



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

Minister of Word & Sacrament: Rev. Dr. Ellen Redcliffe

Minister of Community Development: Rev. Carmen Llanos

Music Director: Randy Vancourt

Reader: Janet Bawcutt

January 15, 2023

WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

Prelude

Lighting the Christ Candle

As we gather in God’s presence, we pause for a moment before we light the Christ candle.

May God’s presence bring calm and strength to each of us this day. May this lit candle remind us of your presence.

Call to Worship

Welcome to this time of worship. Our gathering here says many things about who we are and whose we are.

May the words and actions of this time be a reflection of all that we desire as people of faith.

Introit

The Church Is Wherever God’s People

VU 579

- 1 The church is wherever God's people are praising,
singing God's goodness for joy on this day.
The church is wherever disciples of Jesus
remember his story and walk in his way.
- 2 The church is wherever God's people are helping,
caring for neighbours in sickness and need.
The church is wherever God's people are sharing
the words of the Bible in gift and in deed.

Land Acknowledgement

We now take a moment to acknowledge the sacred land beside the water on which Birchcliff

Bluffs United Church stands. It has been a site of human activity for many thousands of years. This land is the territory of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently the Mississaugas of the Credit and Scugog, all part of the Williams Treaty. We are grateful for the opportunity to live and work on this territory and we seek to be mindful of broken covenants and the need to strive to make right with all our relations.

Opening Prayer

O God, of shooting stars and lapping waves, teach us to pray:

With bodies you've created, the hearts you've expanded, and the minds you've enlivened. May your will be done in and through us, in Jesus name we pray. Amen.

Hymn

Will You Come and See the Light

VU 96

- 1 Will you come and see the light from the stable door?
It is shining newly bright, though it shone before.
It will be your guiding star, it will show you who you are;
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?
- 2 Will you step into the light that can free the slave?
It will stand for what is right, it will heal and save.
By the pyramids of greed there's a longing to be freed;
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?
- 3 Will you tell about the light in the prison cell?
Though it's shackled out of sight, it is shining well.
When the truth is cut and bruised,
and the innocent abused,
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?
- 4 Will you join the hope, alight in the young girl's eyes,
of the mighty put to flight by a baby's cries?
When the lowest and the least
are the foremost at the feast,
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?
- 5 Will you travel by the light of the babe new born?
In the candle lit at night there's a gleam of dawn,
and the darkness all about is too dim to put it out:
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?

Life and Work of the Church

Scripture Isaiah 49:1-7

The Servant of the LORD

49 Listen to me, O coastlands,
and give attention, you peoples from afar.
The LORD called me from the womb,
from the body of my mother he named my name.
² He made my mouth like a sharp sword;
in the shadow of his hand he hid me;
he made me a polished arrow;
in his quiver he hid me away.
³ And he said to me, “You are my servant,
Israel, in whom I will be glorified.”^[a]
⁴ But I said, “I have labored in vain;
I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity;
yet surely my right is with the LORD,
and my recompense with my God.”
⁵ And now the LORD says,
he who formed me from the womb to be his servant,
to bring Jacob back to him;
and that Israel might be gathered to him—
for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD,
and my God has become my strength—
⁶ he says:
“It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to bring back the preserved of Israel;
I will make you as a light for the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”
⁷ Thus says the LORD,
the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One,
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nation,
the servant of rulers:
“Kings shall see and arise;
princes, and they shall prostrate themselves;
because of the LORD, who is faithful,
the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.”

Gospel John 1:29-42 Behold, the Lamb of God

²⁹ The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God,
who takes away the sin of the world!

³⁰ This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was
before me.’

³¹ I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.”

³² And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.

³³ I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’

³⁴ And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”

³⁵ The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples,

³⁶ and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!”

³⁷ The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.

³⁸ Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, “What are you seeking?” And they said to him, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?”

³⁹ He said to them, “Come and you will see.” So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

⁴¹ He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah”.

⁴² He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon the son of John. You shall be called Peter.

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn

Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples

VU 507

1 Today we all are called to be
disciples of the Lord,
to help to set the captive free,
make ploughshare out of sword,
to feed the hungry, quench their thirst,
make love and peace our fast,
to serve the poor and homeless first,
our ease and comfort last.

