

Anglican & United Church Ministries

Home of St. Mary the Virgin Anglican
& Vegreville United Churches



The Second Sunday of Lent

March 1, 2026

A Service of Holy Communion
in the United Church Tradition

Rector & Minister in Charge: The Rev. Laureta Blondin

Music provided by Ellen Johnstone

(* = Please stand, but only if it is comfortable to do so)

W

elcome in the name of Christ to Anglican and United Church Ministries in Vegreville and thank you for joining us on this special day. We pray that you enjoy your time with us and that your spirit is enriched as we sit together at the feet of our Saviour. We believe that no matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey God welcomes you... and so do we! If you are visiting us, a warm welcome to you. We pray that you and your family are blessed and experience Christ's love in this morning's service. God's richest blessings be on you!

The congregations of St. Mary the Virgin Anglican Church and Vegreville United Church are committed to the ongoing work of being fully affirming churches. Inspired by the radical hospitality of Jesus Christ, we welcome everyone into the life of our congregations, without exception to ability, age, race, place of origin, ancestry, marital status, gender identity, sexual orientation, life stage, or any other basis by which a person can be pre-judged. You are invited to join us at this intersection of faith and life as we share God's grace with one another and the world through worship and ministries of healing, reconciliation, and justice.

The congregations of Vegreville United Church and St. Mary the Virgin Anglican Church respectfully acknowledge that we are located on ancestral Treaty Six Territory land ᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ (Siksikaitsitapi), a traditional gathering place, travelling route and home for diverse indigenous peoples including the Nehiyawak (Cree), Tsuut'ina (Sarcee), Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Nakota Sioux, Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), Métis, Dēnē Sų́łnē (Chipewyan), Anishinaabe (Ojibway-Saulteaux), Inuk (Inuit), and many others whose histories, languages and cultures continue to influence our vibrant local communities. We give thanks for their hospitality and the opportunity to share common ground.

Children are welcome at all services! We believe it is very important for families to worship together. Don't feel your child must be absolutely quiet or still, for we are glad to have children — and all their wiggles, giggles, and squiggles — as part of our community and worship life! After all... as an old saying goes, "faith is caught, not taught!"

The Second Sunday of Lent

The Son of man must be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. *John 3.14–15*

Musical Prelude

The Gathering

Welcome

One In Jesus' name, welcome!
First-time participant or one who's been here many days;
child or elder or somewhere in-between;
stewards, caretakers, disciples of Jesus, children of God—
neighbours all, loved and loving. Welcome.
Welcome in Christ's name!

Land Acknowledgement

All **As we gather to worship, let's respectfully pause to remember we live and work and worship on Treaty 6 lands that are, by law, the unceded territory of the original First Nations peoples. Creator of all, give us one heart and one mind that we may live with respect on this land and live in peace and friendship with all diverse peoples who now call this land home. Amen.**

* Call to Worship

One Blessed and blessing, loving and loved, God's people of the Anglican & United Church Ministries in Vegreville, come to this place!

People **We're ready!**

One From times of work, from times of play, from times of busy-ness, from times away, God's people of the Anglican & United Church Ministries in Vegreville, come!

People **We're set!**

One To speak and to receive, to sing and to pray. God's people of the Anglican & United Church Ministries in Vegreville, come!

People **We're here! We're here! We're here to worship God!**

* ♪ **Opening Hymn**..... *Seek Ye First* (VU 356)

Opening Prayer

One God of the smooth road,

All **God of the rough places, God of the wilderness paths, thank you. Thank you for calling us out when we want to wrap ourselves up and hide. Thank you for giving us safe space when everything is just too much. Thank you for blessing all creation with your presence, and with your love. Open our hearts, we pray — open our minds — open our souls and, by your grace, fill them with your abundant love; not only so that we would be changed, not only so that we would be blessed, but so that we can be blessing and people of transformation, in your world. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen.**

Extinguishing the Lenten Candles

One Today is the second Sunday in the Season of Lent. This season offers us the opportunity to be more reflective as we journey together with Jesus through the wilderness and beyond.

