

Glebe-St. James United Church

Trinity Sunday

May 31, 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

Here I Am, Lord

Welcome

Wendy Bergeron

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, May 31.

My name is Wendy Bergeron and I am Chair of Council here at Glebe-St. James.

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, we hope you feel at home.

I recently came across these words of welcome, written by Daniel Addai Fobi, a newcomer to Canada and a member of God's Beloved at Kitchissippi United Church. I believe that this is what Glebe-St. James stands for. I share this with his permission.

You are welcome in our sanctuary. You do not have to explain yourself before you are allowed to belong. You do not have to be healed, changed, or fixed before you are loved. You do not have to leave parts of yourself at the door. If

you are tired, you can rest. If you are angry, you can breathe. If you are unsure, you can come anyway.

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. Thank you for being here.

Announcements

In case you haven't had the chance to read the announcement in the e-update from this week, I am happy to announce that we are supplementing our support for compassionate care at Glebe-St. James. We have created a new part-time position, averaging 20 hours a month, to assist Rev Teresa in providing compassionate care support and EOORC has recently approved the appointment of Rev Paul Dillman to the position. Rev Paul will take up his duties as Minister of Compassionate Care starting in late September, upon his return from his summer cottage. Rev Paul and his wife Rev Elizabeth Bryce have been worshipping with us at Glebe-St. James for the past few months, since his retirement as the Minister at Riverside United Church. We are thrilled that he has accepted this new role. We will provide more information in the Fall but wanted you to know the good news right away.

And now I'll call upon Julia for a special announcement.

Julia Hurlman and DID 613. Hello everybody, My name is Julia Hurrelmann, my pronouns are she/her, and I've been a member of Glebe-St. James for four years. Today I want to tell you about a new group that will start on Wednesday, June 10th. It's called DID-613, because obviously every group needs a catchy name.

DID-613 is a peer support group for adults living with DID or OSDD. DID stands for Dissociative Identity Disorder, and OSDD stands for Other Specified Dissociative Disorder. Both are complex trauma-related dissociative disorders that are much more common than many people realize.

The prevalence of DID is estimated at about 1% of the population, and OSDD is estimated at 3%. Yet despite this, there currently isn't a single in-person peer support group for people with DID or OSDD in Ottawa, and there are only a small number of therapists who specialize in dissociative disorders.

I live with dissociative identities myself. Over the last two years, I attended the Healing Together Conference in Florida, a psychoeducational conference for people living with DID, their loved ones, and mental health professionals. What became very clear to me there, was how powerful healing in community can be. That experience inspired me to explore how to build an in-person peer support space here in Ottawa. And now it's finally happening.

The group will meet on the second Wednesday of each month at 6 PM in the Art Room here at Glebe-St. James. You'll find an information sheet in your leaflet with all the details.

You might wonder how you can support this initiative. Mostly: spread the word. Maybe you know someone with lived experience, or maybe you know a therapist or mental health worker. Let them know the group exists.

Thank you so much for your attention.

Land Acknowledgement

Ruth Burnett-Cole

Good Morning! We are here on the unceded, unsundered land of the Algonquin of Kitigan Zibi – one of the Algonquin nations of the Anishinaabe peoples. Pow Wow Season has begun on Turtle Island. If you check the local events calendar wherever you are this summer, you are sure to find a Pow Wow nearby. Guests are welcome at these celebrations but there are some etiquette rules to follow. Two things to remember: first, always ask for permission to take someone's picture and don't take pictures of the dancing. Dancing is considered a spiritual practice – you don't take pictures of rituals in church, the same applies here. Second, if a feather falls off a dancer's costume, don't pick it up. That is the role of the Indigenous Veterans present. Veterans are honoured as warriors and they lead the Grand Entry – which is the beginning of the dancing. And...if you're at a Pow Wow don't leave without trying the scone dogs or Indian Tacos!

**Dance with the Spirit early in the mornin',
walk with the Spirit throughout the long day.
Work and hope for the new life a-born-in',
listen to the Spirit to show you the way.**

Call to Worship

Come and worship the God who creates us in love.

We gather in wonder and gratitude.

Come and follow the Christ who walks beside us in joy and struggle.

We gather in hope and faith.

Come and be renewed by the Spirit who breathes life into the world.

We gather in courage and compassion.

Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit call us into community.

We come to worship the God of love. Amen.

Opening Prayer

Holy Mystery,
Creator, Christ, and Spirit,
you gather us into your love today.

