

Southminster United Church, Ottawa, Ontario

February 1, 2026

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Worship Leader: Rev. Susan Toller

Director of Music: Sarah Westbrook

Readers: St. John's Stevensville Youth Group

Prelude: Adagio in F minor - Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-George; (25 December 1745 – 9 June 1799) was a French violinist, conductor, composer and soldier of African descent.

Welcome

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the importance of the land, which we call home.

Since time immemorial, Indigenous peoples have occupied and cared for this land.

We seek to live with respect and gratitude on this land.

We acknowledge the Anishinaabe Algonquin people on whose traditional and unceded land Southminster United Church is built.

We seek to live with respect and gratitude on this land.

We acknowledge the harm and mistakes of the past in our relations with Indigenous people.

We seek to live with respect and gratitude on this land.

We reaffirm our commitment and responsibility to improving relationships and our understanding of all Indigenous people and their cultures.

We seek to live with respect and gratitude on this land.

Lighting of the Candles

We light the Christ candle to remind us of Christ's presence among us. May this flame remind us we are loved and are not alone.

We light the Affirming candle to remind us that everyone is welcome here. We are all God's children and our community includes people of all cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations and gender identities. God loves all of us.

Call to Worship

Why are we called to this place?

To be God's people.

What is required of us?

To seek justice,

to love kindness,

to live humbly with God.

And how shall we do this?

**With our prayers,
with our thoughts,
with our actions,
and with our love.**

Then, as people who are both blessed and blessing:

Let us worship God!

Richard Bott, Grace U.C., Burlington, Ont.

Opening Prayer

Spirit of Truth and Wisdom,
you are our comforter,
always,
guiding us,
teaching us,
showing us the way.

We flourish under your care and direction and love.

Praising your name, forever, we pray. Amen.

Pat Clysdale-Cornell, Knox U.C., Fort Frances, Ont.

Opening Hymn: Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love (VU 593)

Refrain:

**Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbours we have from you.**

**Kneels at the feet of his friends,
silently washes their feet,
master who acts as a slave to them. *Refrain***

**Neighbours are rich and poor,
varied in colour and race,
neighbours are near and far away. *Refrain***

**These are the ones we should serve,
these are the ones we should love,
all are neighbours to us and you. *Refrain***

**Kneel at the feet of our friends,
silently washing their feet,
this is the way we should live with you. *Refrain***

Words: Tom Colvin 1969. Music: Ghanaian folk song; adapt. Tom Colvin 1969. Words and music adaptation copyright © 1969 Hope Publishing Company.

Passing of the Peace/ Greeting Time

Prayer of Confession

God, we are a broken people, living in a broken world.

It is not fashionable to admit this.

Usually, we regard ourselves as pretty good folks, only in need of a little tweaking here and there. But the problem goes deeper than that.

In this African Heritage/Black History Month, we cannot escape the recognition that racism is not about the actions and attitudes of a few people.

It is deeply ingrained in our culture, and very few of us are beyond its reach.

We need your challenge to be honest.

We need your forgiveness to cleanse our souls.

We need your call to change and action.

We need your guidance to free everyone from the bondage of racism.

We pray in the name of Jesus the Christ, who came to call us to repentance and newness of life. Amen.

Words of Assurance

The testimony of the tradition of Israel,
together with the testimony of the tradition of the church,
is that God longs for a world of justice, equality, and freedom.

Surely, the arc of history is bent toward this reality as we join with God in the repair of this world.

Let us not be discouraged.

Thanks be to God.

John Moses, Aylesford U.C., Aylesford, N.S.

Prayer of Illumination

Creator, please open our hearts and minds to receiving your wisdom today.

Lectionary Readings

Micah 6:1-8

Hear what the Lord says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. Hear, you mountains, the case of the Lord, and you enduring foundations of the earth, for the Lord has a case against his people, and he will contend with Israel.

“O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me! For I brought you up from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. O my people, remember now what King Balak

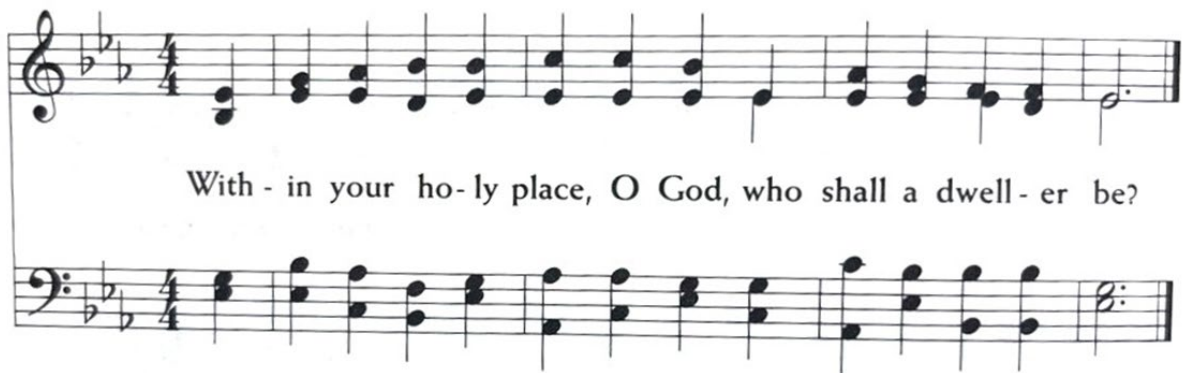
of Moab devised, what Balaam son of Beor answered him, and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the Lord.”

