



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

September 10, 2023

Fifteenth 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

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You

VU 232

1 Joyful, joyful we adore you,
God of glory, life and love;
hearts unfold like flowers before you,
opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
drive the gloom of doubt away;
giver of immortal gladness,
fill us with the light of day.

2 All your works with joy surround you,
earth and heaven reflect your rays,
stars and angels sing around you,
centre of unbroken praise.

Field and forest, vale and mountain,
flowery meadow, flashing sea,
chanting bird and flowing fountain,
sound their praise eternally.

3 You are giving and forgiving,
ever blessing, ever blest,
wellspring of the joy of living,
ocean depth of happy rest!
Source of grace and fount of blessing,
let your light upon us shine;
teach us how to love each other,
lift us to the joy divine.

4 Mortals join the mighty chorus
which the morning stars began;
God's own love is reigning o'er us,
joining people hand in hand.
Ever singing, march we onward,
victors in the midst of strife;
joyful music leads us sunward
in the triumph song of life.

Call to Worship

We come with praise for the beauty around us,

For prairie, for seas, for mountains, for trees.

We come a stewards, partners in care

Of the universe and the earth and all creatures there

We come in gratitude for God's graciousness.

In our song and worship, may our thanks be expressed.

Life and Work

Opening Prayer

Creating God, help us to grow as trees do:

Stretching ever upward, arms open to the world around us, ready to let go of what we carry in due season. Amen.

RECEIVING GOD'S WORD

Scripture Psalm 149

1 Hallelujah! Sing a new song for Yahweh, praise from the assembled beneficiaries of God's loyal love.

2 Let Israel take joyous pleasure in its Maker; let the children of Zion exult in their king.

3 Let them dance a liturgy of praise to the holy name, celebrating I AM with melody of tambourine and lyre.

4 For El Shaddai takes a lot of pleasure in her people and crowns her ordinary folk with victory.

5 Let those who keep the faith exult in triumph, chorusing for joy upon their festive couches.

6 Let them sing full-throated in high praise of Elohim.... This brings honour on all God's faithful ones. Hallelujah!

Matthew 18:15-20

“If your fellow believer sins against you, you must go to that one privately and attempt to resolve the matter. If they respond, your relationship is restored. But if their heart is closed to you, then go again, taking one or two others with you. You’ll be fulfilling what the Scripture teaches when it says, ‘Every word may be verified by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ And if they refuse to listen, then share the issue with the congregation in hopes of restoration. If they still refuse to respond, even to the church, then you must disregard them as though they were an outsider, on the same level as an unrepentant sinner. “Receive this truth: Whatever you forbid on earth will be considered to be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you release on earth will be considered to be released in heaven. Again, I give you an eternal truth: If two of you agree to ask God for something in a symphony of prayer, my heavenly FATHER will do it for you. For wherever two or three come together in honor of my name, I am right there with them!”

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn

Come, We That Love

VU 715

1 Come, we that love our God,
and let our joys be known,
join in a song with sweet accord,
and thus surround the throne.

2 Let those refuse to sing
who never knew our God;
but children of the heavenly One
may speak their joys abroad.

3 The hill of Zion yields
a thousand sacred sweets
before we reach the heavenly fields
or walk the golden streets.

4 Then let our songs abound,
and every tear be dry;
we're marching through Emmanuel's ground,
to fairer worlds on high.

Sermon Reconciliation Day

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn

Praise, My Soul, The God of Heaven

VU 240

1 Praise, my soul, the God of heaven,
glad of heart your carols raise;
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
who, like me, should sing God's praise.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Praise the Maker all your days!

2 Praise God for the grace and favour
shown our forebears in distress;
God is still the same forever,
slow to chide and swift to bless.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Sing our Maker's faithfulness!

3 Like a loving parent caring,
God knows well our feeble frame;
gladly all our burdens bearing,
still to countless years the same.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
All within me, praise God's name!

4 Frail as summer's flower we flourish;
blows the wind and it is gone;
but, while mortals rise and perish,
God endures unchanging on.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Praise the high eternal one.

5 Angels, teach us adoration,
you behold God face to face;
sun and moon and all creation,
dwellers all in time and space.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Praise with us the God of grace!

Offering

God held out hands and created the world. So too, we hold out our gifts to help God's dreams for this earth come true.

We dedicate these gifts in the name of our Creator, giving from our hearts to help make possible what God imagines come to life. Amen.

Prayers of the People

VU 400

**Lord, listen to your children praying
Lord, send your Spirit in this place
Lord, listen to your children praying
Send up love, send us power, send us grace.**

Music plays during prayer

God of the land and living skies, your labour has given us the bounties of the earth. You provide nourishment for all, with generosity. We are blessed to have you in our lives for we would be downtrodden without you.

We praise your works in our comings and goings, in our reflections and our thoughts. Humbly, we ask you to enlighten and inspire us in living with respect in creation...

Moment of silence

Be with us always as you are our hope and salvation. We offer you our prayers in the name of Jesus who taught us to sing together

**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

When We All Get To Heaven

1 Sing the wondrous love of Jesus,
Sing His mercy and His grace;
In the mansions bright and blessed
He'll prepare for us a place.

When we all get to heaven,
what a day of rejoicing that will be!
When we all see Jesus,
we'll sing and shout the victory!

2 While we walk the pilgrim pathway
Clouds will overspread the sky;
But when trav'ling days are over
Not a shadow, not a sigh.

When we all get to heaven,
what a day of rejoicing that will be!
When we all see Jesus,
we'll sing and shout the victory!

3 Let us then be true and faithful,
Trusting, serving ev'ry day;
Just one glimpse of Him in glory
Will the toils of life repay.

4 Onward to the prize before us!
Soon His beauty we'll behold;
Soon the pearly gates will open—
We shall tread the streets of gold.

When we all get to heaven,
what a day of rejoicing that will be!
When we all see Jesus,
we'll sing and shout the victory!

Commissioning and Benediction

Friends, go from here, as those who share creation with all creatures.

We go from here to celebrate life's goodness, as we work for a new world that promises love and abundance for all. 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 that 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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