

**St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth
Sunday, March 3rd, 2024
Rev. Gerry Gallant**

**Righteous Anger
Third Sunday of Lent
John 2:13-22**

Welcome

Announcements

Call to Worship

Seek the Lord while God may be found. Call upon God who is near.

We will return to the Lord our God.

God's thoughts are not our thoughts. God's ways are not our ways.

We come, seeking new paths to follow.

As the heavens are higher than the earth so are God's ways higher than ours.

We come as pilgrims on the journey, praising God along the way.

Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

Loving God, our Creator and Sustainer,
in you we live and move and have our being.
In your depths we find meaning; in your heights we find light and joy.
You are the source of peace and hope for all who turn to you.
You alone have been our help and our guide;
you give us strength and courage when we face challenges.
In you we find rest and welcome along the way.
We praise you, O God, for your steadfast love.
Draw near to us once more in this time of worship.
Reveal your purposes for us
and prepare us for the days ahead
so that our lives may witness to your mercy and grace
as we follow Our Lord and Savior Jesus. **Amen.**

Children's Hymn: "If You Are Happy and You Know It Clap Your Hands"

Call to Confession

Prepare the way of the Lord!
Let us make our confession to God.

Prayer of Confession

God of mercy,
you sent Jesus Christ to seek and save the lost.
We confess that we have strayed from you
and turned aside from your way.
We are misled by pride,
for we see ourselves pure when we are stained,
and great when we are small.
We have failed in love,
neglected justice,
and ignored your truth.
Have mercy, O God, and forgive our sin.
Return us to paths of righteousness
through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news! Who is in a position to condemn us? Only Christ –
And Christ died for us; Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power for us, Christ prays for
us.
In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. By Christ's mercy, we can make a fresh start following
him.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One.
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory,
Forever and ever. Amen.

Music Ministry: "God's Table Divine"**Responsive Reading****Psalm 19:7-11**

⁷The law of the LORD is perfect,
reviving the soul;
the testimony of the LORD is sure,
making wise the simple;

**⁸ the precepts of the LORD are right,
rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the LORD is pure,
enlightening the eyes;**

⁹ the fear of the LORD is clean,
enduring forever;
the rules of the LORD are true,
and righteous altogether.

**¹⁰ More to be desired are they than gold,
even much fine gold;
sweeter also than honey
and drippings of the honeycomb.**

**¹¹ Moreover, by them is your servant warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.**

Opening Hymn #315: "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" (V 1,3,4)

A mighty Fortress is our God,
A refuge never failing;
Our Helper sure amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing:
For still our ancient foe
Yet seeks to work us woe;
With craft and power great,
And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth has not unequal.

And though this world, with evil filled,
should threaten to undo us,
we will not fear, for God has willed
the truth to triumph through us.
The powers of death and hell
our God will surely quell:
their rage we can endure,
for look! their doom is sure;
one little word will fell him.

That Word above all earthly powers
no thanks to them! abiding;
ensures that all God's gifts are ours,
through Christ in us residing,
whose summons rings above all goods,
all earthly love.

Earth's powers waste a way;
 God's Word endures always,
 whose reign will last forever.

Prayer for illumination
(Congregant Prepared)

Scripture

John 2:13-22

¹³ The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. ¹⁵ And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶ And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade." ¹⁷ His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." ¹⁸ So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" ¹⁹ Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ²⁰ The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" ²¹ But he was speaking about the temple of his body. ²² When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

Sermon

We have a way of creating the Jesus that we want when we think about Jesus in our lives. We love a happy Jesus, one that is smiling and loving everyone. We picture him in a flowing white robe, long hair, and a full beard. The miniseries *The Chosen* chooses to depict Jesus this way, a friendly approachable man, who is good with Children. We love this image of Jesus that is presented in *The Chosen*, a man who is welcoming, one who eats with sinners and tax collectors, one who loves people just the way they are.

However, this is not the Jesus that is painted in the Scripture that we read today. He is not carrying a happy whip, and joyfully tossing some coins around and playfully scaring away the animals in the courtyard.

Instead, we see Jesus overturn tables, scattering the coinage of the money lenders over the ground. We see Him chasing out those who are selling animal sacrifices. He tells all those gathered to stop turning his father's house into a house of trade!

