

ST. ANDREW'S HALL

**2026**

# Lenten Devotion Guide



Faithful Presence.  
**PUBLIC WITNESS.**





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# Welcome from the Dean

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.  
(Psalm 51:10)*

**Lent arrives each year as a gracious invitation**—a season when the Church slows its pace, listens more deeply, and opens itself again to the renewing work of God in Jesus Christ. Here at St. Andrew's Hall at the University of British Columbia, a college of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, we join Christians around the world in this journey of reflection, repentance, and hope. Through our campus-based witness and the work of our Centre for Missional Leadership, St. Andrew's Hall is committed to educating and equipping missional leaders through teaching, hospitality, and witness for Christ's church of tomorrow, today. We pray this Lenten Guide will be a source of inspiration and encouragement for you and your church as it has been for others over the years.

The world can feel like a scary place at this moment, and as Christians we turn to God for comfort, assurance, and direction on how to live out our discipleship to Jesus in ways that seek justice and participate in God's reconciling love and peace in this moment. The 2026 Lenten Devotion Guide once again offers you grace-filled support as we draw closer to scripture as well as to the heart of our college community. The season of Lent is not about striving harder or proving ourselves worthy, but rather allowing God to create something new within us—a softened heart, a clearer vision, a renewed spirit. As you read these daily reflections, may you find space to breathe, listen, and encounter the God revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who meets us with compassion and calls us toward new life.

Here at St. Andrew's Hall, we are especially thankful for the voices within our community who have contributed to this guide by offering stories, prayers, and insights from their own journeys of faith. A special word of gratitude goes to the Rev. Rebecca Simpson, Assistant Dean, whose thoughtful editing and pastoral wisdom helped shape this resource with care and clarity.

On behalf of the St. Andrew's Hall community, I pray this Lenten season deepens your trust in God's grace and prepares your heart for the joy of Easter.



The Reverend Ross A. Lockhart, PhD,  
*Dean of St. Andrew's Hall*

# Ash Wednesday, February 18

## MATTHEW 6:1-21

*Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth...but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven... For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:19-21)*

**The quiet of a Canadian winter** is a good time to refresh our spiritual practices, and Jesus gives us something to focus on here: fasting, giving, praying, and forgiving. Each of these are addressed in Jesus's teaching from Matthew 6:1-21. Not only do we receive instructions on prayer that has become the church's beloved "Lord's Prayer," we are also reminded of the value of embodying forgiveness toward others.

What I find most compelling in this passage is that Christ urges his followers to practice these things "in secret." By doing these things in secret, we not only avoid the pitfalls of hypocrisy, but also give ourselves the opportunity to draw our minds into our heart, our inner prayer chamber. Here we can fully listen for Christ's invitation. In quiet times and places, we can regain alignment between our inner being and our outward actions, which naturally results in treasure. Unifying our hearts with Christ's self-giving love reveals the reality of God's Kingdom and bears the fruit of new life and reconciliation within us and around us.

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**The Rev. Rebecca Simpson** is the Assistant Dean of St. Andrew's Hall and lives in the hills of Mission, BC.

*Dear Jesus, as we slow down and move more deeply into our heart spaces this Lenten season, may we discover again your treasure alive in us and all around us. In your holy name we pray, AMEN.*

# Thursday, February 19

**JONAH 3:1–10**

*The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time. (Jonah 3:1)*

**Last year I led a study tour through Greece and Türkiye,** and our group spent a morning walking the ancient streets of Ephesus. The marble stones were worn smooth by centuries of footsteps, and the air carried that strange mix of history and holiness that often settles over sacred places. Together, we read stories from the Book of Acts and Epistle to the Ephesians, listening carefully to the witness of the early church in that place.

As we approached the famous Library of Celsus, imagining Paul and Timothy strolling these same roads, one member of our group slowed down a little, running her hand along the carved columns. “It’s overwhelming,” she said quietly to me. “So many people have walked this road before us. And, in many ways, it feels like I’m only just learning how to walk mine.” Later, she shared that participating in the study tour almost didn’t happen, with all the demands of work and home, but she was glad God gave her the chance to experience what had become for her a moment of grace. In a small group discussion, we reflected on being in Ephesus, a significant place of Paul’s ministry, and his emphasis throughout the New Testament letters on the need to “walk worthily.” This member of our group agreed that part of pilgrimage in another place was reflecting on God’s grace and what it means to walk with God back at home.

Jonah’s famous story from the Old Testament is full of that kind of grace. God calls Jonah, Jonah flees, and yet the word of the Lord comes again. Not once, but repeatedly. God’s mercy extends not only to Nineveh but also to Jonah himself—inviting him back into the work of compassion, even after he has run in the opposite direction.

This season of Lent reminds us that God is the One who calls us a second or third time, again and again, for as long as it takes. Like that member of our group in Ephesus, we may find ourselves surprised by the persistence of grace—surprised that God still speaks, still invites, still believes renewal and reconciliation is possible. The journey of repentance is not about shame; it is about discovering that God’s mercy is always ahead of us, waiting on the road.

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*God of second chances made known to us in Jesus, thank you for calling us again even when we resist or wander. As we walk through this Lenten season, open our hearts to your mercy and give us courage to respond to your invitation. Lead us toward renewal and shape us into people who reflect your compassion. In Jesus’ name. AMEN.*

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**The Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart** is the Dean of St. Andrew’s Hall.

# Friday, February 20

## PSALM 51:1-17

*Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions. (Psalm 51:1)*

**Lent is a sacred 40-day journey** in which we are gently invited to prepare our hearts. It echoes Jesus' own 40 days in the wilderness and calls us into repentance, not as a burden of guilt, but as a loving turning away from all that pulls us from God, the giver of life. Through prayer and fasting, Lent creates space for honest self-examination, confession, and healing. It is a season that invites us to tell the truth about ourselves, trusting that God meets us not with condemnation, but with mercy.

The passage before us today, offers one of the most honest prayers of repentance in scripture. Here we are given a glimpse behind the curtain into the broken heart of King David, a mighty leader and psalmist, yet also an adulterer and a murderer. Here, David comes to the painful realization that his sin has not only harmed others but has endangered his relationship with God, whom he loves and longs to serve. "I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me," he confesses.

Like David, we are called to face the ways we have distanced ourselves from God. There are relationships we have wounded, words we wish we could take back, and choices that have led us away from love. Yet Psalm 51 reminds us that God does not desire perfection or self-reliance. What God welcomes is a broken and contrite heart. God exalts the humble and draws near to those who know their need.

In this season of Lent, we are invited to place our brokenness before God and pray with confidence: "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love and abundant mercy." Because we trust that God alone can cleanse, restore, and renew us, as we continue our journey toward Easter with hope and faithfulness.

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**Nehemia Neuhiša** is a former resident of St. Andrew's Hall. During his studies in Vancouver, he was involved in children's and youth ministry, as well as pastoral ministry in senior living communities. He recently received a call from Stamford Presbyterian, Niagara Falls, Ontario.

***Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love and abundant mercy.***  
**AMEN.**



# Saturday, February 21

## MATTHEW 18:1-7

*Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 18:3)*

**Recently on a ferry ride home to Bowen Island,** I saw a mother and her child walking around and around the passenger deck, passing by my seat every few minutes. Each time they passed, the child would call out a different animal, and both the child and mother would pretend to be that creature. First, a lion. Then, a monkey. The next time an eagle, and finally a snake. The delightful scene made me smile, and that reaction was shared by passengers around. The best part was seeing how it changed the mother. No doubt she was at the end of a long day, and yet her child's enthusiastic imagination invited her into joy and wonder.

In today's reading, Jesus welcomes a child in the presence of his disciples. He makes clear that childlike wonder, imagination, and openness to divine presence is necessary for kingdom people. Too often as adults we can become jaded or cynical. Time spent with children often reminds us of the different ways human beings can perceive and experience the world, perhaps even recalling a time in our own life when we were able to see things more easily through the lens of wonder or faith. Missiologist David Fitch writes on this passage:

There is more going on here than Jesus merely using the child's humble posture as metaphor for what is necessary to enter the kingdom (although it is that). Jesus is saying that in entering the space of a child, his presence is here, and to the extent one can submit to his presence, as this child did, a reorientation of the world will begin...here the kingdom will take shape. (*The Seven Practices of the Church on Mission*, p 73)

In our Lenten journey, how might God be inviting us to look at the world differently, seeing God's creation and divine action through eyes of wonder and sanctified imagination?

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**The Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart** is the Dean of St. Andrew's Hall.

*Loving God, help us to see you in all the seasons of life and rejoice with child-like wonder at your grace and goodness. AMEN.*

# First Sunday of Lent, February 22

## ROMANS 5:12–19

*Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous. (Romans 5:18, 19)*

**The Apostle Paul tells us** that there are two patterns in humankind. The first he names “Adam.” It is a pattern darkened by sin and ending in the utter darkness of death apart from God. Not everything in human life is wicked but everything human has a flaw, namely sin. By calling this pattern Adam, Paul reminds us that this dark flaw is universal. It is not the property of a few evil people or groups—it affects all humankind. And the Adam pattern goes back as far as we can trace human life.

But there is a second pattern, the pattern of Jesus Christ. It too is universal. As the sin of one infected us all, so the grace of Jesus Christ gives life to all. Now, in time, the pattern has been made known in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And God will remake us according to that pattern. “So one man’s act of righteousness, leads to justification and life for all” (5:18).

I’m reminded of something I saw when visiting the Cave at Niaux in the south of France, a complex system of underground chambers containing vivid drawings from the paleo-human past. Our guide gave us miners’ helmets with headlamps and led us into the depths. We scrambled over rocks, stooped through narrow passages lit by the occasional bulb. “Dear God, don’t let the light go out,” I prayed. How deep were we? How long had we ventured? I didn’t know. Finally, we reached a wider cavern and the guide told us to switch off our helmet lights. Utter darkness more complete than in the darkest night on the surface. The guide suddenly threw on the switch and on the cave wall in front of us were painted figures of bison and running horses, executed as skilfully as any modern artist. When Jesus came, the light entered the darkened cave of human existence.

