

351 Amazing Love

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13

Unison

1. My Lord, what love is this that pays so
 2. And so they watched Him die, de-spised, re-
 3. And now this love of Christ shall flow like

dear-ly; That I, the guilt-y one, may go
 ject-ed; But, O the blood He shed flowed for
 riv-ers; Come wash your guilt a-way, live a

Refrain

free?
 me. A-maz-ing love, O what sac-ri-fice, The Son of God giv'n for
 gain.

me; My debt He pays and my death He dies, That

I might live, that I might live.

TEXT: Graham Kendrick
 MUSIC: Graham Kendrick

AMAZING LOVE
 Irregular meter



St. John's United Church of Christ

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WELCOME VISITORS! Thank you for coming! Please sign a pew card to place in the offering plate.

WORSHIP: When reading this bulletin Leader Speaks Plain Font, Everyone Speak Bold Font

You Are Not Alone

The following support groups meet regularly at St. John's

- The Belvidere Group (AA) meets at everyday at 7pm. Women's Group meets Mondays 5:30pm
- T.O.P.S. Mondays 11am



Delicious Fundraiser



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**Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Offertory Prayer

Holy and Generous One, receive our gifts of thanksgiving and hope as we share our resources to support the ministries of this faith community, the wider church, and the world. May our offerings meet needs, change lives, and proclaim the goodness of God in the land of the living. Amen.

Closing Hymn

**"Amazing Love"
(see back of bulletin)**

Benediction

Postlude

Trembling: Service Prayers for Ash Wednesday Year C was written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ.

We are dust. We are oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, carbon, calcium, and phosphorus.

We are made of stars. We will reshape the universe.

We are God's good creation.

Inhale the elements of life. Take a breath, deep or shallow, in gratitude that you have received the breath of life. (pause) Exhale and fuel creation around you with the essence of your being. (pause) Inhale and exhale and remember that you are part of God's beloved creation.

We are God's beloved creation.

You are dust and so much more than that. You are living, breathing, powerful co-creators with the One who set the heavens and the earth into motion. Your life matters, and you have the power of God at work in you and through you.

We are the Holy One's co-creators.

Service of Ashes

(All are invited to come forward to receive the ashes. If unable, please signal an usher and the ashes will be brought to you)

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Holy One, thank you for this precious meal served with grace, mercy, and love. Ignite and strengthen us with compassion, faith, and boldness in proclaiming your good news, following your path, and pursuing flourishing life for all creation. In the fullness of life, we breathe amen. Amen.

Hymn 207 "Just as I am"

Service of Offering

(With clean hearts and renewed spirits, we invite all to offer their gifts of time, treasure and talent up to God.)

The Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Prelude

Greeting

Call to Worship (Inspired by Joel 2:1-2, 12-17)

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near.

Gather the people to turn to the Holy One who is gracious, merciful, and abounding love.

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! The days are bleak and filled with gloom yet rend your hearts and not your clothing.

Feast on righteousness and fast from hopeless, apathy, and despair. Even now, God calls us to reflect, repent, and return.

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Why should it be said among the peoples, "Where is their God?"

Declare the sovereignty of God in word and deed, in compassion and solidarity, in trust and faith! Blow the trumpet! Sound the alarm!

Invocation

Holy One, open our hearts, lips, minds, and spirits, and we will declare your praise. We gather in your name and in your presence to worship you, to reorient our lives in your kingdom, and to direct our attention toward you. May your power flow through us as spirit meets spirit. As we reflect upon your goodness and the needs of the world, stir our hearts toward compassion and our lives toward active participation in your realm. Hear our prayers, delight in our songs, and speak through our words. May it be so. Amen.

Prayer of Confession

Most holy and merciful God: We confess that we have sinned by our own fault in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and what we

have left undone.

We have not loved you with all our heart, mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.

Have mercy on us, O God.

We have been deaf to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

Have mercy on us, O God.

We confess to you, O God. All our past unfaithfulness. The pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives, Our self-indulgent appetites and ways and our exploitation of other people,

We confess to you, O God.

Our anger at our own frustrations and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves, Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts and our dishonesty in our daily life and work, Our negligence in prayer and worship and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

We confess to you, O God.

Accept our repentance, O God, for the wrongs we have done. For our neglect of human need and suffering and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

Accept our repentance, O God.

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt for those who differ from us,

Accept our repentance, O God.

For our waste and pollution of your creation and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

Accept our repentance, O God.

Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.

Favorably hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.

2 Corinthians 6:1 declares, "As we work together with him, we retreat you also not to accept the grace of God in vain."

Holy God, we need your grace towards us and for us to extend to ourselves and others. Help us be agents of your kingdom and citizens of your realm. May our love and compassion have no borders or bounds. Release us from unforgiveness and condemnation in favor of restoration and redemption. Let your way direct, transform, and compel us as your witnesses in the world. Let our feast or fasting not be in vain but a testament to your presence among us and within us. In the name of the Author or Redemptive Love, we pray. Amen.

Silent Prayer and Meditation**Words of Grace**

Beloved, the Holy One is at work with you. You have the power and authority of the Most High as your Companion and Source. Through the Spirit, transformation and new life are yours to claim and proclaim. Receive the gift of grace and mercy given without condemnation so that you may be free to love, to live, and to be as crafted through the Breath of Life.

Hymn #185 "Savior, When in Tear and Dust"**Scripture**

Joel 2:1-2, 12-27

Sermon "Time to Catch you Breath"**Ritual of Breath and Ashes**

Each day invites us to remember the sacred nature of life. Every breath we take, whether unconscious and easy or labored and shaky, connects us with creation. We inhale elements of stardust, shaped and reshaped from the dawn of time and Creator's "Let there be" declarations. We too are dust creations, from the richness of the earth and the vastness of the universe, until our last breath returns us as seeds of new life, new being, new creation.