

SEEKING: HOW DO WE BEGIN AGAIN? SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

March 5, 2023

10:30 a.m.



TO BE A BLESSING by Hannah Garrity
© A SANCTIFIED ART | SANCTIFIED ART.ORG

Vision

Transforming lives through God's grace.

Mission

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, we grow disciples of Jesus Christ to love our neighbours and effect social change.

Values

Belonging, Community, Compassion, Engagement, and Service

The Rev. Greg Smith, Interim Moderator

The Rev. Maren McLean Persaud (on leave)
Associate Minister, Children and Youth

The Rev. Jake Van Pernis
Associate Minister, Engagement and Service

The Rev. Christian Persaud
Interim Pastoral Care Leader

Kate Van Pernis
Children and Youth Coordinator

Matt Kallio
Music Coordinator

Please find Online Worship at:
www.gracechurchcalgary.com



Grace Presbyterian Church
Transforming lives through God's grace

Order of Worship

In a spirit of respect and truth we honour and acknowledge that we live, work, play and worship on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, and Piikani), the Tsuut'ina, the Stoney Nakoda Nations (Bears paw, Chiniki, and Wesley), the Métis Nation (Region 3), and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta.

Prelude Lift thine eyes to the mountains Elijah-Felix Mendelssohn †

Welcome and Announcements Jim Campbell

Lighting of the Christ Candle Cate

Introit Lenten Introits Angela Birkhead-Flight †

Call to Worship

Into life's challenges and questions comes the Mystery of God,
and God's truth opens our eyes.

Into our routines and rituals walks the presence of Christ,
and God's love brings healing and hope.

Into our traditions and conclusions blows the wind of the Spirit,
and God's people are born from above.

We gather in Jesus' name, seeking to encounter God's grace and glory.
Let us worship God with open hearts and minds, seeking God's call and voice.

Hymn # 205 O love, how deep, how broad, how high v. 1, 2, 3, 6 †

Prayer of Adoration The Rev. Jake Van Pernis

Rite of Reconciliation

Prayer of Confession

God of new life, you call us into unknown places,
and we bury our heads in the sand.

You promise all the stars in the sky,
and we doubt it can be true.

You speak of new life in the Spirit,
and we tell ourselves we've missed our chance.

Over and over and over again, you invite us closer to you.

Show us the way. Forgive our mistakes. Give us the courage to begin again with you. Amen.

Hymn # 201 We come to ask your forgiveness

*

Words of Forgiveness

The Peace

May the Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Time with Young Christians

Prayer for Illumination

Alexis

Scripture Genesis 12:1-4

Psalm 121 (Responsive)

John 3:1-17

The Rev. Christian Persaud

Sermon Seeking: How do we begin again?

Hymn # 534 All who hunger, gather gladly

Sylvia G. Dunstan*

Communion

Welcome and Invitation

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

...with your people from every time and place,
we join the whole creation to lift our hearts in joyful praise:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

We give you thanks, holy God, for sending your beloved Son Jesus, into the world...

...Remembering these wondrous things, we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

We pray for those who continue to be in need today...

As our Lord taught us, we now pray:

The Lord's Prayer

Swee Hong Lim*

Our Fa-ther in heav-en, hal - lowed be your name. Your

Chords: D, Em/D, Gm6/D, D, A/C#

king-dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give

Chords: Bm, E7/G#, Em/G, A

us to-day our dai-ly bread and for - give us our sins, as

Chords: D, Em/D, Gm6/D, D, A/C#

we for - give those who sin a - gainst us.

Chords: Bm, E7/G#, Em/G, A

Save us from the time of trial and de - liv - er us from

Chords: D, G/D, Em

e - vil, for the king - dom, the power and the glo - ry are

Chords: A, D7, G, A/G, F#m7, Bm, Em7, A

yours now and for - ev - er. A-men. For - ev - er. A-men.

Chords: F#/A#, Bm, A/C#, D, Gmaj7, A, D

Anthem **Remember our Saviour**

Johann Ernst Eberlin *

Hymn **# 665 Lord Jesus, you shall be my song**

*

Benediction *

As you leave this place, may God bless you with seeking.

Seek out the hungry. Seek the weary. Seek the good in every person you pass. Seek out the hopeful. Seek the faithful. Seek God at all times and in all places. As you seek and as you wonder, may you find what you are looking for. In the name of our loving God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, who is always seeking us, go now in peace. Amen.

Sending

George Whelpton †

Let us, O God, de - part in peace, who in your name are

gath - ered here. Dis - close the bright - ness

of your face, and be for - ev - er near.

