

Glebe-St. James United Church

Season of Creation 2

Sept. 20, 2026

Please note: the livestream camera only captures the chairs at the front of the church. Sitting in the pews or at the back will keep you off camera. During the theme conversation, only the backs of children's heads are shown. – The Worship Team

Gathered by God

Preparing Our Hearts for Worship

“Halle, Halle, Halle”

Caribbean Traditional;
Setting by John A. Behnke

Welcome

Susan Palmai

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 Ottawa on Sunday, September 20th.

My name is Susan Palmai and I'm a member of the Outreach Committee.

We're so glad you're here today. Whether you're a first-time visitor or a longtime member, whether you are joining us in person or online, you are welcome and we hope you feel at home.

We are an Affirming Community of Faith in the United Church of Canada - a place of faith, love and community. We are committed to creating a safe and inclusive environment where people of all ages, backgrounds, and identities feel loved and supported.

This means you are welcome here just as you are: no explanations, no needing to change yourself. **You** are welcome here – with all the complexities of who you are and where you've been. **You** are a beloved child of God and we thank you for joining us today.

Announcements

Pulpit Exchange – A special welcome today to Rev. Dr. Bob Fillier of Parkdale United Church who is leading our worship this morning. In case you're wondering, Rev. Dr. Teresa is visiting Parkdale today.

Patchwork Pilgrimage Retreat – The women's retreat will be happening at Gracefield Christian Retreat from September 25-27th.

Men & Friends' – will be having their Potluck Dinner on September 30th, 5:30pm

Lunch & Learn with Tom Sherwood – will be happening on October 4th at 12 Noon, following worship. More information to follow.

Jeff Bird plays Hildegard von Bingen – Mark this concert in your calendar for October 24th. This ethereal performance is not to be missed.

Land Acknowledgement

Edith Gardell

Land Acknowledgements call us to reflect on our relationship with the indigenous Peoples. Over 7 generations settlers took their land and confined them to small reservations; destroyed their thriving communities, took their children from their families and cultures and placed them into Residential Schools with foreign educational and belief systems, with uncounted losses of lives.

I read the invitation to the 40-year commemoration of the Sudbury Apology of the UCC to Canada's Indigenous Peoples in the Regional UC Newsletter this August with the announcement of the Keynote address by The Very Rev Stan NacKay, our First Indigenous Moderator. During the ceremony at the Apology Cairn, what would he say about our relationship with the Indigenous Peoples?

As a delegate at the Montreal-Ottawa Conference in 1986 I recall the long discussions following the UCC Apology. In 1988 the All-Native Circle Conference replied: They acknowledged the receipt of the document. They had heard and understood its words. However, they did not accept the Apology. The UCC was instead encouraged to put actions behind the words of the apology to demonstrate the change in the Church's attitude. "...We only ask of

you to respect our Sacred Fire, the Creation and to live in peaceful coexistence with us...'I recall the shock, sadness of the delegates and their fear of insurmountable reparation duties for the harm done to Indigenous children in schools run by the UCC.

However, since then our Church created the Healing Fund, participated in the Government Apology, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the 94 Calls for Action and with atonement, active engagement and solidarity with Indigenous justice and antiracism.

As I could not attend the historic speech of The Very Rev, Stan MacKay, I wrote to the organizers and asked whether there was any documentation. They sent a friendly reply and stated that the event was very meaningful and a documentary is in the works and will be widely distributed in the Church for information and study.

I will take another 7 generations to ease or maybe heal some of the wounds. In the meantime, the Canadian Shield Regional Council asks: 'What are you going to do about it?'

The Apology to First Nations Peoples | Canadian Shield

Candle Lighting Our Tears, Falling Down Like Rain

TLUS 89

Our tears, falling down like rain to the ground
will water seeds of change.
Kyrie, kyrie, kyrie, kyrie, kyrie eleison.

Call to Worship

God is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

We come to worship the God whose compassion is wider than our own.

God calls us to see beyond the boundaries we have drawn.

Open our eyes to those we have overlooked.

God calls us to care for one another and for all creation.

Make our hearts larger, our welcome wider, and our compassion deeper.

Come, let us worship the God whose love has room for everyone.

Refrain:

**My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord*,
thirsting for you, my God
My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord*,
thirsting for you, my God
thirsting for you, my God.**

- 1. O God you are my God,
and I will always praise you.
In the shadow of your wings
I cling to you and you hold me high**
- 2. Through the day you walk with me,
all the night your love surrounds me.
To the glory of your name I lift my hands,
I sing your praise.**
- 3. I will never be afraid,
for I will not be abandoned.
Even when the road grows long and weary
your love will rescue me.**

Opening Prayer

Loving and compassionate God,

we come before you with hearts that are sometimes generous
and sometimes guarded;
hearts that readily embrace some people
while struggling to make room for others.

Like Jonah,
we can be certain that we know who deserves your love,
your mercy, and your concern.

Remind us today that your compassion is greater than our categories.

Help us to see beyond the boundaries we have created.
Help us to listen to stories that challenge us.
Help us to recognize the humanity of those we do not understand.