When we arrive weary, renew us.
When we arrive uncertain, steady us.
When we arrive joyful, deepen our gratitude.

Open our hearts to your presence among us—
in song and silence,
in prayer and community,
in word and sacrament.

Teach us again that we are not alone,
but held within your grace
and connected to one another in love.

Shape us into a people who reflect your compassion,
seek your justice,
and walk in the way of Christ.

In the name of the Holy Trinity,
one God, source of life and love, we pray. Amen.

Hymn We Join in Proclaiming (*The Ashgrove*)

**We join in proclaiming the faith we believe in:
that God is Creator and we are God's own.
We trust in Christ Jesus and gladly receive him,
for we have been blessed by the love he has shown.
Christ died and is risen and, one with the Father,
he reigns now in heaven, still loving the earth.
The Spirit of God that moved over the waters'
now moves here among us, empowering God's church.**

**O God, we have pondered through years of our history
how you can be Father and Spirit and Son.
We've prayed and we've studied and call it a mystery
that you are three persons and yet you are one.
Creating and saving, your church here renewing,
you still are one God working many good ways.
May we humbly thank you for all you are doing!
O God in three persons, we offer you praise.**

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 gift by
passing the peace with our neighbours.

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

1. **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.**

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

Listening for Wisdom

Theme Conversation

Good morning, friends!
Today I want to talk about something very special.
It's called the Trinity.
That's a big church word, isn't it?
Can you say "Trinity"?
(Invite children to repeat it.)

The Trinity means that God is with us in more than one way.
God is like...
(hold up one finger)
The Creator — the One who made the trees and puppies and oceans and
YOU!
Can you stretch your arms out really wide like a big beautiful world?
(Wide arms.)

And God is like...
(hold up a second finger)
Jesus — our friend and teacher who showed people how to love.
Can you make a heart shape with your hands?
(Heart hands.)

And God is like...

(hold up a third finger)

The Holy Spirit — like a breath or a wind that reminds us God is close.

Can everybody blow gently into their hands?

(Whoosh together.)

Now look!

Three fingers.

But still one hand!

That's a little bit like the Trinity.

Different ways we know God — but all together in love.

And in today's Bible story, Jesus told his friends:

“Remember, I am with you always.”

Always!

When you are happy?

(Children answer: “Yes!”)

When you are sad?

“Yes!”

When you are scared?

“Yes!”

When you are playing?

“Yes!”

God is always with us:

Creator, Jesus, and Spirit.

Let's do motions together one more time:

Big arms wide — Creator!

Heart hands — Jesus!

Blow the wind — Spirit!

Wonderful.

Let's pray:

Dear God,

thank you for loving us,

thank you for Jesus,

**thank you for your Spirit,
and thank you for always being with us.
Amen.**

Hymn Little by Little (*Verses 1 and 2*)

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

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

Matthew 28:16-20

George LeDrew

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him, but they doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy

Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

This is wisdom from the gospel according to Matthew.

Gift of Music Go Into the World

Natalie Sleeth

*Go ye, go ye into the world, and make disciples of all the nations.
Go ye, go ye into the world, and I will be with you there!
Go ye, go ye into the world, and take the Gospel to all the people.
Go ye, go ye into the world, and I will be with you there!*

*I am the vine, you are the branches, ever the fruit to bear;
I am the light, you, the reflection everywhere.
Go ye, go ye into the world and tell the story to all believers.
Go ye, go ye into the world and I will be with you there!*

*Go ye now and make disciples of all the nations,
Go ye now and I will nw with you there.
Go ye now and take the Gospel to all the people,
Go ye now and I will be with you there.*

*I am the vine, and you, the branches, I am the light for you to share so
Go ye now and tell the story to all believers,
Go ye now and I will be with you there!*

*Go ye, go ye into the world, and make disciples of all the nations.
Go ye, go ye into the world and I will be with you there!
Go ye, go ye into the world and take the Gospel to all the people.
Go ye, go ye into the world and I will be with you there!*

*I am the vine, you are the branches, ever the fruit to bear;
I am the light, you, the reflection everywhere.
Go ye, go ye into the world and tell the story to all believers.
Go ye, go ye into the world and I will be with you there!
And I will be with you there!*

There are some Sundays ministers approach with joy and confidence.

And then there is Trinity Sunday.

Preachers across the church often joke that this is the Sunday where we are most likely to accidentally wander into heresy before the coffee hour.

