



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: Mary Cannings

October 15, 2023

Twentieth after Pentecost

WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

Prelude

Lighting the Christ Candle

With thankful hearts we gather here where the doors are open to all.

We come with open hearts and open minds, thankful that we are children of the light of Christ.

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

Jesus, Come to Our Hearts

VU 324

- 1 Jesus, come to our hearts like falling rain;
come to refresh, come to renew,
wash all our sins away.
- 2 Spirit, come to our hearts like rushing wind;
come with your fire, come with your life,
blow all our doubts away.

3 Come, God, come to our hearts like shining sun;
come to reveal, lighten your Word,
drive all our gloom away.

4 Glory be to the Lamb that once was slain;
praise for his life, praise for his death,
praise that he lives again.

5 Praises be to our God, the three in one;
praise for the sun, praise for the wind,
praise for the falling rain.

Call to Worship

Welcome to this spacious place, where we are fed by the word of God.

Refreshed by the spirit of God through word, song, prayer.

Life and Work

Opening Prayer

Restless God, we are ready for sabbath time. Fill us with your peace, we pray.

Renew our commitment to you and your service. This is your world and we live in it with joy.

RECEIVING GOD'S WORD

Scripture Isaiah 25:1-9

Praise to the LORD

25 LORD, you are my God; I will exalt you and praise your name,
for in perfect faithfulness you have done wonderful things,
things planned long ago.

**2 You have made the city a heap of rubble,
the fortified town a ruin, the foreigners' stronghold a
city no more; it will never be rebuilt.**

3 Therefore strong peoples will honor you;
cities of ruthless nations will revere you.

**4 You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy
in their distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat.
For the breath of the ruthless is like a storm driving against a wall**

5 and like the heat of the desert. You silence the uproar of foreigners; as
heat is reduced by the shadow of a cloud, so the song of the ruthless is stilled.

**6 On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all
peoples, a banquet of aged wine— the best of meats and the finest of wines.**

⁷ On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples,
the sheet that covers all nations;

⁸ **he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears
from all faces; he will remove his people's disgrace from all the earth.
The LORD has spoken.**

⁹ In that day they will say, "Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us.
This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation."

Matthew 22:1-14 The Parable of the Wedding Banquet

22 Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: ² "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. ³ He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.

⁴ "Then he sent some more servants and said, 'Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.'

⁵ "But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. ⁶ The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. ⁷ The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

⁸ "Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. ⁹ So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.' ¹⁰ So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

¹¹ "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. ¹² He asked, 'How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?' The man was speechless.

¹³ "Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

¹⁴ "For many are invited, but few are chosen."

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn

If You Will Trust in God to Guide You

VU 286

1 If you will trust in God to guide you,
and hope in God through all your ways,
God will give strength, whatever betide you,
and bear you through the evil days.
Who trusts in God's unchanging love
builds on the rock that will not move.

- 2 God will embrace your pain and weeping,
your helpless anger and distress.
If you are in God's care and keeping,
in sorrow will God love you less?
For Christ, who took for you a cross,
will bring you safe through every loss.
- 3 Sing, pray, and keep God's ways unswerving;
so do your own part faithfully,
and trust God's word; though undeserving,
you'll find God's promise true to be.
God never will forsake in need
the soul that trusts in God indeed.

Sermon **will YOU come ...**

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn

Softly and Tenderly

- 1 Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,
calling for you and for me;
see, on the portals he's waiting and watching,
watching for you and for me.
- Come home, come home;
you who are weary come home;
earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,
calling, O sinner, come home!
- 2 Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading,
pleading for you and for me?
Why should we linger and heed not his mercies,
mercies for you and for me?
- Come home, come home;
you who are weary come home;
earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,
calling, O sinner, come home!
- 3 Time is now fleeting, the moments are passing,
passing from you and from me;

shadows are gathering, deathbeds are coming,
coming for you and for me.

Come home, come home;
you who are weary come home;
earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,
calling, O sinner, come home!

4 O for the wonderful love he has promised,
promised for you and for me!
Though we have sinned, he has mercy and pardon,
pardon for you and for me.

Come home, come home;
you who are weary come home;
earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,
calling, O sinner, come home!

Offering

May the gifts we offer this morning be our response to everything that God has given us.

We share a portion of what we have to help those in need.

Prayers of the People

VU 400

Lord, listen to your children praying
Lord, send your spirit to this place
Lord, listen to your children praying
Send us love, send us power, send us grace

Music continues ...

Holy One, we meet you with all others who long for peace and healing.

May our hearts be open to repairing the past making way for a future of peace and healing.

Awaken our hearts so they may transform us and become a part of us...

Moment of silence

Creator, 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

I Can Feel You Near Me God

MV 48

1 I can feel you near me God I can feel you near
Yes I know you're with me God I feel you here
I can feel you near me God I can feel you near
Yes I know you're with me God Heaven is here.

And I'll jump for joy
I'm singing Alleluia
Jump for joy for you
I will jump for joy
I'm singing Alleluia
Jump for joy for you.

2 I can feel you loving me yes I know you care
God I know you're loving me always everywhere
I can feel you loving me yes I know you care
God I know you're loving me I know you're there.

And I'll jump for joy
I'm singing Alleluia
Jump for joy for you
I will jump for joy
I'm singing Alleluia
Jump for joy for you.

And I'll jump for joy
I'm singing Alleluia
Jump for joy for you
I will jump for joy
I'm singing Alleluia
Jump for joy for you.

Commissioning and Benediction

Our time of worship is now over. We have listened and our spirits are well nourished.

Let us take up the challenge of radical loving, courageous justice seeking, and compassionate nurturing.

May the grace of God sustain you.

May the example of Jesus guide you.

May the Holy Spirit encourage every day.

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 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

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