

## WATERFORD UNITED CHURCH

Sunday, March 17, 2024

5th Sunday in Lent

LLWL Peggy Guiler

**A Warm Welcome** to everyone worshipping with us today at Waterford United Church. May this time together be a blessing to you as you pause to praise God, to give thanks and to gather spiritual strength for the coming week. Please join us for **the Outreach Soup Lunch and Fellowship Time** after the service.

### GATHERING

### WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### WE GATHER FOR WORSHIP

Friends, we are invited to journey through this season of Lent towards the One who calls us each by a new name. We will walk with Jesus wherever he leads us, pulling our fears, our doubts, our longings, behind us. Believers, we seek to trust the God who always surprises us, whose promises take on flesh and blood in the good news Jesus called us to share.

### LIGHT THE CHRIST CANDLE

#### LENT CANDLE EXTINGUISHING

- One:** Lest we think that Lent is only a sombre time, let us remember that it is also a rich and abundant time.
- Two:** **Just as the desert is not a barren place but, in fact, a very fertile yet largely unknown place,**
- One:** Lent provides opportunities for us to see and experience incredible abundance and extravagance.
- Two:** **Too often, we miss these moments because they appear alongside difficulties and sadness.**  
*(Extinguish the fifth candle.)*

**GATHERING HYMN:** Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery (vs. 1-5) VU #121

### OPENING PRAYER:

Our souls are troubled, Holy One, until they find their rest in you. When we live in fear of our mortality, help us face the future unafraid. Write the truth of Christ's words on our hearts:  
"Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it can only be a single seed. But if it dies, it bears much fruit."  
In our living and in our dying, draw us together with all your people. Amen.

**CHORAL RESPONSE:** 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent VU #121

God of all our fear and sorrow, God who lives beyond our death,  
Hold us close through each tomorrow, love as near as every breath  
Love as near as every breath.

### WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

**SCRIPTURES:** Janet Snow

**1<sup>st</sup> SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 119: 9 – 16 (part 2) VU # 838 – 839

**Refrain:** *Your word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against you.*

**One:** How shall the young be faultless in their way?

By keeping to your words.

**All:** **With my whole heart I seek you; let me not stray from your commandments.**

**One:** I treasure your word in my heart for fear I should sin against you.

**All:** **Blessed are you, O God; teach me your statutes.**

**One:** With my lips I proclaim all the judgements you have uttered.

**All:** **I find more joy in the way of your commandments than in all manner of riches.**

**One:** I will meditate on your precepts; I will give heed to your ways.

**All:** **I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word. (R)**

**2<sup>nd</sup> SCRIPTURE:** Jeremiah 31: 31 – 34 from The Message

**MUSIC MINISTRY:** Like the Murmur of the Dove's Song (pg. 152 Flex. Anthem)  
*(words printed)*

### MESSAGE

**HYMN:** Long Before the Night

VU #282

## WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

**OFFERING:** The One who writes the law of love on our hearts, the One who saves us from the worst parts of ourselves, is here to bless us once more. In giving, we receive; in loving, we find love. Let us show our care for those in need as we offer our tithes and offerings to God.

**Offertory:** Giver of the Perfect Gift (vs. 1) VU #116

*Giver of the perfect gift, only hope of human race,  
Hear the prayer our hearts uplift, gathered at thy throne of grace.*

**Prayer of Dedication:** With hearts washed clean and with spirits made new, we celebrate the joy of your salvation, O God. May the tithes and offerings we share this day reflect the law of love you have written on our hearts. May these gifts bear the fruit of your Spirit, and may they bless those who need it most. Amen.

## **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND CONCERN**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER** (*sung*) VU #960

## WE ARE SENT FORTH AS GOD'S PEOPLE

**HYMN:** Jesus Christ is Waiting VU # 117

**BENEDICTION:** God's law of love is engraved on our hearts. Trust God's internal compass to guide you. Discern the still small voice that whispers with every heartbeat. Going forth, heed the promise of the heart—the warm beat of the living law of love.

**SUNG BLESSING:** O Jesus, I Have Promised (vs. 1) VU #120

*O Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;  
Remain forever near me, my Saviour and my friend:  
I shall not fear the journey if you are by my side,  
Nor wander from the pathway if you will be my guide.*

## **FAITH FORMATION THOUGHTS ~ Debra Leedham**

In his letter to the Hebrews, Paul explains the new thoughts of faith brought by Jesus. He pointed out that Jesus, even though he was the son of God, was obedient to God. Christians today are faced with a great challenge to be obedient to God. It's not as straightforward as we think. It's definitely not as easy as we think. Obedience in any given situation is more complicated than we think, because different people have different roles in obedience.

