

Centering Music: Good Enough

What in our lives do we dream about for tomorrow, void of sorrow?  
Time spent regretting decisions of our yesterdays, mistakes we made?  
Sometimes we get what we get,  
life disappoints us and yet,  
God is still here and somehow, this faith is good enough.

Lighting of the Christ Candle and Peace Candle

One: On this first day of Lent, we gather together in the light of Christ, who walks with us through all our joys and all our sorrows.

And we gather this day in the light of our Peace Candle for, through his life, Christ taught us to live in peace with all Creation. As the congregation of Knox United, we are grateful to live in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are all Treaty People committed to living together in peace and friendship with the lands, waters, and peoples of Mi'kma'ki.

Lighting of the Affirmation Candle

One: In Christ's presence, we have also lit the Affirmation Candle, and we give thanks for all the diversity in which God creates us and calls us good! In this community of faith, we celebrate that:

Welcome      All are welcome in this place.  
All are welcome by God's grace.

\*\*Call to Worship

One: Ash Wednesday is a time to center our hearts in God's presence,  
**All: to set down our burdens, to bring what is breaking and broken before God, and begin again.**

One: As we enter this season of Lent, let us open our lives to God's presence with us through it all—

**All: in life, in death, and in life beyond death, we are not alone.**

One: May this love and this promise be enough for today. Come, let us worship God.

Opening Prayer

**All: Gracious God, long ago, we are told, you formed every living being from the dust of the earth. Today, we remember that we are made from this beautiful dust, and at the end of our lives, it is to dust that we shall return. In our living, help us to re-discover our connection to you, to your Creation, and to each other. From this worship, create in us hearts that are open to transformation. Amen.**

**\*\*Opening Hymn:** VU 642 Be Thou My Vision vv.1-2, 4-5

**Prayer of Confession:**

One: Through the ages of Christian tradition, Ash Wednesday developed as a doorway to speaking the truth of our lives, a time to lay the brokenness of life before God so that we might be healed over the course of Lent. As we search for healing in our lives and the life of this world, let us bring our brokenness before God in prayer:

**All: There are some things I can only share with you, O God—actions and decisions that I regret, bringing my brokenness into my living. And there are some parts of our society's life that we *need* to share with you, O God—the brokenness that seems too big for us to repair by ourselves. I offer this brokenness to you, risen Christ, as my confession. I open myself to you, healing Spirit, asking for renewal and wisdom. Hear the prayers of my deepest self and those of my neighbours in this silent prayer.**

*(A time of silent prayer)*

**Words of Assurance:**

One: Siblings in Christ, hear the good news that is given to us from the life of Christ:

Our lives are not measured by our failures and mistakes, but by the love we are given, and the love we share. And from the teachings of Christ, we are told that God, our Creator loves us *beyond measure*. Through thick and thin, through the joys *and* the sorrows, we are loved, *and we are forgiven*. So, let us trust in this love and forgiveness, and share it with all the world, saying:

**All: We are a loved and forgiven people! Thanks be to God. Amen.**

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**Prayer of Illumination:**

*One: God of the Ages, as we open the scriptures this day, let us take heart, for you are calling to us. As we seek your will for us, free our spirits to receive the truths that you have for us today. Amen.*

**Scripture:**

Isaiah 58:1-12

-read by Florence Carman

A Word of God that is still speaking.  
**Thanks be to God.**

Ashes and Flowers

*In a moment, we will sing our hymn "Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying" that will guide us into a time of prayer. During this time, you are encouraged to prayerfully consider what your Lenten practice or intention for Lent might be, or what you are longing for God to transform this Lent. There will be a prayer on the screen that you can pray silently or aloud to help you in your considerations.*

*When you are ready, you may come forward as you are able to receive the blessing of ashes on your forehead, as well as to nourish the dust of your Lenten intentions with ashes and water from the font, or raise your hand, and a worship leader will bring ashes and water to you.*

Hymn: VU 400 Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

Prayer for setting a Lenten intention:

God, give me courage, give me strength, give me hunger for you. Let this set time of less be a chance for more of you. Let this fast be an entrance into the discernment I desire, the divine presence I'm longing for, and the hope to will what You will, oh God, to be who You've called me to be. Amen.

*(from Good Enough by Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie)*

Hymn: Sing Out! We're Made of Common Dust

\*\*Blessing:

One: And now, may the God who loves all of creation, especially the imperfect bits, and Jesus, our companion along this crooked path called life, and the Holy Spirit, who loves to improvise in surprising ways, go with you, dwell among you, and give you joy. Amen.

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## OUR MISSION

TO SHARE GOD'S LOVE

BY LIVING THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS:

showing mercy,

promoting justice,

offering forgiveness,

acceptance, and hope.

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## Our Vision...

We, the congregation of Knox United Church, publicly proclaim our commitment to become an open and welcoming community of faith. We declare that we welcome everyone regardless of age, race, ability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Everyone is welcome here.

Through the process of honouring diversity and challenging injustice with those who bear the weight

of discrimination, we commit ourselves to openness,  
growth, education, love, and acceptance.

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Christ's Disciples in Ministry: Everyone  
Minister of Worship, Outreach and Faith Formation: Rev. Penny Nelson  
Minister of Pastoral Care: Rev. Kym Burke  
Minister of Music & Dramatic Arts: John Lindsay-Botten  
Church School Superintendent: Lynne Stewart  
Youth Group: James O'Connell  
Pastoral Care: Olive McIlldoon & Judy Hayes

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+Call to Worship written by Rev. Penny Nelson, 2022 while at Knox United Church, Lower Sackville; Opening Prayer adapted from prayer written by Rev. Penny Nelson while at the Tatamagouche Pastoral Charge, 2021 with inspiration from Marcia MacFee's "Ash Wednesday—Calling on God" prayer from *Good Enough*; Prayer of Confession adapted from Gord Dunbar, Kincardine PC, Kincardine, ON, *The Gathering L/E 2020*, pg.30. Used with permission; Words of Assurance written by Rev. Penny Nelson, 2022 while at Knox United Church, Lower Sackville; Prayer of Illumination written by Beth W. Johnston, Bridging Waters Pastoral Charge, Nipawin, SK. *The Gathering: A/C/E/ 2020-21*, pg. 50. Used with permission; Blessing written by Marcia McFee for the "Ash Wednesday" liturgy of *Good Enough* from Worship Design Studio.