Postlude **Hilfe Gott, das mir's gelinge BWV 624** Johann Sebastian Bach †
(Help God, the former of all things)

Offering plates are at each side of the dais for your convenience.

Permissions/Licensing

- * Adapted from prayers by The Rev. Sarah A. Speed, A Sanctified Art LLC, sanctifiedart.org
- * Permission to reprint, podcast, and/or stream this music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE with license #A-700000. All rights reserved.
- † Public Domain

Music Notes

A note on music during the Lenten Season

The themes of reflection, preparation and penitence often permeate liturgical music during the forty days of Lent and a few practices have evolved in sacred music to meet the character of this important season which the Eastern Orthodox church calls the "season of bright sadness". Throughout history, composers of sacred music have sensitively created works for the two seasons of anticipation in the church; Advent and Lent, which both end with important days in the calendar, Christmas and Easter respectively.



Of course, one common practice we follow is the omitting of alleluias both spoken and sung, but another appropriate act in line with the practice of fasting is to do a "musical fast". That is, the tone of the music becomes more in line with the spirit of the season through the limiting of certain sounds. To accomplish this, often the organist will limit the number of stops (sounds) that are utilized in hymns and anthems, giving a more subdued overall sound to the worship service. The brilliant reeds and mixtures which give the organ a bright majestic sound is reserved for when we arrive at Easter and the end of this journey.

Acapella singing is musically appropriate, especially as we move towards Maundy Thursday and Good Friday when minimal instrumental accompaniment parallels the tone of Holy Week.

This penitent and solemn mood breaks with the glorious return of all the bells and whistles, brass and mixtures and reeds on Easter morning when the instruments spring to life once more to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.

Life and Work at Grace Church

www.gracechurchcalgary.com/worship/



Worship Services

- ◇ Sundays at 10:30 a.m. in-person.
- ◇ Livestreamed to watch anytime at www.gracechurchcalgary.com/worship/
- ◇ The South Sudanese community meets Sundays at 12:30 p.m. in the Chapel.
- ◇ The Anyuak community meets Sundays at 3:00 p.m. in the Chapel.

March 5 Second Sunday in Lent, Communion The Rev. Christian Persaud

March 12 Third Sunday in Lent The Rev. Jake Van Pernis

Grace Updates

www.gracechurchcalgary.com/updates/



Lead Minister Search Committee Update

The Lead Minister Search Committee is requesting names of people who might be interested in considering the Lead Minister position at Grace. We will be following up with individuals and moving forward with advertising over the next few weeks. With God's help we will find the person God is calling to Grace. We continue to appreciate your prayers and support.

Sincerely,

Janet Hyde (Co-convener), Clark Hanna (Co-convener), Flora Stephenson, Jennifer Lee, Elizabeth Cressman, Jan Dewar, Greg Retzer

Living in Balance

Tsuut'ina artist Nathan Meguinis was commissioned by Grace to create a painting symbolizing truth, healing and reconciliation. The painting, titled *Living in Balance*, is now on display in the Family Room, until a permanent location is decided.



Artist's Statement

People of the Dene nation live a life of beautiful balance with the world around them and with other Indigenous Nations.

- ◇ The colour red represents Mother Earth. All the abstract human figures are red to show our connection to the earth with each one having a white outline which is our spirit.
- ◇ The braided sweetgrass circle represents lasting unity.
- ◇ The prints on the tree represent our prayers. These flags are tied on a poplar tree which represents life. Each colour has a meaning: Red - Mother Earth; Green - Plant Life; Blue - Air and Water; Yellow - Sun and Protection; and White - Soul and Spirit.
- ◇ The buffalo represents caring for family and all indigenous Nations who have been resilient and rebounded from being driven from known ways of life.
- ◇ The symbol above the poplar tree represents the North Star, the guiding star. As people we are called to be North Stars guiding others into living in balance.
- ◇ The background colours are in a blanket pattern. The orange represents Truth and Reconciliation, and the blue represents water and air which need to be protected and not polluted.
- ◇ The thirteen feathers represent the thirteen moon cycles in the year, which is the calendar the Tsuut'ina people follow. We live in balance when we are working to care for one another and for the earth all the days of the year.
- ◇ The seven teepees across the top represent the seven Nations of Treaty 7.

“My artwork is showing people of the earth coming together in prayer and peace.”

A video Artist Statement was also created.

Information about Grace's work towards justice is available on our website at <https://gracechurchcalgary.com/community/reconcili-action/>

Lent 2023



seeking:

honest questions
for deeper faith

© Sanctified Art LLC

This year Grace will be using the theme of **Seeking: Honest questions for deeper faith** produced by *A Sanctified Art*. We are seeking our calling, the sacred, and how to live as a disciple. Throughout the turbulence of the past few years, many of us are asking big questions about our lives and our faith. Throughout Lent we will be asking what are we seeking, and what is God seeking?