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**The Rev. Dr. Stephen Farris** is a retired Presbyterian minister, and Dean Emeritus of St. Andrew’s Hall.

*Good Lord, let the light of Christ come on, in us and through us. Through Christ our Light and our Lord. AMEN.*

# Monday, February 23

## MATTHEW 4:1-11

*The Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.  
(Matthew 4:1)*

**Temptation is a struggle for many of us.** Social media offers glimpses of a better life, a slimmer waist, or a bigger house. While real hunger exists in the world, most of us are blessed to rarely experience it.

Temptation for us might mean reaching for another cookie on the plate, or choosing the easy path instead of sharing the burdens of our neighbours. It can be easy to confuse our needs with our wants. We should seek to be steadfast against temptation, but it is easy to succumb to our whims and wishes, and in doing so, we grow weaker spiritually.

But what did temptation mean to Jesus, who fasted for 40 days and 40 nights in the wilderness before being tempted by the devil? When I read this passage, I think about the Lord's Prayer. We are taught to pray "and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (Matthew 6:13). Jesus faced temptation in a weakened state of hunger, yet remained steadfast, drawing strength from the word of God. Ultimately he was delivered from evil.

During the season of Lent, we might freely give up something that we enjoy like chocolate or wine, but we rarely go hungry. Our sacrifice is largely symbolic, but resisting temptation, even for 40 days, makes us stronger and brings us closer to God.

This passage encourages me to be mindful of sacrifice, to draw strength from my faith, and to be steadfast in the face of temptations.

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**Helen Sawchuk, CPA**, is the Finance Manager at St. Andrew's Hall. She lives with her family in the Kitsilano neighbourhood of Vancouver and has a passion for utilizing her financial and accounting skills to support the ministry of St. Andrew's Hall.

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*Dear Jesus, help us find the strength to be steadfast against temptation, to endure sacrifice and hardship, and to maintain an abiding love of the word of God. AMEN.*

# Tuesday, February 24

## PSALM 32

*Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.  
(Psalm 32:1)*

**Growing up, I attended an elementary school** that emphasized math and science learning, and one of my most significant interests was volcanoes. For a very long time, Montreal's Mount Royal was rumoured to be a dormant volcano. This myth piqued my fascination.

In high school, we participated in multiple science fairs and small science projects, and my fascination with volcanoes grew. I learned about the different parts of a volcano and how it erupts. And of course, at a math and science school, we experimented with these volcanic eruptions, especially with Coke bottles mixed with Mentos. I took this experimentation into my own hands, which was messy and got me into some trouble. Learning about volcanoes was cool because it taught me about reactions, pressure, and eruption. In the natural world, volcanic eruptions are a cool image, but in reality, there's a lot of devastation when the built-up pressure of gases and lava pour out.

Sometimes, we store up all our emotional turmoil and anger, only to erupt like a volcano. It's often not pretty. However, our passage today calls us to confess it all to God. We should not keep it all inside, but trust in the Lord. In this Lenten season of waiting for Christ's death and resurrection, we are urged to lean into our time with God. The psalmist encourages us to confess and pray to our Living God, for only He can forgive sins. So, friends, don't hold it all in or hide from God. He wants to hear from you and provide a refuge. And through this posture of repentance, you will be blessed.

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**Joe Ragbir** grew up in Montreal and moved to beautiful British Columbia in 2022. He is currently pursuing his MDiv and is a St. Andrew's Hall resident.

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*Lord, I confess that I have been a sinner, and I have sometimes bottled up my sins, transgressions, iniquity, and emotions. Jesus, please accept my confession to you and realign me with your heart. AMEN.*

# Wednesday, February 25

## DEUTERONOMY 26:1–11

*The Lord brought us out of Egypt...and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. So now [we] bring the first of the fruit. ...Then [we]...shall celebrate with all the bounty that the Lord your God has given to [us]. (Deuteronomy 26:8–11)*

**I am captivated by the significance of the Lord descending** on the mountain to be with Moses. God's coming down in this way demonstrates his desire for relationship with his people. This passage gives us a verbal, first-person revelation in which God describes himself as merciful, gracious, and slow to anger. It is important to see the stark contrast between the iniquity God allows to persist over three and four generations and his steadfast love and faithfulness unto thousands of generations, noting, too, that Ezekiel later states there is no punishment to the next generation. Simply, God's blessings are without end.

Exodus 34:6–7 has been described as the Old Testament sibling to the New Testament's John 3:16: the whole of God's character and grace and love in one concise statement. God says, "This is who I really am." We are invited into the same revelation. We are also invited to understand that God is not done with us yet. We come to the top of the mountain with our own sin and our own brokenness. Like Moses, we are not met with rejection, but instead with God's steadfast love and faithfulness.

This Lenten season, be encouraged to prepare your heart for Jesus' willing sacrifice for you. God sent Jesus to repair our relationship with him—the only appropriate response is to bow our heads to the earth and worship, just like Moses did on the mountaintop. God so deeply desires to be in right relationship with you.

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**Jamie Reid-Anderson** is a prairie girl at heart and lives with her family in North Vancouver, BC. She is a Candidate for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church in Canada studying for an MDiv. She attends St. Andrew's and St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church in North Vancouver.

*Gracious God, help me to understand that you desire relationship with me. Lead me closer to your heart so that I may grow in your mercy, grace, and steadfast love and faithfulness through Jesus Christ's sacrifice for me. AMEN.*

# Thursday, February 26

## 2 TIMOTHY 1:3-7

*I thank God, whom I serve, as my ancestors did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.*

*For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. (2 Timothy 1:3-7)*

### Keep that special gift ablaze!

Paul's letter to his friend Timothy highlights how faith can be passed down through generations. Eunice and Lois, Timothy's mother and grandmother, were strong believers who helped shape his life from childhood.

The letter also opens a window into a warm, personal relationship: Paul prays constantly for Timothy, remembers his tears, and looks forward to seeing him again. The Christian faith is kindled in community, and our relationships and friendships play a significant role in growing together in Christ as we pray for one another, share life, and worship together.

Timothy is also reminded that God has given him a Spirit not of fear, but of power, love, and self-discipline. Paul encourages him to rekindle the fire of God's gift in his heart to be an effective and faithful witness to Christ in a world that opposes the Gospel.

During this Lenten season, Paul's words offer encouragement amid political divisions, international instability, anger, and social unrest. Even amid the shadow of Paul's imprisonment, the message of his letter remains hopeful. Followers of Jesus are encouraged not to be ashamed of the gospel but to see Paul as a courageous example of faithfulness and witness to Christ. The tone of the letter reflects faithfulness, loving mentorship, and the confidence that God's Spirit equips believers to stand firm with courage and love. This is a reminder that, even in an inhospitable world, we all have a sense of God's Spirit, and Lent is the time to rekindle that fire.

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**The Rev. Daniel Martinez** serves as Minister at St. Andrew's Presbyterian, Duncan, BC. A former St. Andrew's Hall resident, Daniel continues to connect with St. Andrew's Hall through the programs of the Centre for Missional Leadership.

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*God of grace, you are the source of our strength and joy. Rekindle the fire of your love and Spirit within us to be faithful witnesses to Christ in our world. AMEN.*

# Friday, February 27

## MATTHEW 18:10-14

*And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. (Matthew 18:13)*

**The image of the lost sheep** features in many Sunday school classrooms and has been the source of more than one Vacation Bible School craft over the years. Just reading the passage recalls, for me, the cotton balls, markers, and popsicle stick rendering of sheep and shepherd. This classic story offers us a picture of God's deep value for each of us, and the lengths God goes to in Jesus Christ to redeem and restore us to the fold.

There is, however, a recklessness in this story. What about the other 99 sheep? Imagine a teacher abandoning their entire class of children to look for the one student who had wandered off in the middle of a school field trip on the streets of the downtown core. This would not end well. But the story makes a clear point: the love of the Shepherd drives him to action. There is no one too far removed from God who is undeserving of God's love.

I invite you to take time today to pray and remember all the times in your life when you have felt distant from God. How did God close that gap? How did God show up in unexpected ways, unexpected places and unexpected people, to remind you of how dearly you are loved? How might you be that same kind of surprising presence in the life of those around you, reminding them that there are no limits to how far God will go to love them?

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**The Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart** is the Dean of St. Andrew's Hall.

*God of unlimited love and power, we thank you for your faithfulness in seeking us out and bringing us home. In Jesus' name, AMEN.*

# Saturday, February 28

## PSALM 121

*I lift up my eyes to the mountains—  
where does my help come from?  
(Psalm 121:1)*

**On a pilgrimage along the Camino de Santiago**, I experienced the most difficult day of the trip at the end of my first week. Needing time to pray and wanting to visit a remote sixth-century monastery hidden in the forest, I walked alone for the day. Halfway through the forest, the ground started to move under my feet. No, it wasn't an earthquake—I hadn't eaten properly on the trip and my strength faltered. Not a single soul was in sight, and I remember praying to God for help.

This modern-day pilgrimage is no comparison to that of the ancient world. The Israelites were required to make pilgrimage to Jerusalem three times a year for the religious festivals. Pilgrimages were dangerous—the rough terrain, the scorching Mediterranean sun, the hunger, the lack of accommodations, and even thieves who hid at every corner to take advantage of the exhausted lot.

Psalms 121 was one of the songs that were sung on that road. The Songs of Ascent, also known as Pilgrim Songs, are a collection of 15 psalms that prepared worshippers for the celebration ahead. Their physical climb up to the mountain plateau city of Jerusalem was an echo of their spiritual ascent toward God. And they sought God's mighty presence and help for the journey.

As we make our pilgrimage to the cross and the eventual empty grave this Lenten season, may God watch over you, not let your foot slip, and shade you from all harm.

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**The Rev. Angie Song** is a PhD student researching the missional identity of the second-generation immigrant church. She is a minister in the PCC and a former resident of St. Andrew's Hall.

