

Glebe-St. James United Church

Third Sunday of Easter

Earth Sunday

April 19, 2026

Gathered by God

Preparing Our Hearts for Worship

When He Cometh

Welcome

David Cabbage

My name is David and I am a member of the choir.

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.

Announcements

Next week there will be a lunch and learn event on Palestine and his adversaries, And now, let's acknowledge the land on which our sanctuary stands.

Land Acknowledgement

Rev. Teresa

Good Morning! We are on the unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe territory. Today, Ottawa and the National Capital Region is a gathering place for First Nations, Inuit and Métis from across Canada and they contribute to our society and well-being.

When we lived on Christian Island, we were blessed to regularly attempt ceremonies with the traditional people who lived there. At one point we were invited to participate in the Water Walk. The challenge was to walk all around Georgian Bay beginning at Penetanguishene. A group of largely women walked carrying on Eagle Staff and a copper kettle of water. We prayed a blessing over the water to begin then prayed while walking the circumference of Georgian Bay.

Christian ministers were called to walk because there were places near Owen Sound that the walkers were afraid would stir up people...and not in a good way. So my Ministry student, Okwaho, our dog, and I walked with them for a couple of days to make sure they were safe. It was an amazing experience.

Candle Lighting We Light This Candle

TLUS 55

**We light this candle for hope.
Await the new life within.
May our hearts now live each day,
so hope can find a way, so hope can find a way.**

Call to Worship

Friends, where do you see God?

**We see God in the wide reach of sky,
in the towering height of mountains,
in the depths of the sea,
and in the vividness of flowers.**

Friends, where else do you see God?

**We see God in early morning sunrises,
in the quiet after a snow,
in the reaching of rivers and tributaries,
and in the stars that light the night.**

And in your seeing, what do you know?

**We know that God is here,
and we know that God is good.**

Let us worship the God of creation!

Let us worship our with-us God.

Opening Prayer

Our kin, the flora and fauna are calling,
The earth, the sea, and the sky join in,
Mother earth is hurting
they cry

We need you to act with us
they call
We need you to join us in the restoring Creation
So that our mother may flourish once more.
We need you, they plead.
Discerning God,
How do we faithfully respond to these calls?

[moment of silence]

What would you have us do?
How would you like us to act?
Guide us, we pray and lead us towards transformative actions.
Amen.

Hymn Called By Earth and Sky

MV 135

Refrain:

**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.**

*After last verse, repeat two times
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.**
- 2. Precious this gift, the air we breathe;
wind born and free.
Breath of the Spirit, blow through this place,
our gathering and our grace.**

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

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

Call to Healing

One of the things that is amazing about the Earth is that even after a fire, a flood, or an oil spill, new life always finds a way to grow.

Friends, God's grace is like that.

No matter the mistakes we make,
the mess we create,
or the harm we do,

God's love for us is unending.

Trusting in that good news, let us turn to the prayer of confession with confidence that even here, grace is in bloom.

Prayer for Healing

Creator God,

We have lost our way.

In the beginning, humanity was instructed to care for creation.

However, in pursuit of our own wealth and efficiency, we have done the opposite.

The oceans are heavy with plastic.

The ice caps are melting by the hour.

Animals and plants are treated as a means to an end.

Corporations fill the atmosphere with pollution.

Policies and practices are slow to change.

Forgive us, O God.

Bring us back to the garden.

Fill our hearts with compassion for your world.

**Show us where we can make a difference,
and help us to see your fingerprints in every glimpse of the natural world.**
With hope in our hearts for a better day, we pray.
Amen.

Assurance of God's Love

Friends, when it comes to creation care, we have a lot to confess.
But even here, even now, God's grace for us is like a mighty rushing stream.
So trusting in God's unrelenting mercy, may we be inspired to action.
Join me in proclaiming these words of forgiveness:

Just as flowers that bloom after the fire,
there is nothing that God cannot redeem.
We are known. We are loved. We are made new.
So may we roll up our sleeves and get our hands dirty
with the work of justice,
with the work of compassion,
with the work of mercy.
Thanks be to God for this new day!
Alleluia! Amen.

