

First Congregational United Church of Christ
"Where No One Is a Stranger"
Fifth Sunday in Lent
March 26, 2023

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

*CALL TO WORSHIP (read responsively)

One: Come, people of God, for rest and renewal.

Many: We come to the source of life for new breath.

One: Come to celebrate this time of worship and remembrance.

Many: We have come to rejoice in the Spirit of God which dwells within us.

One: Give thanks to God who is gracious and righteous. Walk before God in the land of the living.

Many: We bring our doubts and fears, our work and worries to this time of reflection and refreshment.

One: Let's worship God.

*OPENING SONG "Breathe on Me, Breath of God" #461

*OPENING PRAYER (prayed together)

Life Giver, come and revive us again. Indwell us with your spirit and let our souls awake to joy. We come boldly that you might breathe on us. May what we experience with you today change us forever and for the better. Amen.

TIME FOR THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (prayed together)

We are set free by your saving grace, Generous God, yet we must confess how we are still bound by our pride and arrogance. We seem unable to throw off the grave clothes of our habitual sin, finding them too comfortable to wear. We cling to our fears, for they are so familiar and make such good companions.

Forgive us, Steadfast Love. In every corner of our lives, in every shadow we fear, into the cold embrace of death itself, you come. You break the bonds of sin and terror, giving us new strength and hope for the journey, and calling us to new life through the love and sacrifice of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

A MOMENT FOR SILENT REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (read responsively)

One: You can put your hope in God, dear friends, for God offers us that love which never fades, that life which never ends.

Many: We wait for God, and God does not fail us. God's hope, God's love, and God's grace are forever. Thanks be to God. Amen.

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Ezekiel 37:1-14

*AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (read together)

I believe in truth as a living Reality, not captured in theory or a creed, but revealed to those who love; the truth of Jesus, the Spirit of truth, the truth of God.

Because I believe I trust, not blindly but open eyed and bold as a child climbing into a mother's lap; the truth of Jesus, the Spirit of truth, the truth of God.

Because I believe I serve, not as a slave that serves a tyrant but like farmers reaping a harvest; the truth of Jesus, the Spirit of truth, the truth of God. Amen.

*GLORIA PATRI #734

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world with-out end. A-men, A-men.

FOCUS SCRIPTURE John 11:1-45 read from the *Good News Bible*

MESSAGE "Do You Believe This!?" Pastor Chris

Lenten Song "The Old Rugged Cross" #260

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/THE LORD'S PRAYER

PRESENTING OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY Words #44

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heavenly host; praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (prayed together)

Abundant God, thank you for the gifts we bring to you. My they bring new life to those in our community and in the world. In your beloved name, we pray. Amen.

*CLOSING SONG "Lord of the Dance" #118

GOING FORTH WITH THE PEACE OF CHRIST

POSTLUDE

The Call to Worship (adapted) is from *Fresh Winds of the Spirit, Book 2-Liturgical Resources for Year A* by Lavon Bayler. The Opening Prayer is from *Worship Ways-Worship Resources for the United Church of Christ*. The Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession, and Words of Assurance are from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Offering Prayer of Dedication (adapted) is by Karin Ellis from the *Abingdon Worship Annual* edited by Mary Scifres and B.J.Be. The Affirmation of Faith is by B D Prewer 2001, and posted on [Bruce Prewer's Home Page](#).

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Worship Leader:	Pastor Chris Burtnett
Lector:	David Burrow
Organist:	Vicki Merchlewitz
March Radio Sponsor:	Todd & Shelly TerHark

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Birthdays: April 1: Jan Woodyard