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*God of pilgrims, we lift our eyes to you to see that your eyes watch over our coming and going both now and forevermore. Thank you, Lord. AMEN.*



# Second Sunday of Lent, March 1

## JOHN 3:1-17

*Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him." Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again." (John 3:1-3)*

**In Korean culture**, teachers have historically held a vital role, commanding profound social respect. A traditional teaching passed down from the era of kings states, "The king, the parent, and the teacher are one." This unique cultural value is clearly reflected in "Teacher's Day," similar to Mother's Day, where students express their deep gratitude and honour through various gifts. Similarly, in Jewish society, those called "rabbi" occupied an exceptionally high social standing. They were honoured with formal greetings in marketplaces and at banquets. There was even a saying: "A father gives life in this world, but a teacher (rabbi) gives life in the world to come." This illustrates just how much they were recognized and revered.

In today's passage, Nicodemus addresses Jesus as "Rabbi," even calling him a "teacher who has come from God." This shows Nicodemus' immense respect of and humility before Jesus. However, today's text reveals that Jesus is far more than just a great teacher—he is the ultimate embodiment of God's love and the only way to salvation. He walked the path of the cross, a path no other rabbi could ever take, and demonstrated a sacrificial love for humanity that no other teacher could offer. Through his work, what he has done, he has become not merely our teacher, but our Saviour. May we truly know Him as our Saviour who accomplished everything through his sacrifice, love, and grace. I pray that we all may confess him as the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

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**The Rev. Chanil Lee** is an associate pastor at Disciple Methodist Church and a PhD candidate in Homiletics. Chanil and his family live at St. Andrew's Hall.

*I pray that the love of Jesus, who became our Saviour, will be upon all of us.*

# Monday, March 2

## LUKE 7:1–10

*When Jesus had finished saying all this to the people who were listening, he entered Capernaum. There a centurion's servant, whom his master valued highly, was sick and about to die. The centurion heard of Jesus and sent some elders of the Jews to him, asking him to come and heal his servant. When they came to Jesus, they pleaded earnestly with him, "This man deserves to have you do this, because he loves our nation and has built our synagogue." So Jesus went with them. (Luke 7:1–6)*

**In Luke 7:7, the centurion says,** "But say the word and my servant will be healed." In commemorating Jesus' Last Supper, we say, "only say the word Lord, and I will be healed." It is no wonder that Jesus was amazed by the faith of this Roman soldier whose words have informed our own as we remember Jesus' sacrifice and look to celebrate his resurrection.

So, who was this centurion? He was a man who understood authority. He commanded many by virtue of the position he had acquired through his training and achievement. The Jewish elders in this passage also had a certain authority and petitioned Jesus on behalf of the centurion and his slave. They had seen what the commander could do (namely, build a synagogue) but they did not know what he truly thought of Jesus. Like many of their peers, the Jewish elders may have asked Jesus, "by what authority do you do this?" Whether they understood the true source of his authority, they knew Jesus had the reputation of a healer, so they approached him out of obligation. In contrast, the centurion grasped that Jesus' authority came from "above"—from the spiritual realm, from the God of the universe. As for Jesus, he was not relying on the centurion, nor the Jewish elders, nor his disciples, nor the crowds to cede authority to him. No, Jesus knew his power came from the Father. And that power could change the lives of believers and those they loved here on earth.

We may not have the faith of the centurion—I know I don't. But as we walk through Lent in a posture of repentance, asking God to deepen our relationship with him, may we be like both the centurion and the Jewish elders, and reach out to Jesus, giving of ourselves out of the knowledge of the Triune God.

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*Jesus, forgive and heal me so that I may walk in your path for the benefit of those you love and for the realization of your kingdom here on earth. AMEN.*

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**Mary Rozsa de Coquet** has 25 years' leadership experience in the philanthropic sector at the local, provincial, and national level. Currently, Mary is the Convener of the St. Andrew's Hall Board, Representative Elder in the Presbytery of Calgary Macleod, and Session member at Grace Presbyterian Church, where she was baptized as an infant.

# Tuesday, March 3

**MATTHEW 17:1–9**

*This is my Son, whom I love. (Matthew 17:5)*

**Suddenly, without warning, Jesus is transformed.** The veil is lifted. Jesus begins to glow. Not only did his face shine like the sun, but his clothes became as white as the light. Even today, it's hard to keep clothes white. In Jesus' time, brilliant white clothing was even more rare, symbolizing importance and purity.

In that moment, however briefly, Jesus let his disciples see who He really was—without the clothing of humanity. Jesus was God, the second person of the Trinity, and the brilliance, majesty, and splendour of his glory was on full display. The Greek word used here for transfiguration is where we get the English word “metamorphosis.” Like how a caterpillar becomes a butterfly. However, Jesus is not metamorphosed into something new, but back to his eternal self. For a moment, the three disciples get to see a glimpse, a brief snapshot, a foretaste of the Kingdom of God in its full splendour. At that moment, on the mountain, heaven and earth touched.

Squinting, shielding their eyes from the light, they then realize that Jesus is not alone. Instead, he has been joined by Moses and Elijah. Then a voice came from the heavens saying: “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”

Doesn't that sound familiar? We say the same exact words from God 14 chapters earlier, in Matthew 3, when Jesus was coming up out of the waters of baptism. The first time God spoke through the clouds was in this wonderful affirmation of a Father's love for His Son during his baptism.

Words of encouragement and support for what was to take place next, days of trial and temptations in the desert. And here it happens again!

Again, God speaks through the clouds. Again, words of affection for his son, and again, words of encouragement for what will take place next, what we will read in the next chapters—of the pain, isolation, and suffering of his journey to the cross.

These same words again encourage Jesus to stay on the path. To stay the course. I think that is why Moses and Elijah appear. Moses represents the law, Elijah represents the prophet, and together, they represent the Old Testament, or rather its fulfilment in Jesus. I don't know what was said in their conversation, but I'm pretty sure it wasn't to dissuade Jesus from enduring what lay before him, but instead, encouraging him to do exactly as he planned—to go to Jerusalem and to the cross. The significance of the transfiguration for Jesus was that it served to encourage and strengthen him for the beginning of his journey to Calvary.

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**The Rev. Albert YS Chu** is the lead pastor of the Tapestry Church and a fellow at the Centre for Missional Leadership at St. Andrew's Hall.

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*Jesus, thank you for the willingness to journey to the cross and to your death. May we take up our crosses and follow you. AMEN.*

# Wednesday, March 4

## EZEKIEL 36:22-32

*"For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. Then you will live in the land I gave your ancestors; you will be my people, and I will be your God." (Ezekiel 36:24-28)*

**It can be difficult to find comfort** in these words offered by Ezekiel. They are harsh and unforgiving. This passage does not shy away from a difficult truth—we will be cleansed and changed, yes, but the things we have done won't simply be erased.

In our discomfort we want to push these words away. It's tempting to turn this passage into a straightforward judgment of ourselves or others, to oversimplify a challenging passage into one-sided shame and blame, to let our hearts turn to stone so they will not hurt anymore.

Yet these very words can also be an invitation.

The truth they convey is critical, because our transgressions are real and significant. Still, God's promise is just as real and far more powerful. We will be gathered and cleansed, restored and cared for.

Accept this call to repent and acknowledge your part in the pain and hurt of the world. In things done and undone, said and unsaid, in the wider world or just your corner of it. Bring that truth, even if it is uncomfortable, to God and God alone for judgement.

Then let your heart soften. Let the water wash over you and rinse away what has been. Let yourself see and hear the blessings intertwined with the struggles. Move forward on your Lenten journey with a new heart, a new spirit, and a renewed relationship with God.

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***Righteous God, help me to face difficult truths and accept your restoration. AMEN.***

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**Nicole Lindgren** is a certified candidate for ministry in the PCC and a student who has been working on her MDiv as a distance student. The exact distance changes throughout the year as she spends time in Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and sometimes Iona, Scotland.

# Thursday, March 5

## EXODUS 16:1–8

*Then the Lord said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days." (Exodus 16:4, 5)*

**As I was praying the other night,** I found myself thanking God for being such a forgiving Father when a rather obvious realization dawned on me: God not only listens to all 8.3 billion people alive on earth right now, but he has listened to all of humanity throughout history. While this may sound simple at first, it becomes much more profound when you really think about the number of people involved. After a quick Google search, it is estimated that around 117 billion people have been born on Earth since the dawn of humanity. That is a staggering amount of prayers, complaints, fears, and hopes. If there is one thing that we, as humans, are particularly good at, it is noticing what we do not have while often overlooking what God has already abundantly provided. This tendency always stands out to me when I read the Exodus story. The Israelites grumbled and longed to return to what was familiar, even if that familiarity meant slavery. Their lack of trust in God's plan caused them to forget the freedom He had already given them. Yet God did not send them back into bondage; instead, He continued to provide for them, even in the midst of their complaints.

In our own lives, we grumble far more often than we may realize—sometimes intentionally, sometimes without even noticing. Yet God does not respond with anger or punishment. He responds with patience and unconditional provision. The important question, however, is whether we recognize his gifts and his love or if we quickly move on to the next thing without giving thanks. Ultimately, we must remember that God has provided, he is providing, and he always will. We are held securely in hands that are both safe and more than capable and full of forgiveness.

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**Annemeij Koedood** is an undergrad English Literature major at UBC. She is the soup maker at SAH and has worked as head cook for Camp Douglas in the summer for the last three years. Annemeij hopes to become an English teacher or work with children later in her career.

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*Thank you, God, for your continued provision and love. Help me to recognize you at work in my life every day. In Jesus Christ, AMEN.*

# Friday, March 6

## COLOSSIANS 1:15–23

*The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible (Colossians 1:15, 16)*

**Usually, we think of Jesus being with God** as the one made in God's image before the creation of humanity. We might even think of it as something like a blueprint or an idea of what humanity will look like once we are saved by grace, renewed in the image of God as Christ-like people.

But today's passage invites us to see something even larger and more awe-inspiring. Paul tells us that Jesus is the image of the invisible God—not merely the first human in God's image, but the One who stands before and above all creation. Christ is not simply part of the created order; He is the One through whom all things came into being.

