storms drive through.
When my thoughts won't let me go,
I'll sing to you: oh, still my soul.

CALL TO WORSHIP

The good news of the gospel is:
**manna in the desert, water turned into wine,
love after loss, forgiveness after pain.**
The good news of the gospel is:
**release for the captive, hope for the hopeless,
mourning turned to dancing, and stranger turned to friends.**
So come on in, there's no time to waste!
This surprisingly good news is here for you.
Let us worship this good-news God.

OPENING PRAYER

We come, trusting in God's mercy and love,
longing to know and to learn more about God's ways.
**We come, to be guided in the ways of God's truth—
to experience the joy of God's salvation.**
We come, at the beginning of our Lenten journey,
aware of God's steadfast love helping us to overcome
the trials and temptations which can descend on us at any time.
**Lead us, O God, to do what is right in your eyes
and teach us to follow the humble way of Christ,
your beloved Son, our crucified and risen Lord.**

- 1 O God, how we have wandered
and hidden from your face;
in foolishness have squandered
your legacy of grace.
But how, in exile dwelling,
we turn with fear and shame,
as distant but compelling,
you call us each by name.
- 2 And now at length discerning
the evil that we do,
by faith we are returning
with hope and trust in you.
In haste you come to meet us,
and home rejoicing bring,
in gladness there to greet us
with calf and robe and ring.
- 3 O God of all the living,
both banished and restored,
compassionate, forgiving,
our peace and hope assured.
Grant now that our transgressing,
our faithlessness may cease.
Stretch out your hand in blessing,
in pardon, and in peace.

CALL TO HEALING

You may have heard, "All is fair in love and war,"
Or "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth."

But God says, "Forgive seventy times seven."
God says, "I am slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love."
God says, "Turn the other cheek."

Friends, let us pray:

PRAYER FOR HEALING

Loving God,
Somewhere along the way we picked up the message that
in order to be faithful we have to be serious.
 We have to pray on our knees with ceasing.
 We have to be somber in worship and quiet in our studies.
 We have to check our wiggles *and* our questions at the door.
But then you say the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed –
 unruly and untamed.
You turn water into wine – surprising and extravagant.
And all of a sudden, we wonder:
 Can we be like that mustard seed?
 Can we be faithful and unruly
 Can we be playful and curious?
 Can we be messy and still be yours?
We know the answer already.
The Spirit whispers: *of course, of course, of course.*
Forgive our doubt.
Pull us closer into your embrace.
With faith like a mustard seed, we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE

God's grace is wild and unruly.
God's mercy is abundant and surprising.
God's love is expansive and unending.
So if you ask, "Holy One, am I forgiven?"
The answer is and always will be:
of course, of course, of course.
This is the good news of the gospel.
Thanks be to God!

SIGN OF PEACE

Friends, the peace of Christ be with you!
And also with you.

HYMN Put Peace Into Each Other's Hands

MV 173

1. Put peace into each other's hands
and like a treasure hold it,
protect it like a candle flame,
with tenderness enfold it.

5. Reach out in friendship,
stay with faith in touch with those around you.
Put peace into each other's hands;
the Peace that sought and found you.

Listening for Wisdom

THEME CONVERSATION

HYMN Peace for the Children

MV 149

**Peace for the children, peace peace.
Peace for the children we pray.
Following the path of One of peace,
we work for healing, we work for peace;
peace for the children today.**

**Peace in the soul, peace, peace.
Peace in the soul we pray.
Following the path of One of peace,
peace for the children today.**

INTRODUCING THE MISSION & SERVICE FUND (M&S)

Susan Palmai

PRAYER FOR INSIGHT

Holy One,
It is easy to see the mustard plant and forget to marvel at the seed.
It is ways to taste good wine and not appreciate it.
It is ways to miss the holy that is in our midst.
So as we turn to your text today, we pray,
surprise us. Speak to us, Move through us.
Draw us closer to your good news.
We wait with bated breath. Amen.