Sign of Peace

Family of faith, God's grace is good news.
God's grace is worth celebrating!
So in the spirit of joy and abundant gratitude,
we are going to celebrate this mercy by
passing the peace with our neighbours.

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

Hymn Send Your Peace to Our World

TLUS 135

**Send your peace to our world, God,
You, the creator of peace.
Our hearts fill with peace, God
You are the source of healing peace.**

Listening for Wisdom

Theme Conversation Water Walkers

Written by Carol Trembath
Illustrated by David W. Craig

Hymn Little By Little (*Verses 1 and 5*)

TLUS 134

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

**Habits of peace and justice.
Habits of peace and justice,
Habits of 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

Creator God,
You speak to us in a thousand different ways—
in the wind that rustles through the trees,
in early morning's birdsong,
and in the first blooms of spring.
Everywhere we look,
creation whispers of your creativity.
So as we turn our hearts toward scripture,
clear the distractions from our minds.
Silence in us any voice but your own,
so that like the birds, and the flowers,
and the mighty rushing wind,
we might sing of your goodness.

We are leaning in.
We are in awe.
We are listening. Amen.

Gospel Luke 24:13-35

April Yorke

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him." Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, "The

Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

This is wisdom from the gospel of John.

Gift of Music

Stay With Us

Ron Klusmeier

Stay with us through the night.
Stay with us through the pain.
Stay with us, blessed stranger
'til the morning breaks again.

Stay with us through the night.
Stay with us through the grief.
Stay with us, blessed stranger
'til the morning brings relief.

Stay with us through the night.
Stay with us through the dread.
Stay with us, blessed stranger
'til the morning breaks new bread.

Reflection Turning Back to What is Already Burning

Rev. Dr. Teresa Burnett-Cole

Two disciples are walking away.

That’s where this story begins—not in triumph, not in clarity, not in resurrection joy—but in quiet disappointment. They are leaving Jerusalem. Leaving the place where hope had flared... and, as far as they can tell, gone out.

They are walking toward Emmaus, about seven miles away. Not just a physical journey—but an emotional retreat. A slow withdrawal from everything they had believed might change the world.

And as they walk, they talk. They rehearse the story.

“We had hoped...” they say.

We had hoped.

That phrase carries so much weight, doesn't it?

Past tense. Hope that has cooled. Faith that feels... uncertain.
And it's right there—in that space—that Jesus comes near.
But they don't recognize him.

Now, isn't that something?

Jesus is right there. Walking with them. Listening. Even opening the scriptures to them.

And still—they do not see him.

Not yet.

Friends, I wonder how often that is true for us.

How often do we walk along—faithful, committed, even busy with church life—
and yet miss the quiet, living presence of Christ right beside us?

How often do we say, “We had hoped...”

instead of asking, “What is God already doing here?”

This is where Earth Day meets the road to Emmaus.

Because Earth Day invites us to notice.

To pay attention.

To recognize that God's creation is not something abandoned or finished—but
something alive, ongoing, unfolding.

Scripture tells us, from the very beginning, that God saw creation and called it good. Not just once—but again and again. And that goodness has never been revoked.

God is still at work in the world—
in the soil, in the water, in the fragile ecosystems, in the resilience of life pushing up through cracks in concrete.
And yet... like those disciples... we don't always recognize it.

We can become so absorbed in our routines—even our *church* routines—that we end up walking away from the very places where resurrection is happening.
We get busy maintaining what is familiar.
We focus on what is comfortable.
We talk about what *used to be*.
“We had hoped...”
And meanwhile—
God is already at work.

In the Emmaus story, recognition doesn't come through argument or explanation alone.

