

**CENTRAL UNITED CHURCH**  
**Lunenburg, Nova Scotia**  
**February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026 – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent**

**Minister:** Rev. Daniel MacDonald

**Minister of Music:** John Scott

**Lay Reader:** Dawn Ernst

**Greeters:** Tom Ritcey

Email: [centralsecretary@bellaliant.com](mailto:centralsecretary@bellaliant.com)

VU: Voices United (red book)

Website: [www.centralunitedlunenburg.ca](http://www.centralunitedlunenburg.ca)

MV: More Voices (spiral-bound book)

*We welcome and celebrate human diversity - including spirituality, ethnicity,  
gender and sexual orientation. Here, people of any faith or none can question  
and discover the sacred in life through openness,  
struggle, laughter, prayer and music.*

**Prelude**

**Gathering Music:** “Welcome Into This Place”

Wel - come in - to this place. Wel - come in - to this  
bro - ken ves - sel. You de - sire to a-bide in the  
prais - es of Your peo - ple, so we lift our hands and we  
lift our hearts, as we of - fer up this praise un - to Your name.

Words & Music  
Orlando Juarez

**Lighting of the Christ Candle**

## Call to Worship:

Today, we set out together

**carrying our anxieties, our doubts, our burdens, our joys,  
our living, breathing, wondering selves.**

Today, we set out together

**with feet cracked and calloused, others nimble and smooth,  
with hearts full of longing, full of wonder,  
others hesitant but hopeful.**

Today, we set out together

**the wilderness beckons, and we journey on,  
seeking to blaze a new path through a world on fire.  
or rather return to an old, and ancient one,  
finding ourselves along the way.**

Today, we set out together.

**May our journey be blessed**

**as we walk together in the Way.**

## Hymn: *"Love Will Be Our Lenten Calling"*



Love will be our Len - ten\_\_\_ cal - ling, love to shake and  
Peace will be our Len - ten\_\_\_ li - ving as we turn for  
Truth will be our Len - ten\_\_\_ lear - ning: hear the Cru - ci -



shat - ter\_\_\_ sin, wa - king ev - ery closed, cold\_\_\_ spi - rit,  
home a - gain, long - ing for the words of\_\_\_ par - don,  
fied One\_\_\_ call! Sha-dowed by the Sa - viour's pas - sion,



stir - ring new life deep with - in, till the quick-ened  
strip - ping off old grief and\_\_\_ pain, till we stand, re -  
i - ma - ges and i - dols\_\_\_ fall, and, in Eas - ter's



heart re - mem - bers what our Eas - ter birth can\_\_\_ mean.  
stored and joy - ful, with the Church on Eas - ter\_\_\_ day.  
ho - ly splen - dour, God a - lone is all in\_\_\_ all.

## **Words of Welcome and Acknowledgement of Land**

### **A Prayer for the Journey:**

**Journeying with you, Creator God,  
is to journey in your world, full of marvels and such beauty.  
To glimpse eternity in sky and sea,  
to feel the earth and rock beneath our feet.**

**Journeying with you, brother Jesus,  
is to journey with your friends.  
To meet and travel a while together,  
then part at the crossroads, knowing you are with us all.**

**Journeying with you, Holy Spirit,  
is to journey with the wind.  
To move to your wild music, then try to sing your song  
so others may hear.**

**Journey with us this Lent  
and help us to glimpse, to meet, to move, to sing  
in a way that opens us to you and one another.  
This we ask, as we name in silence  
our hopes for the journey ahead.**

### **A Time for Silent Reflection and Prayer Words of Assurance**

**Hymn:**                    *“Jesus, Tempted In The Desert”*

**VU #115**

### **Scripture Reading:**

*Gospel:*                    Matthew 4:1-11

### **Sermon**

**Hymn:**                    *“Bless Now, O God, The Journey”*

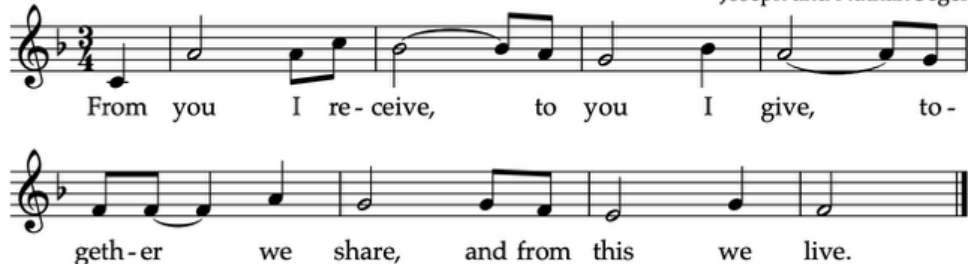
**VU #633**

## **We Celebrate the Life and Work of our Community**

## We Share Our Offerings

Offertory Hymn: *"From You I Receive"*

Joseph and Nathan Segel



From you I re-ceive, to you I give, to -  
geth-er we share, and from this we live.

The musical notation is written on two staves in 3/4 time. The melody is in G major (one sharp). The first staff contains the notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (half), B4-A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (half). The second staff contains the notes: D4 (half), C4 (half), B3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), E3 (half), D3 (half). The lyrics are written below the notes.

