

**Waterloo North Mennonite Church
Sunday March 31, 2019, 10:45 a.m.
Lent 4: God reaches out with open arms**

Focus Statement: When we are lost and far from God, God reaches out with open arms. We get up and enter the feast of reconciliation.

Gathering hymns:

HWB (blue) #12 Come, let us all unite to sing
HWB (blue) #5 There is a place of quiet rest

Welcome, Announcements and Introductions

Chiming to Worship and Silent Preparation

Call to worship (*based on Psalms 63 and 32*)

Leader: O God, you are our God. We seek you.

People: Our souls thirst for you
as in a dry and weary land
where there is no water.

Leader: We confess our sin to you,
and you forgive us.

People: We offer our prayers to you, and you embrace us.

All: O God, you satisfy our souls as with a rich feast.
In the shadow of your wings, we sing for joy,
and you uphold us.

Hymn: STJ (green) #23 Slowly turning, ever turning

Scripture reading: 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 (see insert)

Children's Time

Offering

Hymn: HWB (blue) #139 Far, far away from my loving father

Congregational Prayer

Scripture reading: Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32 (see insert)

Sermon “God reaches out with open arms”

Hymn of Response:

HWB (blue) #145 There's a wideness in God's mercy

Confession and Reconciliation

Leader: (*reading Psalm 32:10-11*)

“Many are the torments of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds those who trust in the Lord. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.”

Who will trust the Lord today?

All: We will trust the Lord today.

Leader: We are all invited to trust the Lord today.
Let us bring ourselves to God in prayer.

**All: God of steadfast love,
we put our trust in your care for us.
When we need to find our way home,
we put our trust in you.**

Leader: When we need forgiveness, we put our trust in you.
When our souls hunger for a new way of living,
we put our trust in you.

**All: In the morning and in the evening,
we will put our trust in you.**

Leader: Our generous God provides for us.

Sending Hymn: HWB (blue) #576 If you but trust in God

Benediction

With gratitude and respect, we recognize that we are worshipping on the traditional land that once belonged to the Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabe peoples.

*We regret the lack of respect given to the Indigenous people in the past,
and pledge to work for justice and reconciliation.*

Headsets for hearing assistance are available from the ushers.

Childcare (infants to age 4): The nursery is located next to the sanctuary. Infant change table is located in washroom next to nursery. Ushers can direct you.

Children's Worship Binder, an instrument to help children through the worship service, is available by the sanctuary entrance.

Offering Thank you to those who contribute electronically. Offering cards are available (or use loose change/cash) so that you can participate in the giving of offering worship experience.

Welcome Visitors We are glad you are worshipping with us this morning. If you would like to learn more about our church and our ministries, including our care groups, education opportunities, seniors group or youth groups, and if you'd like to be added to our email list, please contact the church office or one of the ministers.

2 Corinthians 5:16-21 (NRSV)

¹⁶ From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. ¹⁷ So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, ^[c] not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. ²⁰ So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Luke 15:1-3 and 11b-32 (NRSV)

¹ Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. ² And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

³ So he told them this parable:

11b “There was a man who had two sons. **12** The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. **13** A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. **14** When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need.



(Luke 15 con't)

¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶ He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸ I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.”’ ²⁰ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹ Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ ²² But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴ for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

²⁵ ‘Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. ²⁷ He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ ²⁸ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ ³¹ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”