

The Glebe-St. James United Church

Second Sunday in the Season of Creation

September 14, 2025

Gathered by God

PREPARING OUR HEARTS FOR WORSHIP

Fuga in C major

D. Buxtehude

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Elizabeth Elton

In the name of the Holy Mystery,
who is Wholly Love we welcome one and all who gather here, and online with us this morning.
May our hearts, mind and souls be filled and shared, according to the will of the Holy Spirit
and may we gratefully receive and share this blessing. Amen

My name is Liz Elton and...

Whether you are a regular or a newcomer, a visitor or worshipping from home, we welcome you. Friends, note who is seated near you and extend our hospitality. Green cards are available near the entrances and during coffee hour. If you want more information about Glebe-St. James, fill one out and pass it into the office.

Glebe-St. James is an Affirming Community of Faith in the United Church of Canada. Everyone and their gender, race, ethnicity, abilities, sexual orientation, or religious affiliation, or story is welcome and celebrated in our worship. If you don't experience being welcome, please let us know, and we'll do better!

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 the website - the QR code, on the back of the pews, will take you to the website.

A reminder, GSJ saints, er, volunteers are needed to lead the welcome, share the land acknowledgement, read scripture, prepare the coffee time, and work on Audio Visual.

Photo Directory

For those who are interested, Universal Portraits will be here at Glebe-St. James on October 7, 8, and 9th to take photos for inclusion in our new Photo Directory.

And now, let us remember the holy land upon which this Sanctuary stands.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Andy Hamilton

Ah, yes - fall is upon us once again, in all its splendid colours!

It is at this time of year that we can most deeply agree with our Native peoples that - living as we do, on the unceded, unsundered lands of the Anishnaabe people - is more than just a convenience; it is a precious place that deserves our best and most thankful care, and an opportunity to find a way to truly share what it has to offer - in spiritual as well as material riches.

We are indeed blessed, both outside and inside this building, now that Teresa is back again!

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE I Am Sending You Light

TLUS 99, *chorus only*

I am sending you light to heal you, to hold you.

I am sending you light to hold you in love.

I am sending you light to heal you to hold you.

I am sending you light to hold you in love.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Our hearts ponder the beauty of God's majesty!

It's a poem of love for Creation.

Our pens are ready to write, our brushes are ready to paint

the wonders of God's work!

The firmament displays the sea and sky –

proclaiming the majesty of God's presence.

A God of awe and wonder is worthy of all praise!

May the Creator God come bless our hearts,

That we may show compassion, love, and care –

for all good gifts made for God's pleasure and our delight!

May we be humble, respectful, and grateful

for Creation and for a God who keep creating.

HYMN I Come with Joy

VU 477

I come with joy, a child of God,

forgiven, loved and free,

the life of Jesus to recall

in love laid down for me,

in love laid down for me.

I come with Christians far and near
to find, as all are fed,
the new community of love
in Christ's communion bread,
in Christ's communion bread.

As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share,
each proud division ends.
The love that made us, makes us one,
and strangers now are friends,
and strangers now are friends.

The Spirit of the risen Christ,
unseen, but ever near,
is in such friendship better known,
alive among us here,
alive among us here.

Together met, together bound
by all that God has done,
we'll go with joy, to give the world
the love that makes us one,
the love that makes us one.

OPENING PRAYER

Creator God,

Because of your abundant love
you chose to bring light and order into the formless void,
to create a world of unsurpassed beauty
and you saw that it was good.

We ask that you continue to recreate the world
with that same attentive love,
to bring light into today's ever increasing chaos and darkness
where we have failed to be stewards and care-ers of your creation.

Replenish our hearts
so that we too can renew the face of the earth. Amen

INVITATION TO HEALING

Every being seeks to be whole; seeks to be complete,
this is the longing behind the prayer for healing, please pray with me:

PRAYER FOR HEALING

O Great Source of Love,
we long to share your love with the world,
But sometimes we forget that your love is for
everyone, even for those who have wounded us.
O God, forgive us when we forget.

O Great Creator,
We experience all that is around us in Creation
And are blessed by beauty, but sometimes we
Forget to be good stewards of the earth.
O God, forgive us when we forget.

Eternal Spirit,
We want to follow the way of Jesus, but sometimes
We forget to pay attention to your presence,
And our actions may not reflect our best selves.
O God, forgive us when we forget.

In silence, we think of times that we have
forgotten these things.
(*silent prayer*)

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE

Friends, receive this good news:
The God who loved us into being loves us still and will always
love us, even when we forget about God or God's creation.
We are loved and we are forgiven,
Through God's grace! Thanks be to God!

