

# STITTSVILLE UNITED CHURCH

**“Growing Together in Spirit”**

**Second Sunday of Lent, March 5, 2023**

**Annual Congregational Meeting Sunday**

## **WE GATHER TO PRAISE GOD**

(\* indicates where you are invited to rise in body or in spirit)

**Music to Prepare for Worship:** Hymn Medley by Mark Hayes

**Land Acknowledgement for Lent** - Peter Chynoweth, *Gathering L-E 2020*,  
with permission

ONE: We gather on some of the oldest foundations to be found on this planet, in a place inhabited for thousands of years. Lent is meant to be a time of deep reflection about who we are, and whose we are. It should also be a time of reflection on *where* we are.

**ALL: We are indeed in a place that has been inhabited for a long time, and most of us are very much newcomers on this land – despite how long we might claim residence.**

ONE: Ancestors and newcomers agreed to live peacefully on this land, despite its being unceded and unsurrendered.

**ALL: All of us are treaty people, whether we are here as descendants of the Anishnaabe Algonquin people, or others who came to settle here, or we are new to this place. May we remember with respect the story of this land, and may our relationship with the land and the people form a part of our Lenten reflections.**

**Lighting of the Christ Candle: A Lenten Tenebrae**

- Won Hur, *Gathering L-E 2023*, with permission

(Five candles are lit, as well as the Christ candle.)

ONE: We live unaware of the spiritual realities around us.

ALL: **We fail to grasp the reality of God's presence in our world.**

ONE: Like Nicodemus, we cannot grasp the kingdom of God. Thus we muddle through life, suffering the consequences of our lack of attentiveness.

ALL: **Thus we bear the impact of climate change in the pursuit of economic gains. We live with enormous amounts of plastic waste in the name of convenience.**

ONE: we live with micro-aggressions and systemic racism.

ALL: **We mourn our ignorance and under-developed religious beliefs.**

(The second candle is extinguished)

**Hymn: MV # 90                      *Don't be afraid.***

**Opening Prayer:**                      - Won Hur, *Gathering L-E 2023*, with permission

**O God, we pray to be born anew, in order to grasp the meaning of your kingdom. We long to discover our authentic selves as we shed our false selves in this Lenten season. May your truth set us free. May we abide in your spirit of truth so that we can live a life worth of eternity. Amen.**

**Words of Welcome**

**\*Hymn: VU # 337                      *Blessed assurance***

**Invitation to Worship:**                      - Bill Steadman, *Gathering L-E 2023*, with permission

ONE: God calls us to live our lives with energy and determination. God is the source of all goodness and strength.

ALL: **We are not alone. We are a part of God's world.**

ONE: Jesus called many to follow him in service, in teaching and in healing. Jesus calls us now to serve and to love, to teach and to heal.

ALL: **Jesus was not alone. He was a part of God's world.**

ONE: Nicodemus called out to Jesus to receive his teachings and to be challenged by his insights. Nicodemus represents you and me – people with many questions and few answers.

**ALL: Nicodemus was not alone. He was a part of God's world. We are not alone. We gather here to celebrate God's presence as revealed in Jesus Christ. Thanks be to God.**

### **WE HEAR GOD'S WORD FOR US**

**Welcome & Life and Ministry of the Church**

**\*Hymn: VU # 684      *Make me a channel of your peace***

**Conversation with the Children**

**We Engage with Scripture (read by James Harley)**

Genesis 12:1-4    God calls Abram to be a blessing

John 3:1-17      Nicodemus learns "God so loved the world"

**Message      "New beginnings"**

**Musical Offering:** My Jesus I Love Thee by Lloyd Larson

### **WE RESPOND IN LOVE**

**Invitation to Offer Our Gifts**

**\*Song of Dedication: VU #542 *We give you but your own***

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**\*Prayer of Dedication:** - Fern Gibbard, *Gathering L-E 2023*, with permission

**O God, when our world is falling apart into chaos, we are thankful that you are there in the crashing of the storm as well as the quiet after the storm. In thankfulness, we bring our gifts to you and offer them that they may bring blessings to others. Amen.**

**Invitation to Prayer: #VU 411 O God, We Call (x3)**

**Prayers of Thanksgiving and for Healing and Transformation**

**The Lord's Prayer VU # 916, A Translation**

**Our Father-Mother, who is in the heavens, may your name be made holy, may your dominion come, may your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today the bread we need; and forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven our debtors; and do not put us to the test, but rescue us from evil. For yours is the dominion, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**WE GO FORTH IN SERVICE**

**\*Hymn: VU # 634      *To Abraham and Sarah...***

**\*Commissioning** Ronald Black, *Gathering L-E 2023*, with permission, abridged

Let us take the blessing of fellowship in this sanctuary into our community and the world.

**Let us be guided by the unconditional faith lived by Abraham and Sarah, and the listening faith shown by Nicodemus. Let us be always joyful, blessed by being disciples of God through Jesus.**

**\* Blessing**

**\* Choral Response: VU # 108, verse 1      Throughout these  
Lenten days and nights**

**Music to inspire us as we go: Heavenly Sunlight by Mark Hayes**