

**Central Queens Pastoral Charge
United Church of Canada**

March 15, 2026

10:30 a.m.

Lent IV

Central Queens Mission Statement

Central Queens United Church is a loving and living community called to support the life stages of all people; celebrating the joy and sharing in pain. Through faith and fellowship, we are united by God's love to live and serve as Disciples of Christ.

Gathering for Worship

Prelude

Welcome

Welcome in the name of the Christ.

**Welcome to this place of worship, situated on the
unceded traditional lands of the Mi'kmaq people.**

Welcome to this place of retreat and refuge, worship and wonder.

It is good to be here.

It is indeed good to be together.

Announcements

Birthdays & Special Occasions

Lighting of the Christ Candle

There was a person who **did** such **amazing things** - **said** such **wonderful things** - that great crowds of people followed him

everywhere. One day they ask him, “Who are you?” He said, “I am the light.”

Quiet Preparation for Worship (Bible is brought forward during the quiet time)

Bible Presentation

***Introit** “Don't Be Afraid”

MV #90

Call to Worship

There are stories in scripture
that feel less like explanations
and more like mirrors.

**They turn toward us and ask:
what do you see?**

Christ comes among us
not with blame, but with compassion.

**Christ opens our eyes
to the dignity of every life.**

Come, let us worship the One
who helps us see one another again.

We come to walk in the light of God.

***Hymn** “A Light is Gleaming”

VU #82

Prayer of Approach

Holy One,

**you are the light
that gently opens our eyes.**

**You see the beauty we overlook
and the dignity we sometimes miss.**

**In your presence
certainty softens
and compassion grows.**

Open our hearts this day / this hour.

**Teach us to see one another
with kindness and humility.**

**And let your quiet light
guide us deeper into grace.**

With Jesus, we share in the ancient prayer...

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, which 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,
the power, and the glory,
forever and ever.
Amen.**

Responsive Reading Psalm 23

VU # 747–749

***Hymn** “I Am the Light of the World”

VU #87 vv. 1,2, 3

All God’s Children

Hymn “I Am the Light of the World”

VU #87 v. 4

Prayer of Transformation and New Life

Compassionate God,

too often we do not see clearly.

**We judge too quickly,
cling to our assumptions,
and overlook the quiet dignity in others.**

**Forgive us when our certainty
closes our eyes and hardens our hearts.**

**Open us again to humility,
to kindness,
and to the light of your grace.**

(silent prayer)

Words of God’s steadfast love

Hear this good news.

The One who brings light to the world
does not turn away from our blindness.

Again and again
Christ comes searching for us.

Christ kneels in the dust of our lives
and lifts our eyes toward grace.

In mercy and love
we are forgiven.

In compassion and hope
we are made new.

Thanks be to God.

Response: “Halle, Halle, Halle”

VU #958

Presentation of Our Gifts

Invitation to Generosity

When our eyes are opened to the dignity of every life,
our hearts begin to open too.

The gifts we offer today
are signs of that love and care
shared with the world.

We give with gratitude.

***Presentation of Offering**

*** Offertory** “Christ Has No Body Now but Yours”

MV #171 (Chorus)

***Offerory Prayer**

Generous God,

**from the abundance of your love
we receive life itself.**

Receive these gifts we bring today.

May they become

bread for the hungry,

welcome for the lonely,

**and light for those walking through
shadow.**

**Use them to widen the circle of belonging
in this world you cherish.**

Amen.

Listening for the Word

Prayer for Understanding

Living Word,

as scripture is read among us
quiet the noise within our minds.

Let these ancient words
become living wisdom.

Where we have been certain,
give us curiosity.

Where we have been blind,
give us sight.

Where we have been distant from one another,
draw us closer in compassion.

May your Spirit move gently among us
opening both heart and mind.

Amen.

Sacred Scripture

John 9:1–41

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him.

We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbours and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am he.” But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?”

He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath.” Others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing!

You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. Jesus said, "I came into this world for

judgment, so that those who do not see may see and those who do see may become blind.” Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.

Anthem

Prayer

Let the words of my mouth,
and the listening of all our hearts,
be held in your grace, O God.
May your peace rest upon us
and guide us into what is true and life-giving. Amen.

Sermon *When Certainty Makes Us Blind*

Reflective Music

Responding to the Word

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

God of the wide and tender world,
you see every life clearly —
the joyful
and the weary,
the confident
and the uncertain.

We pray today
for those who feel unseen.

For those living on the margins
of community and care.

For those whose voices are ignored
or whose dignity is questioned.

May they be surrounded
by kindness and respect.

We pray for those living with illness,
disability,
or chronic pain.

Remind the world
that every life is sacred
and every body worthy of honour.

We pray for our communities
and our leaders.

Where fear divides people,
plant seeds of understanding.

Where prejudice has taken root,
grow wisdom and humility.

Where violence threatens peace,
bring courage for reconciliation.

We pray for the earth itself-
for oceans and forests,
for fragile ecosystems,
for the quiet balance of life you created.

Teach us to see this planet
not as possession
but as sacred trust.

And we pray for ourselves.

Open our eyes
to the small moments of grace
that surround us each day.

Help us notice the neighbour,
the stranger,
the one quietly waiting to be seen.

May the light of Christ
guide our steps
toward compassion and belonging. Amen.

***Hymn** “Open My Eyes, That I May See”

VU #371

Changing the Light

See the **light is now changed**. It has taken on a different form.
But it is still here! It's absorbed in you. It clings to you.
Go cradle and share the **Light. Share** it to others as we go about
your daily living. **Go and live in the light**, Carriers of the light.

***Blessing**

May the light of Christ
shine gently upon our path.

May it open our eyes
to the quiet dignity
within every life we meet.

May it soften our certainties
and deepen our compassion.

And may the God
who kneels in the dust of our lives
walk beside us always—

opening our hearts,
widening our vision,
and guiding us
toward the miracle
of seeing one another anew. Amen.

***Choral Benediction** Tune: KINGSFOLD

Go now in peace through desert days,
God walks with you in hidden ways.
From ash and dust to hope made new,
The Lord of life goes forth with you.

Postlude *Please stand as you are able.