

# The Glebe-St. James United Church

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

February 1, 2026

## Gathered by God

### PREPARING OUR HEARTS FOR WORSHIP

"Hymn Prelude on 'Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken' (Austria)"

### WELCOME

Jim Louter

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, January 25th.

My name is Jim Louter 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.

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.

### **It's a new year and we need volunteers.**

Our leadership team seeks thoughtful people who want to contribute to the future of this church. If you are interested, please connect with Pam Fitch at coffee hour. We also need coffee hosts, welcome readers, scripture readers and people to offer land acknowledgements during our services. If you have never tried any of these jobs but think you might like to help, talk with Pam or Liz Elton or check out the volunteering section on the website. And if you are concerned that you won't know what to do, we will make sure you get support and mentoring from our more experienced members.

Today we will have a Congregational Conversation here in the sanctuary, immediately following our worship service. As a follow-up to our November conversation, we will begin discussing the building and its importance to our spiritual life. Before the meeting starts, we'll gather for our usual coffee hour in Fraser Hall.

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

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Wendy Bergeron

Ottawa is built on the traditional, unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe Nation, with deep ties to the closest First Nation communities of Pikwàkanagàn and Kitigan Zibi. This land has been cared for and travelled across for thousands of years, especially along the Kichi Sibi, or Ottawa River. The name Ottawa itself comes from the Algonquin word *adawe*, meaning “to trade”—a reflection of the river’s long history as a meeting place and trade route. Today, the capital is home to a diverse and growing Indigenous population that includes First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people from across Turtle Island. It’s also a place where generations have gathered to speak truth, stand up for rights, and shape the path toward reconciliation.

If you are out and about, exploring what the city has to offer, you’ll find opportunities to engage with Indigenous cultures in meaningful ways. From festivals and food to artwork and ceremony, Indigenous presence is woven throughout the capital.

## LIGHTING OF CHRIST CANDLE

The season of Epiphany started with the Magi from a distant land following the star to the child Jesus. They were the first sign that Jesus was a gift for everyone.

**May we continue to seek Christ's enlightening spirit in the company of all people.**  
We gather in the light of Christ.

## CALL TO WORSHIP

In the season of Epiphany in Canada,  
**we are still in the depths of winter.**  
Cold, howling winds and long nights  
**may keep us inside, and we long for spring.**  
May this Christ light warm our hearts and light our way  
**So that we can be faithful disciples in this time. Amen.**

## OPENING PRAYER

Gracious and Loving God,  
We turn to your light as a beacon of hope in troubling times.  
We ask that you guide us along the way  
So that we may find the road ahead a little  
Easier to bear. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

**HYMN** Come Let Us Sing

VU 222

- 1 **Come, let us sing to the Lord our song,  
we have stood silently to long;  
surely the Lord deserves our praise,  
so joyfully thank God for our days.**
- 2 **O thirsty soul, come drink at the well;  
God's living waters will never fail.  
Surely the Lord will help you to stand,  
strengthened and comforted by God's hand.**
- 3 **You dwell among us and cause us to pray,  
and walk with each other following your way;  
our precious brothers and sisters will grow  
in the fulfilling love they know.**

4 Deserts shall bloom and mountains shall sing  
to the desire of all living things.  
Come, all you creatures, high and low,  
let your praises endlessly flow.

### CALL TO HEALING

Friends, every day we are given choices –  
the choice to be a friend, to be an ally, to extend a welcoming hand.  
Some days we choose wisely, but from time to time, we inevitably get it wrong.

That is one of the many reasons we need the Prayer for Healing.  
In this moment of prayer, we can practice the art of forgiving ourselves and others,  
and being forgiven by one greater than ourselves.  
So, join me in this transformative moment.  
Join me in receiving grace. Let us pray.