“With what shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”

He has told you, O mortal, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?

Psalm 15 (VU p. 736)

Refrain:



God, who may be a guest in your house,
or who may dwell on your holy mountain? Refrain

One who leads a blameless life,
who does what is right,
who speaks truthfully from the heart;
one whose tongue is free from malice,
who never wrongs a friend,
who utters no reproach against a neighbour;
one who cannot respect the unworthy,
but honours those who fear God;
who stands by a promise given,
though it be to personal disadvantage;
one who will not take interest on a loan,
nor accept a bribe to testify against the innocent.
Whoever does this shall never be overthrown. Refrain

Thomas Tallis ca. 1567

Matthew 5:1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Thanks be to God.

Anthem: Hymn to Freedom - *Oscar Peterson*

Reflection: What Does God Require of You?

Hymn: What Does the Lord Require of You? (VU 701)

What does the Lord require of you?

What does the Lord require of you?

**Justice, kindness,
walk humbly with your God**

**To seek justice, and love kindness,
and walk humbly with your God.**

Words: Jim Strathdee 1986. Music: Jim Strathdee 1986. Words and music copyright ©1986 Desert Flower Music.

Minute for Mission: *Brian Kinsley*

Invitation of Offering

We make our offering as a way of showing our commitment to the light that is needed in our communities and in the world around us. Please give as you are able. We recognize that many people give their skills and talents, and that some people contribute online. Let us now pass the offering plate around.

Presentation of the Offering: Ev'ry Day is a Day of Thanksgiving (MV 185)

**Ev'ry day is a day of thanksgiving, God,
you've been so good to me.**

Ev'ry day you're blessing me.

Ev'ry day is a day of thanksgiving.

I will glorify you, O my Lord, today!

Repeat

You keep blessing me, blessing me, blessing me.

**You opened the door that I might see,
you're blessing me.**

And you keep blessing me, blessing me, blessing me.

I will glorify you, O my Lord, today!

*A lively gospel song from the African-American tradition. Words and music: Leonard Burks.
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Offering Prayer

As followers of Jesus, we give you this offering, O God. We trust the talents and gifts we contribute this week will help more light emerge from darkness.

Prayers of the People

Prayers for Joys and Concerns - What prayers of gratitude or concern would you like to request?

We pray the prayer you taught us to pray, saying. . .

The Lord's Prayer

Our Mother and 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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.

Announcements

Closing Hymn: Lord, Prepare Me to be a Sanctuary (MV 18)

Holy Holy Holy, Lord God Almighty (VU 315)

**God, prepare me to be a sanctuary,
pure and holy tried and true; with thanksgiving,
I'll be a living sanctuary for you.**

**Holy, holy, holy! Lord God almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee;
holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!**

**God, prepare me to be a sanctuary,
pure and holy tried and true; with thanksgiving,
I'll be a living sanctuary for you.**

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Sing Amen (Asithi: Amen) VU 431

**Sing amen: Amen, we praise your name, O God.
Sing amen: Amen, we praise your name, O God.
Sing amen: Amen, amen, amen, amen,
amen, we praise your name, O God.**

Words: S. C. Molefe 1977. Music: S. C. Molefe 1977; arr. Dave Dargie 1977. Words and music copyright © 1991 Lumko Institute.

Benediction and Sending Forth

As we leave this space,
Let's go seeking justice, loving kindness and walking humbly
So we can help Jesus turn the world right side up!

Postlude: Piano Sonata in C (1st movement) - Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-George

Coffee Time

Scripture readings are from the New Revised Standard Version (Updated Edition) of the Bible.

Coffee Host: Edie Fraser/ Donald Tarte
Ushers/Counters: Heather Macfaden/ Paul Mullin

As the people of Southminster United Church, we affirm and actively support the life experience of all. All persons are invited to take part in every aspect of church life including membership, leadership, celebration of life passages and marriage. We are committed to following Jesus' example as we embrace people of all ages, racialized groups, genders, sexual orientations, gender identities, ethnic origins, economic circumstances and differing abilities and challenges in the ministry and life of Southminster United Church.



Southminster United Church / 15 Aylmer Ave. Ottawa ON K1S 3X1
613-730-6874 / admin@southminsterunitedchurch.com / southminsterunitedchurch.com

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