Today's reading makes an important statement: Jesus was with God first, over all other creation. Stop and think about that for a moment—Jesus is woven into the very fabric of creation itself. Paul writes that Christ was with God in the beginning, which means Jesus is connected to the fullness of all creation—ocean waves, birds in trees, mice in fields, bears in forests, fish in the sea—not just humanity. If we view Christ as the precursor to all creation, then the entire cosmos is renewed in the resurrection of Jesus. He is a complete person in the image of God and is the blueprint from which all creation was made new: the cosmos, the world, and humanity. Christ is in all of it, and if we live in Christ, we are complete. Take a moment to reflect and rejoice in the fact that we are part of God's plan for this redeemed world. In Christ, we discover our truest identity and purpose.

As we progress through Lent, we must remember that we know what is to happen, but it does not end with the crucifixion—it continues with the resurrection, our salvation, and the renewal of all creation.

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**Alicia Monson** is a second-year MDiv student, a certified student in the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and a resident of St. Andrew's Hall.

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*Dear Lord, be with us as we journey through this season of Lent. Renew our lives with your love through the grace of Jesus Christ. AMEN.*

# Saturday, March 7

## JOHN 4:1–42

*Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship to the Spirit and in truth. (John 4:23, 24)*

**In the story of the woman at the well**, there are so many directions we could pursue, but what stands out to me is the directive to “worship in the Spirit and in truth.” As Jesus’ followers assembled in what we today call “churches” and “congregations,” our first and foremost priority is worship—not fundraising, not paying the bills, and (*ahem*) not mission. Worship.

It is only out of this worship (and love) that all other directives, passions, and even missions of the church spring forth. Worship.

Heartfelt, passionate, mysterious, glorious worship.

Not an hour on Sunday assembled merely out of routine and repetition. Not a spectator sport or an event with an audience to consume an hour or so on a Sunday morning (or any other day or time of the week, for that matter). And our worship certainly isn’t limited to a place like a building.

Not only does our worship recognize God as Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, and so much more, but it is also this pastor’s hope that our people truly get the opportunity to connect with the divine presence while we worship: to truly experience the holy mystery, to worship *with* and *in* the Spirit.

And then that brings us to Truth: I can’t help but be reminded of Jesus saying, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life” (John 14:6). With all kinds of competing ideas out there today, it seems one person’s truth can be in conflict with another person’s. Are there variations of truth? Who holds the truth in these times? So many “Christians” claim to hold the truth, but perhaps the better question might be: Do you own the truth, or does the truth own you?

Now re-read those questions—but this time, use “Jesus” in place of the word “truth.” Do we own Jesus? Or does Jesus own us?

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**The Rev. Janice Doyle** serves the faith family of Caledonian Presbyterian Church in Caledonia, just south of Hamilton, Ontario, and she is a 2025 Guder Scholar with the Centre for Missional Leadership.

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*Loving God, we give you thanks for the amazing opportunities to worship in Spirit and in truth. Empower us in Spirit and truth as we worship, and may we always be mindful that we don’t own the truth, but the truth owns us, and may we live accordingly so. AMEN.*

# Third Sunday of Lent, March 8

EXODUS 17:1-7

*Is the Lord among us or not? (Exodus 17:7)*

## **The wilderness has a way of exposing what is already in us.**

Israel has been freed from Egypt, yet freedom does not spare them from thirst. They camp at Rephidim and find no water. The people cry out, though sadly not in prayer, but in accusation. *Why did you bring us out of Egypt to make us die of thirst?* They cry (17:3). Their fear turns quickly into blame.

Moses, caught between God and a desperate people, does the only faithful thing he can do: he brings the complaint to the Lord. And God responds not with rebuke, but with provision. When Moses is told to strike the rock, water flows where none should exist.

Lent invites us into that a question similar to the ones Israel cried out with. We know what it is to feel dry—spiritually tired, emotionally depleted—unsure if God is still near to us. Like Israel, we may long for certainty, for visible proof that God has not abandoned us in the wilderness of unanswered prayers.

Yet this story reminds us that God's presence is not measured by comfort, but by faithfulness. God stands on the rock before Moses. God is already there before the water flows.

In Lent, we learn to bring our thirst honestly to God. We learn that grace often comes not by escaping the wilderness, but by meeting God within it; drawing life from places we never expected.

The rock still gives water. And God is still among us.

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**The Rev. Daniel A. Surya** is a former resident of St. Andrew's Hall, and now serves as Minister of Word and Sacraments at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Lethbridge, Alberta

*Dear Jesus, we thirst for your gracious presence in our lives. Draw life from new places in us. AMEN.*



# Monday, March 9

## PSALM 95

*In his hand are the depths of the earth; and the mountain peaks belong to him.  
The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. (Psalm 95:4, 5)*

**Have you ever held an infant in your arms?** Their cute little face looking up at you, safely tucked in your protective embrace, their whole body fitting comfortably in your arms. How small they are, how precious and wonderfully made! How they trust you, closing their eyes and falling asleep without a care in the world, somehow knowing your bosom is a safe place to rest.

Today's reading tells us that the seemingly endless depths of the sea, the towering heights of the mountains and the vast expanse of land all fit snugly in God's hand. He is the Creator of all, gently yet firmly holding the whole world and all its' people in his arms. This includes you. You are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14), a child of God through faith. He looks after you, provides for you, and longs for your attention. Today, as we hear his voice, let us come into his presence with thanksgiving, entering into the rest of Christ our Saviour. Let us unburden our hearts and lives from sin, worries, and doubts. We are snug, safe, and carefree in the arms of our heavenly Father.

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**Silva Kraal** is a Community Coordinator at SAH. She remains a firm Lutheran despite occasionally donning a John Calvin shirt at community events.

*Father in heaven, thank you for your loving embrace each new day. AMEN.*

# Tuesday, March 10

## 2 JOHN 1:1–13

*The elder,*

*To the lady chosen by God and to her children, whom I love in the truth—and not I only, but also all who know the truth—because of the truth, which lives in us and will be with us forever:*

*Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love. (2 John 1:1–3)*

**In 2 John 1:1–13, we are welcomed into a gentle scene:** a woman, her children, and a letter written with affection. Whether John is addressing a faithful woman leader or an entire community, his message remains steady and encouraging: walk in truth and love. Lent invites us into that same posture. It is a season to slow down, breathe a little more deeply, and look inward to notice where our hope is truly resting.

John begins by anchoring everything in truth, in a way of life shaped by who Jesus really is. Lent calls us back to this centre. Where have lesser truths shaped our decisions, our relationships, or our view of God?

Yet truth alone is not the whole call. John quickly joins it to an embodied love. “This is love,” he writes, “that we walk according to his commandments.” This love is action-oriented and generous.

John also offers a gentle warning: not every voice that sounds spiritual leads us toward Christ. During Lent, we are invited to pay attention to the voices shaping our hearts. Which voices lead us toward greater love, humility, and faithfulness?

John ends with longing for a connection that is face to face (v. 12). Lent draws us toward deeper communion with God and with one another. I’m moved by the image of a woman, her sister, and their children—a quietly beautiful glimpse of family.

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**Dr. Jenn Skelding** is a member of the  
St. Andrew’s Hall Board.

*Help me to centre your voice today, Lord. I want to love as you love. AMEN.*

# Wednesday, March 11

JOHN 17:20–23

*“[S]o that they may be brought to complete unity.” (John 17:20)*

**Each year, just before we enter the season of Lent**, the global church pauses to observe the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. It’s a moment when Christians across traditions remember Jesus’ prayer that we “may be one” (v. 20), and we intentionally seek to embody that unity in worship and fellowship.

At St. Andrew’s Hall, our chaplain, the Rev. Sumarme Goble, works closely with ecumenical partners across the UBC campus to plan a special service rooted in this theme. This year, we were graciously welcomed by Father Rob Allore and the community of St. Mark’s Roman Catholic Parish. Their hospitality created a beautiful space for us to gather as one body in Christ.

The liturgy we shared was prepared by the Armenian Apostolic Church, drawing from ancient prayers and hymns that reach back to the fourth century. To pray words shaped by such a deep and enduring Christian tradition was a powerful reminder that the unity Christ desires for us is not a modern idea—it is woven into the very history and heartbeat of the church.

Unity does not mean uniformity. It does not erase our differences or ask us to abandon our convictions. Instead, it invites us to recognize Christ at work in one another, to honour the diverse ways God’s grace is expressed, and to seek the peace that comes from belonging to the same Lord.

When we gather with Christians from other traditions, we catch a glimpse of the vastness of God’s family—a family far larger, richer, and more beautiful than any one community can express on its own. That certainly is the case, for example, as a Christian in the Reformed tradition sharing worship with siblings in Christ from the Armenian Orthodox tradition as we did in that service.

As we move into Lent, Jesus’ prayer for unity becomes even more powerful. Lent draws us toward the cross, where Christ breaks down every dividing wall and reconciles all things to Himself. The journey to Easter is not only about personal repentance, it is also about learning to live as a people shaped by Christ’s self-giving love. Unity is both his gift to us and his calling upon us.

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*Gracious God, help make us one as you are one. Open our hearts this day to see your image in everyone we meet. Help us to walk worthily in this season, aware that our faithful footsteps join with others as we get closer to the cross and the tomb of Easter. AMEN.*

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The Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart is the  
Dean of St. Andrew’s Hall.

# Thursday, March 12

## 1 CORINTHIANS 10:1–13

*These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come. (1 Corinthians 10:11)*

### **“Those who do not study history are doomed to repeat it.”**

In our reading today, we see a history lesson laid out for the people of God to give them a warning and encouragement.

The warning points God’s people back to the mistakes that their ancestors made in the wilderness. It tells them to remember these mistakes and do not repeat them—they yield the same consequences.

The encouragement points them to Jesus—the one who gave his people food and drink in the wilderness. It was Jesus who led his people with pillars of cloud and fire. It was Jesus who accompanied and provided for his people in the desert, despite their shortcomings.

And I think this is true for us as well. If we worship the same Jesus that accompanied the Israelites in the wilderness, then we can be confident that he will also accompany us in our own wilderness. Yes, we make the same mistakes as God’s people did in the wilderness. But the God who accompanies us always provides a way to escape the temptations and their harms. We can be confident in this, because we see that Jesus has never stopped accompanying his people.