### PRAYER FOR HEALING

Holy Love, You have created us to be reflections  
of you in our own wonderful uniqueness.  
You have created us to love without any other agenda,  
and yet sometimes we fail to do so.  
Sometimes we turn away from another in fear or judgment.  
We want to be accepted; we want to be one of the crowd.  
You gently call us back to you, teaching us not to be afraid.  
teaching us all a part of your creation and beloved by you.  
May we be people of integrity and grace, acting from mercy and truth.  
May we be people of courage even when we are afraid.  
May we be filled with the Spirit of life, truth, and compassion,  
reflecting your love and mercy always, Amen.

### ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE

Christ continues to lay down his life for us,  
so that we might have life.  
Christ continues to show us the way,  
so that we might live into the truth and the life.  
Christ continues to love us,  
so that we might love God and love our neighbours as ourselves.  
Know that you are healed, loved, and given new life. Amen.

## **SIGN OF PEACE**

One of the ways we are recognized as followers of the Way of Christ, is by the light and love we share with one another.  
It is in remembering this light and love that I say to you:

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

**HYMN** Hope Shines as the Solitary Star

MV 220

**Hope shines as the solitary star,  
faith is the inner light,  
You and I together mirror the Light of Lights,  
and illumines the pathway home**

## **Listening for Wisdom**

### **THEME CONVERSATION**

### **PRAYER FOR INSIGHT**

Breathe on us, Breath of God, and enlighten us with understanding. May these words take root and grow within our spirits. Amen.

**OLD TESTAMENT** Micah 6:6-8

Jim Louter

Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,  
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"  
He has told you, O mortal, what is good,  
and what does the LORD require of you  
but to do justice and to love kindness  
and to walk humbly with your God?

This is God's wisdom from our ancestors in faith.

**GOSPEL** Matthew 5:1-12

Jim Louter

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.  
"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.  
"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.  
"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.  
"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.  
"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.  
"Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
"Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

This is God's wisdom from our ancestors in faith.

## **GIFT OF MUSIC**

"We are Called"

David Haas; arr. by Mark Hayes

Elizabeth Elton, flute

*Come, live in the light  
Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord  
We are called to be light for the kingdom  
To live in the freedom of the city of God*

*We are called to act with justice  
We are called to love tenderly  
We are called to serve one another  
To walk humbly with God*

*Come, open your heart  
Show your mercy to all those in fear  
We are called to be hope for the hopeless  
So hatred and violence will be no more*

*We are called to act with justice  
We are called to love tenderly  
We are called to serve one another  
To walk humbly with God*

*Sing, sing a new song  
Sing of that great day when all will be one  
God will reign and we'll walk with each other  
As sisters and brothers united in love*

*We are called to act with justice  
We are called to love tenderly  
We are called to serve one another  
To walk humbly with God  
We'll walk humbly with God*

## REFLECTION

Rev. Dr. Teresa Burnett-Cole

Today, we commemorate and celebrate the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ. Last Sunday, we heard in the fourth chapter of Matthew that Jesus has gathered disciples and gone throughout Galilee teaching in the synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing the sick. The Sermon on the Mount, which occurs early in Jesus' ministry, is the longest recorded teaching from Jesus in the New Testament and the first recorded teaching in Matthew's gospel.

Matthew sets the scene: Jesus sees the crowds gathered, then goes up the mountain, where he sits down and begins to teach his disciples. Perhaps Jesus preaches his homily in answer to the question from Psalm 15: Lord, who may dwell in your tabernacle? Who may abide upon your holy hill? The psalmist had answered, "Whoever leads a blameless life, and does what is right, who speaks truth from his heart."

Perhaps his homily includes the text from Micah: What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8). Certainly the subject is how to live an ethical life, a life worthy of the household of God. What is the nature of God's justice, kindness, and humility? What is the nature of God's kingdom? What constitutes a blameless, right, and truthful character, for the individual and the community?

So, Jesus begins: *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* Why the poor in spirit? That doesn't sound right to most of us. Wouldn't it be better to be rich in spirit? It is Jesus' role to help us re-think our definitions and values; his movement is one of renewal. Jesus helps us to look at the old texts from the prophets and the psalms in a new spirit. So let us look at blessedness as God's gift, as Jesus makes known the values and priorities of the household of God, and offers a guide to living God's gracious and abundant life.

