

WELCOME

Jim Louter

In the name of the Holy Mystery,
who is Wholly Love,
we welcome you to Creator's House.

Good morning and welcome, everyone, to our worship service at Glebe-St. James United Church in the Glebe neighbourhood of central Ottawa on Sunday, December 21st the fourth Sunday in Advent.

My name is Jim Louter and I'm in the choir. (**Why do you attend GSJ?**) And why do I attend GSJ? For many reasons:

Habit. Attending church was part of my childhood and part of my memory. Habit-forming. Should be similar to brushing your teeth regularly. Its spiritual hygiene.

Part of my commitment; part of my identity. Part of my neighbourhood. Being part of a community. I believe it is important. I believe it is part of my accountability. As my Dad used to say about the 3 's': sin, salvation, service.

And then there is choir where the expression "the whole is greater than the some of the parts" becomes literal and where music takes the expression of spirituality to a whole new level. And then, at Glebe St James, being in the choir means you are part of every service and you can't just decide on a Sunday morning you don't want to go because you'd be letting down a whole group of people. So ya gotta go.

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 and extend our hospitality. If you want more information about Glebe-St. James, green cards are available near the entrances and during coffee hour. Just fill one out and place it on the offering plate or give it to one of the greeters and they will pass it into the office. Then we can contact you.

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

Now I mentioned I'm in the choir. Some of the sharp-eyed among you may have noticed a new, tall bass chorister who has joined us for the past few weeks. He is hard to miss! I'm pleased to introduce Paul Grose to you as our new Minister of Music starting in January. His personal details were in this weeks e-update but I want to let you know that while we will miss James terribly, the news about Paul is helping us to deal with that loss.

Paul has been involved in choirs since childhood, including a stint in the Stratford Boys Choir in Stratford Ontario. Paul was the Director of Music at St. Paul's-Eastern United Church on two separate occasions, for a total of almost 20 years ending in 2021. Yet another gift to Glebe St James from St Pauls Eastern! I know you will join me in warmly welcoming him to our amazing community of faith.

This is a busy community, and lots is going on. You will find the announcements of activities on our website and scrolling on the screens here in the sanctuary before and after our service In the interests of time, I will highlight just one more.

Please join us for Christmas Eve Services. The family service is happening at 4:30 p.m. and the adult service at 7:30 p.m.

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