When we look at history, we see Jesus accompanying his people through difficulty and struggle. And I think that is history worth repeating.

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**Graham McCarthy** is the pastor at Peace Church on 52nd, a Mennonite congregation in South Vancouver, and a 2025 Guder Scholar with the Centre for Missional Leadership.

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*Accompany us Lord as we face temptations and trials of various kinds, and help us see that you have been with us the whole time. AMEN.*

# Friday, March 13

## PSALM 23

*The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.*

*He makes me lie down in green pastures,*

*he leads me beside quiet waters,*

*he refreshes my soul. (Psalm 23:1–3)*

**Traditionally, the psalmist's imagery** of rolling green fields and pastures, along with the ever-present, eternally faithful character of a shepherd, is used to comfort us as members of an anxious flock of sheep. However, in today's context of political unrest—with many living under constant dark, shadowy threats of violence and oppression—liberation theology challenges us to wake up and look beyond this traditional view of the Lord as shepherd. With new, liberating perspectives, many oppressed people see in Psalm 23 the image of a just and powerful God sitting at a generous table, inviting us—despite being visible to our oppressors—to be nourished, affirmed, and given a place in the sheepfold that is God's kingdom. In this shepherd's presence, the oppressed are celebrated, empowered, and uplifted, not pushed aside, arrested, or imprisoned. God's voice is clear, and it echoes as a voice of justice and reconciliation. Reflect on God, our shepherd's, voice from Psalm 23, and keep it in mind as you respond to current events. When leaders invoke God's name to justify exclusion and harm, ask yourself if this aligns with the true voice of the Lord, our Shepherd.

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**Ally McCombs** is a mother, wife, singer, and creative spirit. She works as a student ministry intern at Wedgewood Presbyterian Church in Seattle while pursuing her MDiv and, eventually, ordination with the PC-USA. She joins the worshipping community at St. Andrew's Hall by online participation.

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*Holy Spirit, grant us wisdom to wake up and recognize the true voice of God, our Shepherd. Christ, give us love and courage to stand in solidarity with the oppressed, and Creator God, bless us with the creativity to work for justice and reconciliation in the valleys and pastures we call our neighbourhood. AMEN.*

# Saturday, March 14

## PSALM 77

*Will the Lord reject forever?*

*Will he never show his favour again?*

*Has his unfailing love vanished forever?*

*Has his promise failed for all time?*

*(Psalm 77: 7, 8)*

**Have you ever misunderstood a word** because it had several meanings and you chose the wrong one? I have, more than once! I worked with Koreans in Japan, and both of those languages have identical words with multiple meanings. For example, the Korean word *PEH* can mean pear, ship, or stomach. To remember those meanings, I made up this sentence: “I ate a *peh*, boarded a *peh* and was sick to my *peh*!”

The Greek word *logos* is translated as “word,” but even this seemingly simple term can have multiple meanings. A single element of speech (a word in a sentence), a promise (“I give you my word”), a short expression (“a word of advice”) are a few of the many meanings “word” can convey.

But the “word” in John 1 is a touchpoint for the basic beliefs of Christianity:

- **Creation:** *Logos*, in Greek philosophy, refers to divine reason and expression. And that is a bridge to the Jewish understanding of word as God’s creative speech. “And God said...” is repeated six times in Genesis 1. That is, God’s divine Word spoke the world into existence.
- **The Divinity of Jesus:** Then John gives the creating Word (Jesus) a divine identity: “And the Word was God... All things came into being through him” (John 1:1–3).
- **Jesus, the light of the World:** John says, “In him was life, and the life was the light” (v. 4).
- **Sin:** “He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him” (v. 10). In other words, to turn our back on Jesus and refuse to accept him shows us to be a sinful people.
- **Saviour:** But to those who did accept him and believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God (v. 12). Salvation comes through the Word, Jesus, our Saviour.

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**The Rev. Glen Davis** is a retired minister of the PCC with 63 years of service in the mission of the church, including 15 years with the Korean Christian Church in Japan, 18 years in mission administration of the PCC, 7 years of pastoral ministry in Toronto and 6 years of PCC formation teaching through SAH. He sings in two choirs and is involved in refugee sponsorship at Kerrisdale Presbyterian Church in Vancouver.

It is easy to speed through John 1 with those confusing words about the Word, but in this season of Lent, let’s slow down and see this astounding picture of Jesus, the Creator Word, the Word of revelation, the Word who is light and life and forgives and makes us children of God. May the Word draw us nearer to him in adoration and praise.

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*O life-giving, creating, loving, forgiving Word, thank you for all you are, and all you have done for your world. Help me to be part of the work of the Word to make your creation a world of love, justice and peace. AMEN.*

# Fourth Sunday of Lent, March 15

**JOHN 9:1–41**

*I was blind but now I see. (John 9:25)*

**These words are the punch line** in the response of the blind man Jesus had healed to the Pharisees. This group of Jewish leaders were twisted up knots because they could not comprehend how Jesus—whom they viewed as a “sinner” and definitely not the Messiah—could heal someone. In his dialogue with them, the healed man doesn’t argue with their assessment of Jesus: “Whether he is a sinner or not, I don’t know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!” (v. 25). Eventually the blind man regains not only his physical but also his spiritual sight, “seeing” that Jesus is truly the Messiah.

These words “I was blind but now I see” are also the famous words used “Amazing Grace,” a hymn John Newton wrote after he came to the conviction that his involvement in the slave trade was unjust and evil. While sailing on his ship, the Greyhound, Newton faced a terrible storm in the North Atlantic. For over a week, the storm battered the ship, causing serious damage and leaving the crew hopeless. In this desperate moment, Newton began to think about his life, his promotion of and benefit from the slave trade, and his need for God. In the heart of the storm, he cried out for mercy. After his act of faith, Newton began to repent and to fight against the slave trade alongside William Wilberforce. Their work helped pass the British Slave Trade Act in 1807, which ended slave trading in the British Empire.

The stories of both the man born blind and John Newton call us to open our eyes and see Jesus for who he really is: our healer, saviour, and just judge. They also call us to stop turning a blind eye to the injustices of our times—such as economic policies allow immoral inequalities—in which we can so easily become complicit.

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**The Rev. Dr. Tim Dickau** is the Director of Citygate and an Associate at the Centre for Missional Leadership at St. Andrew’s Hall.

*God, open my eyes to see you more clearly, and to love you more dearly by seeing—and acting—against economic inequality and injustice by your Spirit’s power.*  
**AMEN.**

# Monday, March 16

## ISAIAH 59:9–19

[The Lord] saw that there was no one...to intervene, so his own arm brought him victory, and his righteousness upheld him. (Isaiah 59:16)

**Have you ever watched a situation fall apart** and thought, *Surely someone will step in?* Maybe it was at school, at work, in your family, or even in the church. You can see what's wrong, but no one seems able or willing to fix it. Everyone waits, and the weight of the problem lingers.

Isaiah 59 describes a moment like that on a much larger scale. God's people are walking in darkness. Truth has stumbled in the streets, justice is far away, and sin has broken their fellowship with the Lord. When God looks for someone to intervene—for someone to stand in the gap and bring righteousness—he finds no one. There is no faithful leader, no righteous mediator, no human solution. That reality is meant to humble us.

But then there comes a turning point: “so his own arm brought him victory, and his righteousness upheld him” (v. 16). Salvation did not rise from within God's people—it came from God himself. This is amazing grace. When there was no one to save, the Lord himself acted.

This verse points us to Jesus. God's own arm is revealed in the incarnate Son, who stepped in where we could not. Christ Jesus obeyed where we failed. He bore the guilt of our sin, and secured victory for us, and all creation, through his righteousness—not ours.

Whether we feel weak or confident, young or worn down, our hope is never in ourselves. We are called to rest in Christ's finished work and trust the God who intervenes. Since God has done for us what we could never do for ourselves, may we respond with repentance, gratitude, and joyful obedience.

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**The Rev. Sumarme Goble** is the Chaplain and Community Life Director at St. Andrew's Hall.

*God, help us to live out this ministry of reconciliation, embracing others with the same love and grace you have shown us, so that we may reflect your peace in all our relationships. AMEN.*



# Tuesday, March 17

## PSALM 146

*Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul! (Psalm 146:1)*

**How do you stay thankful** when it feels like the whole world is spinning out of control? We don't have to look far for trouble these days. As I'm writing this, Trump has threatened to invade Greenland—Germany, Denmark, and Finland are mobilizing troops. The US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) shot and killed a young mother in Minnesota. If I'm completely honest, these days I more often feel like crying out in anguish and anger—rage and despair—rather than in thanks or in praise.

So, what does Psalm 146 tell us? It doesn't say that we will not struggle, nor does it promise we will be without problems. But it does invite you to put your trust in the Lord, and to "put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation." That says a lot, doesn't it? We have leaders here on earth: princes, kings, presidents, prime ministers. Some are kind, some are faithful, some are cruel, and some are despotic. But this psalmist says that each one of them will eventually pass away, and "on that very day his plans perish" (v. 4).

That should give us comfort. The plans of men are fleeting and will pass away, but the plans of the Lord? Well, he sets the captives free, he lifts us up, he upholds the widow and the orphan. And he will reign forever.

The times may seem dark and we may feel despair. But our hope is in the God of Jacob. Our Lord keeps faith with us forever. He made the heavens and the Earth. So, praise him! O my soul, praise the Lord.

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**Neil Singh** is the Assistant (to the) Regional Manager of Urban Promise International, and an independent consulting engineer currently building a Christian university in Malawi. He serves on the Board of St. Andrew's Hall, and is an elder at City Centre Church in Surrey, BC.

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*Lord, we pray for peace in the world. We pray for an end to wars and safety for the refugee. We praise you, for you are our rock and our salvation, our ever-present help in trouble. AMEN.*

# Wednesday, March 18

## MATTHEW 9:27-34

*When he entered the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you have faith that I can do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord." Then he touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith, let it be done to you." (Matthew 9:28, 29)*

**Today's passage recounts two encounters** between Jesus and men who needed healing. First, two blind men followed Jesus as he walked along, begging for mercy and loudly calling him "Son of David," the Messiah. As Jesus entered a house, they also went inside. Only then does Jesus respond, asking, "Do you have faith that I can do this?" When they declare "Yes, Lord" he touches them and heals their blindness.