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to me and to you? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the person in charge of the banquet." So they took it. When the person in charge tasted the water that had become wine and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), that person called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee and revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

GIFT OF MUSIC

Gather Us In

Flute: Liz Elton

Clarinet: Stephen Brooks

Here in this place new light is streaming
Now is the darkness vanished away
See in this space our fears and our dreamings
Brought here to you in the light of this day
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken
Gather us in, the blind and the lame
Call to us now and we shall awaken
We shall arise at the sound of our name

We are the young, our lives are a mystery
We are the old who yearn for your face
We have been sung throughout all of history
Called to be light to the whole human race
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty
Gather us in, the proud and the strong
Give us a heart so meek and so lowly
Give us the courage to enter the song
Here we will take the wine and the water

Here we will take the bread of new birth
Here you shall call your sons and your daughters
Call us anew to be salt for the earth
Give us to drink the wine of compassion
Give us to eat the bread that is You
Nourish us well and teach us to fashion
Lives that are holy and hearts that are true

Not in the dark of buildings confining
Not in some heaven light years away
But here in this place the new light is shining
Now is the kingdom, now is the day
Gather us in and hold us forever
Gather us in and make us your own
Gather us in, all peoples together
Fire of love in our flesh and our bones

REFLECTION

Rev. Dr. Teresa Burnett-Cole

People didn't think Jesus could boogie like that. It took them by surprise – his dance moves, undoubtedly, but also how much Jesus, Prince of Peace, Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God...loves a good ol' fashioned Electric Slide.

Jesus is there, at the wedding in Cana. And the party is at the tipping point, the moment when people are either gonna dip, or the party is about to go to the next level. The shoes will come off on the dance floor, mama is gonna bust those moves she hasn't used since college – but instead, something terrible has happened.

The host has run out of wine The servants know it. And for some reason...Mary knows it, too.

In John's gospel *this* is how we meet Mary. A woman who knows the panicked secret about to ruin the party; there is no more wine. A woman who knows exactly who can fix it, so she goes to find her son.

Maybe Jesus is dangling a solo cup in hand, leaning against a wall and enjoying from the sidelines. Maybe he was doing the Cha Cha and is irked to be interrupted. An embarrassing squabble with one's mother in front of friends is a seminal human experience, after all. Or maybe this whole conversation is a teasing ruse because mother and son know what is about to happen – they're both in on the delightful surprise.

The good news is a surprise to us, of course, but it's not a surprise to God. However, this conversation goes down – sassy or sincere – I picture Mary, unblinking at Jesus' insistence that his hour has not yet come. She turns to the crowd of befuddled waitstaff as she saunters off with, "Do whatever he tells you."

Mary has complete trust in the miracle to come.

The servants turn to look at Jesus – hopeful, skeptical, bewildered – and Jesus tells them to fill six stone jars, each holding forty or fifty litres. Then scripture says, "And they filled them up to the brim."

This is equivalent to one thousand bottles of wine! Which is exactly what it becomes. The party tips from good to unforgettable.

Behold: Jesus' debut act of ministry. It's not a healing, or an exorcism, or turning tables for justice. Jesus' first act is to help ensure a party becomes the best party possible. It's a total surprise!

Because this...this is who Jesus is. Jesus doesn't have to begin with defeating evil because he knows ultimately evil doesn't stand a chance against a God who loves disco and his mother. Evil doesn't stand a chance against a God who is not only not afraid of scarcity, but laughs in the face of it. Evil doesn't stand a chance against a God who will never let an empty cistern or full tomb have the final word. Evil is predictable. But our God loves a surprise because God knows the plot twist is the same every time: God's goodness will overflow. Every single time.

Responding in Thanksgiving

HYMN Over My Head

VU 88

Over my head, I hear music in the air. (*repeat 3 times*)
There must be a God somewhere.

1. Leader: When the storms of life are ragin'
All: Ooh, I hear music in the air.
Leader: when the storms of life are ragin'
All: Ooh, ooh, I hear music in the air.
Leader: When the storms of life are ragin'
All: Ooh, I hear music in the air.
Unison: There must be a God somewhere.

