

## TOPSAIL UNITED CHURCH

*"The Church by the Side of the Road"*

P.O. Box 13010, Station Topsail, Conception Bay South, NL, A1W 2K1

[www.topsailunitedchurch.nf.net](http://www.topsailunitedchurch.nf.net)

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### **"The Mission of Topsail United Church is:**

- To offer to all the opportunity to come to know God as revealed in Jesus Christ;
- To grow in faith through worship, study and prayer;
- To care for each other and all of God's creation; and
- To encourage and empower each other to use our talents within the Church."

- <b>Ministers:</b>	<b>The Congregation</b>
- <b>Clergy:</b>	<b>Rev. Bruce Kearley</b>
- <b>Congregational Designated Minister:</b>	<b>Steven Rogers</b>
- <b>Organist:</b>	<b>Beth Cranston</b>
- <b>Choir Director:</b>	<b>Andrew Cranston</b>
- <b>Choir:</b>	<b>Mixed Choir</b>
- <b>Office Manager:</b>	<b>Nicole Ivey-Cross</b>
- <b>Caretaker:</b>	<b>Roger Richards</b>

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**March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016**  
*4<sup>th</sup> in Lent/Communion*

### **SERVICE NOTE**

**WELCOME** God's forgiving love embraces everyone. The youngest, the oldest, the wanderers, the dutiful, the sinful, the just: all are offered a welcome that can make everything new. This week's focus scripture is a story of rebellions and returning, and of a love that reconciles, puts us back together, in spite of ourselves. We are challenged to live generously among those we might consider family.

### **WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE**

#### **THE MUSICAL PRELUDE:**

**INTROIT:** "To The Desert Jesus Came" (VU113 – v. 3)

**CALL TO WORSHIP:** (responsive)

One: God welcomes you to this place.

**All: We are happy to be in God's presence!**

One: God is with us on our Lenten journey, providing the nourishment and love that we need. We remember God journeying with the people out of Egypt and through the desert.

**All: We praise God and remember God's faithfulness.**

One: On their journey home, God greeted the people in the promised land with new food to replace their meals of manna. God was doing a new thing in their lives.

**All: We're looking for the new thing that God is doing in our lives today.**

One: God welcomes you to this place – where all will find love, forgiveness, and restoration.

**All: We celebrate in God's presence!**

One: Let us worship God!

**CONGREGATION SINGS:** (VU #331 – verse 1)

The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ our Lord;  
We are his new creation by water and the Word;  
From heaven he came and sought us that we might ever be  
His living servant people, by his own death set free.

### **A Lenten candle Liturgy**

(each week a purple candle is extinguished)

**WORDS OF WELCOME & CONGREGATIONAL LIFE & WORK:**

**OPENING PRAYER:** (in unison)

Loving God, we have journeyed here from diverse places and stages in life. We open ourselves to what you have in store for us this day. We approach you with humility. We unlock the parts of ourselves that we have kept hidden from you. Open our minds to the message you have to share with us today. May we have ears to hear and receive. Open our spirits to your grace, your forgiving love, and your faithfulness in times of doubt and fear.

**HYMN:** #288 "Great is Thy Faithfulness"

### **WE LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD**

**SCRIPTURE READING:**

Psalm 32 (#759)

Luke 15: 11-32

**SERMON:** "Returning to God"

**HYMN:** #652 "Be Still My Soul"

## **WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD**

### **MINUTE FOR MISSION:**

#### **OFFERTORY: VU #540)**

Grant Us, God, the grace of giving, with a spirit large and free,  
that ourselves and all our living, we may offer faithfully.

#### **OFFERTORY PRAYER:**

Loving and forgiving God, you provided food for your people in the desert. You quench our spiritual thirst and comfort our weary souls when we turn toward you. No matter how far away we journey, we only need to take one step toward you, and we are embraced by your love and compassion. We bring these gifts to you with a spirit of humility. Gracious God, transform these gifts into expressions of love, justice, and peace in our congregation and beyond these walls. Amen!

## **THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

**ANTHEM:** "You Are My Body from More Voices"

### **GATHERING PRAYER:**

#### **CONFESSION:** (responsive)

One: God of reconciliation, during the Season of Lent, you implore us to return to you – whether it be through personal repentance, or by extending your love to those around us.

**All: God, help us to find the courage to turn around and return to you when we have hardened our hearts against you and others. God, help us to find the courage to turn around and return to you when we have unresolved issues in our personal lives.**

One: God, help us to find the courage to turn around and return to you when we have neglected those who are most in need. God, help us to find the courage to turn around and return to you – knowing that your loving grace and forgiveness are always available. Amen.

### **WORDS OF ASSURANCE:**

### **PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING & INTERCESSIONS**

**BLESSING THE BREAD AND CUP**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER:** (sung)

*(The Bread is broken & The Cup is lifted)*

*(Communion is shared)*

**HYMN:** #716 "My Life Flows On"

**COMMISSIONING & BENEDICTION:**

**CHORAL BENEDICTION:** "Eat This Bread & Never Hunger" (VU471)

**MUSICAL POSTLUDE:**