



**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

**Soloist:** Loralie Vancourt

**Reader:** Mary Cannings

**April 9, 2023**

**Easter Sunday / Communion**

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

**Prelude**

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

Light.

**Hope.**

Light.

**Love.**

Light.

**Never-ending presence.**

Light.

**A guide for the way ahead of us.**

The Light of Christ.

**The Light of Christ, Thanks be to God.**

**Call to Worship**

In a garden, in the gloom before dawn, we have received a truth for all ages.

**He is not here but has risen,**

Christ has risen over death, risen for each one of us today.

**Risen in our hearts, risen in our lives. Hallelujah! Christ has risen indeed!**

**Response**

**Now The Green Blade Rises**

**VU 186**

Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,  
wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;  
love lives again, that with the dead has been:  
love is come again, like wheat arising green.

Forth he came at Easter, like the rising grain,  
he that for three days in the grave had lain;  
raised from the dead, my living God is seen;  
love is come again, like wheat arising green.

## Opening Prayer

Comforting God, on this Easter morning, we remember the women in the garden.

**We give thanks for their service to you and the astounding news they shared. As you reassured them , chasing away their fear, dispelling their doubts and grief, share with us the wonder of your Easter hope, the strength of your Easter faith, and be filled with your Easter love. Amen.**

## 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

### Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

VU 155

Words & Music: Lyra Davidica

Jesus Christ is risen today, hallelujah!  
our triumphant holy day, hallelujah!  
who did once, upon the cross, hallelujah!  
suffer to redeem our loss. Hallelujah!

Hymns of praise then let us sing, hallelujah!  
unto Christ, our heavenly King, hallelujah!  
who endured the cross and grave, hallelujah!  
sinners to redeem and save. Hallelujah!

But the pains which he endured, hallelujah!  
our salvation have procured; hallelujah!  
now above the sky he's King, hallelujah!  
where the angels ever sing. Hallelujah!

Sing we to our God above, hallelujah!  
praise eternal as God's love; hallelujah!  
praise our God, ye heavenly host, hallelujah!  
praise the Son and Holy Ghost, hallelujah!

## Life and Work of the Church

### Video

### The Road To Jerusalem - Finale

## Scripture Psalm 118:14-24

The LORD is my strength and my might;  
he has become my salvation.

**15 There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous:**

**“The right hand of the LORD does valiantly;**

**16 the right hand of the LORD is exalted;  
the right hand of the LORD does valiantly.”**

**17 I shall not die, but I shall live  
and recount the deeds of the LORD.**

**18 The LORD has punished me severely,  
but he did not give me over to death.**

**19 Open to me the gates of righteousness,  
that I may enter through them  
and give thanks to the LORD.**

**20 This is the gate of the LORD;  
the righteous shall enter through it.**

**21 I thank you that you have answered me  
and have become my salvation.**

**22 The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the chief cornerstone.**

**23 This is the LORD’s doing;  
it is marvelous in our eyes.**

**24 This is the day that the LORD has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad in it.<sup>[c]</sup>**

## Gospel John 20:1–18 The Resurrection of Jesus

**20** Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb.

**2** So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.”

**3** Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb.

**4** The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.

**5** He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in.

**6** Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there,

**7** and the cloth that had been on Jesus’s head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself.

**8** Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed,

<sup>9</sup> for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

<sup>10</sup> Then the disciples returned to their homes.

<sup>11</sup> But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb,

<sup>12</sup> and she saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet.

<sup>13</sup> They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.”

<sup>14</sup> When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

<sup>15</sup> Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.”

<sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher).

<sup>17</sup> Jesus said to her, “Do not touch me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’ ”

<sup>18</sup> Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and she told them that he had said these things to her.

The Word of God for the people of God.

**Thanks be to God!**

**Hymn**

**Christ Is Alive**

**VU 158**

Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.  
The cross stands empty to the sky.  
Let streets and homes with praises ring.  
Love, drowned in death, shall never die.

Christ is alive! No longer bound  
to distant years in Palestine,  
but saving, healing, here and now,  
and touching every place and time.

In every insult, rift, and war,  
where colour, scorn, or wealth divide,  
Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,  
and lives, where even hope has died.

Christ is alive, and comes to bring  
good news to this and every age,

till earth and sky and ocean ring  
with joy, with justice, love and praise.

**Sermon      Grave Clothes or Angel Robes?**

**In The Garden**

I come to the garden alone  
While the dew is still on the roses  
And the voice I hear, falling on my ear  
The Son of God discloses.

And he walks with me and he talks with me  
And he tells me I am his own  
And the joy we share as we tarry there  
None other has ever known.

He speaks, and the sound of his voice  
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing,  
And the melody that he gave to me  
Within my heart is ringing.

And he walks with me and he talks with me  
And he tells me I am his own  
And the joy we share as we tarry there  
None other has ever known.

I'd stay in the garden with him  
Though the night around me be falling  
But he bids me go through the voice of woe  
His voice to me is calling,

And he walks with me and he talks with me  
And he tells me I am his own  
And the joy we share as we tarry there  
None other has ever known.