People: **As followers of Jesus, we have all experienced times of testing and temptation — times we have felt that we were travelling in the wilderness.**

One As people of faith, we confess that in the face of difficult decisions we are sometimes drawn to easy answers and actions that do not demand much of us.

People: Today's candle represents *searching*. During Lent, we are searching for Jesus. As we extinguish this candle, it reminds us that Jesus will still be where we can find him, whether it is light or dark.

(Extinguish second Lenten candle)

One As we watch the smoke rise, we remember that God's spirit is with us in mysterious and tangible ways. We are reminded that God comforts, encourages and supports us as we face the challenges of following the Way of Jesus.

People: **Knowing ourselves to be loved and blessed, we raise our voices in song — a prayer to you, O God.**

Prayer of Approach and Confession

One On this second Sunday in the season of Lent when we come seeking a space of embrace, reshaping and sending forth.

All **We have settled into this space, in person and through technology, joined in God's timelessness.**

One When the world confuses and confounds us, still we come in hope and anticipation.

All **We come in trust that our hearts will meet the heart of the Divine.**

One Come then, be enfolded in God's divine heart through the intimacy of prayer.

All **We nestle into your loving, sustaining embrace, O God. In the cold of winter, warm us with the Spirit's flame of inspiration. In the bluster of the northern winds, still our minds that we may choose the way of wholeness. On the slippery, dangerous ice of uncertainty, give us traction to be in the grip of stories of Christ's self-giving love. We confess our fear and bewilderment and desire to turn to you, Holy One, for strength and reassurance.**

Words of Assurance

One Gift of Grace: Family of Faith, I don't know what this past week has looked like for you, but I do know this: there is a seat at God's table saved for you. And that is the case: even if you overlooked your neighbour, even if you doubted God's love for you, even if you chose scarcity over abundance, or fear over joy. God has a seat reserved for you. Trusting this good news, join me in these words of forgiveness.

All **We are known. We are loved. We are forgiven. We begin again. Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.**

Finding God Together in Scripture

First Reading

Genesis 12.1-4a [NRSV]

12Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ²I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'⁴So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

Reader: Word of God, Word of Life.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 121 [Voices United, p. 844]

Refrain

Michel Guimont 1990

Unison

Our help is in the name of our God who made heaven and earth.

Music copyright © 1990 Michel Guimont

I lift up my eyes to the hills.

From where will I look for help?

**My help comes from God,
who has made heaven and earth.**

God will not let your foot stumble,
the One who protects Israel will not slumber.

**The One who protects you
will neither slumber not sleep.**

(Refrain)

It is God who protects you,
your defence at your right hand.

**The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.**

God will protect you from all evil,
God will protect your life.

**God will protect your going and coming,
now and forever.**

(Refrain)

Second Reading Romans 4.1–5, 13–17 [NRSV]

⁴What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? ²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.' ⁴Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. ⁵But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

¹³For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations')—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

All **Thanks be to God.**

* ♪ **Gradual Hymn..... *To Abraham and Sarah* (VU #634)**

*** The Gospel Matthew 17:1-9 [NRSV]**

One Hear the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Matthew.

All **Glory to our Lord.**

17Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. ²And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. ³Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. ⁴Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' ⁵While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!' ⁶When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. ⁷But Jesus came and touched them, saying, 'Get up and do not be afraid.' ⁸And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone.

⁹As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, 'Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.'

One This is the Gospel of Christ

All **Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

Sermon The Rev. Laureta Blondin

Modern Affirmation of Faith

One Let us declare our communal Affirmation of Faith.

All **We are not alone;
we live in God's world.**

**We believe in God,
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us
and others by the Spirit.
We trust in God.**

**We are called to be the Church:
To celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.**

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

*** Exchanging the Peace**

One The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

Members of the community are invited to greet those around them with a sign of peace (handshakes or hugs) and words like "The peace of the Lord be always with you." This ancient tradition is an appropriate response to the peace that God gives to those who hear and do his word.

Our Offertory Gifts

Invitation to Generosity

Celebrant As we continue on our journey through the forty days of Lent, let us remember the blessings we have and let us remember others who need our support and aid through our money, our time, and our prayers. Our offering will now be received.

