



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

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

Music Director: Randy Vancourt

Reader: Shirley Scott

Guest Musician: Daniel Giverin

September 24, 2023

Seventeenth after Pentecost

WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

Prelude

Lighting the Christ Candle

With open hearts, open minds and an open door, we gather here today.

We are conscious of the grace and peace that we all share and thankful for the flame that lights our way.

The candle is lit.

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 Hymn

For the Beauty of the Earth

VU 226

1 For the beauty of the earth,
for the glory of the skies,
for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies.
God of all, to you we raise
this, our hymn of grateful praise.

2 For the beauty of each hour
of the day and of the night,
hill and vale and tree and flower,
sun and moon and stars of light,
God of all, to you we raise
this, our hymn of grateful praise.

3 For the joy of human love,
brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth, and friends above,
for all gentle thoughts and mild,
God of all, to you we raise
this, our hymn of grateful praise.

4 For each perfect gift sublime
to our race so freely given,
graces human and divine
flowers of earth and buds of heaven
God of all, to you we raise
this, our hymn of grateful praise.

Life and Work

Hymn

Wade In The Water

Wade in the water,
wade in the water, children,
Wade in the water.
God's gonna trouble the water.

1 See that host all dressed in white,
God's gonna trouble the water.
The leader looks like the Israelite.
God's gonna trouble the water.

Wade in the water,
wade in the water, children,
Wade in the water.
God's gonna trouble the water.

2 See that band all dressed in red,
God's gonna trouble the water.
Looks like the band that Moses led.

God's gonna trouble the water.
Wade in the water,
wade in the water, children,
Wade in the water.
God's gonna trouble the water.

3 Look over yonder, what do I see?
God's gonna trouble the water.
The Holy Ghost a-comin' on me
God's gonna trouble the water.

4 If you don't believe I've been redeemed,
God's gonna trouble the water.
Just follow me down to Jordan's stream.
God's gonna trouble the water.

Wade in the water,
wade in the water, children,
Wade in the water.
God's gonna trouble the water.

RECEIVING GOD'S WORD

Scripture

Gospel Matthew 20:1–16 A Story About Vineyard Workers

20 “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who owned some land. One morning, he went out very early to hire some people to work in his vineyard. ²The man agreed to pay the workers one silver coin for working that day. Then he sent them into the vineyard to work. ³About nine o'clock the man went to the marketplace and saw some other people standing there, doing nothing. ⁴So he said to them, ‘If you go and work in my vineyard, I will pay you what your work is worth.’ ⁵So they went to work in the vineyard. The man went out again about twelve o'clock and again at three o'clock. Both times he hired people to work in his vineyard. ⁶About five o'clock the man went to the marketplace again. He saw others standing there. He asked them, ‘Why did you stand here all day doing nothing?’ ⁷They answered, ‘No one gave us a job.’ The man said to them, ‘Then you can go and work in my vineyard.’

⁸“At the end of the day, the owner of the vineyard said to the boss of all the workers, ‘Call the workers and pay them. Start by paying the last people I hired. Then pay all of them, ending with the workers I hired first.’

⁹“The workers who were hired at five o’clock came to get their pay. Each worker received one silver coin. ¹⁰Then the workers who were hired first came to get their pay. They thought they would be paid more than the others. But each one of them also received one silver coin. ¹¹When they got their silver coin, they complained to the man who owned the land. ¹²They said, ‘Those people were hired last and worked only one hour. But you paid them the same as you paid us. And we worked hard all day in the hot sun.’ ¹³But the man who owned the vineyard said to one of those workers, ‘Friend, I am being fair to you. You agreed to work for one silver coin. ¹⁴So take your pay and go. I want to give the man who was hired last the same pay that I gave you. ¹⁵I can do what I want with my own money. Are you jealous because I am good to those people?’

¹⁶“So those who are last now will someday be first. And those who are first now will someday be last.”