## Dedication of Our Gifts:

God of every journey,  
Let the gifts we offer today  
become stepping stones of peace and justice.  
Let them smooth the path ahead  
for those whose way is rough.  
Let them forge a trail of hope  
through the wilderness of despair and oppression.  
Let them be a waymarker of love and kindness,  
for all who feel lost,  
and let them be the welcome rest  
at the end of every hard trek.  
God of every journey, bless our gifts,  
as we continue to walk in your Way.  
Amen.

## We Celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion

### Invitation to the Table

Hymn to the Table:

*"When We Are Tested"*

**MV #65**

### The Great Thanksgiving

God is here.

**Always and Forever.**

Let us remember!

**With all that we are!**

God of the wind and the sky, God of the earth and the soil.  
God of the path that lays before us, and the road that led us here,  
In the beginning,  
before the beginning,  
before the before,  
you were there.  
You and the chaotic nothingness.  
Then, exploding with love, you gave life it's life!

Your heart burst with an explosion of grace....  
...and then from that holy stardust, those sacred beginnings,  
you formed us in your image,  
naming us and all creation good,  
inviting us to journey with you in Love.

At times, we journeyed with you eagerly, at times, we held back.  
But still, you sought us out, across the ages,  
encouraging us on our way, time and time again...

...You have turned up beside us in the guise of friend and stranger,  
prophet and teacher, pilgrim and traveller.  
You have made all things new.

And so – grateful for your presence with us on life's every journey and  
across time and space, we join with all those who have walked  
the Way before us, and with creation itself, proclaiming your praise:

**Holy, holy, holy are you, God of power and might,**

**Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest!**

**Blessed is the one that comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest!**

Mindful of all who have shared this journey of love with us,  
we give thanks in this moment  
for the trailblazer that was Jesus the Christ...

...on the night that he gave himself up for the path of justice,  
he was at the table with his friends.  
He invited them and he invites us  
to pause in our quest for destinations,

and savour the company of each other  
and the ways in which he still is present in our gathering together...

And so, here at the threshold of one more Lenten journey,  
we gather to eat and drink and remember,  
gathering strength and nourishment for the Way ahead,  
as we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

*Blessing of the Elements*

*Prayers of the People*

***The Lord's Prayer***

*Sharing of the Feast*

**Prayer after Communion:**

**As we set out together into the wilds of this Lenten season,  
we have been fed with your love once again, O God.**

**May the nourishment we've received here in bread and wine and  
community so strengthen us for the journey ahead  
that we might follow with courage, conviction and hope,  
the path that is laid before us,  
even when it takes us in new and challenging directions.  
nourishing and caring for one another and others  
along the Way.**

**With Christ as our guide, we set out.**

**With Christ as our guide, we pray. Amen.**

**Closing Hymn:**        *"Be Thou My Vision"*

**VU #642**

**Commissioning and Benediction**

**Postlude**

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*Some of our prayers today have been inspired by materials written by Marcia  
McFee or adapted for our use from resources first written by members of the  
Iona Community. Used with gratitude and permission.*

# AFRICAN HERITAGE MONTH

## *Strength in Unity: Moving Forward with Purpose, Prosperity, Power, and Progress*



When the deepest coal mine in North America "bumped", an unlikely hero emerged. **Maurice Ruddick**, known as the "Singing Miner", was an African Nova Scotian man whose music and leadership saved the lives of his fellow miners.

Maurice Ruddick was born to a coal mining family in Joggins, Nova Scotia. He became an amateur boxer in his teens and, after finishing Grade 11, commenced work in the coal mines of nearby Springhill, NS. The descendants of enslaved persons who were brought to Nova Scotia by Loyalists in the late-18th century, Ruddick and his wife Norma were among a handful of people who formed the Black Community of Springhill, where they raised a family of twelve children.

The Springhill No. 2 coal mine had a "bump" (similar to an earthquake) on October 23, 1958, killing 75 men. Seven men, including Maurice Ruddick, were trapped together around 3 km deep in the mine for 8 ½ days. On a normal workday and occasionally while trapped, Ruddick led hymns and rhythms like "The Old Rugged Cross" to keep others' spirits up. Being trapped for 8 ½ days took its toll on all of them in different ways. Ruddick said, "I cried in the darkness, but I made sure that nobody else heard me. It might have broken their resolve to live." Other miners' mothers and wives said that "if it wasn't for Maurice, they'd all have been dead."

The rescue became a media sensation. One of the survivors was invited to appear on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, while Ruddick also

became a brief celebrity. After he was quoted as saying, "Give me a glass of water and I'll sing you a song," upon his rescue, he garnered profiles under headlines such as "Cheerful After Ordeal" and "Hero Keeps Comrades' Spirits Up." The story caught the attention of Georgia Governor Marvin Griffin, who invited the surviving men and their wives to a resort on Jekyll Island. But upon learning that Ruddick was Black, Griffin insisted that Ruddick be segregated from the group, stay in a trailer outside the resort and rest at a separate beach. When his colleagues refused to go without him, Ruddick and his wife Norma chose to accept the governor's half-hearted invitation. "This might be a chance to open some people's eyes," said Ruddick.

Maurice Ruddick was named Canada's Citizen of the Year in 1958, and in 2015 the African Nova Scotia Music Association presented him a Lifetime Achievement Award which is given to a musician or group who has impacted the African Nova Scotian music scene. He was also featured in a Canadian Heritage Minute.

Ruddick's daughter, folk singer Val MacDonald, recorded a song that he composed in the mine, "The Springhill Mine Disaster Song."