SIGN OF PEACE

One of the hallmarks of faithful living is concern for others –
we pray for better conditions for people here and in war zones.
We seek to build peace in our homes and workplaces,

and on the national and international stages.
It is in remembering this sacred duty that I say to you:

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

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

Listening for Wisdom

THEME CONVERSATION Taking Care of the World

Imagine a land filled with elephants, chimpanzees, gorillas, hippos, leopards, lions, and hundreds of other animals. Over 1,000 species of birds flutter through the air, and over 10,000 different tropical plants grow here. The land is rich with rubber, timber, copper, diamonds, tin, and gold. And over 75 million people call this area home. What is this amazing place? The Congo Basin in Africa.

The Congo Basin is the area of land surrounding the Congo River, which is the world's deepest river. At 220 metres deep, you could stack two Parliament Peace Towers on top of each other and still be underwater! The river is 4,700 kilometres long and crosses the equator twice. All that water so close to the hot, hot, hot temperatures of the equator creates the perfect environment for the world's second largest rainforest (The Amazon rainforest holds the number-one spot).

But the Congo Basin is in danger. Poachers are killing too many animals, the rainforest is being cut down, and the frequent wars aren't helping anyone.

God told us to take care of the Earth – even those parts halfway around the world (Genesis 2:15). How can you help the Congo? One way has to do with the food grown in and near rainforests – foods like bananas and cocoa. Ask your parents to look for foods that are sustainably grown. That means the farming doesn't hurt the forests. Little things can make a big difference when you work with those around you and with God to make the world a cleaner, happier place.

PRAYER FOR INSIGHT

Wise and Knowing God, Through you, all things are known:
from the mysteries of the world
to the stories we share with each other,
your wisdom illuminates our world.

**Through you, we learn more and more:
we study and we teach each other
so that we can all grow together
to better understand your Creation.**

Through you, we find wisdom:
hidden in parable and fable,
in the experiences of our elders
and in the innocence of our children.

**Wise and knowing God,
fill us with your knowledge and love
so that we may cross the earth
sharing it with each other. Amen.**

GIFT OF MUSIC

With a voice of singing

Martin Shaw

With a voice of singing declare ye this, and let it be heard, Alleluia!

Utter it even unto the ends of the earth.
The Lord hath delivered His people, Alleluia!
O be joyful in God, all ye lands.
O sing praises to the honor of His name,
make His praise to be glorious.

With a voice of singing, declare ye this, and let it be heard, Alleluia!

The tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law were whispering among themselves. They said, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

Then Jesus told them a story. He said, "Suppose one of you has 100 sheep and loses one of them. Won't he leave the 99 in the open country? Won't he go and look for the one lost sheep until he finds it? When he finds it, he will joyfully put it on his shoulders and go home. Then he will call his friends and neighbours together. He will say, 'Be joyful with me. I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you, it will be the same in heaven. There will be great joy when one sinner turns away from sin. Yes, there will be more joy than for 99 godly people who do not need to turn away from their sins.

"Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Won't she light a lamp and sweep the house? Won't she search carefully until she finds the coin? And when she finds it, she will call her friends and neighbours together. She will say, 'Be joyful with me. I have found my lost coin.' I tell you, it is the same in heaven. There is joy in heaven over one sinner who turns away from sin."

This is wisdom from our ancestors in faith.

REFLECTION Rejoice in the Task of the Finding

Rev. Dr. Teresa Burnett-Cole

In these parables, we almost always look at the lost sheep or the lost coin. We imagine ourselves as the one lost and Jesus leaving all the others to find us. Or perhaps we imagine ourselves as part of the obedient flock, the ones who stay put. Sometimes we might even imagine we can point a finger at the wayward sheep – able to see exactly who the troublemaker is, sure that we know who Jesus is needing to run after. This time, though, consider a different part of the parable: Jesus phrases the question to his followers as a no-brainer – as obvious – but let's take a minute to actually look at what he's asking.

"Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it?" Ummm... me? Me, Jesus. I don't do that. Do you? Think of what Jesus is actually saying: He suggests it's clear that any one of us would leave our ninety-nine happy, healthy, obedient sheep – in the wilderness, no less – to go after the one who was probably always a pain in our backside anyway.

Honestly, would we even notice that one went missing?

His next question is similar: “What woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it?” Now, I’m not sure why this one is specific to women – but again, we all might answer, “Me.” We would probably not search the house for one missing coin.

Now, there’s much to be said for having an abundance mindset, for looking at the things we do have and feeling gratitude for the many ways God has blessed us. That is one part of stewardship – a very important part. But today’s parable asks us about the other part of stewardship: What do we have responsibility for, and how do we take care of what we have?

