

*\*If you are able, please stand where asterisk is shown.*



# St. James United Church

**An Affirming Ministry**

Weekly Service Bulletin – April 12th, 2026

**Holy Humour Sunday**

221 Romaine St, Peterborough, ON K9J 2C3 • 705-742-2222 • [stjamesunitedchurch.ca](http://stjamesunitedchurch.ca)

More Info: [affirmunited.ca](http://affirmunited.ca) • [united-church.ca](http://united-church.ca)

*Living fully, intentionally and compassionate*

*\*Please rise in body or spirit*

**PRELUDE / WELCOME AND LIFE AND WORK OF THE CHURCH / INTROIT**

## WE GATHER

### **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**Iris Muir**

“We respectfully acknowledge that St. James is located on the Treaty 20 Michi Saagiig territory and in the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Nations, collectively known as the Williams Treaties First Nations, which include: Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Alderville, Scugog Island, Rama, Beausoleil, and Georgina Island First Nations. Our St. James congregation respectfully acknowledges that these Nations are the stewards and caretakers of these lands and waters, and that they continue to maintain this responsibility to ensure their health and integrity for generations to come.”

Curve Lake First Nation Land Acknowledgement (adapted slightly for use)

### **CALL TO ACTION**

**Cora Muir**

*A Land Acknowledgement is a single act of reconciliation. As an Affirming Ministry that is part of the United Church of Canada, we commit to learning from, listening to and supporting Indigenous people. One way we can do this is through the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action.***

### *Call to Action #32*

*We call upon the federal government to amend the Criminal Code to allow trial judges, upon giving reasons, to depart from mandatory minimum sentences and restrictions on the use of conditional sentences.*

### **\*GATHERING SONG**

*Joy Comes with the Dawn*

**VU#166**

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### **Refrain:**

**Joy comes with the dawn; joy comes with the morning sun;  
joy springs from the tomb and scatters the night with her song,  
joy comes with the dawn.**

1. Weeping may come; weeping may come in the night,  
when dark shadows cloud our sight. **R**
2. Sorrow will turn, sorrow will turn into song,  
and God's laughter make us strong. **R**

**Refrain:**

**Joy comes with the dawn; joy comes with the morning sun;  
joy springs from the tomb and scatters the night with her song,  
joy comes with the dawn.**

3. We will rejoice, we will rejoice, and give praise,  
to the One who brings us grace. **R**

**LIGHTING OF THE JESUS, RAINBOW & PEACE CANDLES**

**Maeve O'Neill**

Let the light of Jesus and the flame of the rainbow candle  
draw us together as we ready ourselves for worship -  
with the assurance that we are not alone, and all are welcome.  
May we experience peace during our time together  
and live lives of peace when we leave this place.

Dora White, **Easter Gathering, 2021** (adapted for use at St. James United Church)

**GATHERING WORDS** (*responsive*)

One: As people of light,

**All: we come together.**

One: As people of the journey,

**All: we come to seek.**

One: As people of new life,

**All: we come for renewal.**

One: As people of faith,

**All: we come together.**

One: As people of good news,

**All: we come to seek.**

One: As people of joy,

**All: we come to laugh and sing.**

One: Let us celebrate the gifts of life in worship, song, laughter and reflection!

**OPENING PRAYER** (*responsive*)

One: Loving God, we are provided so many opportunities for laughter and joy:  
the delight of happy children,  
the wonder of serendipitous moments,  
the pleasure of a job well done,  
the power of our language to be both  
entertaining and prophetic.

**All: Help us to share with the world that being a follower of Jesus  
is a vibrant, joyous, hope-filled way to live. Amen.**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER** (*a paraphrase – spoken in unison*)

**VU#916**

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be,  
Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe! The way of your justice be  
followed by the peoples of the world! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!  
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come to earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In times of temptation and test, strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen.