2 God made the world and at its birth
ordained our human race
to live as stewards of the earth,
responding to God's grace.
But we are vain and sadly proud,
we sow not peace but strife,

our discord spreads a deadly cloud
that threatens all of life.

3 Pray justice may come rolling down
as in a mighty stream,
with righteousness in field and town
to cleanse us and redeem.
For God is longing to restore
an earth where conflicts cease,
a world that was created for
a harmony of peace.

4 May we in service to our God
act out the living Word,
and walk the road the saints have trod
till all have seen and heard.
As stewards of the earth may we
give thanks in one accord
to God who calls us all to be
disciples of the Lord.

Sermon Look Into His Eyes ...

Hymn Jesus, You Have Come to the Lakeshore VU 563

1 Jesus, you have come to the lakeshore
looking neither for wealthy nor wise ones;
you only asked me to follow humbly.

O Jesus, with your eyes you have searched me,
and while smiling, have spoken my name;
now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me;
by your side I will seek other seas.

2 You know so well my possessions;
my boat carries no gold and no weapons;
you will find there my nets and labour.

O Jesus, with your eyes you have searched me,
and while smiling, have spoken my name;
now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me;
by your side I will seek other seas.

3 You need my hands, full of caring
through my labours to give others rest,
and constant love that keeps on loving.

O Jesus, with your eyes you have searched me,
and while smiling, have spoken my name;
now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me;
by your side I will seek other seas.

4 You, who have fished other oceans,
ever longed for by souls who are waiting,
my loving friend, as thus you call me.

O Jesus, with your eyes you have searched me,
and while smiling, have spoken my name;
now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me;
by your side I will seek other seas.

Offering

We do offer our whole lives to you, O God. Like Peter, Andrew, Philip and Nathanael, we too go to Jesus.

Accept these our gifts today, that they may support the discipleship and discovery of this congregation. Amen.

Prayers of the People

God of hope, who is the beginning and the end, you assure us that there is more to life than we perceive.

Help us not to be anxious about our present situation, but rather to trust in your plan for us, so that we may live faithfully and lovingly, spreading hope to all we meet ...

May your mercy and peace be on us. May your mercy and peace be upon the world, we offer this prayer in Jesus' name ...

We now take a moment to remember those we keep in our prayers.

**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 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 and the power, and the glory,
For ever and ever, Amen.**

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me

VU 575

1 I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

2 I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

3 I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

4 I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

Benediction & Commissioning

Jesus said we should be just like salt and just like light.

As we leave this place of worship, we remember the delight of our baptism, the strength of community, and the call to live in love.

Go in the name of the Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer.

Amen.

Postlude

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**Birchcliff Bluffs United Church
Additional Lectionary
Second After Epiphany
Sunday January 15, 2023**

Psalm 40:1-11

New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

Thanksgiving for Deliverance and Prayer for Help

To the leader. Of David. A Psalm.

- ¹ I waited patiently for the LORD;
he inclined to me and heard my cry.
- ² He drew me up from the desolate pit,^[a]
out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock,
making my steps secure.
- ³ He put a new song in my mouth,
a song of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear
and put their trust in the LORD.
- ⁴ Happy are those who make
the LORD their trust,
who do not turn to the proud,
to those who go astray after false gods.
- ⁵ You have multiplied, O LORD my God,
your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us;
none can compare with you.
Were I to proclaim and tell of them,
they would be more than can be counted.
- ⁶ Sacrifice and offering you do not desire,
but you have given me an open ear.^[b]
Burnt offering and sin offering
you have not required.
- ⁷ Then I said, "Here I am;
in the scroll of the book it is written of me."^[c]
- ⁸ I delight to do your will, O my God;
your law is within my heart."

⁹ I have told the glad news of deliverance
in the great congregation;
see, I have not restrained my lips,
as you know, O LORD.

¹⁰ I have not hidden your saving help within my heart;
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;
I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness
from the great congregation.

¹¹ Do not, O LORD, withhold
your mercy from me;
let your steadfast love and your faithfulness
keep me safe forever.

1 Corinthians 1:1-9 New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

Salutation

1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes,

² To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord^[a] and ours:

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I give thanks to my^[b] God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵ for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— ⁶ just as the testimony of^[c] Christ has been strengthened among you— ⁷ so that you are not lacking in any gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸ He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁹ God is faithful, by whom you were called into the partnership of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.