

position as a blessing to humanity; and those of strong faith, that they may walk humbly and affirm the weaker souls.

Righteous God, steer us through times of temptation,
and deliver us from evil.

And now most Holy Friend, we pray for each other in this church. None of us know the extent of the pressures that some may be under this very day. Look upon us all, read our thoughts and weigh our feelings, and by Your utter resourcefulness, *“save us in the time of trial and deliver us from all evil.”*

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray saying....
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

BIBLE READINGS -

Genesis 9:8-17 (Page 8) Peter 3:18-22 (Page 1202) Mark 1:9-15 (Page 1000)

MESSAGE: *“The Rainbow and the Cross”* **Bob Minton**

HYMN: **658** *“I, the Lord of Sea and Sky”*

OFFERING - OFFERTORY PRAYER

God of grace, in our time of darkness You bless us with gifts of light. We bring these offerings to You - our gifts at home, our gifts online - and with them we offer our lives; that they may be used to serve others, and give you glory. We make our prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN: **276** *“There’s A Light Upon the Mountain”*

BENEDICTION

As Christians we are never promised that we won’t be troubled or tested, but that we shall not be overcome. Therefore, go out from this place cheerfully and boldly, for the God of Christ is on your side and nothing can ultimately defeat those who are encompassed by such an incomparable love.

It is Christ’s grace that is saving us, not our achievements. By faith we accept this grace of God and go on our way with thanksgiving.

The inexhaustible grace of Christ Jesus, the all-embracing love of God, and the resilient friendship of the Spirit, is Yours today and for evermore.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord In the name of Christ. Amen!

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Longueville - St. Andrew’s Uniting Church



ORDER OF SERVICE **LENT 1**

21 February 2021

CALL TO WORSHIP

God: who offers spiritual liberation to all who search for it, we worship You.

We come to the Holy One with our sins and regrets, asking for forgiveness.

God: who offers peace of heart and mind to all who seek it, we thank You.

We come to the Welcoming One, as we yearn for acceptance and renewal.

God: whose promises are always trustworthy, just and fair; we come to share in the blessings of Your unshakable love; Your constant faithfulness and mercy.

We come to the Transforming One, who, as we make our confessions - lovingly and graciously forgives and restores us emotionally, mentally and spiritually.

“My heart is fixed upon You, God; my heart is steadfast in Your love...at peace” .

(Psalm 25:1-10)

PRAYER OF PRAISE

God of storms and rainbows, God of rain and sunshine, God of all creation, we worship and adore You. We gaze in wonder at the beauty of Your creation and marvel at stormy skies transformed with the vibrant colours of a rainbow. Like Noah and his family, we praise You for this everlasting sign of Your love and care for the whole creation - Your desire to preserve and not destroy life. And at Jesus' baptism, the sky again revealed Your love when You identified Him as Your beloved Son, strengthening Him with the same Spirit who empowers and strengthens each of us. For all these assurances of your love for us and for the whole creation, we praise and worship You, O God, in the power of the Holy Spirit and in the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**

HYMN: 591 “Forth Days and Forty Nights”

PRAYER FOR CONFESSION

Gracious God, as we begin our Lenten journey, we do want to follow Jesus but we confess our reluctance to face the stress and temptation that the journey might hold for us. We confess that we are sometimes tempted to wish for miracles which would make life easier rather than more stressful. We admire the difficult and risky journey that Jesus took, challenging systems which put conditions on God's love, but confess that we want our journeys of faith to be devout but not too daring; comfortable and not too threatening. We cherish the faithfulness and humility of Jesus, yet we confess our fear of treading Jesus' way of obedience - the way of the cross.

(A time of silence for personal confession)

Lord Jesus Christ, save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. Forgive us our sins and fill us with the joy and peace of Your salvation and strengthen us during this Lenten season to follow You wherever You choose to take us. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Hear the good news. *“For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God.” (1 Peter 3:18)*

And so, I declare to you: In Jesus Christ we loved are we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God! Amen!

HYMN: 593 “Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me”

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Most Holy Friend, Your goodness always tests our readiness to receive it, please increase our eagerness for You and enlarge our ability to share Your love around.

Gracious God, steer us through times of temptation,
and deliver us from evil.

On this first Sunday in Lent we think of those who are being acutely tempted: tempted to look the other way when wrong is happening in their workplace; tempted to misuse their gifts for a sordid purpose; tempted to allow untamed emotions to hold sway; tempted by the corrupting power of money; and those tempted to stay in a rut rather than strike out on new paths for Christ Jesus.

Generous God, steer us through times of temptation,
and deliver us from evil,

We pray also for the many who feel pushed and tested almost beyond their endurance; those in positions of heavy responsibility who feel overloaded to the point of collapse; or those pressured from all sides by factions in workplace or community; suffering people—and all who must watch a loved one suffer - who feel they can bear no more; kindly folk whose patience with a difficult friend is now at breaking point; persecuted Christians whose faith seems stretched beyond their limit; and the depressed whose inner being endures a misery which no human word can alleviate.

Merciful God, steer us through times of temptation,
and deliver us from evil.

We also pray for those who seem to be in a position of advantage: the happy, that their happiness may always be used for goodwill and compassion; the strong, that their energies may be used wisely and gently; the clever, that they may employ their mental facility for good not evil; for the rich, that their wealth may be shared for the uplifting of the poor; for the powerful, that they may use their