Jesus presumes that we would leave nine good coins or ninety-nine good sheep to look for the one that has been lost. And yet, do we?

Sometimes, our abundance mindset leads us to believe that we should leave well enough alone. And, at times, there is wisdom in that. But here, Jesus is giving us a very different message – one that says every single individual is important.

It’s not enough to have a church with an Average Sunday Attendance of ninety-nine. Where is the one missing? Go out and find them! Without that one (or those ones), our congregation is not complete.

It’s not enough to have a loose idea of where you spend your money each month. Track it and find out if coins are going missing. If you’re missing money you should have or getting double-charged for something, go find that missing piece!

The place where this strikes home perhaps even more viscerally is in our care for creation. There are so many species we have lost to extinction – feathered beings, furred beings, plant beings, whole species wiped out due to climate change or loss of environment. And we can become callous to it, numb to the disappearance of these beautiful beings.

Jesus is pointing us toward something really important, something we ourselves have lost. He is pointing us toward **joy**. When we don’t look for the lost thing, or maybe don’t even realize something has been lost, we lose a chance to rejoice in the finding. When we leave well enough alone, we don’t just deprive the herd of their missing friend; we deprive ourselves as well.

In both parables, the one who is lost is searched after because it’s understood how important that missing piece is. It’s understood that the flock isn’t the same without the one, and that each coin is needed and important. Often, the importance of an individual – the importance of one – is overlooked. We imagine that we’ll get along fine with one missing, or that another will come to fill its place. But Jesus isn’t like us in this way. He loves with a specificity that doesn’t accept substitutions. Jesus loves you, individually. And her. And him. And each one of us.

And that love is what brings him to seek us out, each one. He calls us into loving one another such that we might do the same: seeking out that which is lost until it is found again and brought back. In both of these parables, when those who are lost are found, there is a huge celebration. The one who finds his missing sheep “calls together his friends and neighbours, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’” Likewise, the woman who finds the missing coin “calls together her friends and neighbours, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’” There is a huge communal aspect to these stories and to this celebration – it’s not a “finders-keepers, losers-weepers” situation. Instead, this is a joy that grows through sharing. The joy of the finder is multiplied by the community that shares in the celebration.

This pointing us to joy, then, is not only something we are doing individually but something we are doing together. Our joy is not just for us, but for our whole community to join.

These days, joy can feel hard to come by. And so, the celebration and rejoicing that we can partake of and share with one another takes on an even greater importance. We celebrate and rejoice as a form of resistance, as a form of praise, as a living prayer. Our joy doesn’t belong to us alone, but to our whole community – to our friends and neighbours, as much as us.

This morning, we are invited to again consider these well-worn, well-loved parables. We are invited to see ourselves as the finders – to remember the joy of finding that which is lost, and to remember the joy of sharing our delights with our neighbours. Perhaps we are neither lost nor found, but reminded of the importance of the finding. And hopefully, we are reminded of God’s joy. Amen.

Responding at Table

HYMN Jesus Came Bringing Us Hope

MV 33

Jesus came bringing us hope,
Jesus came bringing us hope,
Jesus came bringing us hope,
hallelujah forever more!

Jesus came bringing us joy,
Jesus came bringing us joy,
Jesus came bringing us joy,
Hallelujah forever more!

Jesus came bringing us peace,
Jesus came bringing us peace,
Jesus came bringing us peace,
Hallelujah forever more!

INVITATION TO GIVE

We are thankful for all we have in our lives.
Let us be a blessing for others, as you have been for us.
Our offering will now be received.

OFFERING HYMN Grant, O God, The Grace

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

Holy One, you have called us friends and named us partners in your work of Creation. Accept the gifts we bring and bless them for your use, that they may reveal to others the depth of your love for all people and for Creation itself. Amen.

Communion

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Creator is here.
God's Spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to God.

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

You are worthy of our thanks and praise,
God, Creator of Life,
For by the breath of your mouth

You have spoken your word,
And all things have come into being.

You fashioned us in your image
And placed us in the garden of your delight
To tend and keep your creation.
Though we chose a path that led away from you
You did not abandon your people nor your world.

In the sign of the rainbow you drew all creatures into your covenant of grace.
In choosing a people for yourself you placed them in a land of plenty,
And furnished them with laws and prophets to guide them
In seeking your reign of justice, mercy and peace.

As we watch for the signs of your kingdom on earth,
We echo the song of the angels in heaven,
Evermore praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Lord God, you are the most holy one.
Enthroned in splendour and light,
Yet in the coming of your son Jesus Christ,
You reveal the power of your love
Made perfect in human weakness,
Amen. Creator, we believe.