To be poor in spirit is to be open and empty before God. Let us approach God's kingdom humbly, with our hands, hearts and minds open, free of clutter, of old habits and anxieties. Humble and receptive, available for God to do a new thing. Jesus re-orders our reality, re-defines the nature of abundance to mean a new life in God.

*Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.* The mourner is cracked open, available to receive God's grace. Open to sorrow over all pain, offense, and need. Mourning is another kind of emptying, an assumption of appropriate responsibility for the brokenness around us.

*Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.* Qualities of gentleness, quietness, kindness, and humility. Qualities of letting go of control into the hands of God. Another kind of emptying.

So, the first step to kingdom living is emptying, and the next is transforming that clean emptiness to the blessing of a profound relationship with God. Poverty of spirit, mourning, gentleness, humility: these are characteristics of the contemplative life, these are qualities of a life of prayer.

Righteousness and justice lie at the heart of an active life in the kingdom of God. Having taught his faithful disciples how to be humble servants of God, Jesus begins to teach them to be leaders: peacemakers who hunger and thirst for righteousness

In the section of the Beatitudes describing the righteous life, Jesus puts truth and justice issues on the table. Justice must be accompanied by mercy and purity of heart. The psalmist has written, in response to the question Who may abide on God's holy hill: Whoever leads a blameless life and does what is right, who speaks the truth from his heart. There is no guile upon his tongue; he does no evil to his friend; he does not heap contempt upon his neighbour. These words describe the Beatitude qualities of purity of heart and peacemaking. One who is pure of heart is single-minded in the quest for justice and truth, sincere, transparent and without guile before God. One who is pure of heart cultivates habits of integrity: unity among heart, word, and deed. The peacemaker values truth and reconciliation: peace with God, reconciliation in the community of faith, love for all neighbours, near and far. These are qualities of life in community.

Finally, *Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake.* A great challenge to the qualities of blessedness – openness, gentleness, humility, purity of heart, justice, and mercy – occurs when we are persecuted for that very peacemaking to which we have been led by our relationship with God and our neighbours. Or perhaps we want to aid and protect

those who are being persecuted. There is no peace without justice. Those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake must call on virtues of courage, patience, and self-control. Peacemakers must affirm hope in the midst of difficulty, despair, suffering.

The shape of the Beatitudes is brilliant in presenting an ethic of character based on the interplay between being and doing. In the Beatitudes, we journey with the disciples of Jesus from faith through simplicity, service, and reconciliation to hope. Hope is the future tense of faith. As Christians, we live in expectation. Expectation leads to joy and freedom. Jesus reminds us: rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven. As followers of Jesus, we are to be prophets, in our prayers and in our lives, of the good news of the kingdom of God. Hear with the disciples, Jesus' words of renewal. We are blessed by God's grace to live the abundant life of the household of God, in relationship with God and our neighbours. We are called to be Peacemakers, living the Beatitudes in our daily work, in our communities and organizations. Do Justice. Love Kindness. Walk Humbly with your God. Hunger and thirst for Righteousness. Make peace with purity of heart. Expect nothing less than the kingdom of God, and persevere in the face of opposition.

In Matthew 5:13-14, Jesus tells us what we will become when we live by the ethics of being he teaches in the Beatitudes. You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world. As the salt of the earth, may our way of being foster justice and peace in our daily relationships. As the light of the world, may our way of being be a model for justice and peace in the world around us and in the world to come.

We have need of Peacemakers here and now, at home, in our communities, in our country, in our world. May we become poor in spirit so that we may be renewed, refreshed, and inspired by the words of the Beatitudes. May we profess the good news of the household of God, in our lives and by our prayers. Amen.

## **Responding in Thanksgiving**

**HYMN** Christ Has No Body Now but Yours

MV 171

**Christ has no body now but yours,  
no hands but yours.  
Here on this earth, yours is the work,  
to serve with the joy of compassion.**

1. No hands but yours to heal the wounded world,  
no hands but yours to soothe all its suffering,  
no touch but yours to bind the broken hope  
of the people of God. R

*Refrain*

Christ has no body now but yours,  
no hands but yours.  
Here on this earth, yours is the work,  
to serve with the joy of compassion.