Because how do you explain the Trinity?

One God in three persons: Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit.

Three and yet one.

Distinct and yet united.

For centuries, theologians have tried to explain it with diagrams and metaphors: water, ice, and steam; clover leaves; the sun and its rays.

And honestly, none of them quite work.

But perhaps that is the point.

The Trinity is not a math problem to solve.

It is a mystery to enter.

And maybe progressive Christians are well equipped for that.

Because we are often more comfortable with mystery than certainty.

We know God is larger than our definitions.

We know language always falls short.

We know faith is not about possessing all the answers.

So perhaps Trinity Sunday is not asking us to explain God perfectly.

Perhaps it is inviting us to experience something true about God.

And the Gospel reading today gives us a place to begin.

The disciples meet the risen Jesus on a mountain in Galilee.

Matthew tells us:

“When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted.”

There it is again — one of the most honest verses in scripture.

They worshipped.

And they doubted.

At the same time.

Matthew does not separate the faithful from the uncertain.

He does not say the doubters were sent home while the faithful stayed for the commissioning.

No. They all remain together.

The church begins not with certainty, but with relationship.

And that is one of the deepest truths of the Trinity.

At its heart, the Trinity tells us that God is relationship.

Not isolation.

Not domination.

Relationship.

Love flowing between Creator, Christ, and Spirit.

Love shared and given and received eternally.

The early church understood something profound: if God is love, then relationship must exist within the very being of God.

Love cannot exist alone.

And so the Trinity becomes less about abstract doctrine and more about a living picture of divine community.

A God who exists in mutuality.

In connection.

In self-giving love.

That matters deeply in a world shaped by individualism and division.

We live in a culture that teaches us to compete, accumulate, isolate, and fear one another.

People are increasingly lonely.
Communities fracture easily.
Public life grows harsher.

And into that world comes this strange Christian claim:

At the centre of reality itself is not violence.
Not power.
Not hierarchy.

But relationship.

The Trinity says that we are made in the image of a relational God.
Which means we are most fully human when we live in connection: with God, with one another, and with creation itself.

That has enormous implications.

It means faith is not merely private spirituality.
It is communal life.

It means justice matters because harm to one person harms the whole body.

It means racism, poverty, homophobia, transphobia, colonialism, and environmental destruction are not just political issues — they are spiritual wounds in the web of relationships God calls holy.

The Trinity invites us to imagine another way of being together.

Not domination, but mutuality.
Not exclusion, but belonging.
Not fear, but love.

And then Jesus gives the disciples their commission:

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

For generations, churches sometimes heard these words as permission to conquer.

Mission became entangled with empire.

Christianity too often travelled alongside colonialism.

As part of the United Church of Canada, we cannot ignore that history.

We carry both grief and responsibility for ways the church harmed Indigenous peoples and attempted to erase cultures and spiritual traditions.

So how do we hear this passage differently today?

Perhaps we begin by remembering the character of Jesus himself.

Jesus never coerced people into belonging.

He invited.

He welcomed.

He ate with outsiders.

He crossed boundaries.

The mission of the church is not to control the world.

It is to participate in God’s healing of the world.

To make disciples is not to produce perfect believers.

It is to help people learn the way of Jesus.

The way of compassion.

The way of justice.

The way of mercy.

And notice that baptism happens in the name of the Trinity.

Into relationship.

Into community.

Into the great flow of love that is God.

Baptism is not a reward for certainty.
It is an invitation into belonging.

Which is good news, because most of us carry some doubt.

We doubt ourselves.
We doubt institutions.
Sometimes we even doubt God.

But the Gospel reminds us that doubt does not disqualify us.

The disciples doubted, and Jesus still entrusted them with the future.

That gives me hope for the church.

Because many congregations today feel uncertain about what comes next.
Buildings age.
Attendance shifts.
Old assumptions no longer hold.

And yet perhaps the future of the church does not depend on having all the right answers.

Perhaps it depends on whether we can embody the relational love of the Trinity.

Can we become communities of deep welcome?
Can we create spaces where people are known and valued?
Can we practice justice and compassion together?
Can we remind a fragmented world that connection is still possible?

That may be the most powerful witness the church can offer.

And finally, Jesus leaves the disciples with this promise:

“Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Not: “You will always succeed.”

Not: “You will never struggle.”

Not: “You will never doubt.”

Just this:

“I am with you.”

The God revealed in the Trinity is not distant.

Not detached.

Not absent.

