



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: Janet Bawcutt

October 16th, 2022

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Prelude

Call to Worship

Servants of God, come in from the fields, homes, workplaces, where you labour all week.

We have laid down our tools and set aside our toil.

Come into this holy place and time, ready for worship.

We come ready to meet God, to give thanks, and to rest.

Introit

O Word of God Incarnate

(Psalm 119)

O Word of God incarnate,
O Wisdom from on high,
O Truth unchanged, unchanging,
O Light of our dark sky,
we praise thee for the radiance
that from the hallowed page,
a lantern to our footsteps,
shines on from age to age.

O make your Church, dear Savior,
a lamp of purest gold
to bear before the nations
your true light, as of old.
O teach your wand'ring pilgrims
by this their path to trace
till, clouds and darkness ended,
they see you face to face.

Land Acknowledgement

We now 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 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 light this candle inviting the Spirit of God to be with us.

Light candle here

We feel its presence and know we are not alone.

Opening Prayer

In a world where there is too much hunger,

We come for the bread of life, O God.

In a world where too many have nothing,

We come in prayer, O God. May your law of self-giving love become the center of our living faithfully and widen our vision for a global perspective. Come to us in word, song, prayer and praise. Amen.

Hymn

I, the Lord of Sea and Sky

VU 509

1. I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in deepest sin my hand will save.
I who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

2. I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain,
I have wept for love of them; they turn away.

I will break their hearts of stone,
give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them.
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

3. I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame,
I will set a feast for them; my hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide
till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them.
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

Life and Work of the Church

Scripture Reading

Jeremiah 31:31-34 A New Covenant

³¹ The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

³² It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD.

³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

³⁴ No longer shall they teach one another or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD, for I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more.

Gospel Luke 18:1-8

18 Then Jesus^[a] told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart.

² He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people.

³ In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Grant me justice against my accuser.’

⁴ For a while he refused, but later he said to himself, ‘Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone,

⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.’”^[b]

⁶ And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says.

⁷ And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them?

⁸ I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”

Sermon Precious Lord ...

Precious Lord, Take My Hand

VU 670

1. Precious Lord, take my hand,
 lead me on, let me stand,
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;
through the storm, through the night,
 lead me on to the light:
take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

2 . When my way grows drear,
 precious Lord, linger near,
when my life is almost gone,
 hear my cry, hear my call,
 hold my hand lest I fall:
take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

3. When the darkness appears,
 and the night draws near,
and the day is past and gone,
 at the river I stand,
 guide my feet, hold my hand:
take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

4. Precious Lord, take my hand,
 lead me on, let me stand,
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;
through the storm, through the night,
 lead me on to the light:
take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

Offering

Here is the work of our hands, hearts and love.

Here is our desire to help make this a better world.

Bless our offering and send your Spirit upon it that our gifts may join to help your kingdom come. Amen.

Choir

When Love Is Found

Prayers of the People

Creator God, as we gather, your greatness is all around us. We praise you and give thanks that you are faithful in your promises.

Multiply our efforts by your grace, God of love, so that all needs are met and your people know that they are cared for and valued and a beloved part of your creation. Strengthen us as we give and receive our love and support in your name.

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

**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 and the power, and the glory,
Forever and ever, Amen.**

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

Spirit, Open My Heart

MV 79

Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.

1. God, replace my stony heart
with a heart that's kind and tender.
All my coldness and fear
to your grace I now surrender.

Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.

2. Write your love upon my heart
as my law, my goal, my story.
In each thought, word, and deed,
may my living bring you glory.

Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.

3. May I weep with those who weep,
share the joy of sister, brother.
In the welcome of Christ,
may we welcome one another.

Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.

Benediction & Commissioning

On this day we came to rest and restore our spirits. Now we go forth in gratitude and commitment ready for work again.

May God go with us each step of our way. Amen.

Postlude

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Birchcliff Bluffs United Church Additional Lectionary

Jeremiah 31:27-34 New Revised Standard Version

Individual Retribution

²⁷ The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of humans and the seed of animals. ²⁸ And just as I have watched over them to pluck up and break down, to overthrow, destroy, and bring evil, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, says the LORD. ²⁹ In those days they shall no longer say:

“The parents have eaten sour grapes,
and the children’s teeth are set on edge.”

³⁰ But all shall die for their own sins; the teeth of the one who eats sour grapes shall be set on edge.

A New Covenant

³¹ The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ No longer shall they teach one another or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD, for I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more.

Psalm 119:97-104

New Revised Standard Version

⁹⁷ Oh, how I love your law!
It is my meditation all day long.
⁹⁸ Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies,
for it is always with me.
⁹⁹ I have more understanding than all my teachers,
for your decrees are my meditation.
¹⁰⁰ I understand more than the aged,
for I keep your precepts.
¹⁰¹ I hold back my feet from every evil way,
in order to keep your word.
¹⁰² I do not turn away from your ordinances,
for you have taught me.
¹⁰³ How sweet are your words to my taste,
sweeter than honey to my mouth!
¹⁰⁴ Through your precepts I get understanding;
therefore I hate every false way.

2 Timothy 3:14

New Revised Standard Version

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it

2 Timothy 4:5

New Revised Standard Version

⁵ As for you, be sober in everything, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.