

Strathearn United Church

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Our Living Statement... Strathearn United Church is a loving Christian community living by faith and action, communicating through worship, education, fellowship and outreach, greeting the future with hope.

Minister	Rev. Sandy Ferguson
Minister Emeritus	Rev. Dr. Don Mayne
Music Director	Kathryn Wood
Musician	Shannon Hiebert
Office Administrator	Rena Spiess
Custodian	Rup, Coverall Services

We, the congregation of Strathearn United Church, are situated on Treaty 6, traditional lands of the First Nations and the Metis People.

Strathearn United Church welcomes you
to our Morning Worship!
24th of March 2024, Sixth Sunday in Lent
Palm/Passion Sunday

WELCOME & GATHERING

MUSICAL PRELUDE

GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE:

*God's reign is already present on our earth in mystery.
When the Lord comes, it will be brought to perfection.
That is the hope of Christians. We know that every
effort to better society, especially when injustice and sin
are so ingrained, is an effort that God blesses,
that God wants, that God demands of us.
-Archbishop Oscar Romero before
he was murdered on the 24th of March 1980*

HYMN: "He Came Riding on a Donkey" VU124

- 1 He came riding on a donkey, he came riding into town; slow and easy kind of lowly he came riding with the dawn. His disciples walked beside him, staying close, a little shy; not too sure where he would guide them, on to live or on to die. But all the morning sang his praises; waking birds and dancing wind; here he is, the Son of David; riding on to take his throne.
- 2 Then the children gathered, singing shouts of laughter, bursting cheer; in the streets their song was ringing, "Hosannas" filled the morning air. Timid adults strained to see him, caught the Spirit, joined

the song; spread their cloaks along before him, branches flashing in the sun. So all the city sang his praises; waking streets and dancing crowd; here he is, the Son of David; our Messiah, Son of God.

3 In our fasting, and our feasting, called to follow in his way; called to walk his road to Easter, called to live his cross today. Hosanna to the Son of David, hosanna in the heavens above; blessed is he who comes to save us, blessed is he who brings his love. Let us join to sing his praises; open hearts and souls to God; he is with us, Son of David; God's Messiah, Christ the Lord.

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PRAYER OF APPROACH:

One: Our Lenten journey is coming to an end. Holy Week awaits us. God, we pray that You be with us, As we walk under the shadow of the cross, And shudder, And wonder, Why did triumph turn into anguish? God, be with us as we struggle with our questions as we walk with Your Son. Amen.

A UNITED CHURCH CREED:

We are not alone, we live in God's world. We believe in God who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit. We trust in God. We are called to be the Church: to celebrate God's presence, to live with respect in Creation, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION & ASSURANCE OF GRACE

"Go to Dark Gethsemane" (Verse 1) VU133

1 Go to dark Gethsemane, you that feel the tempter's power; your Redeemer's conflict see; watch with him one bitter hour; turn not from his grief away: learn from him to watch and pray.

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"Sometimes the best thing we can do for each other is talk honestly about being wrong." -Nadia Bolz-Weber

All: God, in confession we turn to You. We cry Hosanna, then move on with our lives, Business as usual, Hoping someone else will act, Because we doubt our ability to be faithful witnesses to Your hope. God, forgive our doubts in Your love for us. (Silence)

One: God have mercy.

All: Christ have mercy.

One: God have mercy. Thank You. Let us pray together.

All: "Our Father, who 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.

HYMN: "Why Has God Forsaken Me"

VU154

- 1 "Why has God forsaken me?"
cried out Jesus from the cross,
as he shared the loneliness
of our deepest grief and loss.
- 2 At the tomb of Lazarus
Jesus wept with open grief:
grant us, God, the tears which heal
all our pain and unbelief.
- 3 Jesus, as his life expired,
placed himself within God's care:
at our dying, Christ, may we
trust the love which conquers fear.
- 4 Mystery shrouds our life and death
but we need not be afraid,
for the mystery's heart is Love,
God's great love which Christ displayed.

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WE SHARE IN GOD'S WORD

*O God, Your Word is a lamp to our feet, and a light
to our path. Give us grace to receive Your truth
in faith and love. Amen.*

A READING FROM THE GOSPEL OF MARK 11:1-9

One: The Word of God for the People of God

All: Thanks be to God.

MINISTRY OF MUSIC

HOLY WEEK LITANY FROM THE IONA COMMUNITY

One: Jesus. Prince of Peace. Humble and riding on a donkey.

All: Jesus. Disturber of the peace. You upset religion when it gets in the Way of God

One: Jesus. Upsetter of the self-righteous. You turn questions on their head, offering no instant answers, but showing the way.

All: Jesus. Lover of the Lost. You say "forgive" When we want to shout "condemn!"

One: Jesus. Host at the table. You share your best even in the face of our worst.

All: Jesus. Saviour of the world. Yes, even the world which wants you until it meets you.

SERMON

THE WORD OF GOD ENACTED

"Prayer does not mean simply to pour out one's heart. It means rather to find the way to God and to speak with God, whether the heart is full or empty."

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

One: God, we thank you for all good things. For life and love. For health and food. For work and home. For nature's beauty and comfort. For human skills and laughter. For memory and hope, For our connections with one another. And in silence we bring our prayers of thanksgiving to You. (Silence) God, we pray for Your creation, the world we live in. For all who struggle in difficult days. For those who cry out for justice. For those who search for

hope. For those who yearn for healing. For those living their lives hoping for better days. God, the world as we have shaped it fails to be the world You hoped for. Yet You have faith that we will be Your witness to Your love for all. So, God we pray that you will fill us with Your justice, Your strength and Your compassion. And in doing so we will be the people who reach out to the lost of this world and say, "You are not alone." Let it begin with prayer as God we come to You, with the prayers of our hearts. For those who we know who struggle with illness of the mind, body and spirit. For those who are alone. For those who yearn for connection. These names we bring to you. (Silence) Amen.

HYMN: "Ride On, Ride On, the Time is Right" VU126

- 1 Ride on, ride on, the time is right: the roadside crowds scream with delight; palm branches mark the pilgrim way where beggars squat and children play.
- 2 Ride on, ride on, your critics wait, intrigue and rumour circulate; new lies abound in word and jest, and truth becomes a suspect guest.
- 3 Ride on, ride on, while well aware that those who shout and wave and stare are mortals who, with common breath, can crave for life and lust for death.
- 4 Ride on, ride on, though blind with tears, though voiceless now and deaf to jeers. Your path is clear, though few can tell their garments pave the road to hell.

- 5 Ride on, ride on, God's love demands. Justice and peace lie in your hands. Evil and angel voices rhyme: you are the man and this the time.

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SENDING FORTH:

One: The excitement is over, the crowds drift away looking for other entertainment. Jesus wonders, what now? Ahead lies violence in the Temple. The sharing of stories and a last meal. A struggle in a garden and death on a cross. A time of endings. A time of new beginnings? Amen.

POSTLUDE

PRAYER CYCLE OF THE WEEK

Our Family: Kayla Bekolay, Brett Bekolay, Ken Bodell, Esther Borynec, Karen Boschee

Within Strathearn: Group Leaders

Northern Spirit: Fort McMurray: First PC (First United), Wainwright: Grace Pastoral Charge (Grace United)

World Council of Churches:
Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Connect & Share Hosts:

Please join us downstairs for coffee following worship.

Mar 24: Worship, Christian Development

Mar 31: No Coffee / Happy Easter!

April 7: Mission & Outreach / M & P / Regional Rep.

Good Friday Musical Service: March 29, 2:00 pm