



**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

**April 16, 2023**

**Holy Humour Sunday**

WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

**Prelude**

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

We light this Christ candle in recognition of the resurrection.

**Christ shines on us as we gather in Christ’s name.**

**Call to Worship**

On this Holy Humour Sunday, we come to laugh, to giggle, to groan at the terrible puns as we ponder God’s direction for us. We need to remember the joyful bubbling of the Spirit – as we join in prayer.

**Opening Prayer**

Surprising Spirit,

**distill our weary spirits with your flame of faith, pouring us out as gifts of joy to encourage one another. Risen Christ, transform our hearts through our shared humanity, enfold us with your arms of grace, bless us as we laugh at ourselves, with others, in this time of worship. Amen.**

**Introit**

**Give To Us Laughter**

**VU 624**

1 Give to us laughter, O Source of our life.  
Laughter can banish so much of our strife.  
Laughter and love give us wholeness and health.  
Laughter and love are the coin of true wealth.

2 Give to us laughter as sign of deep joy;  
let us in laughing find Christian employ,  
joining with stars and with bright northern lights,  
laughing and praising and sharing delights.

## 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

### Come In, Come In and Sit Down

VU 395

Come in, come in and sit down,  
you are a part of the family.  
We are lost and we are found,  
and we are a part of the family.

1 You know the reason why you came,  
yet no reason can explain;  
so share in the laughter and cry in the pain,  
for we are a part of the family.

Come in, come in and sit down,  
you are a part of the family.  
We are lost and we are found,  
and we are a part of the family.

2 God is with us in this place,  
like a mother's warm embrace.  
We're all forgiven by God's grace,  
for we are a part of the family.

Come in, come in and sit down,  
you are a part of the family.  
We are lost and we are found,  
and we are a part of the family.

4 There's rest for the weary and health for us all;  
there's a yoke that is easy, and a burden that's small.  
So come in and worship and answer the call,  
for we are a part of the family.

Come in, come in and sit down,  
you are a part of the family.  
We are lost and we are found,  
and we are a part of the family.

## Life and Work of the Church

### Scripture Psalm 16

<sup>1</sup> Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

<sup>2</sup> **I say to the LORD, “You are my Lord;  
I have no good apart from you.”**

<sup>3</sup> As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble ones  
in whom is all my delight.

<sup>4</sup> **Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows;  
their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out  
or take their names upon my lips.**

<sup>5</sup> The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup;  
you hold my lot.

<sup>6</sup> **The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;  
I have a goodly heritage.**

<sup>7</sup> I bless the LORD, who gives me counsel;  
in the night also my heart instructs me.

<sup>8</sup> **I keep the LORD always before me;  
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.**

<sup>9</sup> Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices;  
my body also rests secure.

<sup>10</sup> **For you do not give me up to Sheol  
or let your faithful one see the Pit.**

<sup>11</sup> You show me the path of life.  
In your presence there is fullness of joy;  
in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

### Gospel John 20:19–31

### Jesus Appears to the Disciples

<sup>19</sup> When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” <sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” <sup>22</sup> When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

<sup>24</sup> But Thomas, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.” <sup>26</sup> A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” <sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” <sup>28</sup> Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” <sup>29</sup> Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”

The Word of God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God.**

1 Sing your joy, proclaim God's glory!  
Rise and sing, the morning has come!  
Bless our God and praise all creation;  
song of the earth, and light from heaven:  
God is alive! Hallelujah!

2 All the earth is filled with rejoicing,  
light and life, the wonder of God!  
Christ has triumphed! Risen forever!  
Joy of our hearts, and hope of our dreaming:  
God is alive! Hallelujah!

3 May we learn to become your kingdom,  
may we be your kindness and truth!  
Love is our calling, gift of your presence;  
children of God, and spirit of Jesus:  
God is alive! Hallelujah!

4 Light our way, O God of the living,  
may we learn to see with new eyes!  
Jesus the Lord, our power and promise;  
light for the blind, and food for the hungry:  
God is alive! Hallelujah!