For many people this Jesus is a little bit frightening, he is not acting like the one we see portrayed everywhere in the media and in many churches in the world today. And this

piece of Scripture was recorded for a reason, to remind us that God is not always happy and loving, he is not always smiling and accepting. The Scripture says that:

Exodus 34:6-7

⁶The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”

God is slow to anger, and we can all be thankful for that, otherwise we would have all received a just punishment for our sin, very early in our lives. Instead, God is extremely tolerant and forgiving of those who wonder away from his teachings. However, God does get angry, throughout the Old Testament we see God cast his judgement down upon the Israelites who worship the Golden calf, those who died in the great flood, the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the Israelites into Babylon. His judgment and anger also appear in the New Testament, here in the Temple, in his conversations with those who are religious leaders, but not religious people. It is perhaps the clearest in the book of Revelation, on Judgement Day there is no question about the fate of those who do not recognize God as their Lord and Saviour as they are cast into the lake of fire so that the debt of their sin, death, may be paid.

Christians need to remember this, to think about this God, the one that loves us, but also gets angry with our ways of living.

Unfortunately, we live in a world and culture that is very averse to any form of anger. Anger in our culture is always associated with hate, and hate of any form is culturally forbidden, especially in the last few years. The world has painted anger and hatred, or even disagreement, as the polar opposite of tolerance.

So, as Christians we try to live lives that are filled with patience, kindness, and self-control, those virtues of the Holy Spirit that we know the world accepts in all people. We try to be the follower of the Christ that is presented in The Chosen, one that is filled only acceptance.

Yet, the Jesus we see in the Scripture today gets out a whip and starts flipping over tables, which is not very tolerant in the world’s eyes. The truth is that there are times when anger is needed, especially when danger is involved. When someone is playing with fire, or a gun, or explosives, things which could harm them and others, anger is necessary if they refuse to listen to you and stop the dangerous behavior. When someone could be hurt you need to send a very clear message about the risks involved in the action. When someone is doing something that could harm themselves, or others and we get angered over that behaviour it is called a righteous anger.

The Bible does not say do not get angry as so many people believe, it says.

Ephesians 4:25-26

²⁵ Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. ²⁶ Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷ and give no opportunity to the devil.

Be angry, but do not sin in your anger. Be angry at sin, be angry at those who disobey the Word of God, be angry against those who hurt others with their words and deeds, but do not let that anger get out of control and cause you to sin against them.

In the Scriptures the disciples are not upset by Jesus's anger, they do not pull him aside and talk to him about self control. His disciples remember that the Scripture says that.

Psalms 69:10

⁹ For zeal for your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me.

Jesus's anger is a zealous anger, being zealous means; having a deep concern for or devotion to someone or something.' If you are deeply concerned and devoted to something or someone it is only natural that you become upset, angry even, when someone else is causing it harm. In essence your anger shows your passion and love for it, those strong emotions coming to the surface are a display of your care.

Anger is not always a bad thing or a hateful thing. Anger can be a display of loving something, love and anger sometimes walk hand in hand. And sometimes the lack of anger and the blind acceptance of sinful behaviour is a sign of a lack of love.

Think about that in worldly terms. When a married couple decides to get divorced for what ever reason, and they end everything in a perfectly peaceable way, that means that there was no love left there. It should bother you when the person who promised to spend the rest of their life with you even mentions that they might leave you one day, it should anger you, because you love them.

Yet, if someone was to bump into your car in the parking lot, something you paid for and care about, something that is a constant drain on your pocketbook, it angers you, but not in the same way. That anger is financial and to be honest it is very easy to let that anger go, because it has no long-term bearing on your life. We are not zealous about our cars, or at least we should not be.

When you are passionate about something you become zealous, and you are not willing to let go of any harm being done to it without a fight. That does not mean you need to physically go pummel anyone who does harm to something you love, but it also means

that you just don't walk along in blind tolerance of everything going on around you in the world, because tolerance has become the way of the secular world.