Give us courage to face the truth,
humility to acknowledge where we have caused harm,
and patience for the long work of reconciliation.

May your love enlarge our hearts
until our concern reaches beyond ourselves
and embraces our neighbours,
our communities,
and the whole of your creation.

Amen.

Prayer for Healing

God of mercy,
we confess that sometimes our circles are too small.
We care deeply about what affects us
but fail to notice the struggles of others.

We are quick to judge and slow to listen.

We want healing and forgiveness for ourselves
but sometimes hesitate to offer it to others.

We can desire justice without always making room for transformation.

We confess the ways we have been comfortable
when we should have been courageous;
silent when we should have listened;
certain when we should have been humble.

Where we have ignored the stories of others, open our ears.

Where we have contributed to harm,
give us courage to acknowledge it.

Where we have resisted change, give us willingness to grow.

And where our hearts have become small, make them larger.

**We pray not simply to feel forgiven and whole,
but to become people who live differently. Amen.**

Assurance of God's Love

Family of Faith, hear this good news:
God's compassion is wider than our failures.
God does not give up on Jonah.
God does not give up on Nineveh.
And God does not give up on us.

When we turn toward truth,
when we seek to repair what has been broken,
when we choose compassion over indifference,
God meets us with grace.
We are forgiven.
We are made whole once again.
And we are called to extend that grace into the world.

Thanks be to God.

Sign of Peace

Hymn May the Peace of God Be Your Peace

MV 222

**May the peace of God be your peace.
May the love of God be the love you show.
May the joy of God be the joy you know,
and may the world that God would see be found in you.**

Listening for Wisdom

Theme Conversation

Jonah, the Plant, and God's Big Love

Leader:

Come and sit with me. I have a story to tell you about a man named Jonah.

Can you say, "Jonah"?

Children: Jonah!

Leader:

Jonah went to a big city called Nineveh.

Jonah told the people:

“God wants you to stop hurting people and start being kind.”

And the people listened!

They said,

“Okay! We will try to do better.”

God saw that they were changing.

And God was kind to them.

But Jonah was not happy.

Can you make a sad face?

Children make sad faces.

Can you make an angry face?

Children make angry faces.

Jonah was angry because God was kind to the people of Nineveh.

Jonah thought:

“God should not be kind to them!”

But God said:

“Jonah, I care about them.”

Now something funny happened.

Jonah sat outside the city.

It was HOT!

Let's pretend it is very hot.

Everybody fan your face.

Children fan themselves.

“Whew! It's hot!”

Then God gave Jonah a big plant to give him shade.

Let's make a big plant!

Stretch your arms up like branches.

Children stretch arms up.

Ahhhh!

Jonah had shade.

Jonah was happy.

Can you make a happy face?

Pause.

But then...
A little worm came.
Wiggle one finger like a tiny worm.
The worm ate the plant.
And the plant went away!
Jonah didn't have any shade anymore.
Oh no!
Jonah was angry again.
Can you make your angry face?

What Did Jonah Care About?
God asked Jonah:
"Jonah, why are you so upset about the plant?"
And then God said something very important:
"You care about the plant.
And I care about the people."
Jonah cared about his plant.
God cared about the people of Nineveh.
God said:
"I love them too."
God wanted Jonah to learn that God's love is for everyone.
Let's Make God's Circle
Let's make a tiny circle with our hands.
This is Jonah's little circle.
Now let's make it bigger.
Bigger!
Bigger!
Really big!
God's circle of love is very, very big.
God loves you.
Point gently toward children.
God loves me.
God loves your family.
God loves your friends.
God loves people who are different from us.
God loves people far away.

God loves everyone.

And God asks us to care about one another too.

Our Action

Let's practice.

Put your hands on your heart and say:

"God cares."

Now stretch your arms way out and say:

"We care!"

Let's do it together.

God cares!

Hands on heart.

We care!

Arms wide.

Again!

God cares!

We care!

Wonderful!

So when we see someone who needs help—
we can care.

When we see someone who is lonely—
we can care.

When we meet someone who is different from us—
we can care.

Because God's love is big enough for everyone.

Repeat-After-Me Prayer

Let's put our hands on our hearts.

Loving God,

Thank you for loving us.

Thank you for loving everyone.

Help us to be kind.

Help us to care.

And help us make our circle of love bigger and bigger.

Amen.

**Little by little by little.
Little by little by little.
Little by little by little I know,
The tiniest seed will grow.**

**Watered by peace and justice,
watered by peace and justice,
watered by peace and justice:
tools to change our world.**

**Little by little by little.
Little by little by little.
Little by little by little I know,
The tiniest seed will grow.**

Prayer for Wisdom

Be with us, Loving Spirit,
inspire our hearts as we lean into Scripture,
that we might understand
in a new and fresh way,
your Word of Life. Amen.

Scripture Jonah 3:10-4:11

Brad Munro

When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it.

