



Thornbury, Ontario  
**Grace United Church**  
Bold. Nurturing. Liberal. Christian.

**March 10th, 2024**

## *Fourth Sunday of Lent*

Find this service at [www.graceunitedthornbury.ca/live](http://www.graceunitedthornbury.ca/live)

Leading us today in Worship:

**Minister: Rev. Dr. John G. Smith**

**Music Director: Dr. Christopher Burton**

**Scripture Reader: Heather Dickson**

Leader: regular font ~ All: bold font ~ Sung words: bold italics

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## *We Gather Together in Community*

### **PRELUDE:**

"Fanfarinette" - J. P. Rameau

### **WELCOME:**

### **LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE:**

Even though it is Lent, we light the Christ candle.  
For the world needs this light; the world needs OUR light.

During our observance of Lent this year,  
May the Christ candle remind us of the fragility of light.

May the purple colour remind us that Christ's light is  
eternal.

And may these Lenten days bring us closer to the beauty  
of his light.

May the light of Christ be with you all;

**And also with you.**

## **OUR COMMITMENT to SAFE SPACE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT of the LAND:**

We believe all people are made in the image of God and are entitled to dignity and respect. At Grace United Church we try to offer a safe, inclusive and generous space for all who are seeking a faith community – people of all gender identities, sexual orientations, races, ages and abilities. We are committed to continuing to learn and grow as we prepare to become an Affirming congregation.

Grace United Church is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabek, Petun, Huron-Wendat, and Mississauga peoples, located within the boundary of Treaty 18 region of 1818. We humbly acknowledge the First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples of Canada As traditional stewards of the land on which we work and worship and are committed to working actively toward genuine restitution and reconciliation.

### **INTROIT:**

**VU #381 “Spirit of Life”**

***Spirit of Life, come unto me.  
Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.  
Blow in the wind, rise in the sea;  
move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.  
Roots hold me close; wings set me free;  
Spirit of Life, come to me, come to me.***

### **OPENING READING:** (From Psalm 103)

As we come together this morning, let us bless the  
Beloved!

May all that is within us, Bless God's holy Name.  
May our souls rejoice, and remember Love's  
goodness

With every step and with every breath.

**For the Beloved lifts us up from despair  
And renews our spirits like the eagle's.**

Let us bless the God of Peace.  
Let us bless the God of Justice.  
Let us bless the God of Truth,  
Who guides us on our way.

**Let us bless the God of mercy.  
Let us bless the God of grace.  
Let us bless the God of steadfast love,  
Unconditional, understanding, forever open to us.**

As far as the heavens are from the earth, so great is  
the Beloved's love for us.  
So great is the Light of Love which emanates from  
the Beloved's heart!  
So great is the Peace which flows from the  
Beloved's Spirit.

**At this very moment, let us bless the Beloved!  
And never forget that all these benefits are here  
with us now.**

**Our hearts are full and ready;  
Our spirits are open and receptive to the call of the  
Beloved.**

**Amen! May it be so! Amen!**

**\*HYMN:**

***"When Our Heart is In a Holy Place"***

*Refrain: When our heart is in a holy place,  
When our heart is in a holy place,  
We are bless'd with love and amazing grace,*

***When our heart is in a holy place.***

- 1) *When we trust the wisdom in each of us,  
Ev'ry color ev'ry creed and kind,  
And we see our faces in each other's eyes,  
Then our heart is in a holy place.***

**Refrain: *When our heart is in a holy place,  
When our heart is in a holy place,  
We are bless'd with love and amazing grace,  
When our heart is in a holy place.***

- 2) *When we tell our story from deep inside,  
And we listen with a loving mind,  
And we hear our voices in each other's words,  
Then our heart is in a holy place.***

**Refrain: *When our heart is in a holy place,  
When our heart is in a holy place,  
We are bless'd with love and amazing grace,  
When our heart is in a holy place.***

- 3) *When we share the silence of sacred space,  
And the God of our Heart stirs within,  
And we feel the power of each other's faith,  
Then our heart is in a holy place.***

**Refrain: *When our heart is in a holy place,  
When our heart is in a holy place,  
We are bless'd with love and amazing grace,  
When our heart is in a holy place.***

### **OPENING PRAYER:**

We gather as a circle of friends.  
We bring our hearts together that we might beat as  
one.

We bring our voices together that we might speak  
with one loud voice.  
We bring our love together, that we might conquer  
the world!

**God bless our hearts, bless our voices, bless our  
love.**

As we think about the world around us,  
Let us pray  
**That we might be a guide for others on the  
path.  
A raft across a turbulent time  
A bridge over troubled water.**

Quiet moment

As we think about people in our own lives, facing  
trouble or darkness or heaviness  
Let us pray  
**That we might be a lamp in the night,  
An open door for someone who is lonely,  
A rest stop on a difficult journey.**

Quiet moment

As we think about our families, our kids and  
grandkids,  
Let us pray  
**That we might be a vessel of unconditional  
love and hope  
A tree that produces miracles  
A banquet of friendship, goodness, and  
integrity**

Quiet moment

May all that we do, all that we pray, all that we  
 have to offer  
 Be in front of us today,  
 Joyful gifts from the depths of our own hearts and  
 spirits.