It comes at the table.
When Jesus takes bread, blesses it, breaks it, and gives it to them—
their eyes are opened.

And suddenly they realize:
“He was with us all along.”

And then they say something beautiful:
“Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road?”

Their hearts were already burning.

Even before they understood.

Even before they recognized him.

Something in them knew.

I think that's important for us—especially when we think about Earth Day.

Because sometimes we are tempted to wait for certainty before we act.
We wait until everything is clear, until we fully understand, until we feel completely ready.

But the disciples didn't have clarity at first.

A stirring.

A sense that something mattered.

That something was alive.

And maybe that's where God meets us today.

In the quiet burn of concern for the earth.

In the ache we feel when we see creation suffering.

In the joy we experience when we encounter beauty—trees budding, rivers flowing,
birds returning.

Those are not small things.

Those are signs of God's presence.

But here's the turning point of the story.

Once the disciples recognize Jesus, they have a choice.

They could stay in Emmaus.

They could say, "Well, that was a meaningful experience," and carry on.

But they don't.

They turn around.

That very hour, they get up and go back to Jerusalem.

Back to the place they had left.

Back to the community.

Back to where the work of God is unfolding.

They choose to *participate*.

And that, I think, is the question before us.

Will we keep walking the familiar road—
comfortable, contained, perhaps even faithful in appearance—
Or will we turn back toward the living, unfolding work of God?

Because God is already at work.

In creation—groaning, healing, renewing.

In communities—seeking justice, restoration, right relationship.

In small, often unnoticed ways—like seeds in the ground.

The question is not whether God is active.

The question is whether we will recognize it...

and whether we will turn toward it.

Earth Day is not just about awareness.

It is about turning.

Turning from habits that harm
toward practices that heal.

Turning from indifference
toward care.

Turning from seeing the earth as resource
to seeing it as sacred gift.

And yes, even in the church, we can sometimes walk in the opposite direction.

We can become so focused on preserving what has been
that we miss what God is doing now.

We can be so busy *doing church*

that we forget to *be the church*—alive, responsive, rooted in God's ongoing
creation.

But here is the good news:

Christ still comes alongside us.
Even when we are walking away.
Even when we don't recognize him.
Even when our hope feels like it belongs in the past tense.
He walks with us.
He speaks to us.
He kindles something within us.

And when we begin to notice—
when our eyes are opened, even just a little—
we are invited to turn.
To turn back to life.
To turn back to community.
To turn back to the work God is already doing.

So perhaps today, the question is simple:
Where is your heart burning?
What is stirring in you—about this earth, about your community, about the future
God is bringing into being?
And what might it look like—not just to notice it—
but to turn toward it?

Because resurrection is not behind us.
It is beside us.
Ahead of us.
Within us.
Alive in the world God still loves.

And when we recognize that—
even for a moment—
we may find ourselves, like those disciples,
getting up...
turning around...
and walking back into the very heart of God's unfolding work.

Responding in Thanksgiving

Hymn As We Walked Home at Close of Day

VU 184

- 1 As we walked home at close of day,
a stranger joined us on our way.
He heard us speak of one who'd gone,
and when we stopped, he carried on.**

- 2 'Why wander further without light?
Please stay with us this troubled night.
We've shared the truth of how we feel
and now would like to share a meal.'**

- 3 We sat to eat our simple spread,
then watched the stranger take the bread;
and, as he said the blessing prayer,
we knew that someone else was there.**

- 4 No stranger he; it was our eyes
which failed to see, in stranger's guise,
the Lord who, risen from the dead,
met us when ready to be fed.**

- 5 Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
As Mary and our sisters said,
the Lord is risen from the dead!**

Invitation to Give

Friends, we are east of Eden, which means we have work to do. So may we roll up our sleeves and live out our faith. May we live generously and give what we can. The ushers may now come forward to collect tithes and offerings. Thank you for being a community that gives together. Let us be generous now.