But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the Lord and said, “O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live”. And the Lord said, “Is it right for you to be

angry?” Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

The Lord God appointed a bush and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort, so Jonah was very happy about the bush. But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, “It is better for me to die than to live.” But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?” And he said, “Yes, angry enough to die.” Then the Lord said, “You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labour and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also many animals?”

This is wisdom from our ancestors in faith.

Gift of Music

“Hands Across the Universe”

David N. Childs

Let us all sing a simple song, let us all sing a song;
A song of peace, a song of hope, and a song of unity.
Let us all sing a simple song, let us all sing a song;
A song of peace, a song of hope, and a song of unity.

May our song of joy reach across the universe;
May it touch upon the hearts of people in the world.
May our song of joy reach across the universe;
May it touch upon the hearts of people in the world

Let us all sing a simple song, let us all sing a song;
A song of peace, a song of hope, and a song of unity.
Let us all sing a simple song, let us all sing a song;
A song of peace, a song of hope, and a song of unity.

May our hands and our voices reach out to those who need it most,
May our song of peace be heard by those who are not at peace.
May our hands and our voices reach out to those who need it most,
May our song of peace be heard by those who are not at peace;
Not at peace, at peace, not at peace, at peace, peace.

Let us all sing a simple song, let us all sing a song;
A song of peace, a song of hope, and a song of unity.
Let us all sing a simple song, let us all sing a song;
A song of peace, a song of hope, and a song of unity.
A song of unity.

Reflection Faithline

Rev. Dr. Bob Fillier

Responding in Thanksgiving

Hymn I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me

VU 575

- 1 I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!**
- 2 I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!**
- 3 I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!**
- 4 I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!**

Invitation to Give

One of the ways we demonstrate our courage is in responding through our collection. To say we are a community that supports flourishing life, means we must create space in our community for difference, for healing, for generosity. The ushers may now come forward to collect our tithes and offerings. Thank you.

Offering Hymn Who Will Speak A Word of Warning (*Verse 1*)

TLUS 130

**Who will speak a word of warning to a world whose wealth expands,
as the growing wealth is gathered into ever fewer hands?
Christ, you speak a word of warning for the church to know and tell:
greed is death and life is giving; hands that give receive as well.**

Offering Prayer

Generous God,
you have given us more than we can measure:
life and breath,
community and friendship,
food and shelter,
beauty and belonging.
Receive these gifts we offer today.
May they become signs of your expansive love—
supporting those who need care,
strengthening our community,
working for justice,
and helping us participate in the healing of our world.
Teach us to hold what we have lightly
and to share it generously.
May our giving help make your circle of compassion wider.
Amen.

**Give peace to ev'ry heart.
Give peace to ev'ry heart.
Give peace, God. Give peace, God.**

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.**

Sent by the Spirit

- 1. We cannot own the sunlit sky,
the moon, the wildflow'rs growing,
for we are part of all that is
within life's river flowing.
With open hands receive and share
the gifts of God's creation,
that all may have abundant life
in ev'ry earthly nation.**

2. When bodies shiver in the night
and weary, wait for morning,
when children have no bread but tears,
and warhorns sound their warning,
God calls humanity to wake,
to join in common labour,
that all may have abundant life
in oneness with their neighbour.
3. God calls humanity to join
as partners in creating
a future free from want or fear,
life's goodness celebrating,
that new world beckons from afar,
invites our shared endeavour,
that all may have abundant life
and peace endure forever.

Sending Forth

Go now with hearts a little larger.
Listen deeply.
Care generously.
Speak truthfully.
And wherever there is harm,
look for the possibility of healing and transformation.
May the God of Jonah and Nineveh
enlarge your heart.
May you have courage to face the truth,
humility to listen,
patience to seek reconciliation,
and compassion for all God's people.
And may you discover, again and again,
that God's love is wider than any circle we can draw.
Go in peace. Go with us, God of creation, as we sing:

Sung Amen

VU 968

Music for the Journey

"Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven"

(LAUDA ANIMA)
setting by Don Hustad

End of Worship | Beginning of Service

Welcome to Glebe-St. James United Church.
Thank you for joining with us for our morning worship.
A special welcome to Rev. Dr. Bob Fillier

Please join us in Fraser Hall, following the service
for a time of fellowship and refreshments.

Musical Acknowledgements

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This week @ Glebe-St. James United

Today: WIG & Labyrinth
Monday crafts at Judy Wolanskis (1 pm)
Tuesday Nattering Knitters (1:30 pm)
Wednesday (23rd) Men & Friends, come at 5:30, supper at 6
Saturday (26th) Celebration of Life: David Barbour

Walk for the Centre happens on October 4th (centretownchurches.org)

Eleven years ago, Centretown Churches Social Action Committee started a small walkathon to raise much-needed funds for the Centretown Community Food Centre. Each year, the walk has grown in size and in participation to become a beloved community event.

October 4th is also our Lunch & Learn with Tom Sherwood but for those who would like to make a donation or prefer to walk, please check out the link below or speak with Margo Williams.

[Glebe-St.James United Church walkers](#)

Glebe-St. James United Church

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