

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

February 25, 2024

10:30 a.m.

Second Sunday in Lent

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

Do not be afraid to answer the call to discipleship.

What does the call require?

Letting go of our life as we know it. Following the way of the cross. Aligning our soul with God's.

We step out in the way of Jesus by losing our life to save it.

Do not be afraid to walk in the way of Jesus.

We answer the call, unashamed and unafraid.

In our worship, may we breathe in God's Spirit.

And as we leave, live out the ways of God.

*Hymn "Great is Thy Faithfulness"

VU #288

Prayer of Approach

O God, we are offered every opportunity to embrace the path that helps us gain the world at great expense to our spiritual

values. Instead, you have called us to yourself and to follow in the way of love and compassion. Teach us about Jesus' way and lure us away from the paths of self-absorption and greed. You have called us to discipleship, to self-emptying and embracing your way with courage. May it be so.

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 22:23–31

VU #746 Parts 3 & 4

***Hymn** "Jesus Talked To Children" *All God's Children Sing* vv. 1, 2

All God's Children

Hymn "Jesus Talked To Children" *All God's Children Sing* v. 3

Prayer of Transformation and New Life

Holy God, like Peter, sometimes we think we know best. We make our own attempts to save ourselves and others from the cross filled path you have called us to walk. Help us to get behind you, because it has become easier to rely upon ourselves, rather than on your strength and presence. Grant us grace and help us to let go of our need for control so that you and your way might be our guide and path forward. Amen.

Words of Grace

Dear ones, may the God of compassion, Jesus the wounded healer, and the Holy Spirit who shapes and transforms us anew, grant us peace and hope. For we know that the One who calls us to follow in the way of Jesus is merciful and offers the consolation of love in a world of empty promises. Be at peace and thanks be to God.

Presentation of Our Gifts

Invitation to Generosity

In a world that offers a vision of never enough, we share in God's abundant provision for all. While we could gain the world but lose our soul, it is from within our soul that we share in a generous spirit of giving.

Offertory

***Presentation of Offering**

*** Offertory** “We Give Our Thanks”

MV #187

***Offertory Prayer**

Giving God, Jesus invited us to give our lives away, take up our cross, and to follow. May the sharing of these gifts nurture our commitment to walk in your way. In the name and way of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

Listening for the Word

Sacred Scripture

Genesis 17:1–7, 15–16

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, ‘I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.’ Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ‘As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you

throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.'

Mark 8:31–38

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.'

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'

Those who lose their life for the gospel will save it.

Anthem

Sermon

Reflective Music

Responding to the Word

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Let us join together in praying for the people of Israel-Palestine who have been affected by conflict. We pray boldly for the de-escalation of war within the region and stand in solidarity for peace.

O God of life and love and peace,
we witness the violence and injustice in your Holy Land
and our hearts break.

Our hearts break for the people of Israel—
for the victims of violent attacks by Hamas
for those who live with fear and insecurity
for those who suffer from the inter-generational trauma of
violence.

Our hearts break for Palestinians—
for the victims of violent attacks by the Israeli military
for those being denied water, electricity and medical care
for those who are refugees, long displaced from their homes.

We especially pray—
that weapons of war be laid down
that walls of separation be dismantled
that prisoners be released
that demonizing of “the other” cease
that political leaders seek the good of all people in Palestine and
Israel.

O God, whose heart breaks for the world,
may your justice dwell in the land
may your righteousness abide in fruitful fields
may the effect of righteousness be quietness and trust forever
may the effect of justice be peace—enduring peace.

Amen

***Hymn** “Take Up Your Cross”

VU #561

Extinguishing of the Christ Candle

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.

***Benediction**

We step out into a world offering us the power to gain the whole
world, and yet the call to discipleship is one that is less of us and
more of Christ.

Go forth to serve, to embrace a life of humility, and to walk in the way of the cross. For such a path is the way of life. Amen.

***Choral Benediction** “Throughout These Lenten Days and Nights” VU #108 v.1

Postlude

*Please stand as you are able.