



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: Beth Moore

September 11th, 2022

WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

Prelude

Call to Worship

We gather here this morning

Seeking to ground our lives in our love.

We gather here this morning

Knowing you sustain all life on earth.

We gather here this morning

To praise and worship God the Creator.

Land Acknowledgement

We take a moment to acknowledge the sacred land beside the water on which we gather. 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 the Mississaugas of the Credit and Scugog. The lands where Birchcliff Bluffs United Church sits are part of the Williams Treaty. Today, the meeting place around Toronto is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island. 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.



Candle Lighting –

We have enjoyed a beautiful summer and realize our blessings.

We light our Christ candle reminding us that we are not alone.

Light candle here

**Let us enter this time of praise knowing we are a part of
God’s people.**

Opening Prayer

What are we without you, O God,

A puff of smoke that dissipates,

A blade of grass among millions.

Who will remember us in a thousand or million years?

Help us to remember that every creature is precious to you.

Let us hold tight to the fact that you love us, now and always. Amen.

Hymn

Jesus, Come to Our Hearts

VU 324

Jesus, come to our hearts like falling rain;
come to refresh, come to renew,
wash all our sins away.

Spirit, come to our hearts like rushing wind;
come with your fire, come with your life,
blow all our doubts away.

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

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

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

Life and Work of the Church

Scripture Reading Psalm 14:7-9

“For there is hope for a tree,
if it is cut down, that it will sprout again
and that its shoots will not cease.

⁸ Though its root grows old in the earth
and its stump dies in the ground,

⁹ yet at the scent of water it will bud
and put forth branches like a young plant.

Gospel Reading Luke 15:1-10

15 Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. ² And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

³ So he told them this parable: ⁴ “Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he

finds it? ⁵ And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep.' ⁷ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

The Parable of the Lost Coin

⁸ "Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹ And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' ¹⁰ Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Hymn

O God Who Shaped Creation

VU 276

O God who shaped creation
at earth's chaotic dawn,
your word of power was spoken,
and lo! the dark was gone!
You framed us in your image,
you brought us into birth,
you blessed our infant footsteps
and shared your splendored earth.

Although your heart is broken
when people scorn your ways,
you never cease your searching
through evil's tangled maze;
and when we cease our running,
your joys, O God, abound
as of a searching woman
when treasured coin is found.

In mercy and compassion
your goodness is revealed;
with tenderness you touch us,
and broken hearts are healed.
You claim us as your children,
you strip our prideful shame;
with freedom born of mercy
we bless your holy name!

Sermon Help Me ... I'm lost!

Choir **Take All The Lost Home** Words and Music: Joe Wise

Offering

God calls us across the ages to help care for those who are in need.

We bring our gifts so they may be a blessing in a hurting world.

May they be used where they are most needed. Amen.

Communion

Invitation

Sharing bread and juice in communion reminds us of the forgiveness, love, and hope we experience through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Everyone here- young, old, first-time worshipper or long-time member of the United Church-is welcome to share in the breaking of bread together.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give God our thanks and praise.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Even when we don't know where to go or how to follow, God's love nourishes us where we are planted. Despite God's unconditional love and assurances, despite our covenant relationship, too often we forget whose we are.

In response, Jesus came to help us back on the path of self-giving love, to remind us of God's promises and of God's abundant grace.

The Holy Spirit joins us at this table:

Through communion God joins us and we are made new.

The bread of new life – eat and be filled!

Through God's Spirit, we are empowered:

Drink and be renewed!

Thank you, God, for the gifts of such abundance. **Amen.**

Prayers of the People & Lord's Prayer

Attend to us, our rock and our redeemer.

We are withering in the sweltering heat of this world. Help us! Help us, O God! We cry to you and you alone, knowing we have messed up. Refresh us, your servants as we offer you our open hearts and thirsty souls, for only you can transform us. We trust you to guide us as we learn to follow the path you set for us...

We now take a moment to remember those we keep in our prayers.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray.

Lord's Prayer

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, the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

Praise with Joy the World's Creator

VU 312

Praise with joy the world's Creator,
God of justice, love, and peace,
source and end of human knowledge,
God whose grace shall never cease.
Celebrate the Maker's glory,
power to rescue and release.

Praise to Christ who feeds the hungry,
frees the captive, finds the lost,
heals the sick, upsets religion,
fearless both of fate and cost.
Celebrate Christ's constant presence:
friend and stranger, guest and host.

Praise the Spirit sent among us,
liberating truth from pride,
forging bonds where race or gender,
age or nation dare divide.
Celebrate the Spirit's treasure:
foolishness none dare deride.

Praise the Maker, Christ, and Spirit,
one God in community,
calling Christians to embody
oneness and diversity.
This the world shall see reflected:
God is One and One in Three.

Benediction & Commissioning

Our covenant with God is for life, for peace, for joy.

We go in the love and goodness of our God.

Go and proclaim God's renewing power for all of creation.

Amen.

Postlude

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**Birchcliff Bluffs United Church
Additional Lectionary**

Jeremiah 4:11-12 New Revised Standard Version

¹¹ At that time it will be said to this people and to Jerusalem: A hot wind comes from me out of the bare heights^[a] in the desert toward the daughter of my people, not to winnow or cleanse, ¹² a wind too strong for that. Now it is I who speak in judgment against them.

Jeremiah 4:22-28 New Revised Standard Version

²² “For my people are foolish;
they do not know me;
they are stupid children;
they have no understanding.
They are skilled in doing evil
but do not know how to do good.”

²³ I looked on the earth, and it was complete chaos,
and to the heavens, and they had no light.

²⁴ I looked on the mountains, and they were quaking,
and all the hills moved to and fro.

²⁵ I looked, and there was no one at all,
and all the birds of the air had fled.

²⁶ I looked, and the fruitful land was a desert,
and all its cities were laid in ruins
before the LORD, before his fierce anger.

²⁷ For thus says the LORD: The whole land shall be a desolation, yet I will not make a full end.

²⁸ Because of this the earth shall mourn
and the heavens above grow black,
for I have spoken; I have purposed;
I have not relented, nor will I turn back.

Denunciation of Godlessness**To the leader. Of David.**

- ¹ Fools say in their hearts, “There is no God.”
They are corrupt; they do abominable deeds;
there is no one who does good.
- ² The LORD looks down from heaven on humankind
to see if there are any who are wise,
who seek after God.
- ³ They have all gone astray; they are all alike perverse;
there is no one who does good,
no, not one.
- ⁴ Have they no knowledge, all the evildoers
who eat up my people as they eat bread
and do not call upon the LORD?
- ⁵ There they shall be in great terror,
for God is with the company of the righteous.
- ⁶ You would confound the plans of the poor,
but the LORD is their refuge.
- ⁷ O that deliverance for Israel would come from Zion!
When the LORD restores the fortunes of his people,
Jacob will rejoice; Israel will be glad.

Gratitude for Mercy

¹² I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he considered me faithful and appointed me to his service, ¹³ even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, ¹⁴ and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me^[a] with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. ¹⁶ But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience as an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. ¹⁷ To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible,^[b] the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever.^[c] Amen.