♪ **Offertory Hymn.....*River Running in You and Me*** (MV #163)

* **Prayer of Dedication Over the Gifts**

Celebrant God of all creation,

All **we bring these gifts today in response to your love and grace at work in our lives. We wish to participate in your purpose to offer healing and love to all people. We pray that these gifts will be used faithfully and well in this community of faith and in the world through Mission and Service. Strengthen us so that we may offer our lives to your work. Amen.**

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

One God is here.

People **Always. Forever!**

One Let us remember!

People **With all that we are!**

One Let us give thanks to God.

People **It is right to offer thanks and praise.**

One In the beginning before there was a beginning,
before there was even a before, there you were, God-of-All.
You and the chaotic nothingness.

People **And with your Word, You brought being into being.
All that was, all that is, all that there will ever be.**

One And with your love, you gave creation life — in all its fullness. Life! In all its complexity.

People **Life! In all its wandering confusion!**

One DNA, RNA, one cell, many cells. Things that fly, things that swim, things that waddle or walk or crawl, things that move and have their being in you.

People **And us, too!**

One You give us curiosity, wonder, stubbornness, spirit, intention, action, neighbour, and stranger. You gave us hope, laughter, companionship, song. You gave life — life, in its myriads of possibility.

People **Thank you, loving God!**

One Sometimes, we have lived that life in ways that live into your desire for us. But, sometimes in our wandering, in our fear, in our times of loss, or greed, or apathy — we have twisted the gift, we have twisted ourselves, we have twisted others — people, places, and things.

People **But every time, your love has sung out, urging us to wholeness, urging us to healing, urging us to right and loving relationships, with ourselves, with the other, with you.**

One In this season of Lent, in this time of reflection, of living in the in-between, we commit ourselves again, to listening, prayerfully. We commit ourselves, again, to walking with Christ—to Jerusalem, to the cross, to the beyond.

People **We commit ourselves, again, knowing that you walk with us, God of deep places.**

One And we remember.

People **We remember.**

Breaking of the Bread

One That, on the night before he was taken to what would be his death, Jesus gathered with his disciples — people he said were his friends — and he ate with them, once again. Sharing in a meal of love, for each around the table, And for all around the world, he gave thanks to you, Loving God. He took bread and broke it, And he gave it to those around, saying, “Take this, all of you, and eat it. This is my body, given for you. Each time you eat bread, remember me.”

People **We eat, and we remember.**

Pouring the Wine

One When the meal was almost over, he took a cup, and again gave thanks to you, Loving God. Then he said to them, “Take this, all of you, and drink it. This is my promise that I am always with you. Each time you drink, remember.”

People **We drink, and we remember.**

By remembering Jesus in this way now, we claim our common heritage as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

Prayer of Transformation (*Epiclesis*)

One God of all places, from the deepest space, to the tiniest place inside, we ask that you would help us to know that you journey with all of creation. Help us to see your Holy Spirit in this bread and cup, and in all who are gathered, that we might know deep within, That they, and we, are the body of Christ, alive in the world.

All **Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory is yours,
God most holy, now and forever. Amen.**

One God of all, we now pray and remember those in need of our
prayers...

Intercessory Prayers of the People

*We hold the following ministries, communities, and people in prayer.
During the Prayers of the People in our services of worship, we bring
before God the needs of others and ourselves. Please consider offering
these requests to God in your own daily prayers through this week.*

Let us lift our hearts and voices to the Lord in prayer, that he would be merciful to his people. Our response to, "Lord in your mercy," is "hear our prayer."

Dearest heavenly Father, we know John 3:16 by heart. Thank you for its truth. You *do* so love the world! You gave your only Son! We have everlasting life, not death! Thank you for your love. By your Spirit, let our lives reflect that love – to you, and to people who don't yet know your love or believe your Word (*pause*). Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Ever seeking your glory, we pray for the church. Today we remember:

- in the Anglican Communion's world cycle of prayer, the people and leadership of *The Nippon Sei Ko Kai* as well as the Edmonton Diocese's own companion Diocese of Buyé, Africa.
- in the United Church of Canada cycle of prayer, we pray for the Rev. Dr. Kimberly Heath, our Moderator and for the people and leadership of the *Horseshoe Falls* Region.
- in the Anglican Church of Canada cycle of prayer, we pray for our Primate, the Rt. Rev. Shane Parker, and for the people and leadership of the Diocese of Moosonee and the Rt. Rev. Rod BrantFrancis, their Bishop.