- ◇ Self-guided daily devotional - Lenten Devotions: *Inward work for outward living*
Copies of this devotional are available by e-mail to office@gracecalgary.org
- ◇ There is a Lenten group study in person on Thursday mornings at 10:30am in the Family Room led by Rev. Jake Van Pernis and Rev. Christian Persaud.
This study runs through March 30.

This Lent, we invite you to engage in the spiritual practice of seeking. We encourage you to stay curious, open, and nimble. We hope you will soften your assumptions and expand your perspectives. We pray that these questions will create a safe space to explore—to be drawn more deeply into the fullness of life, into the heart of God.

Holy Week and Easter Worship Services

- Sunday, April 2: Palm Sunday, All Ages, at 10:30 a.m.
- Thursday, April 6: Maundy Thursday at 7:00 p.m.
- Friday, April 7: Good Friday at 11:00 a.m.
- Sunday, April 9: Easter Sunday, Communion at 10:30 a.m.

Minister Resource Committee Update

The Minister Resource Committee exists to support Grace's Ministers as they lead Grace's congregation to fulfill its agreed upon mission. When there are times of transition, the Minister Resource Committee works to ensure Grace has strong ministerial resources to meet the congregation's spiritual needs.

We all know that Grace has seen many transitions in the past few years, and 2023 will be no different:

First, we are excited to welcome back the Rev. Maren McLean Persaud, Associate Minister Children and Youth on Sunday, April 2 after being on parental leave. She is returning to her 0.75 role encompassing work with children and youth, supporting the Spiritual Growth Committee, and preaching as often as once a month. Rev. Maren plans to be at Grace on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays and is looking forward to reconnecting.

Second, the Rev. Sabino Diok will continue preaching once a month. We are grateful and see his faithfulness to God's call as a wonderful example of what it means to be a disciple.

Third, the Rev. Jake Van Pernis Associate Minister, Engagement and Service and his wife Kate are expecting a baby in early July. Congratulations!

Rev. Jake will take the standard 35 weeks of parental leave, returning in the Spring of 2024. In preparation for his absence, Minister Resource is meeting with the Engagement and Service Committee to better understand their needs during this time.

We are also meeting with Kate to ensure a smooth transition for Rev. Maren's return.

Finally, the Minister Resource Committee is seeking possible full-time ministers who may be willing to support the congregation until Rev. Jake returns, as well as considering part-time leaders who would cover specific areas that correspond to our ministry model including preaching and Bible studies (like the Rev. Dr. Stephen Ferris did), pastoral care (as the Rev. Christian Persaud is doing) as well as our outreach ministries (as the Rev. Roberto DeSandoli did prior to his graduation).

Minister Resource is listening carefully for the lead of the Holy Spirit, as well as following the guidance of the Rev. Greg Smith, Grace's Interim Moderator, and Session, in working to fulfill its responsibilities.

As more decisions are made, the congregation will be informed in a timely fashion.

Mary Lil Rozsa de Coquet, Minister Resource Liaison, Jim Campbell, Rev. Jake, Rev. Christian, Len Wolstenholme, Rev. Greg Smith

Grace Events



www.gracechurchcalgary.com/events/

Grace Youth - First Sunday Lunch – today after Worship

All Grace Youth (grades 7-12) are invited to gather for lunch together today. We'll meet after worship (roughly 11:45 a.m.), just inside the Sanctuary from the north doors and return to the south lot by 1:30 p.m.

Grace Bethany

Grace Bethany is meeting on Tuesday, March 14 in Grace's Family Room from 1:00- 3:00 p.m. All women of Grace are invited to join for fellowship, refreshment and enrichment. Grace Bethany has been apart for a few months and is excited to "re-boot" connections. Hope to see you there!

Rescheduled Shrove Tuesday Pancake Party: Tuesday, March 14

Grace's congregation along with community members are invited to the rescheduled Pancake Party from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 14.

Please RSVP online at Grace's Events website on/before Sunday, March 12.



Preaching Grace Book Study

Join Elizabeth Cressman in exploring *All Our Grievs to Bear: Responding with Resilience after Collective Trauma*, written by Dr. Joni Sancken, this year's Preaching Grace guest speaker. The study will take place Tuesday evenings in April. It will explore themes like collective trauma, storytelling and blessing as well as invite thought about collective learnings for Grace and ourselves. Please register for the study at www.gracechurchcalgary.com/events/. Copies of *All Our Grievs to Bear: Responding with Resilience after Collective Trauma* are available at Owl's Nest Books, Britannia Plaza, or Amazon.ca. Order your copy today!



