



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

Readers: Norma Grech, Tricia Reid, Mary Cannings

March 27, 2022 - Lent 4

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Prelude

God, You Are Clothed With Light

Music: Samuel Sebastian Wesley

Call to Worship

Let us approach our God with joy,

For God does not wish to condemn us.

Let us bring our praises to God,

For God will lift us up.

Let us bring our troubles to God,

For God offers us steadfast love.

Opening Hymn

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

VU 271

Words: Frederick William Faber

Music: Johann Ludwig Steiner

There's a wideness in God's mercy
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in God's justice
which is more than liberty.

There is no place where earth's sorrows
are more felt than up in heaven;
there is no place where earth's failings
have such gracious judgement given.

Troubled souls, why will you scatter
like a crowd of frightened sheep?
Foolish hearts, why will you wander

from a love so true and deep?

For the love of God is broader
than the measures of the mind,
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.



Life & Work of the Church

Welcome to online worship. We are very happy that you have decided to worship with us here today at Birchcliff Bluffs United Church. Information about our programs and services can be found on our website at www.bbuc.ca

Land Acknowledgement

As we prepare for worship we now take a moment to acknowledge this 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 (the ancestral name for these lands). 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

The Christ candle is lit as a reminder of Christ's light given to all, a symbol of God's presence.

Opening Prayer

Holy One, who is always there for us,

Help us to feel your presence in this season of fear and temptation.as we come out of the wilderness of our life, help us to learn with and from Jesus what it means to say yes to the reign of God, as we stand with Jesus. Transform us that we might experience eternal life here and now. Amen.

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

Gospel Reading

New Revised Standard Version

Luke 15:11b-32

The Parable of the Lost Son

¹¹ Then He said: "A certain man had two sons. ¹² And the younger of them said to *his* father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls *to me*.' So he divided to them *his* livelihood. ¹³ And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with ^[a]prodigal living. ¹⁴ But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. ¹⁵ Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. ¹⁶ And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the ^[b] pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him *anything*.

¹⁷ "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! ¹⁸ I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, ¹⁹ and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants." '

²⁰ "And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. ²¹ And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

²² "But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put *it* on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on *his* feet. ²³ And bring the fatted calf here and kill *it*, and let us eat and be merry; ²⁴ for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry.

²⁵ "Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. ²⁷ And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.'

²⁸ "But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ So he answered and said to *his* father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. ³⁰ But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.'

³¹ “And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. ³² It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.’ ”

The Word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God.

Reflection Seeing The Light

Song

King Herod’s Song

Words: Tim Rice / Music: Andrew Lloyd Webber

Hymn

I Saw The Light

Words & Music: Hank Williams

I wandered so aimless, life filled with sin
I wouldn't let my dear saviour in
Then Jesus came like a stranger in the night
Praise the Lord, I saw the light

I saw the light, I saw the light
No more darkness, no more night
Now I'm so happy no sorrow in sight
Praise the Lord, I saw the light

Just like a blind man, I wandered along
Worries and fears I claimed for my own
Then like the blind man that God gave back his sight
Praise the Lord, I saw the light

I saw the light, I saw the light
No more darkness, no more night
Now I'm so happy no sorrow in sight
Praise the Lord, I saw the light

I was a fool to wander and stray
For straight is the gate and narrow the way
Now I have traded the wrong for the right
Praise the Lord, I saw the light

I saw the light, I saw the light
No more darkness, no more night
Now I'm so happy no sorrow in sight
Praise the Lord, I saw the light

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Offering



Our gifts have the power to enable compassion, inspire justice, enlarge our living. We give as generously as we are able. Please visit our website at www.bbuc.ca/donate to learn how you can support the work of this place in this community.

Prayers of the People

God of the ages,

As we encounter the scriptures this day, and seek answers to our questions from these verses, help us to ask the right questions, and to be open to your guidance, inspired and challenged to greater faithfulness... as we follow in Jesus' footsteps.

God, you find us anxious as conflict rages in the world.
You find us angry at the senseless loss of life,
distressed for the safety of civilians and grieving over the unnecessary violence.

You give us hope, God.
Hope that leaders will patiently give peace a chance.
Hope that despite the heartache, the terror and the loss,
places of sanctuary will be found and acts of kindness will take root and grow.
Hope that feelings of revenge will be replaced by a willingness to restore
community and to forgive.

We now take moment to remember those we keep in our prayers....(pause)

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



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**Deep In Our Hearts****MV 154**

Words © 1995 John Wesley Oldham

Music © 1996 Ron Klusmeier

Deep in our hearts there is a common vision;
deep in our hearts there is a common song;
deep in our hearts there is a common story,
telling Creation that we are one.

Deep in our hearts there is a common purpose;
deep in our hearts there is a common goal;
deep in our hearts there is a sacred message,
justice and peace in harmony.

Deep in our hearts there is a common longing;
deep in our hearts there is a common theme;
deep in our hearts there is a common current,
flowing to freedom like a stream.

Deep in our hearts there is a common vision;
deep in our hearts there is a common song;
deep in our hearts there is a common story,
telling Creation that we are one.

Benediction & Commissioning

As we leave this church building may we feel God's Spirit is with us. Go, in the name of God, Son and Spirit. Amen.

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Additional Lectionary Readings
Year C – Lent 4
Sunday, March 27, 2022

Joshua 5:9-12

New Revised Standard Version

⁹The LORD said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.” And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

¹⁰While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. ¹¹On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. ¹²The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

Psalms 32

New Revised Standard Version

¹Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.

²Happy are those to whom the LORD imputes no iniquity,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

³While I kept silence, my body wasted away
through my groaning all day long.

⁴For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength was dried up^[a] as by the heat of summer.*Selah*

⁵Then I acknowledged my sin to you,
and I did not hide my iniquity;
I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,”
and you forgave the guilt of my sin.*Selah*

⁶Therefore let all who are faithful
offer prayer to you;
at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters
shall not reach them.

⁷You are a hiding place for me;
you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with glad cries of deliverance.*Selah*

⁸I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go;
I will counsel you with my eye upon you.

⁹Do not be like a horse or a mule, without understanding,
whose temper must be curbed with bit and bridle,
else it will not stay near you.

¹⁰ Many are the torments of the wicked,
but steadfast love surrounds those who trust in the LORD.

¹¹ Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, O righteous,
and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

2 Corinthians 5:16-21 New Revised Standard Version

¹⁶ From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. ¹⁷ So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, ^[c] not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. ²⁰ So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Luke 15:1-3 New Revised Standard Version

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:

Luke 15:11-32 New Revised Standard Version

¹¹ Then Jesus said, “There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. ¹³ A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. ¹⁴ When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶ He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸ I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.’” ²⁰ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹ Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ ^[c] ²² But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴ for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

²⁵ “Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. ²⁷ He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ ²⁸ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ ³¹ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”