Embracing our createdness,
Jesus showed the way of salvation;
Loving to the end,
He gave himself to death for us and for all the world
Dying for all that he had made,
He set us free from snares of sin,
And released creation from its bondage to decay.
Amen. Creator, we believe.

On the night before he died
He took bread and gave you thanks,
He broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
Do this in remembrance of me."

Amen. Creator, we believe.

In the same way, after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks;
He gave it to them, saying:
"Drink this, all of you, this is my blood of the new covenant
Which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Amen. Creator, we believe.

Therefore, Creator, with this bread and this cup
We celebrate the cross on which he died to set us free.
Defying death he rose again
And is alive with you to plead for us and all the world.

Amen, Creator, we believe.

As we recall your sacrifice of redemption for us and all the earth,
Creator, by your Holy Spirit let these gifts of your Creation
Be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;
Form us into the likeness of Christ
And make us a perfect offering in your sight.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Look with favour on your people
And in your mercy hear the cry of our hearts.
Bless the earth,
Heal the sick,
Let the oppressed go free
And fill your Church with power from on high...

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Gather your people from the ends of the earth,
To feast with all your saints at the table in your kingdom;
Where the new creation is brought to perfection
In Jesus Christ our brother and Lord:
By whom, and with whom, and in whom,
In the unity of the Holy Spirit,

All honour and glory be yours, almighty God,
For ever and ever. **Amen.**

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 the Bread, Sharing the Cup

We break this bread to share in Christ's body,
broken for us and the world.
We drink this cup to share in Christ's mission,
dreamed of for us and the world.

Sharing Communion Together

Draw near, dear friends,
Receive these elements:
Eat and drink:

The body of Christ, broken for you and for all the world.
The lifeblood of Christ, shed for you and for all the world.

Sent by the Spirit

PRAYER FOLLOWING COMMUNION

Almighty God,
We thank you for feeding us at the banquet of your Son,
A foretaste of your new creation of peace and justice.
Though Jesus we offer you our souls and bodies
To be a living sacrifice.

Send us out into your world
In the power of your Spirit
To live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.

HYMN It's A Song of Praise to Our Maker

MV 30

**It's a song of praise to the Maker,
the thrush sings high in the tree.
It's a song of praise to the Maker,
the gray whale sings in the sea,**

Refrain:

**And by the Spirit
you and I can join our voice to the holy cry
and sing, sing, sing to the Maker too.**

**It's a call of life to the Giver
when waves and waterfalls roar.
It's a call of life to the Giver
when high tides break on the shore,**

**It's a hymn of love to the Lover;
the bumblebees hum along.
It's a hymn of love to the Lover;
the summer breeze joins the song,**

**It's the chorus of all creation;
it's sung by all living things.
It's the chorus of all creation;
a song the universe sings,**

SENDING FORTH

Go now with each breath, sharing the unending love of your Creator.
Know that the very mystery of the universe holds you
and molds you now and always.
Rely on that love to reveal itself in you,
in your hopes and dreams,
thoughts, feelings, and actions.
May we know that we are One with all of Creation,
tend to it and be tended to by it

for friends, we are never alone!
We go with God the Source of love,
Jesus, the Love in Human Love,
And the Holy Spirit, God's love and sustenance.

SUNG AMEN

Merritt in G

MUSIC TO SEND US FORTH

Toccata in e minor

Johann Pachelbel

Thank you to all who participated in today's service – you stand among the saints of GSJ!
Please join us in Fraser Hall following the service for coffee and fellowship.

End of Worship - Beginning of Service

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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...At Glebe-St. James

Monday Meditation, weekly at 8 pm on zoom

Council Meeting, September 17th – in-person in Fraser Hall

Women's Intergenerational Group, Sept 21st (Fraser Hall)

Come walk the Labryrith, Sept 21st, 3-5 pm (Fraser Hall)

Men & Friends' Potluck, Sept 24th, 5:30 (Art Room)

Quilting Retreat, September 26-28th, Gracefield

Check Mates – will resume September 30th, 10 am

Trustees Meeting, September 30th (Art Room)

Nattering Knitters – will resume October 7th, 1:30 pm

Photo Directory – photo dates

October 7, 8, and 9th

GSJ Goes Out to Dinner Fall Edition

Saturdays in October

Our Ministry Team...

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

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

Minister of Music: James Caswell, ex 25; music.gsj@gmail.com

Minister of Music Emeritus: Robert Palmai

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

613-236-0617, x 21

www.glebestjames.ca