**Sermon**      **May Peace Be With You**

**Hymn**                      **Because He Lives**

God sent his son, they called him Jesus  
He came to love, heal and forgive  
He bled and died to buy my pardon  
An empty grave is there to prove my saviour lives.

Because he lives, I can face tomorrow  
Because he lives, all fear is gone  
Because I know he holds the future  
And life is worth the living just because he lives.

And then one day, I'll cross the river  
And fight life's final war with pain  
And then as death gives way to victory  
I'll see the lights of glory and I'll know he reigns.

Because he lives, I can face tomorrow  
Because he lives, all fear is gone  
Because I know he holds the future  
And life is worth the living just because he lives.  
Because I know he holds the future  
And life is worth the living just because he lives.

## Offering

God invites us to be joyful givers and blesses our offerings of time, talent, and treasure.

**That the oppressed may dance in liberation; those marginalized delight in community; and we recognize that we have been changed and made whole in God's name.**

## Prayers of the People

Thomas said, "unless I see the scars of the nails in his hands, and put my hand on his side, I will not believe.

**Be with us in our doubting as well as in our believing, Loving God. When we engage with science for the truth it has to offer, when we search for answers to our deepest questions, when we yearn for the quiet voice in all the noise around us, for it is your voice we seek ...**

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

Sing a Happy Hallelujah

VU 224

1 Sing a happy hallelujah,  
sing it out with heart and style,  
we're the echo of God's laughter,  
we're the image of God's smile.

Hallelujah, all creation,  
hallelujah everyone!  
Hallelujah, all creation,  
hallelujah everyone!

2 We're the proof of God's good humour,  
we're the twinkle in God's eye,  
made to shine, reflect the glory,  
given light and space to fly.

Hallelujah, all creation,  
hallelujah everyone!  
Hallelujah, all creation,  
hallelujah everyone!

4 Every day sing hallelujah!  
We are loved, though so absurd,  
human, foolish, chosen people,  
God still takes us at our word!

Hallelujah, all creation,  
hallelujah everyone!  
Hallelujah, all creation,  
hallelujah everyone!

### **Benediction & Commissioning**

May God bless us so that like Thomas, we may find our way to Christ's side,  
Where we meet our Lord and our Redeemer. **Amen.**

### **Postlude**

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### **Additional Lectionary**

**Acts 2:14                      New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition**

#### **Peter Addresses the Crowd**

<sup>14</sup> But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Fellow Jews<sup>[a]</sup> and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say.

**Acts 2:22-32    New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition**

<sup>22</sup> “Fellow Israelites, <sup>[a]</sup> listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, <sup>[b]</sup> a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know— <sup>23</sup> this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. <sup>24</sup> But God raised him up, having released him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. <sup>25</sup> For David says concerning him,

‘I saw the Lord always before me,  
for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken;  
<sup>26</sup> therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;  
moreover, my flesh will live in hope.  
<sup>27</sup> For you will not abandon my soul to Hades  
or let your Holy One experience corruption.  
<sup>28</sup> You have made known to me the ways of life;  
you will make me full of gladness with your presence.’  
<sup>29</sup> ‘Fellow Israelites,<sup>[c]</sup> I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and  
was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. <sup>30</sup> Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had  
sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. <sup>31</sup> Foreseeing  
this, David<sup>[d]</sup> spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah,<sup>[e]</sup> saying,  
‘He was not abandoned to Hades,  
nor did his flesh experience corruption.’  
<sup>32</sup> ‘This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.

## **1 Peter 1:3-9 New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition**

### **A Living Hope**

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a  
new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead <sup>4</sup> and into an  
inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who are being  
protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last  
time. <sup>6</sup> In this you rejoice,<sup>[a]</sup> even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various  
trials, <sup>7</sup> so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though  
perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus  
Christ is revealed. <sup>8</sup> Although you have not seen<sup>[b]</sup> him, you love him, and even though you do  
not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, <sup>9</sup> for you  
are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.<sup>[c]</sup>