**\*HYMN**

*Let's Go Together (Welcome)*

**TLUS#138**

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1. Let's go together for a while and ask where we begin  
To build a world where love can grow and hope can enter in  
To be the hands of healing and to plant the seeds of peace

**Refrain:**

**Singing welcome**

**Welcome to this place.**

**You're invited to come and know God's grace**

**All are welcome, the love of God to share,**

**'Cause all of us are welcome here; all are welcome in this place**

2. Let's talk together of a time when we will share a feast,  
Where pride and power kneel to serve the lonely and the least,  
And joy will set the table as we join our hands to pray **R**
3. Let's dream together of the day when earth and heaven are one,  
A city built of love and light, the new Jerusalem,  
Where our mourning turns to dancing, every creature lifts its voice **R**

**THEME CONVERSATION** *100 Kids Tell a Joke*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NMIjkqZFN9o>

(HiHo Kids, 2019)

**CHILDREN'S PRAYER**

Catholic Agency for Overseas Development 2020

Loving God, help us to work together, to share what we have,

So that everyone has what they need.

Help us to build a better world,

Where each of us becomes the best person we can be. Amen.

**WE REFLECT**

**ANTHEM**

**HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING**

*Genesis 18:1-15, 21:1-7*

**Marney Horton**

The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. He said, "My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have

come to your servant.” So they said, “Do as you have said.” And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, “Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.”

Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate. They said to him, “Where is your wife Sarah?” And he said, “There, in the tent.” Then one said, “I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.

So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?” The Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, and say, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?’ Is anything too wonderful for the Lord? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son.” But Sarah denied, saying, “I did not laugh”; for she was afraid. He said, “Oh yes, you did laugh.”

The Lord dealt with Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as he had promised. Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the time of which God had spoken to him. Abraham gave the name Isaac to his son whom Sarah bore him. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. Now Sarah said, “God has brought laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me.” And she said, “Who would ever have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”

#### **\*HYMN**

#### *Give to Us Laughter*

**VU#624**

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1. Give to us laughter, O Source of our life. Laughter can banish so much of our strife.  
Laughter and love give us wholeness and health.  
Laughter and love are the coin of true wealth.
2. Give to us laughter as sign of deep joy; let us in laughing find Christian employ,  
joining with stars and with bright northern lights,  
laughing and praising and sharing delights.
3. Why do we worry that we will lose face?  
Why act like king for the whole human race?  
Often in family, and often with friend,  
laughing at pride causes anguish to end.
4. Even in sorrow and hours of grief, laughter with tears brings most healing relief.  
God, give us laughter, and God, give us peace,  
joys of your presence among us increase.

#### **REFLECTION**

## WE RESPOND

### OFFERING AND OFFERTORY MUSIC

#### **\*SUNG OFFERTORY RESPONSE** *What Can I Do?*

**MV#191**

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What can I do? What can I bring? What can I say? What can I sing?  
I'll sing with joy. I'll say a prayer. I'll bring my love. I'll do my share.

#### **\*OFFERTORY PRAYER**

### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE GIFT OF LAUGHTER

## WE GO FORTH

#### **\*HYMN**

*Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You*

**VU#232 vs. 1,3**

Words: Henry van Dyke 1907. Music: Ludwig van Beethoven 1824. Adapted by Edward Hodges. Descant: © 1979 G.I.A. Publications, Inc.

1. Joyful, joyful we adore you, God of glory, life and love;  
hearts unfold like flowers before you, opening to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive the gloom of doubt away;  
giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.
3. You are giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest,  
wellspring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!  
Source of grace and fount of blessing, let your light upon us shine;  
teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine.

#### **\*BLESSING** *(responsive)*

One: Go now to live, breathe, laugh –  
and share the joy of new life and new opportunities with everyone you meet.  
Go in the name and in the spirit of the risen Jesus.

**All: We will go in Jesus' name, anticipating and welcoming  
His loving presence in everyone God has created.**

One: Go with hope and go with joy! Amen.

#### **\*SUNG BLESSING**

*You Shall Go Out with Joy*

**VU#884**

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You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace;  
the mountains and the hills will break forth before you;  
there'll be shouts of joy, and all the trees of the field  
will clap, will clap their hands!

And all the trees of the field will clap their hands (clap, clap),  
the trees of the field will clap their hands (clap, clap),  
the trees of the field will clap their hands (clap, clap)  
while you go out with joy.

### POSTLUDE