- in the Northern Spirit Region cycle of prayer, we pray for the Rev. Adam Hall, our Pastoral Relations Minister, and for the people and leadership of St. Paul-Ashmont Pastoral Charge.
- in the Diocese of Edmonton cycle of prayer, we pray for the Rt. Rev. Stephen London, our Bishop and for the people and leadership of St. Mark-Jieng, Edmonton.
- in our local cycle of prayer, we pray for the people and the leadership of St. John's Lutheran Church.
- in our indigenous cycle of prayer, we pray for the people and the leadership of the Saddle Lake Cree Nation.

Let the wind of your Spirit blow through your Church. Breathe your life and love through it, to revive everyone who is wounded and dying from the assaults of the sin, death, and the devil. Make the Church your "wounded healer," able to draw broken and sinful people close to Jesus (*pause*). Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Fill this congregation with the Holy Spirit, so that day by day, our hearts, minds, words, and works are reborn as instruments of your will. Use us to bring your redeeming love to those who need it most (*pause*). Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Keep watch over our persecuted brothers and sisters around the world when they cry to you for help. Preserve them from every evil. Grant repentance, forgiveness, and new life to their tormentors (*pause*). Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Nicodemus, a teacher in Israel, needed the challenge, wisdom, and words of life that only Jesus could give. Grant that all who seek to be pastors, teachers, and theologians should always sit at Jesus' feet. Fill them with his Spirit. Make them truth-filled teachers and trustworthy guides to everyone in their care (*pause*). Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Teach and guide the leaders of all nations, especially our own. Help them prefer integrity and wisdom to the allure of power or popularity. Make them watchful and protective toward those entrusted to their care. Guide them in paths of justice and righteousness and help us all to walk in those paths (*pause*). Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for travelers, immigrants, and refugees. Protect them from cruel traffickers, false promises, and deadly dangers. We also pray for those who strive to keep our nation safe from those who abuse our hospitality and endanger the innocent (*pause*). Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Be the shield and strength of those who risk their lives on our behalf. Do not let their foot be moved. Deliver them from evil. Use them to bring safety and help in dangerous situations. Restore them to their loved ones when their task is done. Grant honour to the fallen, healing to the wounded, and peace to all (*pause*). Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Watch over everyone who endures pain, sorrow, fear, doubt, loneliness, or despair, including those we lift before you now and name aloud or hold within the silence of our hearts (*long pause*). Along with those for whom no one prays, be their shade and shelter. Give hope to their hearts, health to their bodies, confidence to their minds, and faith to their souls. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, thank you for embracing our beloved dead in your everlasting arms. Keep us steadfast in faith. Guide us through this "barren land." Feed us with the Bread of Heaven. Be our strength and shield. When we tread the verge of Jordan, bid our anxious fears subside. By the Cross of Jesus, land us safe on Canaan's side. Fill us with songs and praises that, with all the redeemed, we sing to you forever (*pause*). Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

All these things, and whatever else you see that we need, grant to us, dear Father, for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ who taught us to pray these words.

* 🎵 **The Lord's Prayer**(VU 959)

One And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us, let us pray,

All **Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive
those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours, now and for ever.**

Sharing Communion

One My friends, the table is ready.
Bread for the journey.
Wine for the way.
Christ's gifts for all creation.
These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

All **Thanks be to God.**

The Communion

An Open Table! *When we celebrate Holy Communion, we are all guests at the table, with Jesus himself as our host. We have not earned a place at the table, rather we are invited because of the amazing grace of God. For that reason, this celebration of the Holy Communion is open to all—including children—who wish to know the presence of Christ and the community of God's people, and not merely members of this congregation or denomination. This is a joyful feast for all the people of God. Please make your way to the serving station at the front of the sanctuary, by way of a centre aisle. Receive the elements and then return to your seat by an outside aisle.*

Important Health Notice: *For your health and the health of others, please use the hand sanitizer provided in the main aisle before receiving communion. Communion bread is gluten free. There is also both consecrated wine and grape juice.*

♪ Communion Hymn..... ***Behold, Behold, I Make All Things New*** (MV #115)

Prayer after Communion

All **As we journey through Lent, as we remember, reflect and re-live, you have fed us with your love, once again. Help us to remember that we carry that love, everywhere we go. Help us to remind the world, you are present, and we are never, ever, alone. Amen.**

Benediction

One May the God who is revealed in the mystery of whirlwinds and transfigurations, be the God who goes with you now and always, as you come down from the mountain and travel another way.