In our modern society, tolerance has become the number one priority, it is why we have cat boxes in high school bathrooms, it is why the Canadian Government has changed the who stats Canada survey to clarify the difference between gender at birth and the current gender you identify as, it is why to even apply to a university today you have to answer questions about your gender identity and sexual identity. Things that would have been red flags for mental issues 25 years ago are now just accepted as normal human behaviour, and it is causing problems in our society as this tolerance of the abnormal becomes more and more acceptable. We now have organizations in North America pushing for the acceptance of MAPS, minor attracted persons, someone we would have referred to as a pedophile and placed under scrutiny just 20 years ago. We have completely lost sight of the importance of righteous anger in our tolerant society.

Why? you might ask. The answer is simple. The devil wants us to tolerate sin, in fact he wants us to celebrate sin.

Yet God's Word says that sin is harmful. It is sin that separates us from God. A Holy God cannot tolerate sin even being in his presence. So, if we love God, we should love the same things that God loves, and we should hate the same things that God hates. Afterall, we do not want to hurt our relationship with God by inviting the things that he hates into our lives. We do not want to ruin our relationship with him over the things of this world and hurt the one we love and ourselves in the process.

Jesus's display of anger in the Scripture was because of his zeal for his Father's house. He wanted people to be coming to the temple to hear God's Word and see and understand the reasoning for the sacrifices that were being made there. He wanted people to understand that it was sin that was being confessed in the temple, and that the relationship with God was the focus.

Yes, animals were needed for the sacrifice, but they had turned the temple court into a marketplace and farmyard. Imagine how it would smell and sound, there would be animal feces all over the place and people haggling over the prices of animals and the exchange rates on coins.

How could people honor, respect, and revere God in the midst of all that noise and odor? No one would be able to focus on God, on the meaning of the Word or the sacrifices that were being made. There was no sense of Holiness, being set apart from the world, because the world was displaying itself proudly right there in the court of the temple.

People would be distracted by the doves cooing, the cows mooing, they goats bleating. It would be like trying to hold a church service in a petting zoo, no one would really be

listening to the word of God. So yeah, Jesus was angry, because God was being placed second behind the profits and ways of the world.

Worship of God is meant to be a time of reverence and respect to the Lord. We don't want 1000 distractions pulling people away from a time of Worship. We want people to hear God's glory proclaimed in word, song, and sacrament. We want the focus to be God and not the things of this world.

In that temple courtyard there was no reverence and respect for God. People had turned God's house into a place of business. They had accepted the world, into God's house and Jesus had had enough.

The temple leaders, the rabbi's and even the people had done nothing to stop this behaviour, they had all just tolerated this change in the house of God, maybe because they did not care, maybe because they felt it was not their place to question, maybe because they were just tolerating the changes in society around them.

The same way that Christians in our society today tolerate the changes in church and even in God's Word in the world around us today. Christians have embraced tolerance because that is who they are told that Jesus is, he loves everyone unconditionally, and that is an absolute truth, I agree with that fully. However just because he loves everyone unconditionally, does not mean that he accepts everyone unconditionally.

The Bible is quite clear that the only way into heaven is through Jesus Christ. The only way into heaven is to be reborn in the Holy Spirit, to repent of our sinful nature and trust and obey the Lord. There are a lot of people who will be in for a shock on judgement day when the curtain is drawn back and the truth of what the Scripture says is laid out before them.

Jesus himself says in the book of Matthew.

Matthew 7:21-23

²¹ "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' ²³ And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

God does not tolerate sinful behaviour; he calls for us to cast it out of our lives. That is what Jesus does here in the temple courtyard. The money changers and animal salespeople had convinced themselves that they were doing something good for the people of the church, they were serving God's people in some manner.

So, Jesus comes in and says 'no' to their behaviours. He exposes their sins against God. He flips the tables and uses a whip to drive the animals out of the courtyard, returning the temple to a place of God's Word and worship, a place of reverence and respect for God.

God is not as tolerant of our sin as the world wants us to believe. We need to be reminded that his patience with us and our sinful lifestyle does not mean that he accepts our sinful lifestyle.

Sure, people laugh about drinking too much and doing something stupid or think it's funny when they make fun of and humiliate others online. They think nothing of judging someone on the clothes they wear or the music they listen to and saying something mean or hurtful, they think nothing of gossip or telling little white lies. We all sin in a thousand different ways, some which show blatant disregard for the teachings of Scripture and others which are more subtle. We all have sins we like to think are acceptable by God, even though we know deep down in our core they are not. We justify it to ourselves a hundred different ways, but when we go into the truth of God's Word without our worldly bias's, we discover we have sinned, and that sin is a big deal. Jesus's is flailing about with a whip and overturning tables in the courtyard of the temple, sin is a big deal to God.