This account includes some interesting details. The two did not wait quietly for Jesus to pass by them on the roadside. Somehow, they managed to follow him, shouting "Son of David, have mercy." When he didn't stop, they even entered the house where he had gone. They were persistent in seeking him out. They knew he had the power to heal them. Though blind, they saw who Jesus truly was.

The second account is of a possessed mute man whom Jesus heals. We know only that the demon-tormented man was brought to Jesus, and that Jesus restored him fully. We are told that the crowds who watched were astounded by this miracle, while the Pharisees condemned Jesus' actions.

The stories of these people in need are our stories, too. We are dismayed and fearful for so many reasons—broken relationships, isolation, poverty, distrust within communities, and escalating global tensions, to name a few. Like the blind men, we seek Jesus, the One who can heal us, mend a broken world and transform lives. When Jesus asks us the question, "Do you have faith that I can do this?" let our answer be a resounding, "Yes, Lord!"

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**Mary Jesse** is an elder at First Presbyterian, Regina, and is a member of the St. Andrew's Hall Board.

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*Lord, we give thanks for the healing hand you bring to this world. We ask for courage and faith to follow in your ways and pray that your love great love for all creation is reflected in our actions. AMEN.*

# Thursday, March 19

## ACTS 9:1–10

*For three days [Saul] was without sight, and neither ate nor drank. (Acts 9:9)*

**Today's scripture passage conveys the beginning** of one of the most dramatic conversion stories ever told. In it, we find Saul—a persecutor of the early church who assaulted the disciples of Jesus with threats and murder—on his way to Damascus, carrying letters from the high priest that allowed him to bring these Christ-followers bound to Jerusalem.

Saul's desire to seek out, find, and punish the followers of the Way is intense and palpable, but also legal. He is not some villain in black robes working under cover of night. He does his persecuting in full daylight, with signed letters authorizing his actions. Saul's puffed-up chest and zealous attitude remind us of those in our own time who excuse themselves from accusations of wrongdoing because of their "official" positions of authority.

And yet, however legal, official, or zealous his actions, Saul is knocked off his feet and out of his position of authority by what the Transfiguration story calls the uncreated light of God.

Saul is caught. Questioned. Humbled. Blinded. He is brought as helpless as those he hoped to persecute to a disciple of the very Way he was seeking to destroy. However, what makes this Good News is not that Saul receives the just reward for his heinous actions, but rather what Christ does through his conversation and redemption. A conversion that we, like Saul, must wait in fasting to receive.

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**The Rev. Roberto DeSandoli** is a former St. Andrew's Hall resident and current Minister of Word and Sacraments at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Saskatoon.

*Holy and just God, as we wait in Lenten anticipation for the conversion of Saul the persecutor to Paul the Apostle, we wait also with those who are persecuted in our own time: those labelled as "illegal" or "unneeded." May you uphold them and strengthen us to do all we can to support those who are persecuted today as your disciples. AMEN.*

# Friday, March 20

## ISAIAH 42:14–21

*“For a long time I have kept silent,  
I have been quiet and held myself back.  
But now, like a woman in childbirth,  
I cry out, I gasp and pant.” (Isaiah 42:14)*

**For much of the Old Testament**, there were periods where God seemed quiet. In Isaiah 42:14, God says, “For a long time I have kept silent, I have been quiet and held myself back.” In the period between when the final words of the Old Testament and the first words of the New were written, 400 years passed when the scriptures were silent, as though God had stopped speaking. Yet, we know that in that quiet, God was labouring; He was preparing the world for the arrival of His Son, Jesus Christ.

The paradox is that God’s silence is not God’s absence, but a period of holding back because of a gathering intensity. Verse 14 reveals that God is not sleeping, but is in labour—the deep, focused breath a mother takes before she cries out to bring new life into the world. Thus, the silence of God is never empty.

Likewise, the “quiet” of our Lenten journey one of spiritual gestation, which is a necessary preparation for the loud joy of the Resurrection. Like a mother in labour, God is working behind the scenes, “panting and gasping” with desire to redeem us. While the pains of labour are present, it conveys a significant sense that new hope will emerge. Today’s scripture passage depicts both devastation and salvation, and in this tension, we wait for the new life of Easter found in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, trusting that God’s creative power is bringing about salvation.

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**Neena Durbha** is a final-year MDiv student, certified in the PCC, and is looking forward to her graduation this spring 2026. She is a former St. Andrew’s Hall resident.

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*Lord, thank You for the seasons of silence. Help us to trust the labour of Your love even when we cannot hear Your voice. AMEN.*

# Saturday, March 21

## LUKE 24:44–53

*When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. (Luke 24:50–52)*

**Every now and then**, it takes a moment to remember which side of the resurrection we live on.

We all face and navigate losses, rejections, doubt, and pain that come from loving and serving others—or simply being around them—reading the news, or just living on planet Earth. It's not hard to get caught up in what we see around us and come to conclude that's all there is. But we're still on this side of the resurrection.

Looking at today's scripture and its account of the risen Lord during Lent, I'm reminded that the Christ-followers of our own times may struggle just as much as the first disciples to live as those who have been told what's on the other side of suffering and death: rising, life, promise, power, joy, and blessing.

I'm reminded that Jesus is speaking to a room of disciples who were scared and frightened, and did not expect him there. I'm reminded that Jesus' relentless goodness and faithfulness to the purposes of God continue and come to us even when we don't respond with much faith.

I'm reminded of the last, beautiful, and enduring sight that the first disciples had of Jesus was of him risen, rising, and with raised hands, blessing them as far as their eyes could see. We're on this side of the resurrection.

I have a friend who, when I am leaving his home, insists on walking out with me to stand on the driveway as I pull out. And as I pull out and drive away, he then walks down to the street waving. As I look in the rearview mirror, for as long as I can see, he's still there waving and watching. It's a helpful picture for me to remember that Jesus is still sending us out in his blessing today.

May we continue to ask ourselves (even if Ross isn't around to do so), "How is the Lord blessing you today?"

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**The Rev. Joseph Bae** is the lead pastor of Vaughan Community Church English Ministry and serves on the Board of St. Andrew's Hall.

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*King Jesus, may we have grace to walk as those who are living in your blessing: not living for, trying to earn it, but living in it. AMEN.*

# Fifth Sunday of Lent, March 22

## EZEKIEL 37:1-14

*He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know."  
(Ezekiel 37:3)*

**When I was an elementary school teacher**, I would ask my students ridiculous questions to get their attention. "What colour is an apple? Purple?" "No, sir! Apples are red!"

It worked in my first-grade class, but by sixth grade, my students would roll their eyes at my antics, saying "yes, sir, you know best."

When God asked Ezekiel if dead bones can live, one can imagine Ezekiel's perfunctory tone in response to God's ridiculous question. "O Lord God, you know." But as he followed God's command to prophesy to the bones in the valley, Ezekiel saw the impossible unfold in front of his eyes: the dry bones, baked white by the sun, soon grew flesh, muscles, and tendons that bound them together, and skin to envelop them like clothing. As Ezekiel continued to prophesy, the four winds brought God's Spirit into these bodies, raising them back to life.

God shows us no scenario is too ridiculous for him. It can be hard to feel hopeful for our world when its problems seem so daunting and our best efforts are all but futile. But God sees when our hope is lost, and God will act to bring life to the world. O Lord God, you know.

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**Aaron Law** is a PCC Mdiv student from Hong Kong and Montreal. He is in the first year of studies and a regular participant in the St. Andrew's Hall worshipping community.

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*God, who works in incredible ways, we ask you to accomplish in the world far more abundantly than all we can ask or imagine. AMEN.*

# Monday, March 23

**JOHN 11:1-45**

*"Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." (John 11:21)*

**After the death of Lazarus**, Martha and Mary say almost the same words to Jesus:

*"Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."*

But they come to Him in different ways.

Martha runs out, before Jesus even reaches the village.

Mary stays at home, sitting in her grief, until she later goes out to meet Him.

The words and wound are the same.

Jesus' response to each is unique.

With Martha, Jesus speaks.

There is conversation. There is theology. There is a confession of faith.

With Mary, he explains nothing. He simply weeps.

I don't know why this is, but I find beauty in it all the same.

Jesus comes as a friend, not only as a teacher.

He enters into relationship, into the wound.

And He puts off coming until the fourth day. Until Lazarus is unquestionably dead.

There is no longer any "maybe."

No more room for hope.

Four days of waiting in uncertainty, maybe a time when prayers begin to fade into silence.

Martha and Mary expected Jesus to come sooner.

Jesus chose to delay.

And that delay caused longer suffering, deeper disappointment, and words we know too well: "If only..."

In the season of Lent, we are invited to remain in this space.

The space of waiting.

The space where faith is not always a confession, but a presence.

The question that asks not only whether resurrection is possible, but also: Do I trust that He loves me enough to come, even when He seems late by my calculations? And am I willing to remain with Him on the fourth day?

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**Astrid Melatunan** is a PCC-certified  
MDiv student and currently in her final  
year of studies.

*Jesus, stay with us in waiting, even when hope feels gone. AMEN.*

# Tuesday, March 24

## EPHESIANS 2:1–10

*For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works...  
(Ephesians 2:10)*

**Most mornings, before the students** rush out the door with their coffee and backpacks, I sit quietly in the St. Andrew's Hall entrance way. From my spot, I watch the world wake up—the mountains catching the first light, the seagulls arguing about breakfast, and the students shuffling toward another full day at UBC.

As the official St. Andrew's Hall mascot, I see students at fun social gatherings like the September welcome BBQ, Thanksgiving dinner, Wednesday soup nights, pizza parties, knitting club, and Easter dinner. But I also see students sometimes looking tired, overwhelmed with their studies and late-night paper writing. With pressures from home, society, and from within, I long for them to know that the gospel is clear—in Jesus they are enough. God's grace meets us exactly where we are—worn out, uncertain, distracted, or discouraged—and breathes new life into us.

