



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

Minister of Word & Sacrament: Rev. Katie Vardy

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Reader: Norma Grech

September 20th, 2026

17th Sunday after Pentecost

WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

Prelude

Welcome

Lighting the Christ Candle

Today, we light this candle as a reminder that Christ is among us. May this light guide us to recognize God’s presence in unexpected places. *Candle is lit.*

Lighting the Rainbow Candle

We also light the rainbow candle to celebrate the beautiful diversity of God’s creation. May this flame remind us that we are all beloved children of God! *Candle is lit.*

Land Acknowledgement

As we gather for worship, we acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of many Indigenous Peoples, including the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee, the Wendat, the Chippewa, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. We give thanks for the generations who have cared for this land, its waters, plants, animals, and communities long before us.

May our words lead us toward truth, right relationship, reconciliation, and the work of repairing what has been broken.

Opening Hymn

God of the Bible

MV 28

1 God of the Bible, God in the Gospel,
hope seen in Jesus, hope yet to come,
you are our centre, daylight or darkness,
freedom or prison, you are our home.

Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,
God always faithful, you do not change

Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,
God always faithful, you do not change.

2 God in our struggles, God in our hunger,
suffering with us, taking our part,
still you empow'r us, mothering Spirit,
feeding, sustaining, from your own heart.

Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,
God always faithful, you do not change
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,
God always faithful, you do not change.

4 Not by your finger, not by your anger
will our world order change in a day,
but by your people, fearless and faithful,
small paper lanterns, lighting the way.

Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,
God always faithful, you do not change
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,
God always faithful, you do not change.

5 Hope we must carry, shining and certain
through all our turmoil, terror and loss,
bonding us gladly one to the other,
'til our world changes facing the Cross.

Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,
God always faithful, you do not change
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,
God always faithful, you do not change.

Call to Worship

Come, you who have been here since early morning.

Come, you who have only just arrived.

Come, you who are weary and you who are hopeful.

There is room for all in the love of God.

God's grace is generous, surprising, and abundant.

So let us worship the God whose goodness is enough for everyone!

Passing the Peace

God's peace is not a prize we earn or a reward reserved for a few. It is a gift, freely offered and freely shared. May we receive that gift and become signs of Christ's peace for one another.

The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us share signs of Christ's peace.

Life and Work

Opening Prayer

Let us pray:

Generous God, you meet us in the wilderness with bread, in our weariness with compassion, and in our calculating with grace.

Open our hearts this day. Free us from the temptation to measure who deserves what, and teach us instead to delight in your abundant goodness.

Gather us, nourish us, challenge us, and make us more generous in love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Hymn

My Soul is Thirsting for You

MV 109

My soul is thirsting for you, O God,
thirsting for you, my God
My soul is thirsting for you, O God,
thirsting for you, my God.
thirsting for you, my God.

1 O God you are my God,
and I will always praise you.
In the shadow of your wings
I cling to you and you hold me high

My soul is thirsting for you, O God,
thirsting for you, my God
My soul is thirsting for you, O God,
thirsting for you, my God.
thirsting for you, my God.

2 Through the day you walk with me,
all the night your love surrounds me.
To the glory of your name I lift my hands,
I sing your praise.

My soul is thirsting for you, O God,
thirsting for you, my God
My soul is thirsting for you, O God,
thirsting for you, my God.
thirsting for you, my God.

3 I will never be afraid,
for I will not be abandoned.
Even when the road grows long and weary
you love will rescue me.

My soul is thirsting for you, O God,
thirsting for you, my God
My soul is thirsting for you, O God,
thirsting for you, my God.
thirsting for you, my God.

RECEIVING GOD'S WORD

Scripture Exodus 16:2-5, 9-15

² The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. ³ The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat and ate our fill of bread, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." ⁴ Then the Lord said to Moses, "I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. ⁵ On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days."

⁹ Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites: 'Draw near to the Lord, for he has heard your complaining.'" ¹⁰ And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. ¹¹ The Lord spoke to Moses, ¹² "I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the Lord your God.'" ¹³ In the evening quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. ¹⁴ When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. ¹⁵ When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat."