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Musical Guest

Daniel Giverin

Reflection

**Creator, in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your dominion come, your will be done on earth, as 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 evil,
For yours is eternity, the power, and the glory,
For ever and ever, Amen.**

RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD

Hymn

Never Ending Joy

MV 40

Never ending joy, never ending joy
Never ending joy
Never ending joy, Never ending joy
Never ending joy

1 God of every tribe, every language,
God of every river and sea,
God of every mountain and island,
you bring joy to me.

Never ending joy, never ending joy
Never ending joy
Never ending joy, Never ending joy
Never ending joy

2 God of every hill, every valley,
God of every leaf, every tree,
God of every cloud, every raindrop,
you bring joy to me.

Never ending joy, never ending joy
Never ending joy
Never ending joy, Never ending joy
Never ending joy

3 God of every song, every story,
God of every captive set free,
God of every dance, every footstep,
you bring joy to me.

4 Never ending joy, never ending joy
Never ending joy
Never ending joy, Never ending joy
Never ending joy

Offering

There is an offering plate on the table where you entered. There is no obligation; we don't give because we have to. We don't give because anyone else is watching. We give because we are grateful for the many gifts we receive, and thankful to be part of the work of our church in this community.

Prayers of the People

We give thanks for the grace-filled moments in life. Those moments when a stranger shows us kindness, when we are given extra time to complete a task, when we are offered something we needed, or perhaps didn't even know we needed. May we all live our lives with grace; with wisdom and gentleness in how we interact with others. Let us be peaceful and kind in all things. Let us have minds that are open to reason and show mercy. In all of today's tasks, let us have the wisdom and grace to be sincere and thankful.

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

Moment of silence

Like the grace of the landowner paying the last hired workers an entire day's wage, let us share love and grace with each other.

Amen.

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn Everybody's Gonna Have a Wonderful Time Up There

1 Listen everybody 'cause I'm talking to you,
Jesus is the only one can carry you thru,
Now you better get you ready for I'm telling you why,
Jesus is a coming from His throne on high;
Many are the weary and the lone and sad,
They're gonna wish they hadn't done the things they had,
How're you gotta feel about the things He'll say
on that judgment day?

Everybody's gonna have religion in glory,
Everybody's gonna be singing that story,
Everybody's gonna have a wonderful time up there,
Oh glory hallelujah;
Brother, there's a reckoning a-coming in the morning,
Sister get you ready 'cause I'm giving you the warning,
Everybody's gonna have a wonderful time up there.

3 When the tribulations seem to darken the way,
That's the time to get down on your knees and pray,
Ev'rybody's gonna have their troubles too,
Gotta be so careful 'bout the things we do;
We're going down the valley, going one by one,
Gonna be rewarded for the things we've done,
When we get to heaven and the promised land,
Then we'll understand.

Everybody's gonna have religion in glory,
Everybody's gonna be singing that story,
Everybody's gonna have a wonderful time up there,
Oh glory hallelujah;
Brother, there's a reckoning a-coming in the morning,
Sister get you ready 'cause I'm giving you the warning,
Everybody's gonna have a wonderful time up there.

4 Now get your Holy Bible, in the back of the book,
book of Revelation, that's the place you must look,
If you understand it and you can if you try,
Jesus is a coming from His throne on high;
Readin' in the Bible all the things that He said,
Said he was a comin' back to raise the dead,
Are you gonna be among the chosen few,
Will you make it thru?

Everybody's gonna have religion in glory,
Everybody's gonna be singing that story,
Everybody's gonna have a wonderful time up there,
Oh glory hallelujah;
Brother, there's a reckoning a-coming in the morning,
Sister get you ready 'cause I'm giving you the warning,
Everybody's gonna have a wonderful time up there.

Commissioning and Benediction

And now as we go out into the world, may we all spread the joy, love and grace that we have shared here today. Amen.

Choral Benediction

Go Now In Peace

**Go now in peace, never be afraid
God will go with you each hour of every day.
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true,
Know God will guide you in all that you do.
Go now in love and show you believe
Reach out to others so all the world can see.
God will be there, watching from above
Go now in peace, in faith and in love.
Amen, amen, amen!**

Postlude

Simon Tov

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