2. When the winds of strife are blowin'...
3. When the tide of hate is risin'...
4. O Jesus is a-callin'...

INVITATION TO GIVE

OFFERING HYMN Grant Us, God, the Grace of Giving

VU 540

**Grant us, God, the grace of giving,
with a spirit large and free,
that ourselves and all our living
we may offer faithfully.**

OFFERING PRAYER

Loving God, you surprise us with grace when we least expect it.
Take our gifts and multiple them that the needs of the community may be met. Amen.

Gathering at the Table

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Friends, if we are honest with ourselves and with God,
we are all seeking something.
Some of us long for a place to belong.
Others seek permission to be who we are made to be.
Some of us are hungry for connection,
hungry for justice,
or hungry for a glimpse of the Divine.
No matter what it is your soul longs for,
there is good news to be found here.
Friends, this is Christ's table.
We are the guests.
He is the host.
There is a seat here with your name on it.
Thanks be to God for a love like that.

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

God of the lost and the found,
surely it is right for us to give our thanks and praise;
for day after day we look for you,
and day after day we find you:
in the laughter of children,
in the sun rising over the horizon,
in the flowers of spring.
Our seeking does not go unanswered,
and for that we are grateful.
So first and foremost, we come to you in prayer to say thank you,
for when we're seeking beauty,
you give us mountains and freckles, green eyes and brown eyes.
When we we're looking for reason to hope,
you give us rainbows after the storm, and candles flickering in the window.
When we're seeking peace,
you give us three part harmony and the sound of the rain.
And when we're seeking justice,
your life reminds us that everyone is welcome at your Table, and none shall be turned away.
For all these reminders we are deeply grateful.
And yet, gracious God, our seeking does not stop.
For even though your fingerprints are all over this world,
we are not yet at your promised day.
So in addition to our gratitude, we also pray today for conviction.
Do not let us get comfortable with half-hearted seeking.
Do not let us grow numb to the suffering of this world.
Make us relentless in our pursuit of justice—
relentless in our consoling of the grieving,
in our welcoming of the stranger,
and in the feeding of the hungry.
Like a dog with a scent,
may we walk toward your kingdom,
never giving up, never wandering off the path.
And as we see and as we seek, pour out your Spirit on this ordinary bread and cup.
May this meal be the nourishment we need to continue seeking you in the world.
Until your promised day, we will pray.
Until your promised day, we will seek, saying:

PRAYER OF JESUS

Our Mother and Father
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power,
and the glory, forever and ever.
Amen.

BREAKING OF BREAD/POURING OF CUP

The Distribution

PRAYER FOLLOWING COMMUNION

God of manna and mustard seeds,
we came to this Table hungry
and we leave feeling full—
full of hope,
full of promise,
full of what could be.
For we not only found glimpses of you at this Table,
but we caught a glimpse of the way things could be:
in a meal where all are welcomed and all are fed.
Is there anything holier than that?
So thank you for nourishing our curiosity
alongside our spirit and our conviction.
May we always seek you the way you seek after us.
With grateful hearts we pray, Amen.

Sent by the Spirit

HYMN You Call Us Out

VU 569

- 1 You call us out to praise you,
the God who gave us birth,
to gather in communion,
and treasure your whole earth;
we are your living story,
to hear and to be heard;
we praise your name, who writes us,
the author and the word.

- 2 For varied hues and textures,
new patterns, still you search,
to weave your seamless garments,
the fabric of your church;
our tattered faith you cherish,
reclaim from wear and moth;
we praise your name, who twines us,
the weaver and the cloth.

- 3 The church that speaks forgiveness,
confesses its own need;
the church that feels its hunger,
finds grace to care and feed;
our famished world is crying,
its future filled with dread;
we praise your name, who fills us,
the baker and the bread.

- 4 The church that offers healing,
discerns its wounds and loss;
the church that faces dying,
shares life beyond the cross;
to people torn and broken,
your mercy is revealed;
we praise your name, who loves us,
the healer and the healed.

5 Our feeble voices struggle,
to sing your justice clear;
the world has sunk in silence,
each discord echoes fear;
one voice alone is ragged,
together we are strong;
we praise your name, who breathes us,
the singer and the song.

