



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: Betty McCulloch

February 19th, 2023

Transfiguration Sunday

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Prelude

Lighting the Christ Candle

We light the Christ candle remembering the star that led the wise men...

May God's light shine through us as a beacon of hope in our world.

Call to Worship

This is the day that God has made!

Rejoice. Rejoice. Hallelujah!

This morning is God's morning!

Today we praise God in our worship. God receives our prayers, our offerings, our confessions. Today we meet Jesus on the mountaintop.

This day is God's day.

It is our day of renewal as we begin a new week.

Introit

It Only Takes a Spark

VU 289

1 It only takes a spark to get a fire going,
and soon all those around
can warm up in its glowing:
that's how it is with God's love,
once you've experienced it:
you spread God's love to everyone,
you want to pass it on.

3 I wish for you, my friend, this happiness that I've found -
on God you can depend,
it matters not where you're bound;
I'll shout it from the mountain top;
I want my world to know:

the God of love has come to me,
I want to pass it on
the God of love has come to me,
I want to pass it on.

Opening Prayer

One and eternal God of time and space, we are filled with awe.

We discover the glory of your presence on hillsides and mountaintops, in the beauty of lakes and valleys, blessed are you. Help us not to take for granted the gifts of your presence all around us for you are the Morning Star, rising in our hearts. 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.

Hymn

Called By Earth and Sky

MV 135

Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.

1 Precious these waters, endless seas,
deep ocean's dream,
waters of healing, rivers of rain,
the wash of love again.

Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.

2 Precious this gift, the air we breathe;
wind born and free.
Breath of the Spirit, blow through this place,
our gathering and our grace.

Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.

This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.

3 Precious these mountains, ancient sands;
vast fragile land.
Seeds of our wakening, rooted and strong,
Creation's faithful song.

Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky
called by earth and sky
called by earth and sky.

Life and Work of the Church

Scripture Psalm 2 God's Promise to His Anointed

¹ Why do the nations conspire
and the peoples plot in vain?
² The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers take counsel together,
against the LORD and his anointed, saying,
³ "Let us burst their bonds apart
and cast their cords from us."
⁴ He who sits in the heavens laughs;
the LORD has them in derision.
⁵ Then he will speak to them in his wrath
and terrify them in his fury, saying,
⁶ "I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill."
⁷ I will tell of the decree of the LORD:
He said to me, "You are my son;
today I have begotten you."
⁸ Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage
and the ends of the earth your possession.
⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron
and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."
¹⁰ Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
be warned, O rulers of the earth.
¹¹ Serve the LORD with fear;
with trembling ¹² kiss his feet,^[a]
or he will be angry, and you will perish in the way,
for his wrath is quickly kindled.
Happy are all who take refuge in him.

Gospel Matthew 17:1-9

The Transfiguration

17 Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves.

² And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became bright as light.

³ Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him.

⁴ Then Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will set up three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”

⁵ While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!”

⁶ When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear.

⁷ But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Get up and do not be afraid.”

⁸ And when they raised their eyes, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone.

⁹ As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, “Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

Hymn

Jesus On the Mountain Peak

VU 102

1 Jesus on the mountain peak
stands alone in glory blazing;
let us, if we dare to speak,
join the saints and angels praising. Hallelujah!

2 Trembling at his feet we saw
Moses and Elijah speaking.
All the prophets and the law
shout through them their joyful greeting: Hallelujah!

3 Swift the cloud of glory came,
God proclaiming, in its thunder,
Jesus as the Son by name!
Nations, cry aloud in wonder: Hallelujah!

4 This is God's beloved one!
Law and prophets sing before him,
first and last and only One.
All creation shall adore him! Hallelujah!

