

Little Current United Church Pastoral Charge
www.littlecurrent-sheguiandah-unitedchurch.org
Box 254, Little Current ON P0P 1K0 368-2941
Minister: Rev. Whitney Bruno - lcucpc@gmail.com
Music Ministry: Ruth McDonald, Judith Mosher, & Choir
** an invitation to stand in body or spirit in the service
~ BOLD PRINT- Congregational Participation

Lent 1 Sunday– February 22, 2026
10:00 am at Little Current United Church

WELCOME: a special welcome to guests worshipping with us today. Please sign the guest book as you enter the sanctuary.

Gathering & Prelude
Announcements - The Life & Work of the Church
We Approach God

Centering:

Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory

We gather this morning on land in Little Current. Before we spoke English on this land, we spoke French and called here Le Petit Courant. Before we spoke French here, we spoke Ojibwe, also known as Anishinaabemowin, and called here Waebijewung. Many names. Many peoples. Many generations. One place. In honour of all who have come before us, may we never forget history didn't begin with English here. There are more sacred stories. In hope of all the people after us, may we weave our lives with the peoples who call this place home.

We are all sacred people – beloved children of the Holy One.

Lighting of the Christ Candle

This candle represents the light of Christ, which cannot be overcome, which shines through the hardest times, which faithfully lights our way ever back towards God.

Call to Worship (based on Joel 2:1–2, 12–17)

One: Come as people who are broken, who have made mistakes, who seek healing.

All: We hear the inner voice of God inviting us to return.

One: Come, listen to Christ's invitation to repent from brokenness.

All: We come to mark the beginning of the Lenten season, seeking the Spirit's guidance for our deepening and for our growing.

One: Come and commune with God as we pray: (+1)

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Invocation

All: We know you love us completely and unconditionally, O God. We also know you worry about our decisions and wait for us to turn back to you. We are gathered in worship committing anew to embrace love, to mourn wrong decisions and subsequent brokenness, and to find your path of self-giving once more. Equip us and strengthen us for this journey of becoming, we pray. Amen. (+1)

Invitation to Observe a Lenten Discipline

The Ash Wednesday service is one that many Christian communities have observed through the centuries with great devotion in order to mark the beginning of the season of Lent. In the earliest years of the church, Lent became a time to prepare for Easter by contemplating how we grow as disciples of Jesus, fasting as a pathway into deeper connection with the Divine, and studying prayerfully to delve more deeply into the heart of God. Lent was the 40-day season within which converts to the Way of Jesus prepared for their baptism into the body of Christ on Holy Saturday, the day before Easter.

It also became a time when people who had committed serious sins, thus separating themselves from the believing and practising community of faith, sought reconciliation, forgiveness, and restoration into the family of faith. By observing Ash Wednesday, the whole congregation is reminded of the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. I invite you, therefore, in the name of the living Christ, to observe a holy Lent through self-examination, intentional prayer, serving others, and studying God's word in scripture, within us, and around us. (+1)

The ashes are made of last year's palms. Our celebration becomes sorrow. They are a sign of repentance, mourning, grief.

The sign on your head, or hand, is a visible sign of your heart that is committed to deeds that become prayer most holy. Prayer in breath, in life, in death, in resurrection - prayer for and with nature, prayer for and with the elements, prayer for and with one another, and prayer for and with ourselves.

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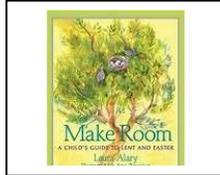
We will sing Dust And Ashes and receive ashes - choosing your head or hand.

Hymn: Dust And Ashes Touch Our Faces VU 105

You are invited to come forward and receive ashes.

Learning for All Ages

Make Room
by Laura Alary



Listening

Hymn of Illumination (MV 115)

Behold, (behold,) behold, (behold,)

I make all things new,

Beginning with you and starting from today.

Behold, (behold,) behold, (behold,)

I make all things new,

My promise is true, for I am Christ the way

HOLY SCRIPTURES

(Psalm 32: VU 759) *(Blessed are those whose sins are forgiven.)*

(Matthew 4:1-11) *(The Temptation of Jesus.)*

May God's spirit shape our understanding of these words.

And may they awaken in our hearts

SERMON: **Ramadan, Lunar New Year, and Lent**

- An auspicious time to reflect

Learning Hymn: **"Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive" VU 364**

M4M – Your Generosity Matters.

Where Play Builds Community

Responding to the Word

Invitation to Commitment:

Now that we have examined scripture, examined our surroundings, and examined ourselves, it is time to make a commitment to God. What do you commit to do, refrain from doing, give, or refrain from giving for this Lenten time? As we

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gather resources to redistribute among the congregation, community, and globe, let us also commit to God in our hearts our intentions for how we observe a holy Lent.