**What can I do? What can I bring?
What can I say? What can I sing?
I'll sing with joy, I'll say a prayer
I'll bring my love. I'll do my share.**

Offering Prayer

With our time, with our talents, with our treasures and with our trust,
We respond to the cries of Creation.
Bless our actions in this offering, and may they bare fruit beyond our imagining,
For the sake of your Creation.
Amen

**Send your peace on our world, God,
you, the creator of peace.
Our hearts fill with peace, God.
You are the source of healing peace.**

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

Hymn This is God's Wondrous World

VU 296

- 1 This is God's wondrous world,
and to my listening ears
 all nature sings, and round me rings
the music of the spheres.
This is God's wondrous world;
I rest me in the thought
 of rocks and trees, of skies and seas,
God's hand the wonders wrought.**

- 2 This is God's wondrous world:
the birds their carols raise;
 the morning light, the lily white,
declare their Maker's praise.
This is God's wondrous world:
God shines in all that's fair;
 in the rustling grass or mountain pass,
God's voice speaks everywhere.**

- 3 This is God's wondrous world:
O let me ne'er forget
 that though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the ruler yet.
This is God's wondrous world:
why should my heart be sad?
 Let voices sing, let the heavens ring:
God reigns, let earth be glad!**

Sending Forth

as you leave this place,
may your heart swell for the beauty of this Earth.
May it break for the suffering of creation.
May you burn with the conviction to do something about it,
and may you always be aware of the holy ground beneath your feet.

In the name of the Creator, the created, and the source of creativity:
Go in peace, and do the good that is yours to do.
But, as you go, go knowing that you are not alone for you go with...
God, the Source of Love,
Jesus, the Love Incarnate,
And the Holy Spirit, Love's Comfort and Power!
And so we sing...

Sung Amen

VU 974

Music to Send Us Forth

Postlude In G

End of Worship | Beginning of Service

Welcome to Glebe-St. James United Church.

Thank you for joining with us for our morning worship.

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

This week's Music

The organ prelude, "When He Cometh," is a setting by Gordon Young (1919-1998), an American composer and organist, of the traditional children's hymn on the tune JEWELS. The registration makes use of the somewhat uncommon French Horn stop to highlight the melody.

The choir anthem "Stay with Us" comes from an Easter cantata of the same name composed by Ron Klusmeier, a former music director at GSJ, with lyrics by Walter Farquharson, written in 1989 and based on the Emmaus Walk story from Luke 24.

The organ postlude, "Postlude in G," is by Henry Kihlken (1939-2017), a Lutheran organist and composer from Ohio.

Musical Acknowledgements

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April 26th

Guest Speaker: Iyas Salim Ab-Hajjar

Adjunct Professor at the College of Public and
Global Affairs (Carleton University)

Following the service, join us for a facilitated lunch and learn with Iyas Salim Abu-Hajjar and Diana Ralph (guest speaker on April 29th). Please bring your own lunch.

In preparation for the event, we encourage everyone to read and reflect on the "Principles for Justice Work in The United Church of Canada" found here:

https://unjppi.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/United-Church-principles-justice-work_oct2023.pdf

Glebe-St James Summer 2026 major roofing project update

The April 15, 2026 meeting of the Glebe-St James Council approved the contract proposed by Aquila Roofing to carry out a major roofing project in the Summer of 2026. This will include renovations on the Western end of the Sanctuary as well as smaller repairs at the Eastern end of the building. The work is expected to begin during the first week of July and to be completed by Labour Day – more information will be provided as the work progresses.

Council's decision was based on the generous support provided by members of the congregation and others, including parents from the Glebe Montessori School, that included substantial donations in the Spring of 2026 and pledges payable in 2027 and 2028.

We are awaiting official approval from EOORC in regards to our application for bridge funding. We expect to hear from them in the near future.

Thank you again to everyone who has helped to make this possible ... and watch this space!

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