Matthew 20:1-16

¹ "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the labourers for a denarius for the day, he sent

them into his vineyard. ³ When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴ and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So, they went. ⁵ When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶ And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' ⁷ They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the labourers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹ When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹ And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹² saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³ But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius?' ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

VU 271

1 There's a wideness in God's mercy
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in God's justice
which is more than liberty.

2 There is no place where earth's sorrows
are more felt than up in heaven;
there is no place where earth's failings
have such gracious judgement given.

3 There is plentiful redemption
in the blood that Christ has shed;
there is joy for all the members
in the sorrows of the Head.

4 Troubled souls, why will you scatter
like a crowd of frightened sheep?
Foolish hearts, why will you wander
from a love so true and deep?

5 For the love of God is broader
than the measures of the mind,
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind

Sermon

Enough for Everyone

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn

I Hunger and I Thirst

1 I hunger and I thirst:
Jesus, my manna be;
O living waters, burst
out of the rock for me.

2 O bruised and broken Bread,
my life-long wants supply;
as living souls are fed,
We know you will provide.

3 The true life-giving Vine,
let me your sweetness prove;
renew my life with thine,
refresh my soul with love.

4 Rough paths my feet have trod
since first their course began:
feed me, O Bread of God;
help me, O Son of Man.

5 For still the desert lies
my thirsting soul before:
O living waters, rise
within me evermore.

Offering

Generous God, everything we have first comes from you. Receive these gifts and the lives they represent. Bless them and multiply their goodness, that there may be enough: enough food, enough welcome, enough justice, enough hope. May our generosity become part of yours. Amen.
Let us sing:

What can I do? What can I bring?
What can I say? What can I sing?
I'll sing with joy. I'll say a prayer.
I'll bring my love. I'll do my share.

COMMUNION

Jesus told of a landowner who kept returning to the marketplace, calling more and more people into the vineyard. Early morning. Nine o'clock. Noon. Three o'clock. Even at the end of the day. And when the table of grace is set, Christ does something similar. Christ keeps calling.

Come, you who have followed faithfully for decades. Come, you who are not quite sure what you believe. Come, you who are returning after years away. Come, you who have only just arrived. This table does not belong to those who arrived first. It does not belong to those who understand everything. It does not belong to those who believe themselves deserving.

This is Christ's table. And Christ says: Come. There is enough for you.

God is with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to God.

Let us give thanks to God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Generous God, we give you thanks. When your people wandered through the wilderness, hungry and uncertain, you heard their cries. Morning by morning, you gave them bread. Not enough to hoard. Not more for the powerful. But enough for each day.

You taught your people to trust that your abundance was meant to be shared. Through prophets and poets, dreamers and troublemakers, you continued calling humanity back to justice, mercy, and love. And when we still struggled to understand the wideness of your grace, you came among us in Jesus.

Jesus ate with those others rejected. He welcomed children and strangers. He touched those considered untouchable. He told stories in which the last became first and grace refused to follow our rules. And so, with your people in every time and place, we join the song of creation:

**Holy, holy, holy God,
God of love and abundant life,
heaven and earth are filled with your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!**

**Blessed is the One who comes in the name of God.
Hosanna in the highest!**

We remember that on the night before Jesus died, he gathered at a table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and shared it, saying: "Take and eat. This is my body, given for you. Whenever you do this, remember me." After supper, Jesus took the cup, gave thanks, and shared it, saying: "This cup is the new covenant, poured out for you and for many. Whenever you drink it, remember me." And so we remember.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Let us pray:

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and cup. May this bread become for us the bread of life, and this cup the cup of blessing. As we share them, make us one in Christ: not because we are all the same, but because all of us are beloved. Feed us until we become hungry for justice. Fill us until generosity spills from our lives. Give us enough courage to challenge systems built upon scarcity, enough imagination to believe another world is possible, and enough love to welcome whoever arrives next. For this is the feast of grace, where nobody earns their place and nobody eats alone. Amen.

The bread we break is a sharing in the life of Christ. **There is enough for everyone.** (*The bread is broken.*)

The cup we share is a sharing in the love of Christ. **Grace overflows for everyone.** (*The cup is poured out.*)

These are the gifts of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

SHARING THE MEAL

(Please come forward through the middle aisle to receive the elements. Please eat the elements as you receive them, discarding the cup into the bin next to the folks serving Communion.