SENDING FORTH

As you leave this place,
when you meet anger, speak with love.
When you meet fear, speak with hope.
When you meet pain, speak with gentleness.
But no matter what, speak this good news.
For the good news of the gospel is:
love and justice for all.
It is joy that surprises,
and nonviolence that transforms.
The good news of the gospel is alive in the world,
so go forth speaking.
For if you won't, then who will?
Thanks be to God
for this good, good news.

SUNG AMEN

VU 969 (Kriewald)

MUSIC TO SEND US FORTH

End of Worship – Beginning of Service

MUSICAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Used with permission, All rights reserved. Re-printed under ONE LICENSE A-722049

We welcome you and thank you for joining us this morning.

A special thank you to Liz Elton and Stephen Brooks for sharing their talents with us.

Please join us in Fraser Hall following the service for coffee and fellowship.

Today's Instrumental Music

- ♪ "Juliet's Waltz" was composed in 2025 by Grant Horsley (b. 1959), a UK-based composer, ballet accompanist, teacher and classical/jazz/rock performer. The song is named after Juliet from Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet.
- ♪ "My Song Is Love Unknown" is an arrangement by Dale Wood (1934-2003), California-based composer, teacher and editor, of the traditional Welsh hymn tune "Rhosymedre," written by Rev. J. D. Edwards in 1840.
- ♪ Today's communion-themed anthem is a 1982 hymn by Minneapolis-based Marty Haugen, an influential hymn writer who has worked in the Lutheran, Roman Catholic, and United Church of Christ denominations.



Notice of Annual Congregational Meeting - March 1, 2026

This year, the ACM will be combined with our Sunday Worship Service in order to invite the Spirit more directly into the essential "business" of the church. The service will be available on zoom, rather than the usual live streaming platform.

All are welcome as we report on our programs and finances for 2025, confirm our Council leadership team for 2026 and review and approve our budgets for 2026. Please note that arrangements have been made for Children's Church to be available from the start of the service. We will celebrate together after the service by sharing a potluck lunch.

If we have your e-mail on our distribution list, you will likely have a copy of the handouts already. If not, there are copies in the Narthex or send Jennifer an e-mail and she will send you the handouts electronically.

March 1st Luncheon

Following the meeting, we welcome the congregation to enjoy a potluck lunch in Fraser Hall. Please join us and if able to bring food here is the recommendation. Be sure to label your dishes with your name. And remember no nut products please.

If your surname begins with the letters:

- A to M - please bring a side dish/appetizer/salad/or bread
- N to Z - please bring a main dish (crock pot items welcome, and if something needs to be heated in the oven provide directions)
- Choir - desserts

**Board of Trustees nominations
for consideration at the March 1, 2026 Annual Congregational Meeting**

In accordance with the provisions of the United Church of Canada Manual, Glebe-St James Council is making the following nominations to the Glebe-St James Board of Trustees for consideration at the 2026 Annual Congregational Meeting.

- That Margaret Torrance be reappointed as a member of the Board of Trustees for a one-year term ending at the 2027 Annual Congregational Meeting
- That Dudleigh Coyle, Jennifer Johnson and Jim Louter be re-appointed as members of the Board of Trustees for a 5-year term ending at the 2031 Annual Congregational Meeting
- That Louise Archer be appointed as a member of the Board of Trustees for a 5-year term ending at the 2031 Annual Congregational Meeting

Holy Week Services

March 29th: Palm Sunday

April 2nd: Maundy Thursday (service at 7 pm)

April 3rd: Good Friday (service at 10:30 am)

April 4th: Easter Sunday

Our Ministry Team...

Coordinating Minister: Rev. Dr. Teresa Burnett-Cole, ex 24; revtbc.gsj@gmail.com

Children's Church Leader: Kayla Cseh, ex 22; childrenschurch.gsj@gmail.com

Minister of Music: Paul Grose, ex 25; min.music.gsj@gmail.com

Accounts: Lori Stinson, ex 23; accts.glebestjames@gmail.com

Church Administrator: Jennifer Reid, ex 21; admin@glebestjames.ca

**Glebe-St. James United Church
650 Lyon St. S., Ottawa, ON K1S 3Z7**

admin@glebestjames.ca

www.glebestjames.ca

613-236-0617, x 21