Sermon

Time to Listen

Choir

Shine, Jesus, Shine

God, the light of your love is shining
In the midst of the darkness, shining
Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us
Set us free by the truth you now bring us
Shine on me, shine on me

Shine, Jesus, shine
Fill this land with your radiant glory
Blaze, Spirit, blaze
Set our hearts on fire
Flow, river, flow
Flood the nations with grace and mercy
Send forth your word
God, and let there be light

God, I come to your awesome presence
From the shadows into your radiance
By the blood I may enter your brightness
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness
Shine on me, shine on me

Shine, Jesus, shine
Fill this land with your radiant glory
Blaze, Spirit, blaze
Set our hearts on fire
Flow, river, flow
Flood the nations with grace and mercy
Send forth your word
God, and let there be light

As we gaze on your holy brightness
So our faces display your likeness
Ever changing from glory to glory
Mirrored here may our lives tell your story
Shine on me, shine on me

Shine, Jesus, shine
Fill this land with your radiant glory
Blaze, Spirit, blaze
Set our hearts on fire
Flow, river, flow

Flood the nations with grace and mercy
Send forth your word
God, and let there be light

Offering

God of the transfiguration, we bring our gifts to you to help us build your church in this time and place.

Help us to notice the ways you are calling us to serve in your name. set us free to love and serve this wonderful world in extraordinary ways. May our offerings bring love, justice, and compassion in this Birchcliff Bluffs community. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Be not afraid, I go before you always, come, follow me, and I will give you rest ...

Holt One, you breathe hope into our midst. You remind us that the church is not a building, but God's space can be found wherever your people gather to share the good news. Give us ways in which we can be a loving presence in our community. Encourage us to be your presence each day touching all in a way they learn to know they are not alone, you are with them ...

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

My Life Flows On

VU 716

- 1 My life flows on in endless song,
above earth's lamentation.
I hear the sweet, though far off hymn
that hails a new creation.
Through all the tumult and the strife,
I hear the music ringing:
It finds an echo in my soul -
how can I keep from singing?
- 2 What though my joys and comforts die?

My Saviour still is living.
What though the shadows gather 'round?
A new song Christ is giving.
No storm can shake my inmost calm,
while to that Rock I'm clinging:
since Love commands both heaven and earth,
how can I keep from singing?

4 I lift my eyes; the cloud grows thin;
I see the blue above it;
and day by day this pathway smooths,
since first I learned to love it.
The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart,
a fountain ever springing:
all things are mine since I am Christ's -
how can I keep from singing?

Benediction & Commissioning

The light of love has come to us this day.

We will let it shine in and through our lives.

Go with God's love to show you the way, Christ's peace to share with others, and the Holy Spirit as your guide and friend.

Amen.

Postlude

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**Birchcliff Bluffs United Church
Additional Lectionary**

Exodus 24:12-18 New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

¹²The LORD said to Moses, “Come up to me on the mountain and wait there; I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction.” ¹³So Moses set out with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up onto the mountain

of God. ¹⁴To the elders he had said, “Wait here for us, until we come back to you. Look, Aaron and Hur are with you; whoever has a dispute may go to them.”

¹⁵Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. ¹⁶The glory of the LORD settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the cloud. ¹⁷Now the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the Israelites. ¹⁸Moses entered the cloud and went up on the mountain. Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.

Psalm 99 **New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition**

Praise to God for His Holiness

¹The LORD is king; let the peoples tremble!

He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!

²The LORD is great in Zion;

he is exalted over all the peoples.

³Let them praise your great and awesome name.

Holy is he!

⁴Mighty King,^[a] lover of justice,

you have established equity;

you have executed justice

and righteousness in Jacob.

⁵Extol the LORD our God;

worship at his footstool.

Holy is he!

⁶Moses and Aaron were among his priests,

Samuel also was among those who called on his name.

They cried to the LORD, and he answered them.

⁷He spoke to them in the pillar of cloud;

they kept his decrees

and the statutes that he gave them.

⁸ O LORD our God, you answered them;
you were a forgiving God to them
but an avenger of their wrongdoings.

⁹ Extol the LORD our God,
and worship at his holy mountain,
for the LORD our God is holy.

2 Peter 1:16-21 New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition
Eyewitnesses of Christ's Glory

¹⁶ For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. ¹⁷ For he received honor and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, my Beloved,^[a] with whom I am well pleased." ¹⁸ We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain.

¹⁹ So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. ²⁰ First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's^[b] own interpretation, ²¹ because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.