



**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:** Norma Grech

**November 5, 2023**

**Twenty-Third after Pentecost**

**Remembrance Sunday**

**WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE**

**Prelude**

**I Vow To Thee, My Country**

Gustav Holst

**Anthem**

**O CANADA**

**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**

**Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah**

**VU 651**

1 Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,  
pilgrim through this barren land.  
I am weak, but thou art mighty,  
hold me with thy powerful hand.  
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,

feed me till I want no more,  
feed me till I want no more.

2 Open now the crystal fountain,  
whence the healing stream doth flow;  
let the fire and cloudy pillar  
lead me all my journey through.  
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer,  
be thou still my strength and shield,  
be thou still my strength and shield.

3 When I tread the verge of Jordan,  
bid my anxious fears subside;  
death of death, and hell's destruction,  
land me safe on Canaan's side:  
songs of praises, songs of praises  
I will ever give to thee,  
I will ever give to thee.

### **Call to Worship**

Today we wake to a world of beauty and catastrophe, a world of vision and violence,  
compassion and cowardice.

**We live in such a wounded world-beyond the grief of natural disasters, we face the  
devastation of human violence.**

How do we give prayerful expression to our grief?

### **Life and Work**

### **Opening Prayer**

O GOD, you sent us the Prince of Peace to teach us your ways but we are slow to learn and quick  
to forget.

**Help us to remember that small acts, joined together, shape society. Guide us in all  
our actions so that our small acts of love and kindness may shape a society of justice  
and mercy, security and peace for all. Amen.**

## **RECEIVING GOD'S WORD**

### **Hymn**

### **We Are Pilgrims**

**VU 595**

1 We are pilgrims on a journey,  
fellow travellers on the road;  
we are here to help each other  
walk the mile and bear the load.

2 Sister, let me be your servant,  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.

3 I will hold the Christ-light for you  
in the night-time of your fear;  
I will hold my hand out to you,  
speak the peace you long to hear.

4 I will weep when you are weeping,  
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;  
I will share your joy and sorrow,  
till we've seen this journey through.

6 Brother, let me be your servant,  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.

**Scripture                      Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37**

<sup>1</sup> Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;  
and whose love endures forever.

<sup>2</sup>        **Let the redeemed of the LORD tell their story—  
those redeemed from the hand of the foe,**

<sup>3</sup> those gathered from the lands,  
from east and west, from north and south

<sup>4</sup>        **Some wandered in desert wastelands,  
finding no way to a city where they could settle.**

<sup>5</sup> They were hungry and thirsty,  
and their lives ebbed away.

<sup>6</sup>        **Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble,  
and they were delivered them from their distress.**

<sup>7</sup> the LORD led them by a straight way to a city where they could settle.

The LORD turned rivers into a desert, flowing springs into thirsty ground,

<sup>34</sup>        **and fruitful land into a salt waste, because of the wickedness of those who lived  
there.**

<sup>35</sup> the deserts were turned into pools of water and the parched ground into flowing springs;

<sup>36</sup>        **there the LORD brought the hungry to live, and they founded a city where they  
could settle.**

<sup>37</sup> They sowed fields and planted vineyards that yielded a fruitful harvest;

**Matthew 23:1-12**     A Warning Against Hypocrisy

**23** Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: <sup>2</sup>“The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. <sup>3</sup>So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. <sup>4</sup>They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.

<sup>5</sup>“Everything they do is done for people to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; <sup>6</sup>they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; <sup>7</sup>they love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and to be called ‘Rabbi’ by others.

<sup>8</sup>“But you are not to be called ‘Rabbi,’ for you have one Teacher, and you are all brothers. <sup>9</sup> And do not call anyone on earth ‘father,’ for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. <sup>10</sup> Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one Instructor, the Messiah. <sup>11</sup> The greatest among you will be your servant. <sup>12</sup> For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

The Word of God for the People of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Hymn**

**For The Healing of the Nations**

**VU 678**

1 For the healing of the nations,  
God, we pray with one accord;  
for a just and equal sharing  
of the things that earth affords.  
To a life of love in action  
help us rise and pledge our word.

2 Lead us forward into freedom,  
from despair your world release;  
that, redeemed from war and hatred,  
all may come and go in peace.  
Show us how through care and goodness  
fear will die and hope increase.

3 All that kills abundant living,  
let it from the earth be banned:  
pride of status, race or schooling,  
dogmas that obscure your plan.  
In our common quest for justice  
may we hallow life's brief span.

4 You, Creator-God, have written  
your great name on humankind;  
for our growing in your likeness  
bring the life of Christ to mind;  
that, by our response and service,  
earth its destiny may find.

## **The Gift of Tradition**

**Randy**

**Just a Common Soldier**

**Last Post**

**Moment of Silence**

**Rouse**

**In Flanders Fields**

## **Offering**

Accept, O GOD, our gifts freely given.

**May they be signs of freedom for others; freedom from hunger, from oppression,  
from conflict, from violence.**

Use these gifts, as you use us, for your purposes in the world.

**Amen.**

## **Communion**

God is with us!

**We are not alone!**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to God.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Source of Life, Living Word, and Bond of Love,  
you are creative and self-giving, generously moving.  
In all the near and distant corners of the universe.  
nothing exists that does not find its source in you.

**Even when we turn away from you, you are with us;  
your presence never fails us,  
your gifts of hope and new life transform us.**

It is Jesus, God incarnate, the Risen Christ,  
who joins us together as a community of broken but hopeful believers:

loving what he loved, living what he taught, and  
striving to be his faithful servants in our time and place.

**In this meal we remember Jesus, his promises,  
and the price he paid for who he was, what he said, and what he did.**

On the night before Jesus died,  
he took a loaf of bread,  
gave thanks, broke it, and said,  
“Take and eat; whenever you do this, remember me.”  
After supper, Jesus took the cup, and poured, saying,  
“This is the new covenant, remember me.”

**We do remember. We remember his life of love, his friendship, his teaching, his  
dying, and his rising to life again.**

In sharing this meal, we live out the mystery of our faith:

The body of Christ,

**the bread of life.**

**Eat and be filled**

the cup of blessing. The gifts of God for the people of God.

**Thanks be to God!**

### **Prayer after Communion**

Thank you, O Christ, for this feast of life.

**We are fed by your love; we are strengthened by your life.**

**We are sent forth into this world to live into the visions God has laid on our hearts.**

**We are now commissioned to:**

**feed as we have been fed, forgive as we have been forgiven, love as we have been  
loved ...**

**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**

**Let There Be Light**

**VU 679**

1 Let there be light,  
let there be understanding,  
let all the nations gather,  
let them be face to face;

2 open our lips,  
open our minds to ponder,  
open the door of concord  
opening into grace;

3 perish the sword,  
perish the angry judgement,  
perish the bombs and hunger,  
perish the fight for gain;

4 hallow our love,  
hallow the deaths of martyrs,  
hallow their holy freedom,  
hallowed be your name;

5 your kingdom come,  
your spirit turn to language,  
your people speak together,  
your spirit never fade;

6 let there be light;  
open our hearts to wonder,  
perish the way of terror,  
hallow the world God made.

### **Commissioning and Benediction**

Today we remember, lift prayers, praise, hopes and dreams. As we go from this place ...

**Bless us with love, with divine presence, with grace. 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**

#### **Be Still My Soul**

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