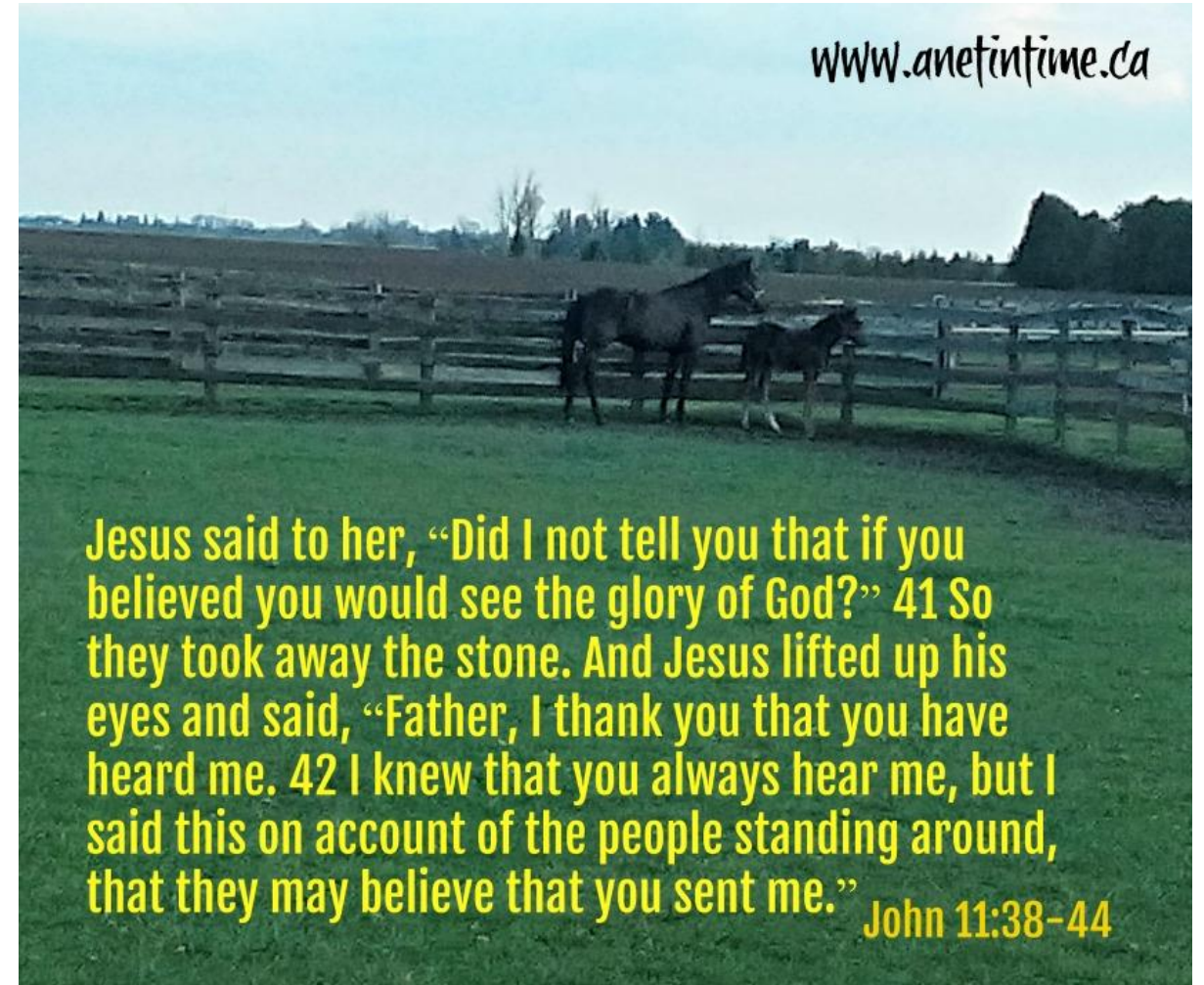
Today, March 26: 10 am.- Worship
 Sunday School
 11am. -12:30pm. Remembering Chuck Fellowship Coffee

Tuesday, March 28: 9:30-11am: Pastor at Feed Mill
 2:00pm.: Good Sam Bible Study
 Deadline for April/May Newsletter

Palm Sunday, April 2: 10:00 am. – Worship with Communion
 Sunday School
 Coffee
 Food Pantry
 Palm Sunday Potluck Bruch

It is time to order Easter Lilies again. They will be \$10.70. Please let the church office know if you would like one and of whom it is in honor or in memory.

The radio sponsorship on KLGa has increased the price to \$32.50/Sunday. It would be \$130 for 4 Sundays a month and \$162.50 for 5 Sundays.



*First Congregational
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