## *We Listen to Together*

**A Theme Conversation:** On Your Mark!

### **SCRIPTURE READING:**

**Mark 2: 13 – 28 (The Message)**

Then Jesus went again to walk alongside the lake. Again a crowd came to him, and he taught them. Strolling along, he saw Levi, son of Alphaeus, at his work collecting taxes. Jesus said, "Come along with me." He came.

Later Jesus and his disciples were at home having supper with a collection of disreputable guests. Unlikely as it seems, more than a few of them had become followers. The religion scholars and Pharisees saw him keeping this kind of company and lit into his disciples: "What kind of example is this, acting cozy with the misfits?"

Jesus, overhearing, shot back, "Who needs a doctor: the healthy or the sick? I'm here inviting the sin-sick, not the spiritually-fit."

### Feasting or Fasting?

The disciples of John and the disciples of the Pharisees made a practice of fasting. Some people confronted Jesus: "Why do the followers of John and the Pharisees take on the discipline of fasting, but your followers don't?"

Jesus said, "When you're celebrating a wedding, you don't skimp on the cake and wine. You feast.

Later you may need to pull in your belt, but not now. As long as the bride and groom are with you, you have a good time. No one throws cold water on a friendly bonfire. This is Kingdom Come!"

He went on, "No one cuts up a fine silk scarf to patch old work clothes; you want fabrics that match. And you don't put your wine in cracked bottles."

One Sabbath day he was walking through a field of ripe grain. As his disciples made a path, they pulled off heads of grain. The Pharisees told on them to Jesus: "Look, your disciples are breaking Sabbath rules!"

Jesus said, "Really? Haven't you ever read what David did when he was hungry, along with those who were with him? How he entered the sanctuary and ate fresh bread off the altar, with the Chief Priest Abiathar right there watching—holy bread that no one but priests were allowed to eat—and handed it out to his companions?" Then Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made to serve us; we weren't made to serve the Sabbath. The Son of Man is no yes-man to the Sabbath. He's in charge!"

### **RESPONSE:**

These words from scripture are meant to guide us, nurture us, and teach us.

**Thanks be to God!**

### **ANTHEM:**

"Love Knocks and Waits" - D.C. Damon

### **SERMON:**

**"Getting Cozy with the Misfits"**

# *We Respond to God's Word*

## **\*HYMN for LENT:**

**MV # 157 "I Am a Child of God"**

**1) I am a child of God,  
I am a glimpse of God's new creation.  
I am a child of God,  
I am a child of God.**

**2) I am an endless prayer,  
I am a yearning for contemplation,  
I am an endless prayer,  
I am an endless prayer.**

**3) I am an angry voice,  
I am compassion and consternation,  
I am an angry voice,  
I am an angry voice.**

**4) I am a cry for peace,  
I am commitment and dedication,  
I am a cry for peace,  
I am a cry for peace.**

**5) I am a song of joy,  
I am the moment of jubilation,  
I am a song of joy,  
I am a song of joy.**

## **PRAYER OF DEDICATION for the OFFERING:**

The work of creating a world that works for all,  
requires many gifts, many talents, many resources.  
**We bring all that we have, our courage, our strength,  
our prayers and our dreams,**



**our gifts of time and treasure,  
and all the love and acceptance we embody,  
to create God's world of justice and joy.**

Thanks be to God.

**AMEN**

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**phone:** 519-599-2438 to arrange a cheque pick-up, or an e-transfer  
**Mail:** Grace UC, 140 Bruce St. S. PO Box 219, Thornbury, ON. N0H 2P0  
**Care, Prayer, Share**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and the LORD'S PRAYER:** (VU # 910)

### **What's Up at Grace**

## ***We Go Out to Serve***

**\*HYMN:** VU #586

**"We Shall Go Out with Hope of Resurrection"**

- 1) **We shall go out with hope of resurrection;  
we shall go out, from strength to strength go on;  
we shall go out and tell our stories boldly;  
tales of a love that will not let us go.  
We'll sing our songs of wrongs that can be righted;  
we'll dream our dreams of hurts that can be healed;  
we'll weave a cloth of all the world united  
within the vision of new life in Christ.**
- 2) **We'll give a voice to those who have not spoken;  
we'll find the words for those whose lips are sealed;  
we'll make the tunes for those who sing no longer,  
expressive love alive in every heart.  
We'll share our joy with those who still are weeping,  
raise hymns of strength for hearts that break in grief,**

***we'll leap and dance the resurrection story,  
including all in circles of our love.***

**\*COMMISSIONING:**

**\*SUNG BENEDICTION:**

***Go Now in Peace  
Go now in peace. Never be afraid.  
God will go with you each hour of every day,  
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true,  
Know God will guide you in all you do.  
Go now in love, and show you believe.  
Reach out to others so all the world can see.  
God will be there, \*within, around, above.  
Go now in peace, in faith and in love.  
Amen, amen, amen.***

***\*alternate words: watching from above***

**POSTLUDE:**

***"Spring" from The Four Seasons - A. Vivaldi***

**LITURGY SOURCES:**

**OPENING READING:** from Psalm 103 written and arranged by Rev John G Smith

**HYMNS and SUNG VERSES:**

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**SCRIPTURE PASSAGES:**

Scripture Passage from the Message

**Prelude:** “Fanfarinette” - J. P. Rameau

**Anthem:** “Love Knocks and Waits” - D.C. Damon. Words and Music © Hope Publishing Company. One License

**Postlude:** “Spring” from *The Four Seasons* - A. Vivaldi