The God of relationship remains with us.

In our questions.

In our grief.

In our acts of courage.

In our communities striving imperfectly toward justice and love.

And maybe that is ultimately what Trinity Sunday is about.

Not solving the mystery of God.

But trusting that beneath all things — beneath creation, beneath history, beneath our lives — there is a current of divine love holding everything together.

Creator, Christ, and Spirit.

A communion of love inviting us into communion too.

And in a fractured world, that may be the holiest news we can share.

Amen.

Responding in Thanksgiving

Hymn Deep In Our Hearts

MV 154

1. Deep in our hearts there is a common vision;
deep in our hearts there is a common song;
deep in our hearts there is a common story,
telling Creation that we are one.
2. Deep in our hearts there is a common purpose;
deep in our hearts there is a common goal;
deep in our hearts there is a sacred message,
justice and peace in harmony.
3. Deep in our hearts there is a common longing;
deep in our hearts there is a common theme;
deep in our hearts there is a common current,
flowing to freedom like a stream.
4. Deep in our hearts there is a common vision;
deep in our hearts there is a common song;
deep in our hearts there is a common story,
telling Creation that we are one.

Invitation to Give

One of the ways we demonstrate our courage in responding is 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.

- 1 Your work, O God, needs many hands
to help you everywhere,
and some there are who cannot serve
unless our gifts we share.**

- 2 Because we love you and your work,
our offering now we make:
be pleased to use it as your own,
we ask for Jesus' sake.**

Offering Prayer

Holy God,
Creator, Christ, and Spirit,
all that we have and all that we are come from you.
Bless these gifts and bless our lives,
that they may bring hope where there is fear,
justice where there is harm,
and love where people feel alone.
Send us into the world as your faithful people,
sharing your compassion in word and action.
In the name of the Holy Trinity, we pray. Amen.

Prayers of the People O Holy

Pat Mayberry

O Holy, O Blessed, O God, hear our prayer.
O Holy, O Blessed, O God, hear our prayer.

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 Go Make A Diff'rence

MV 209

Refrain:

**Go make a diff'rence.
We can make a diff'rence.
Go make a diff'rence in the world.
(Repeat 2 times)**

- 1. We are the salt of the earth,
called to let the people see
the love of God for you and me.
We are the light of the world,
not to be hidden but be seen.
Go make a diff'rence in the world.**
- 2. We are the hands of Christ
reaching out to those in need,
the face of God for all to see.
We are the spirit of hope;
we are the voice of peace.
Go make a diff'rence in the world.**
- 3. So let your love shine on,
let it shine for all to see.
Go make a diff'rence in the world.
And the spirit of Christ
will be with us as we go.
Go make a diff'rence in the world.**

Sending Forth

Go now in the love of the Creator,
who made you in wonder and joy.
Go now in the way of Christ,
who calls you to compassion and justice.
Go now in the power of the Holy Spirit,
who stays beside you in every moment.
And as you go, remember:
you do not walk alone.
The Holy Trinity goes with you—
today, tomorrow, and always.

Go in peace,
go in hope,
go in love.
And so we sing...

Sung Amen

VU 974

Music to Send Us Forth Holy, Holy, Holy (NICAEA)

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

- ♪ Today's organ prelude is an arrangement of Dan Schutte's contemporary hymn "Here I Am, Lord" (VU 509) by Douglas Wagner (b. 1952), a prolific Indianapolis, U.S.-based school and church composer.
- ♪ The postlude is an arrangement of the traditional hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy" (Tune: NICAEA) that was once sung nearly every Sunday in many United Churches. The arranger is Dan Forrest (b. 1978), an accomplished composer active in academic, publishing and church circles in South Carolina, U.S.

Musical Acknowledgements

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Glebe-St James Goes Out to Dinner

Spring 2026 edition – Sign up now!

The Spring edition of Glebe-St James Goes Out to Dinner is coming together very nicely. There will be a high tea the afternoon of Saturday, June 6th and dinners on Thursday, June 11, Saturday, June 13 and Saturday, June 20th. Guests are signing up, but there is room for more! Especially if you haven't joined one of our dinners in the past, you are invited to join an event that combines good food and good company. This is a fundraising event, but even more important it is a community-building event, an opportunity to get to know each other better.

If you are interested in participating as a guest, please get in touch with Margaret Ford and David Brown at fordbrown@rogers.com or through Jennifer Reid at the church office (613) 236-0617 ext. 221.

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