Jesus knows us perfectly, he knows our sin, we may be able to hide it from the world, from our friends, family, and coworkers, we might even justify it and try to hide it from ourselves, but God knows it is there and through the Holy Spirit he wants to help us remove it from our lives. The same way Jesus saw the sin that was happening in the courtyard and exposed it for what it was.

The people who oversaw temple were angered by Jesus's disruption of the business that was happening there.

John 2:18-22

¹⁸ So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" ¹⁹ Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ²⁰ The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" ²¹ But he was speaking about the temple of his body. ²² When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

They were tolerant of the business in the Lord's house. Maybe at first, they had disagreements on what should be allowed and what shouldn't be allowed. Maybe at first it was only money lenders and pigeons, after all they are quiet, and then eventually the goats and cows were let in. Maybe they were getting a cut of the prophets from the businesses. They all likely had excuses and justifications for the business that was occurring in the courtyard, but Jesus was having none of it.

So, they rebuke Jesus, they do on the defensive immediately, **‘What sign do you show us for doing these things?’** They demand that Jesus prove to them that he has the authority to clean out the temple of the Lord, after all they are the ones in charge of the temple, and they had allowed for this business to be set up.

Jesus tells them, **‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’** They have no idea that he is speaking of his own body, instead they believe he is speaking of the physical temple he is standing in.

Jesus is pointing out to these leaders of the temple, he is the Messiah, he is the answer, he is the son of God and that is the authority by which he cleanses the temple of its sin. In fact, he is going even further than that, he is telling those listening that he is the answer, because after his death there will be no more need for money lenders and animal salespeople because the one sacrifice for all of mankind’s sin will have been made with his blood upon the cross at calvary.

Jesus was cleaning out the temple and with it the corruption of sin that had made its way into the organized religion of the Jews of his day. He is telling them that going forward the people will no longer need the temple and the priest, they will no longer need to make sacrifices, because he will be the one way to God. His death and resurrection would be the fulfillment of God’s covenants with his people.

Yet not one person standing there understood what he was saying.

When Jesus was crucified, he was placed in a tomb, and a large boulder was rolled over the entrance, which was then placed under guard by the Sanhedrin. They were worried about his prophecy and wanted to make sure that no one could sneak in and steal his body, faking his resurrection.

After his return, his disciples remembered his prophecy on this day, and they finally understood what he was saying to the people in charge of the temple and to them. They finally believed in all his teachings and understood that he was in truth the Messiah, and that everything that had happened, had been according to God’s plan. When he had cleansed the temple, he had prophesized his own death and resurrection, and established a foothold of faith for his disciples in understanding what he had done for all of mankind and the importance of worship and reverence of God. They remembered his zeal in the temple courtyard.

The truth is, we all prefer the happy always loving Jesus, zealous angry Jesus is a little bit scary. However, this Jesus is portrayed to us in the Scriptures for a reason, it is part of God’s nature that we often choose to forget. Throughout the Scriptures of the New Testament, we see Kind Jesus, Merciful Jesus, Healing Jesus, Caring Jesus, even Empathetic Jesus, and we embrace them all. But when Angry Jesus pops up, we become

uncomfortable, it reminds us that even though we are Christians we are still sinners and still struggling with some of those things which anger God in our lives.

Angry Jesus reminds us that God is Holy, he reminds us that we are deserving of God's wrath because of our sin. He reminds us that the tolerant ways of this world are not the ways of God, just because we make something legal and acceptable in our society does not change the way that God views sin.

We cannot stand in the presence of a Holy God with sin in our lives, so angry Jesus reminds us of our need of for his death and resurrection. He reminds us that Jesus came for us, went to the cross for our sins, suffered the wrath of God not for anything which he had done, but for the sins that we have done, so that we could be cleansed of our sins and be made holy in the presence of our Holy God. He came for our Salvation.