Ephesians reminds us that we are God's workmanship, God's handiwork, God's beloved creation. Not because we've earned it. Not because we've achieved something impressive. But because God delights in making us new. Grace is God's gift, freely given, shaping us into people who reflect Christ's love in the world.

As I watch students at St. Andrew's Hall rush to class, I hope they feel even a small whisper of that truth—that they are held by grace, created for good, and invited to walk in the life God has prepared for them. Lent is a season that helps all of us remember: we are made new not by our effort, but by God's love.

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**Andy the Bear** is the beloved mascot of St. Andrew's Hall, known for his quiet wisdom and faithful presence around the college.

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*Gracious God, thank you for the gift of your transforming grace. Remind us that we are your handiwork, created in Christ for good and beautiful purposes. Renew our hearts this Lent and guide our steps in the way of your love. AMEN.*



# Wednesday, March 25

## LUKE 1:26–38

*In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you." (Luke 1:26–28)*

**As we journey with Jesus to the cross in Lent,** I wonder how often Mary found herself thinking back to this moment when it all began. How often did the angel's words "Do not be afraid" come back to her? Will she remember them again when she stands at the foot of the cross? When she sees the empty tomb?

Mary was called by God to bear Jesus, as we all are in our own way. It is both marvelous and fearful to find ourselves becoming part of God's redemptive purposes. It opens our hearts to the world—to love, care, and hope for it as Jesus does. It is incredibly beautiful, but it does make us vulnerable and even afraid.

Reflect for a moment, what makes you afraid? What fears motivate your decisions? Fear of what will happen? Of failing? Of losing someone or something? Of getting hurt?

Mary would have known these fears. Fear is a normal human response, helpful and protective, in the face of danger. The challenge is that it can hold us back from living the life that God offers.

And so, I also wonder, since that encounter with the angel, how did Mary's lived experience of God at work in her life and in Jesus, lead her to know and trust the deep truth of these words: Nothing is impossible with God.

Who do you know that lives out of this truth? When have you?

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**The Rev. Karen Dimock** serves as Minister at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Ottawa and is on the Board at St. Andrew's Hall.

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*God, as these words blessed Mary, may they encourage me, banishing my fears so I can say Here I am. Let it be with me according to your word. AMEN.*

# Thursday, March 26

## MARK 10:32-34

*They will mock him and spit upon him and flog him and kill him, and after three days he will rise again.” (Mark 10:34)*

### **It is not always easy to follow the leader.**

In describing the road Jesus and the disciples travelled going up to Jerusalem, the Gospel of Mark shares an interesting detail: Jesus is walking ahead of his disciples.

As a parent, this scenario is familiar. If kids don’t want to go somewhere (or at least if they lack the motivation to do so) they will do everything possible to lag behind. For many young kids, going for a five-minute walk feels like “Forever!” In an effort to communicate their dread, kids may spontaneously collapse on the floor, only to be summoned back to life at the suggestion of a reward offered at the end of the journey. Kids will be kids.

The disciples—described as “amazed” and “afraid”—lag behind their master, ignorant of the ultimate purpose of the journey. Jesus pulls them aside and bluntly tells them four concrete actions he must endure once in Jerusalem: he will be mocked, he will be spit at, he will be handed over to the Gentiles, and he will be killed. Jesus foretells not only his death of the cross, but also the public shaming he will endure leading up to it.

Jesus reminds the disciples (and us) of the reward at the end of the journey. He tells them that after three days, the Son of Man will rise again. Jesus knowingly walks into shame, pain, and death for the sake of love. Jesus reminds his followers of the greater purpose: in Jesus we are summoned back to life!

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**Kevin Pauls** is leader of community ministry of Kildonan Community Church in Winnipeg. Kevin grew up in the Mennonite tradition, and is now an MDiv student and a ministry candidate in the PCC.

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*Jesus, as you walk ahead of us toward suffering and love, give us courage to follow you when the road seems frightening and costly. Protect us through mockery and pain, trusting that beyond the cross you lead us into resurrection life. AMEN.*

# Friday, March 27

## PHILIPPIANS 1:21–30

*For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. (Philippians 1:21)*

**When I was a child**, my father took me to a video game store and told me he would buy me a game as a gift. I saw two games I really wanted, but I could only get one. I grew indecisive and thought about it for a long time—both choices seemed wonderful.

Anyone who has ever had to choose between two great options knows that feeling.

Paul experiences something similar in today's scripture. Like someone standing before two good choices, the apostle lays out his dilemma: to die and be with Christ, or to live and continue bearing fruit.

From a human perspective, Paul's hesitation seems somewhat strange. It does not appear that he is choosing between two good options, especially when we remember that he was in prison. To live would mean continuing to suffer. And yet, the dilemma is between that and... dying?

I am convinced that Paul's struggle here is sincere. As someone whose heart is centred on Jesus, Paul knows that death is not the end, but the beginning of eternal life with his Saviour. At the same time, he looks at the Philippians and thinks of all that could still be done—how many people still need to know the love of Christ, how many seeds could still be planted.

Therefore, we are invited to remember that life only has meaning when we live for Christ, bearing fruit until we are finally with him—which is far better.

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**The Rev. Lucas Neiro** is a resident of St. Andrew's Hall, where he lives with his wife and their 18-month-old son. He is an ordained minister in the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil.

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*Lord Jesus, during this season of Lent, we reflect on our own lives. Forgive us, Lord, for the many times we live selfishly, thinking only of ourselves. We desire to commit ourselves to living for you, bearing fruit and sharing your love at all times. In your name we pray, AMEN.*

# Saturday, March 28

## PSALM 31

*Into your hands I commit my spirit (Psalm 31:5)*

**Psalm 31 is a song for a time of crisis.** On the global stage, 2026 feels like a period of crisis. It's emotionally draining to click on our news feeds, knowing that we will likely read news of harm and distress. Yet knowing the importance of staying informed, we click on the next article and absorb the heaviness. On a personal level, life is rarely free from ups and downs. We experience crisis up close and personal—it's a part of being human in our turbulent world.

Psalm 31 wrestles with crisis through the image of a *hand*. A hand can either protect or destroy, hold or crush. "Hand" stands for power and agency.

In verse five, in the midst of distress and fear, the psalmist is able to gasp out: "Into your hands I commit my spirit." Jesus utters these words from Psalm 31 as his last words to his Father on the cross. Here in the Psalm, they are not words from the dying, but words from the living. The psalmist believes that his breath, his spirit (it's the same word) is safe in God's hands. So, he sings this phrase of great trust: "Into your hands I commit my spirit."

Later in the same stanza, the psalmist sings: "And you have not delivered me into the hand of the enemy" (v. 8). The hand of an enemy is a terrifying place to be. The thought that a person who abhors us now has power over our life and death—that's the stuff of nightmares. Yet God's hand proves more powerful and relentless than the hand of our enemies.

Nonetheless things are still not as neat and tidy as it may seem. Later, the writer uses the hand image to express the tension he is experiencing:

But I trust in you, O Lord;  
I say, "You are my God."  
My times are in your hand;  
deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors. (vv. 14, 15)

The psalmist is still in the fire, and he prays earnestly for deliverance from his enemies' hand. Even as he cries out for protection, he chooses trust: "My times are in your hand." It's as if he is saying: "If it is time for me to die, I trust that even then you are good and you are protecting me."

This experience of turmoil and suffering has deepened his ability to trust God. He is learning that whatever happens, God's loving hand will prevail. Whether in life or in death, God can be trusted.

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**The Rev. Dr. Mark Glanville** is the Director of the Centre for Missional Leadership at St. Andrews Hall. He is author of five books including *Preaching in a New Key: Crafting Expository Sermons in Post-Christian Neighbourhoods*.

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***Dear Lord, I trust in you, you are my God, my times are in your hand. In Christ, AMEN.***

# Palm Sunday, March 29

## MATTHEW 21:1–11

*Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!  
Hosanna in the highest heaven! (Matthew 21:9)*

**Our lives are filled with uncertainty and mystery.** The only thing we can be sure of is that the grace of the living God, the love of Jesus, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit are with us. However, even with this assurance, our lives often feel incomplete, frequently clouded by doubt. We receive God's Word in our lives, but because of our inner conflict and hesitation, we struggle to follow that divine voice with confidence.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus tells two disciples to go into the village and bring a donkey tied with its colt. He instructs them that if anyone questions them, they should say, "The Lord needs them."

When we encounter various trials in life, especially those that arrive in forms we cannot understand, they often provoke doubt and anxiety within us. At times, the path God sets before us feels incomprehensible or even nonsensical. However, God's plan is wonderful. It is always reaching far beyond our human thoughts and imagination. We are being prepared for an amazing purpose through God's mysterious ways.

Jesus asked for the two donkeys to fulfil the words of prophecy. Although the two disciples did not fully understand his intent at the time, they followed his word and brought the donkeys. They laid their cloaks over them to prepare a seat for the Lord. Then, Jesus entered Jerusalem on that donkey amid shouts of glory.

Now, what calling has God placed on us today? What is the "donkey" we are asked to bring? Are we ready to follow the Lord's Word and share in both the glory and the suffering of Christ?

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**Chorong Shin**, a PCC-certified student, will soon continue pursuing a MDiv degree. She is living in Red Deer, Alberta with her spouse and two lovely kids. She is a former resident of SAH.

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*O God, please use us for your amazing plan, and give us your wisdom and courage to walk faithfully through uncertainty. AMEN.*

# Monday, March 30

## PSALM 24

*Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. (Psalm 24:7)*

**The ancient Israelites had an image of a temple** where God would dwell. To enter it, they were required to serve God and to live righteously and purely. Only in fulfilling these commands would they finally be qualified to enter the gate of righteousness. The gate was special, and at the same time, it revealed the people's situation. The chosen ones would be able to enter, but those who have walked the path of the wicked would not be able to pass.