Prayer After Communion

Let us pray:

God of abundant grace, you have met us at this table and given us what we need. Having received this bread and cup, send us out with open hands and generous hearts.

Teach us to build communities where no one is disposable, no one is forgotten, and another person receiving enough is cause for celebration.

May the grace we have tasted here become grace we practise everywhere. Amen.

Grateful for the life you give us,
thankful for your Holy Son,
joyful in your Spirit flowing over all,
O God of Love.
Grateful for the Bread of Heaven,
thankful for your Holy Word,
joyful in your mercy flowing,
we will praise you.

Prayers of the People

Generous and loving God,
you gave manna in the wilderness, you brought water from the rock,
you called workers into the vineyard, and you continue to meet your people with unexpected
grace. We come before you carrying gratitude and worry, hope and weariness, joy and grief.
Receive all that we bring.

We pray for your world. For places where there is not enough food, clean water, safe shelter,
medicine, or peace. For communities living beneath the weight of war, violence, displacement,
poverty, and environmental destruction. Where abundance is hoarded by a few, awaken
generosity. Where systems declare some lives more valuable than others, stir up justice. Where
people have forgotten that we belong to one another, plant seeds of compassion.

We pray for those who work. For those who rise before dawn and those searching desperately for
an opportunity. For people whose labour is overlooked or underpaid. For migrant workers,
temporary workers, caregivers, teachers, health-care workers, service workers, artists, labourers,
volunteers, and all whose work sustains our communities. May every person know dignity,
security, rest, and enough.

We pray for those standing in the marketplace waiting: waiting for employment, waiting for
housing, waiting for an appointment, waiting for test results, waiting for reconciliation, waiting
for grief to become bearable, waiting for something to change. Meet them in the waiting, O God.

We pray for those who are sick, lonely, grieving, overwhelmed, or afraid. We remember
especially those whose names and circumstances are held within this community, and those
whose needs are known only to you. (*Silence*)
Surround them with tenderness, courage, companionship, and peace.

And we pray for ourselves. When we compare our lives with others, remind us that another
person's blessing does not diminish our own. When we are tempted to measure grace according
to deserving, remind us that your love has never worked that way. When someone else receives
what they need, teach us not resentment, but joy.

Make us people of the vineyard: ready to work for justice, ready to welcome the newcomer, ready to share what we have, and ready to trust that your generosity is wider than our imagination.

And we now join our voices in the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray; Divine Creator, our Holy Parent, our Mother and...

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kin-dom 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 kin-dom, the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

In All Times Past

TLUS 62

1 In all times past, in present ones,
the griefs of history
take flight before that rising Sun
of love—God's victory.

Beloved friends, lift up your eyes,
the reign of God perceive:
from desert wastes a paradise
will bloom for all to see!

2 Each breaking heart, each hidden face,
each gathering tear behold:
the world is gilded by God's grace,
our lives outshine all gold.

Beloved friends, lift up your eyes,
the reign of God perceive:
from desert wastes a paradise
will bloom for all to see!

3 In weary streets, on lonely plains,
God's glory shines like light.
Let earth and heaven sing again
as dawn dissolves the night.

Beloved friends, lift up your eyes,
the reign of God perceive:
from desert wastes a paradise
will bloom for all to see!

Bread for the Journey

How might God be inviting you to move from “That’s not fair” to “What would justice look like?”

Commissioning

Go into the world knowing that grace is not scarce.

We will live generously.

Go remembering that every person bears sacred worth.

We will seek justice and honour dignity.

Go to the vineyard, the wilderness, the neighbourhood, and wherever love is needed.

We will go as people of hope, trusting there is enough for all.

Go in peace to love and serve.

Thanks be to God!

Benediction

May the God who provides bread in the wilderness, the Christ whose grace refuses to be measured, and the Spirit who makes abundance possible bless you and keep you.

And may you go from this place with open hands, generous hearts, and enough love to share.
Amen!

Choral Response

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.

Postlude

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