Let us pray,

Preserve Us in All Temptations

Lord God, heavenly Father,
 you sent your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,
 to take on himself our flesh
 that he might overcome the devil's tyranny
 and defend us poor sinners.
 We give you thanks for your merciful help.
 Be present with us in your grace in all temptations,
 preserve us from worldly security
 and by your Holy Spirit keep us
 in your Word and your fear,
 that we may be delivered from the enemy
 and obtain eternal salvation;
 through your beloved Son,
 Jesus Christ our Lord,
 who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
 one true God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Source: Veit Dietrich, d. 1549, Lent 3

Hymn: "Grace"

Your grace that leads this sinner home from death to life forever,
 And sings the song of righteousness by blood and not by merit.

Your grace that reaches far and wide to every tribe and nation,
 Has called my heart to enter in the joy of Your salvation.

CHORUS

By grace I am redeemed by grace I am restored,
And now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

Your grace that I cannot explain not by my earthly wisdom,
The Prince of life without a stain was traded for this sinner.

Chorus

Let praise rise up and overflow my song resound forever,
For grace will see me welcomed home to walk beside my Saviour.

Chorus

Communion

Invitation to the Table

As we prepare to celebrate holy communion, let us remember that Scripture calls us to examine ourselves before God. We are taught that eating and drinking unworthily brings judgment upon ourselves (1 Cor. 11:28-29). Let us therefore ask God for the proper spirit in which to celebrate the sacrament.

Let us Pray,

Almighty God, before whom can be neither secret thought nor hidden deed, grant us your Spirit that we may know our hearts, our lives, and our inmost thoughts as you know them.

Grant us your grace that we may repent sincerely of all sin, find peace with you through our Lord Jesus Christ, and grow in assurance of salvation in him.

May the celebration of our Savior's infinite love in his redeeming death bring joy to us and glory to you. **Amen.**

The Prayer of Great 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.

It is truly right and our greatest joy
 to give you thanks and praise,
 O God our creator and redeemer.
 In your wisdom, you made all things
 and sustain them by your power.
 You formed us in your image
 to love and serve you,
 but we forgot your promises
 and abandoned your commandments.
 In your mercy, you did not reject us
 but still claimed us as your own.
 When we were slaves in Egypt you freed us
 and led us through the waters of the sea.
 You fed us with heavenly food in the wilderness,
 and satisfied our thirst from desert springs.
 On the holy mountain you gave us your law
 to guide us in your way.
 Through the waters of Jordan
 you led us into the land of your promise,
 and you sustained us in times of trial.
 You spoke through prophets
 calling us to turn from our willful ways
 to new obedience and righteousness.
 You sent your only Son
 to be the way to eternal life.

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
 heaven and earth are full of your glory.
 Hosanna in the highest.
 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
 Hosanna in the highest**

You are holy, O God of majesty,
 and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.
 He took upon himself the weight of our sin
 and carried the burden of our guilt.
 He shared our life in every way,
 and though tempted, was sinless to the end.

Baptized as your own, he went willingly to his death
 and by your power was raised to new life.
 In his dying and rising,

you gave birth to your church,
 delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
 and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

Remembering all your mighty and merciful acts,
 we take this bread and this wine
 from the gifts you have given us,
 and celebrate with joy
 the redemption won for us in Jesus Christ.
 Accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving
 as a living and holy offering of ourselves,
 that our lives may proclaim the One crucified and risen

**When we eat this bread and drink this cup,
 we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus,
 until you come in glory**

Gracious God,
 pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
 and upon these your gifts of bread and wine,
 that the bread we break
 and the cup we bless
 may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.
 By your Spirit unite us with the living Christ,
 and with all who are baptized in his name,
 that we may be one in ministry in every place.
 As this bread is Christ's body for us,
 send us out to be the body of Christ in the world.

Let us together confess the faith of the church at all times and in
 all places:

The Apostles Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.
 I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
 born of the Virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried;
 he descended to the dead.
 On the third day he rose again;
 he ascended into heaven,
 he is seated at the right hand of the Father,**

and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.
 I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the holy catholic church,
 the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins,
 the resurrection of the body,
 and the life everlasting. AMEN.