## **WATERFORD UNITED CHURCH**

**March 17, 2024**

**Worship Leader: LLWL Peggy Guiler**

**Music: Joe Calverley**



*5th Sunday in Lent*

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*Today we are gathered in the traditional territories of several indigenous nations with gratitude. As settlers, we take on the responsibility of learning about historic and current relationships, and our desire to engage in building right relations. We are also mindful of broken covenant, and the need to commit ourselves to deep reconciliation and healing.*

**The Waterford United Church is a place where everyone is welcome regardless of their ability, age, class, ethnicity, gender, race, or sexual orientation.**

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Church Phone: 519-443-5261

Church Webpage: [www.waterfordunitedchurch.org](http://www.waterfordunitedchurch.org)

Office Administrator, Diane Holden [wucsecretary@bellnet.ca](mailto:wucsecretary@bellnet.ca)

Treasurer, Kimberly Holden [wuctreasurer@bellnet.ca](mailto:wuctreasurer@bellnet.ca)

Church Bookings, Cori Angus 519-443-8212 or 519-802-2401



**WELCOME AND THANK YOU  
to LLWL Peggy Guiler  
for leading today's Worship and to  
Joe Calverley for his Music Ministry.**

**OUTREACH SOUP LUNCH** will follow the service **TODAY**. Donations gratefully received. Please help support Outreach initiatives. Last month's Soup Lunch donations of \$125 supported Waterford Public School's grade 4 swim program.

**PASTORAL CARE** – as we work toward a change in ministry, we are grateful that Rev. Allan Burr and Rev. Gary Patterson are available **for emergent pastoral care**. However, if you know of someone who needs a phone call or visit, please let us know by calling the office.

**MINISTRY & PERSONNEL MEETING** – Tuesday, March 19 at 3:30 p.m.

**OUTDOOR FOOD PANTRY** – a gentle reminder that the Outreach Committee invites you to help stock the pantry with your donations. Items requested are: instant packets of oatmeal, dried and canned soups, sardines, corned beef, baby formula, ensure. Items with pull tabs are preferred.

#### **LENT AND EASTER SERVICES**

5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent	March 17 - 10:30 a.m. led by LLWL Peggy Guiler
Palm Sunday	March 24 - 10:30 a.m. led by LLWL Mae Bedford
Maundy Thursday	March 28 – 6:00 p.m. evening Seder (traditional Passover) Meal
Good Friday	March 29 - 10:30 a.m. led by Chris Savory
Easter Sunday Morning	March 31 - 10:30 a.m. led by Cori Angus

**FREE CONCERT** – Friday, March 22 at 7:30 p.m. featuring **Organist Joe Calverley**. Light refreshments will follow.

**SOLAR ECLIPSE PRESENTATION** – There will be a presentation about the upcoming solar eclipse (April 8) and how to view it safely, at the Waterford Library on Thursday, March 28, 2-3 p.m. It will be put on by members of the Norfolk astronomy club. (It will also be at the Simcoe Library on Friday, March 22 at 10:30 a.m.) See more information about the eclipse posted on the bulletin board.

#### **LIKE THE MURMUR OF THE DOVE'S SONG**

Like the murmur of the dove's song, like the challenge of her fight,  
Like the vigour of the wind's rush, like the new flame's eager might:  
Come, Holy Spirit, come.

To the members of Christ's Body, to the branches of the vine,  
To the Church in faith assembled, to her midst as gift and sign:  
Come, Holy Spirit, come.

With the healing of division, with the ceaseless voice of prayer,  
With the power to love and witness, with the peace beyond compare:  
Come, Holy Spirit, come.



A Traditional Passover Meal (Seder Meal) will be prepared and presented by Renee and Michael Jarvis on Maundy Thursday evening, March 28 at 6:00 p.m. Attendance is limited so **please RSVP to Cori or Diane by Monday, March 18.**

The evening begins with the story of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who recall their people's suffering and persecution as they were going out of Egypt.

This traditional meal will include readings, partaking in drinking 4 sips of wine, telling stories, eating special foods, singing, and other Passover traditions. Food includes wine (juice), vegetables dipped in salt water, matzah (cracker-like bread), bitter herbs (horseradish and romaine dipped in charoset, a paste of nuts, apples, pears and wine)

This meal will be followed with more familiar dishes to round out the Seder meal.