Preaching Grace 2023 Book Study with Elizabeth Cressman

Tuesday evenings in April

Book: All Our Grievs to Bear: Responding with Resilience After Collective Trauma, written by Dr. Joni Sancken, this year's Preaching Grace guest speaker



Dr. Joni Sancken, PhD, is professor of Homiletics at United Theological Seminary. An ordained minister in Mennonite Church USA, Joni is also the author of several books reflecting a theological and interdisciplinary approach to preaching.

In Community



Multi-Choir Advent Concert Donation

There was a free will offering gathered on the evening of the multi-church Advent concert which was donated to Project Warmth Society. Project Warmth Society has recently sent their thanks for the generosity of this gift.

Service Opportunity - Building Homes in Mexico

For many years, members from Grace Presbyterian Church participated in trips to build homes in Mexico. Marlene and Dan Doherty have continued to participate in these trips and this year are going to help build three homes with the organization Youth With A Mission from April 17 – April 21, 2023.

There is space to join this trip from April 17-21, and Marlene would be happy to share details if you'd like to learn more. Participants are responsible for their airfare to and from San Diego, and for their meals. Please contact Grace's office at office@gracecalgary.org to connect with Marlene.

Note: While this specific trip is not affiliated with Grace, the Engagement and Service Committee is wondering if the congregation would be interested in other possible mission opportunities to lend their hands and hearts in service to neighbours near and far. If so, please provide your feedback through Grace's office at office@gracecalgary.org

Volunteer Opportunities

Rescheduled Pancake Party Volunteers

Many hands make light work! Come join in the fun. Help greet attendees, prepare or serve food, or oversee pancake flipping challenges on Tuesday, March 14.

Pastoral Care Committee Members

The Pastoral Care Committee attends to the personal aspects of congregational needs, from equipping lay leaders in fostering relationships, to ensuring members feel connected to God and to Grace. This Committee would welcome the participation of a few more members who have passion for this ministry of caring.

Please contact our Coordinator of Volunteers, Cindy Stephenson at volunteers@gracecalgary.org to learn more about the many opportunities to volunteer at Grace.

Thank you

Chris Crooks and Rob Strother-Stewart have been sharing in the operation of the sound system during Sunday morning worship – we give thanks for their dedication to this important work! We are delighted that additional volunteers have stepped forward: Abuk, Cate, Doch, Nya and Stephen are training to help with the sound and video systems.

Also, Rob recently constructed a desk to house the live-streaming video equipment up in the balcony. A plaque dedicating the desk to God's glory has been installed on its front.

How blessed Grace is with the generosity of time and talent facilitating our ministry of worship.

Artist Statement

TO BE A BLESSING by Hannah Garrity

Inspired by Genesis 12:1-4a

Paper lace and pencil over oil paint on paper

"I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing." -Genesis 12:2 (NRSV)

As I begin to study this text, the motion we are in as a human species came to mind. God calls Abram. She tasks him with relocating; she's not really explicit as to why. Contemporary theologian Norman Wirzba speaks of our current ability to rely on global positioning systems, or GPS, to travel without needing to know here we are.¹ What do people carry when they are forced to begin again? Medicine and technology, that's what people are carrying across borders right now as they sustain and navigate life through the journey ahead.

How did Abram begin again? He was wealthy. He was called, not forced. He traveled with his entourage. In this image, the globe subtly depicts the route the Abram and his wives, his children, his servants, and his animals took. The lines of countries are suggested as they ripple outward. Tools for navigation used to read the stars and the shadows are echoed below the globe. Stars in the corners represent the twelve tribes of Israel.

How do we begin again? Through the paper lace, the book of Genesis overlays a canvas. The text is hard to read, clouded by oil paint. How do we begin again? Listen through the haze, through the clouded reality, for God's call. God is calling as we begin again.

"In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." -Genesis 12:3 (NRSV)

Dear God, it doesn't feel like much of a blessing these days. We carry on in this journey, beginning yet again. We are called, like Abram—to navigate, to persevere, to be a blessing.

-Hannah Garrity



¹ Wirzba, Norman. *This Sacred Life: Humanity's Place in a Wounded World*. (Cambridge University Press, 2021).

Grace Presbyterian Church

1009 15 Avenue SW, Calgary, AB T2R 0S5

Phone: 403-244-5861

Email: office@gracecalgary.org

Website: www.gracechurchcalgary.com

Twitter/Facebook: @calgarygrace

[YouTube](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Facebook](#)