When we look at the life of the psalmist, we can imagine his past life. It was a journey that was sometimes difficult but was ultimately led by the faithful God on the path of righteousness. So, he shouts out proudly, urging us to give thanks to God and sing of his lovingkindness. God answers and gives us salvation. So, we can rightly rejoice in God. Our past lives were sometimes happy and sometimes sad, but now we are very thankful to God. The reason is that the Lord has always been with us. The Creator has guided us and saved us from suffering.

I invite you to look to God who gives us light. Listen to Jesus' voice calling us. Then enter the gates of God today with the help of the Holy Spirit. Let us go out to meet Jesus, who comes to us on the journey towards a righteous life.

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**The Rev. Jaebok Gu** was received into the PCC and has been serving Knox Presbyterian Church in Red Deer since September 2024. He is a former resident of St. Andrew's Hall.

*May we live as your light and then enter your gate. AMEN.*

# Tuesday, March 31

## 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-31

*For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.. (1 Corinthians 1:18)*

**A carpenter once showed a child a rough piece of wood** with nails bent and stained. To the child, it looked useless, something to be thrown away. But the carpenter smiled and said, “This is what held everything together.” What appears weak or foolish often carries the greatest strength.

Lent invites us to slow down and look honestly at what we value. The world teaches us to admire strength, success, intelligence, and self-reliance. Yet Paul reminds the Corinthians, and us, that God works in a completely different way. God chooses what the world calls foolish, weak, and insignificant to reveal divine power and wisdom.

The cross stands at the centre of this truth. It was a symbol of shame and defeat, yet through it, God brought salvation into the world. In Lent, we are asked to confront our own assumptions: the pride we cling to, the achievements we trust, and the voices that tell us we must prove our worth. God does not save us through our wisdom or strength, but through Christ crucified.

This season calls us to humility, to boast not in ourselves, but in the Lord.

When we surrender our need to appear strong, God meets us in our weakness.

When we let go of control, grace takes hold. The cross teaches us that God’s power is most clearly seen where love chooses sacrifice.

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**Kennedy Mwash** is from Kenya and is pursuing an MDiv in preparation for ordination in the Presbyterian Church in Canada. He previously studied finance and economics, worked in banking, and brings a deep passion for discipleship to his call to ministry from his background in the Presbyterian Church in East Africa.

*Lord, teach me to trust the wisdom of the cross and to boast only in you. AMEN.*

# Wednesday, April 1

## HEBREWS 12:1-3

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. (Hebrews 12:1)*

**Lent invites us into a slower, more honest journey of faith.** It is a season that asks us not how fast we can run, how quickly we can move but whether we are willing to keep walking when the road becomes difficult. Hebrews 12:1-3 speaks into this sacred time with wisdom, calling us to run with perseverance.

We are reminded that we are not on this path alone. A great cloud of witnesses surrounds us (saints) those who have gone before us who knew struggle, failure, repentance, and grace. Their lives do not shame us, they encourage us. They remind us that faithfulness is often shaped in wilderness places, where trust must deepen and distractions fall away.

Lent also calls us to lay aside every burden that weighs us down. Some of these are obvious sins that need confession and release. Others are more subtle: the need to appear strong, the habit of busyness, the weight of unspoken guilt or disappointment. This season gives us permission to set these down, trusting that God desires honesty and endurance.

At the centre of our Lenten journey is Jesus. We fix our eyes on him, the one who endured the cross, who embraced suffering out of love, and who remained faithful even when the way led through pain and rejection.

Lent does not rush us toward Easter. It teaches us how to walk with Christ through suffering, trusting that perseverance, shaped by grace, will lead us toward life.

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**The Rev. Krishna Durbha** is the minister at St. Andrew's Presbyterian in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, and a former resident of St. Andrew's Hall.

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*May you find your walk with our Lord filled with joy as you run towards Him.*  
**AMEN.**



# Maundy Thursday, April 2

## 1 CORINTHIANS 11:26

*For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (1 Corinthians 11:26)*

**When I was growing up in Korea**, it was usual for national television channels, although they were not religious, to air Christian films in Christmas seasons, as they did Buddhist movies on Buddha's birthday. One Christmas season decades ago, I walked into the living room to find my father watching a film about the life of Jesus—I cannot recall the title. When I joined him, the movie reached the crucifixion scene where Roman soldiers were nailing Jesus through His palms to the cross. It was shockingly brutal to a young kid. I was petrified and couldn't continue watching. That unsettling memory stayed with me for a long time, continually inflicting fear and guilt on me.

When the *Passion of the Christ* film was released, many critics described it as extremely violent. I knew it was not a film for me, so I did not join the SAH group who went to view it at Dunbar Theatre.

Communion services at my church in Korea were held quarterly. They always began with solemn and intense music and words inviting people to repent before receiving the bread and wine. I can still feel the pressure that pushed people to a kind of emotional breaking point with plenty of tears. We seemed to be relentlessly chastised for our sins. To be qualified to partake of the Lord's Supper, we needed to prepare ourselves by confessing our sins and asking for forgiveness. For me, an overwhelming sense of guilt used to be accompanied by the vivid image of Jesus dying on the cross. As a result, I struggled to grasp the meaning of the Lord's Supper for many years.

Contemplating this passage has guided me to a question: Why have I focused on our sins, repentance, and his sacrifice rather than on redemption?

His sacrifice was once for all. And the redemption reaches us now!

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**Mihye Park** is the Housing Manager at St. Andrew's Hall and a member of Kerrisdale Presbyterian Church.

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*Thank you, Jesus. By your sacrifice, your love, and your grace, our sins were completely wiped out on the cross. In your name, AMEN.*

# Good Friday, April 3

## HEBREWS 4:14–16, 5:7–9

*During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. (Hebrews 5:7)*

**Jesus did not want to die.** We hear in the three accounts of Matthew, Mark, and Luke the Son's plea to the Father to remove the cup of suffering from him.

Jesus shared in agony, with "fervent cries and tears" to "the one who could save him from death." On this Good Friday, we remember that Christ's agony became salvation for us. He submitted to the Father's will. The Father answered him. Hebrews 4 explained how Jesus was tempted like we are. But Jesus submitted perfectly to the will of God and trusted in the Father's will.

The Father's will is to save Jesus from death. But his ways are not ours. On this Good Friday, we contemplate the obedience of Christ, the love of Christ, and the hope of Christ. His prayers were answered on Easter Sunday when victory over death came to Jesus and to "all who obey him." Jesus is our Lord, our obedient and faithful Saviour.

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**Afonso Issa** is a former resident of St. Andrew's Hall. He now lives in West Vancouver with his wife and their four kids and serves as pastor at West Vancouver Presbyterian Church.

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*Our Father in heaven, your grace invites us to come to your throne. We seek your mercy to help us in this time of need. Form in us your reverent submission, by the power of your Holy Spirit, so we may glorify your name, in the name of Jesus.*  
**AMEN.**

# Holy Saturday, April 4

**JOHN 19:38–42**

*Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jewish leaders. (John 19:38)*

**Grandpa was a farmer in North Dakota**, so when he and grandma moved into a regular home on a lot in Snohomish, it was no surprise that they filled their backyard with an array of fruits and vegetables--corn, peas, lettuce, strawberries, cucumber, dill, and more. Many of the colours and smells of their garden are still vivid in my recollection, but one particularly pungent smell I'll never forget was that of the compost box in the back corner. That juxtaposition—the stench of rot and the garden's delectable aroma—is similar to the one we find in today's scripture: "At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in that garden, a new tomb" (19:41–42).

The original garden had been the birthplace of death. Now, the garden of death would become the birthplace of a new creation. Jesus is laid in a tomb, but he is less a buried corpse than a planted seed. "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies," Jesus told his disciples. "It remains just a single grain, but if it dies it bears much fruit" (John 12:24).

As for it was Jesus, so it is for us. In Lent, as we soberly weigh the death-dealing stench of sin, we are not entombed in despair. Rather, as we "fall into the earth," we are planted deep in the compost-rich soil from which the new creation bursts.

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**The Rev. Dr. Christopher B. James**, a repeat guest instructor of the Centre for Missional Leadership, teaches mission and leads grant initiatives at University of Dubuque Theological Seminary. He is author of *Church Planting in Post-Christian Soil* and the forthcoming *Reseeding Church*.

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***Though death surrounds me, O Gardener of the new creation, plant me like a seed and raise me to everlasting life.***

# Easter Sunday, April 5

LUKE 24:1-49

*"Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen."  
(Luke 24:5)*

In 2018, while leading a pilgrimage tour through the hills of Meteora, in Greece, my wife Laura and I got up early to observe one of spectacular clifftop monasteries, just as dawn began to break. The sky shifted from deep blue to soft gold, and the rock pillars rose like ancient sentinels around us. Taking in the scene, we could not help but feel like we were literally watching the world wake up.

That moment has stayed with me because it echoes the heart of Easter morning. The women who went to the tomb at dawn expected to be caretakers of death. Instead, they encountered the whole world waking up to a stunning new reality—the stone rolled away, angels proclaiming life, and the first light of resurrection breaking into human history.

Luke tells us that the disciples struggled to believe it. Fear, confusion, and disbelief clouded their vision. Yet Jesus kept showing up—on the road, in the room, at the table—opening their eyes to the truth that death had not won. Resurrection was not an idea to ponder but a reality to wake up to by grace.

Easter invites us into that same awakening. In a world that often feels weighed down by grief, uncertainty, or exhaustion, the risen Christ meets us with hope that is stronger than despair, and life that is deeper than death. Like those first disciples, we are called to bear witness—to carry the resurrection into our conversations, our communities, and our daily lives.

On this Easter morning, may we hear again the angel's question: Why do you look for the living among the dead? And may we discover today, with joy and wonder, that Christ is already ahead of us—alive, present, and calling us into the newness of resurrected life, by inviting us to join in his ongoing mission of reconciling the world unto himself. Thanks be to God—**HALLELUJAH!**

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*Risen Christ, thank you for breaking open the tomb and filling the world with new life. Awaken our hearts this Easter morning to your hope, your presence, and your promise. Help us to walk as witnesses of your resurrection in all we do.*  
**AMEN.**

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## NOTES

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*Thanks for participating in the 2026 SAH Lenten Devotion Guide.*

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