All **Amen,**

♪ Recessional Hymn ...***I Have Called You by Your Name*** (MV#161)

The Dismissal

Celebrant With the light of Christ to guide you,
go now in hope and peace
to love and serve the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God!**

* ♪ **Three-Fold Amen**(VU #967)

Thank you for worshipping with us!
Please join us for fellowship time with a potluck lunch
in the auditorium following the worship service.

Announcements

The Life and Work of the Church

Donations to our churches: To continue the good work of St. Mary the Virgin Anglican and Vegreville United churches and ensure their ongoing presence in our community, your financial support is most appreciated. Donations can be made by either cash, cheque or e-transfer. Please use one of the envelopes located in the Narthex for cash or cheque donations and place the envelope in the offertory plate by the door. If writing a cheque, please ensure your cheque is made payable to either Vegreville United Church or St. Mary the Virgin Anglican Church. Annual Tax Receipts are provided for all donations totalling \$20 or more per year to the church of your choice. E-transfers for Vegreville United Church can be sent to vegucc@telusplanet.net and e-transfers for St. Mary's can be sent to stmarysvegreville@gmail.com. Cheques can also be delivered to 5126-48 Avenue, Vegreville, AB T9C 1M7.

Our Upcoming Joint Ministry Schedule: Our worship services are at 10:00 AM (unless otherwise noted) and alternate between the Anglican and United worship styles at Vegreville United with occasional blended services:

- Mar. 8th **3rd Sunday of Lent:** An Anglican communion service.
- Mar. 15th **4th Sunday of Lent:** A United worship service.
- Mar. 22nd **5th Sunday of Lent:** An Anglican communion service.
- Mar. 29th **Palm Sunday:** A blended worship service.
- Apr. 2nd **Maundy Thursday:** A blended communion service at 7:00 PM with a Potluck supper before the service from 5:00 – 6:45 PM.
- Apr. 3rd **Good Friday:** A blended 'Meditations on the Cross' worship service at 2:00 PM. **Please note** Rev. Laureta will be at St. Joseph's Hospital for a 10:30 AM service on Good Friday.
- Apr. 5th **Easter Sunday:** A blended communion service

Monthly Bible Study: Bible Study will resume on the third Thursday of the month from 10:30 to 11:30 AM (Mar. 19th) in the St. Mary the Virgin Prayer Room. All are welcome.

Spring Pie Fundraiser: Helpers are needed for Friday, March 13th when small and large pies (apple, rhubarb, cream and possibly quiche) will be freshly made and baked. All purchases are by donation. Pick up will be anytime on Saturday, March 14th between 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM or during fellowship time after worship on Sunday, March 15th. All funds collected will go towards the support of our churches' ongoing good work and presence in our community.

Lent Quiet Day: The Anglican and United Church Ministries in Vegreville invites you to their first joint Lent Quiet Day on Saturday, March 21st from 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM. Coffee, donuts and muffins will be available starting at 9:30 AM and a simple hot lunch of soup will also be provided. The cost of the day is free but a donation to help cover the cost of the lunch is appreciated. Any extra funds collected will go towards the support of our churches' ongoing good work and presence in our community. Please pre-register by calling the church office at (780) 632-2338 to ensure enough food is made. Come by yourself and bring a friend. All are welcome.

Please contact Irene Sabados by calling (780) 632-2338 in the church office or via email vegucc@telusplanet.net for bulletin submissions or to add a name to the prayers for the sick and deceased.

Please check out our events page on our church website for more upcoming events:

<https://vegrevilleunitedchurch.com/events>.

`I have made you the father of many nations')