**Offering**

In words of compassion and acts of reconciliation,

**in acts of peacemaking and acts of peace bringing,**

in gifts for the local church and in gifts for a needy world,

**Christ is alive in and through us! May we be evidence of his vitality. Amen.**

**Special Music**

**Jerusalem**

Loralie Vancourt

### **Communion**

As the disciples recognized Jesus in the breaking of Bread, as we share this meal, may we be aware of Christ's presence in ourselves, in others,  
And in creation around us.

Only a few days ago Jesus was at the table with his friends. He told them that every time they gathered to eat and drink in his name, he would be with them.

Jesus is here with us thus day ... the Bread of new life, eat and be filled.  
The cup of blessing ... drink and be renewed.

### **Prayers of the People**

Lord, you brought us here out of the valley ...

**So that we could experience the river and sky, watch the ice as it melts,, smell the bark of maple trees issuing sap, and recall that Jesus spoke of rivers of living water.**

You brought us here to the hilltop ...

**To get a new perspective on the valley, notice the yelp of the foxes and the call of the chickadees, smell the forest and remember where Jesus gave us the Beatitudes.**

You brought us here to the seacoast ...

**To experience the white foam and distant shore, see the waves crashing and touch the cold wet sand, we smell the salt air and remember that Jesus tames the sea ...**

You brought us to the desert ...

**So we could experience the endless sky, sun and moon, notice the wind, touch the rocky pavement, smell the heat of the day and the dew of night, and remember Jesus there for forty nights...**

You brought us here to experience the living Christ in the Spirit of Creation.

**You brought us here ...**

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**

**Thine Is the Glory**

**VU 173**

Thine is the glory, risen, conquering One:  
endless is the victory thou o'er death has won.  
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,  
kept the folded grave-clothes where the body lay.

Thine is the glory, risen, conquering One:  
endless is the victory thou o'er death has won.

Lo, Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb!  
Lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom.  
Let the church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,  
for our God now liveth: death has lost its sting.

Thine is the glory, risen, conquering One:  
endless is the victory thou o'er death has won.

No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of life;  
life is nought without thee: aid us in our strife;  
make us more than conquerors, through thy deathless love;  
bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above.

Thine is the glory, risen, conquering One:  
endless is the victory thou o'er death has won.

### **Benediction & Commissioning**

Take this Easter joy into your hearts.

**Christ is risen!**

Go forth in joy and in hope and in love, ready to share God's love every day.

**Christ is risen! Hallelujah! Amen.**

### **Postlude**

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## **Birchcliff Bluffs United Church**

### **Easter Sunday**

**Sunday, April 9, 2023**

### **Additional Lectionary**

#### **Acts 10:34-43      New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition**

##### **Gentiles Hear the Good News**

<sup>34</sup> Then Peter began to speak to them: “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, <sup>35</sup> but in every people anyone who fears him and practices righteousness<sup>[a]</sup> is acceptable to him. <sup>36</sup> You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. <sup>37</sup> That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: <sup>38</sup> how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. <sup>39</sup> We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, <sup>40</sup> but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, <sup>41</sup> not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup> He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup> All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

#### **Jeremiah 31:1-6      New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition**

##### **The Joyful Return of the Exiles**

**31** At that time, says the LORD, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.

<sup>2</sup> Thus says the LORD:

The people who survived the sword  
found grace in the wilderness;

when Israel sought for rest,

<sup>3</sup> the LORD appeared to him<sup>[a]</sup> from far away.<sup>[b]</sup>

I have loved you with an everlasting love;

therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.

<sup>4</sup> Again I will build you, and you shall be built,

O virgin Israel!



Again you shall adorn yourself with your tambourines  
and go forth in the dance of the merrymakers.

<sup>5</sup> Again you shall plant vineyards  
on the mountains of Samaria;  
the planters shall plant  
and shall enjoy the fruit.

<sup>6</sup> For there shall be a day when sentinels will call  
in the hill country of Ephraim:  
“Come, let us go up to Zion,  
to the LORD our God.”

## **Psalm 118:1-2**                      **New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition**

### **A Song of Victory**

<sup>1</sup> O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;  
his steadfast love endures forever!

<sup>2</sup> Let Israel say,  
“His steadfast love endures forever.”

## **Colossians 3:1-4**                      **New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition**

### **The New Life in Christ**

<sup>3</sup> So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth, <sup>3</sup> for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> When Christ who is your<sup>[a]</sup> life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

## **Acts 10:34-43**                      **New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition**

### **Gentiles Hear the Good News**

<sup>34</sup> Then Peter began to speak to them: “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, <sup>35</sup> but in every people anyone who fears him and practices righteousness<sup>[a]</sup> is acceptable to him. <sup>36</sup> You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. <sup>37</sup> That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: <sup>38</sup> how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. <sup>39</sup> We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, <sup>40</sup> but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, <sup>41</sup> not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup> He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup> All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

## **Matthew 28:1-10 New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition**

### **The Resurrection of Jesus**

**28** After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. <sup>3</sup> His appearance was like lightning and his clothing white as snow. <sup>4</sup> For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. <sup>5</sup> But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. <sup>6</sup> He is not here, for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he<sup>[a]</sup> lay. <sup>7</sup> Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead,<sup>[b]</sup> and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ This is my message for you.” <sup>8</sup> So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to tell his disciples. <sup>9</sup> Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers and sisters to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”