2. No eyes but yours to see as Christ would see,  
to find the lost, to gaze with compassion;  
no eyes but yours to glimpse the holy joy  
of the city of God. R
3. No feet but yours to journey with the poor,  
to walk this world with mercy and justice.  
Yours are the steps to build a lasting peace  
for the children of God. R
4. Through ev'ry gift, give back to those in need;  
as Christ has blessed, so now be his blessing,  
with ev'ry gift a benediction, be  
to the people of God. R

**INVITATION TO GIVE**

We are called to be the embodiment of God's Word. We are called to use our whole selves to care for creation, community, and the church. You are invited to share your financial gifts for the ministry and work of both this community of faith and Mission and Service. Together we will speak God's kin-dom into being.

**OFFERING HYMN** All Is Given for the Glory of God

(Verse 4) MV 34

All is giv'n for the glory of God. Amen! Amen!  
All depends upon our glorious God. Amen! Amen!  
Amen! Amen! Amen!  
All is giv'n for the glory of God. Amen! Amen!

## OFFERING PRAYER

There is so much that needs doing, O God, and we have no magic wand to get it done without effort, and no gold, frankincense, and myrrh to finance our efforts.

Here is our offering, but we also present our lives so that, in your grace, all of our offerings may meet the needs to which they are directed. Give us wisdom and courage as we seek to offer all that we are in your work. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Light of Christ

*Gathering*

**Light of Christ shine in and through me,  
Light of Love be with me now.  
Take these hands, healing hands.  
Light of Christ flow through me now.**

## 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** Take Up His Song

MV 213

Take up his song of peace\* (\*hope, faith, love)  
and go into the world.  
Take up his song of peace\*  
in ev'ry moment.  
In ev'ry moment of the journey,  
we're laying down our lives;  
lay them down, in peace\*  
lay them down, and take up his song.

### **SENDING FORTH**

May blessings abound around you this day.  
Feeling God's loving presence among us, let us go forth into the world,  
allowing our light to shine on all we meet.  
Go from this place knowing you are never alone,  
for you go with God, the Source of Love...

**SUNG AMEN**

VU 969 (Kriewald)

### **MUSIC TO SEND US FORTH**

"Festive Recessional"

## ***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.  
We offer a special thank you to Liz Elton (flute)  
Please join us in Fraser Hall following the service for coffee and fellowship.

## **Congregational Conversation – please join us after Coffee Time**

As a follow-up to our November conversation, we will be starting to talk about the building and its importance to our spiritual life.

## **Roofing Project Pledge Cards and Donations**

Watch this space for updates on our Roofing Project.

### **Name tags:**

If you ordered a name tag before Christmas, please check with Alex in the office. They are in. Cost is \$ 25.00



Shrove Tuesday  
February 17<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 to 7 pm  
Admission: Donation at the Door

Ash Wednesday will follow the Pancake Supper, 7 pm

Palm Sunday: March 29<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 am

Maundy Thursday: April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7 pm

Good Friday: April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10:30 am

Easter Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 am

## ***Our Ministry Team...***

Coordinating Minister: Rev. Dr. Teresa Burnett-Cole, ex 24; [Revtbc.gsj@gmail.com](mailto:Revtbc.gsj@gmail.com)

Children's Church Leader: Kayla Cseh, ex 22; [Childrenschurch.gsj@gmail.com](mailto:Childrenschurch.gsj@gmail.com)

Minister of Music: Paul Grose, ex 25; [min.music.gsj@gmail.com](mailto:min.music.gsj@gmail.com)

Accounts: Lori Stinson, ex 23; [accts.glebestjames@gmail.com](mailto:accts.glebestjames@gmail.com)

Church Administrator: Jennifer Reid, ex 21; [admin@glebestjames.ca](mailto:admin@glebestjames.ca)

---

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

[admin@glebestjames.ca](mailto:admin@glebestjames.ca)

[www.glebestjames.ca](http://www.glebestjames.ca)

613-236-0617, x 21