Communion

When the hour had come for him to be glorified
 by you, his heavenly Father,
 having loved his own who were in the world,
 he loved them to the end:
 at supper with them he took bread,
 and after giving thanks to you,
 he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying,
 "Take, eat. This is my body, which is given for you.
 Do this for the remembrance of me."
 After supper he took the cup, saying,
 "This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood,
 shed for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins.
 Whenever you drink it,
 do it for the remembrance of me."

Holy God, we now celebrate this memorial of our redemption.
 Recalling Christ's death and his descent among the dead,
 proclaiming his resurrection and ascension to your right hand,
 awaiting his coming in glory,
 and offering to you, from the gifts you have given us,
 this bread and this cup,
 we praise you and we bless you.

Taking of the bread

Take and eat.
 This is the body of Christ, which is [given] for you.
 Do this, remembering him.

Drinking of the cup

This cup is the new covenant
sealed by Christ's blood,
which was shed that the sins of many
might be forgiven.
Drink from it, all of you

Prayer after Communion

God of compassion,
you are slow to anger, and full of mercy,
welcoming sinners who return to you with penitent hearts.
Receive in your loving embrace
all who come home to you.
Seat them at your bountiful table of grace,
that, with all your children,
they may feast with delight
on all that satisfies the hungry heart.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
the one true living God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

Invitation to Offering

Offering

Presenting our tithes and offerings is an act of worship. I want to encourage you to write a cheque and drop it in the mail to the church using your envelope, if you have one. (St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, PO Box 161, 1 Drummond St W, Perth, ON K7H 3E3). We also have another option for you for giving and that is you can make an e-Transfer. This note from our treasurer:

E-transfers are now accepted. Please note the new email address for this purpose only. standrewspert offering@gmail.com If you have an Offering Envelope #, please include it in the message section of the INTERAC transfer page you fill in. If you wish any part of your donation to go to a specific fund (e.g., Presbyterian Sharing) please mention this in your message

Offertory Prayer (Congregant Prepared)

Closing Hymn #352: “And Can It Be That I Should Gain” (V 1,2,5)

And can it be that I should gain
 God's riches through the Saviour's blood?
 Died he for me, who caused his pain?
 For me, who him to death pursued?
 Amazing love! how can it be
 that thou, my God, should'st die for me?
 Amazing love! how can it be
 that thou, my God, should'st die for me?

'Tis mystery all! the immortal dies:
 who can explore his strange design?
 In vain the firstborn seraph tries
 to sound the depths of love divine.
 'Tis mercy all! let earth adore;
 let angel minds inquire no more.
 'Tis mercy all! let earth adore;
 let angel minds inquire no more.

No condemnation now I dread;
 Jesus, and all in him, is mine;
 alive in him, my living head,
 and clothed in righteousness divine,
 bold I approach the eternal throne,
 and claim the crown, through Christ, my own.
 Bold I approach the eternal throne,
 and claim the crown, through Christ, my own.

Pastoral Prayer

God of Hope,
 When the world is confusing and frustrating,
 you bring light and hope.
 We give you thanks for lessons learned, for changes of heart,
 for fresh discoveries made, and new paths followed.
 We pray this day for those who are confused or afraid.
 for those who feel anger or despair.

God of Peace,
 there is so much conflict, hostility, and antagonism
 around us and within us.
 Personal relationships are often tense; the world community at odds.
 We pray for understanding to prevail
 in relationships at home and at work,

in our community and our country.
And we pray for diplomacy to end conflict and threat among nations

God of Joy,
we give you thanks for moments of joy and celebration in our lives,
for small pleasures given and received through times of isolation.
We remember those who feel left out or bitter,
those who are anxious or in distress.
We pray for those who face loss and hardship in these uncertain times,
and all who know sorrow and suffering,
naming before you those on our hearts this day.

God of community and compassion,
we thank you for your steadfast presence
in the face of all that brings uncertainty and worry these days.
Bless our congregation and every church that is struggling;
inspire us to consider renewed ministry and mission.
Reawaken our love for one another
and our desire to worship and serve together in Jesus' name.
Sustain leaders who feel exhausted by the challenges they've faced
and renew our stewardship with gratitude for your love.

God of grace,
Receive these prayers and the unspoken prayers of our hearts.
Deepen our trust in you for the days ahead,
We pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Benediction

May the grace of Christ attend you,
the love of God surrounds you,
the Holy Spirit keep you
now and forevermore.