(The offerings will now be brought forward)

****Offertory Hymn:** **(VU 542)**

***We give you but your own,
what e'er the gift may be;
all that we have is thine alone,
we give it gratefully.***

Prayer of Commitment *(unison)*

Generous God, you have given us opportunity after opportunity to do good. Accept our offerings as a response to your call to do good. Bless what we offer, what we intend, and guide us all into a holier time. Amen.

Prayers of the People

God of ashes, God of forgiveness, God of second and third and more chances, attend to our prayers today.

We pray as people who trust in you. We know you can turn ashes into fertile soil. We know you can turn a single grain of wheat into a feast. We know you turn the dust of galaxies into our bones, our lives.

You take what is, and work with us to make it fuller, more whole, stronger.

You take us as we are, see the good we intend, and work with us to let that good grow into glorious, generous, kind gardens.

When we doubt your power, forgive us and encourage us.

When we get overwhelmed by the evil in the world, remind us you are more powerful than wrongs and evils. Reassure us that, even here, even now, you are alongside us weeping with us, angry at the injustice and cruelty just as we are, and you offer the Spirit to withstand. You offer the Spirit to be balms and healing. You offer the stalwart power that isn't flashy or showy - it doesn't get on national TV or get a thousand likes - you offer the power to resist meanness, resist temptations, resist cruelty and the power to forgive, the power to hope, the power to love.

5.

Love truly is more powerful than hate.
Life is truly more powerful than death.
You are truly more powerful than all that is.
And in you, all shall be well, eventually, somehow, assuredly.

We entrust to you now these situations and people who need your powerful presence and reassurance we do not face these times alone....

Holy One, in Jesus' name we pray as he taught us saying**“Our 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, and the power and the glory forever and ever.” AMEN**

Going Forth Into The World

***Hymn for New Week:** *‘Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing’* TLUS 123

Benediction & Carrying out the Light:

We are marked by the cross of Christ.
We bear that cross to remember whose we are.
We have committed to discipleship in love.
We live that love by the power of the Spirit.
We carry God’s blessings as forgiveness and as faith.
Let us go and proclaim, in word and in deed, the gospel of courageous love. (+1)

Light is extinguished, we carry the light in our hearts

Choral Benediction: MV 221 | I Am Walking a Path of Peace

***I am walking a path of peace, (3X)
Lead me home, lead me home.***

Go now in the peace of Christ!



Sources Resourced:

(+1) - Gord Dunbar, Kincardine P.C., Kincardine, Ont. Gathering - 2021

***Little Current United Church PC
Welcome***



**“Lent 1” & Imposition
Of Ashes.**

February 22, 2026

Hymns for Feb. 22, 2026 – LCUCPC

#1 105 VU Dust And Ashes Touch Our Face

1. Dust and ashes touch our face,
mark our failure and our failing.
Holy spirit, come, walk with us tomorrow,
take us as disciples, washed and wakened
by our calling.

***Take us by the hand and lead us,
lead us through the desert sands,
bring us living water,
Holy Spirit, come.***

2. Dust and ashes, soil our hands -
greed of market, pride of nation.
Holy Spirit, come, walk with us tomorrow,
as we pray and struggle through the meshes
of oppression. ***Refrain.***

3. Dust and ashes choke our tongue
in the wasteland of depression.
Holy Spirit, come, walk with us tomorrow,
through all gloom and grieving to the paths
of resurrection. ***Refrain.***

~ ~ ~

#2 364 VU Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive.

1. "Forgive our sins as we forgive,"
you taught us, Christ, to pray;
but you alone can grant us grace
to live the words we say.

2. How can your pardon reach and bless
the unforgiving heart
that broods on wrongs, and will not let
old bitterness depart?

3. In blazing light our cross reveals
the truth we dimly knew:
what trivial debts are owed to us,
how great our debt to you!

4. O cleanse the depths within our souls
and bid resentment cease;
then, bound to all in bonds of love,
our lives will spread your peace.

~ ~ ~

#3 123 TLUS Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing

1. Lift ev'ry voice and sing till earth and heaven ring,
ring with the harmonies of liberty.
Let our rejoicing rise high as the list'ning skies,
let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that dark past has taught us.
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us.
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
let us march on till victory is won.
2. Stoney the road we trod, bitter the chast'ning rod,
felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet
come to the place for which our people sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered.
We have come, treading our path thro' the blood of the slaughtered,
out from the gloomy past, till now we stand
at last where the bright gleam of our bright star is cast.
3. God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
thou who hast brought us thus far on the way,
thou who hast by thy might lead us into the light,
keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met thee;
lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget thee;
shadowed beneath thy hand, may we forever stand
true to our God true to our native land.

