



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

Minister of Word & Sacrament: Rev. Katie Vardy

Music Director: Randy Vancourt

Reader: Mary Cannings

November 1st, 2026

All Saints' Day

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Prelude

Welcome

Lighting the Christ Candle

We light this candle as a reminder that the light of Christ is among us: a light that reveals truth, a light that leads us in love, a light that calls us to walk humbly with one another. *Candle is lit.*

Lighting the Rainbow Candle

We light this rainbow candle as a sign of God's boundless welcome. We honour the saints who dared to live as their whole, beloved selves, and we commit ourselves to building a church where every person can do the same! *Candle is lit.*

Land Acknowledgement

As we gather for worship, we acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of many Indigenous Peoples, including the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee, the Wendat, the Chippewa, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. On this All Saints' Day, we remember the generations who have cared for this land before us and those who continue to do so today.

**May our remembering lead us beyond words toward relationships of respect,
justice, reconciliation, and right relationship with the land and one another.**

Opening Hymn

For All The Saints (v. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6)

VU 705

1 For all the saints, who from their labours rest,
all who by faith before the world confessed,
your name, O Jesus, be forever blest.
Hallelujah, hallelujah!

2 You were their rock, their fortress, and their might:
you were their captain in the well-fought fight;
you, in the darkness drear, their one true light.
Hallelujah, hallelujah!

3 O blest communion, fellowship divine!
We feebly struggle, they in glory shine;
yet all are one within your great design.
Hallelujah, hallelujah!

5 But lo! there breaks a yet more glorious day
the saints triumphant rise in bright array:
as God to glory calls them all away.
Hallelujah, hallelujah!

6 From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast,
through gates of pearl streams in the countless host,
sing to Creator, Son, and Holy Ghost:
Hallelujah, hallelujah!

Call to Worship

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

We gather with all the saints to seek the way of Christ.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

We gather carrying memories, grief, gratitude, and hope.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

We gather to become the people God calls us to be.

Come, saints of God, known and unknown, joyful and grieving.

Let us worship God together.

Passing the Peace

Jesus calls the peacemakers blessed. So, let us practise that blessing here and now, sharing with one another the peace that Christ gives freely.

The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us share signs of Christ's peace.

Life and Work

Opening Prayer

Let us pray:

God of every generation, you surround us with a great communion of saints: those whose names are remembered, those whose stories have been forgotten, and those whose faithful

lives continue among us. Open our hearts to your presence. May our worship draw us closer to you and to one another. Amen.

Hymn

Gather Us In

Here in this place new light is streaming
Now is the darkness vanished away
See in this space our fears and our dreamings
Brought here to you in the light of this day

Gather us in, the lost and forsaken
Gather us in, the blind and the lame
Call to us now and we shall awaken
We shall arise at the sound of our name

We are the young, our lives are a mystery
We are the old who yearn for your face
We have been sung throughout all of history
Called to be light to the whole human race

Gather us in, the rich and the haughty
Gather us in, the proud and the strong
Give us a heart so meek and so lowly
Give us the courage to enter the song

Here we will take the wine and the water
Here we will take the bread of new birth
Here you shall call your sons and your daughters
Call us anew to be salt for the earth

Give us to drink the wine of compassion
Give us to eat the bread that is you
Nourish us well and teach us to fashion
Lives that are holy and hearts that are true

Not in the dark of buildings confining
Not in some heaven light years away
But here in this place the new light is shining
Now is the kingdom, now is the day

Gather us in and hold us forever
Gather us in and make us your own
Gather us in, all peoples together
Fire of love in our flesh and our bones
Fire of love in our flesh and our bones

RECEIVING GOD'S WORD

Scripture Revelation 7:9-17

⁹ After that, I saw before me an immense crowd without number, from every nation, tribe, people and language. They stood in front of the throne and the Lamb, dressed in long white robes and holding palm branches. ¹⁰ And they cried out in a loud voice, "Salvation is of our God, who sits on the throne, and of the Lamb!" ¹¹ All the angels who were encircling the throne, as well as the elders and the four living creatures, prostrated themselves before the throne. They worshiped God ¹² with these words: Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and strength be to our God forever and ever! Amen!"

¹³ Then one of the elders asked me, "These people in white robes, who are they, and where do they come from?" ¹⁴ I answered, "You are the one who knows." Then the elder said to me, "These are the ones who survived the great period of testing; they have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb and made them white. ¹⁵ That's why they stand before God's throne and the One they serve day and night in the Temple; the One who sits on the throne will shelter them forever. ¹⁶ Never again will they be hungry or thirsty; the sun and its scorching heat will never beat down on them, ¹⁷ for the Lamb, who is at the center of the throne, will be their shepherd and will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe every last tear from their eyes."

Matthew 5:1-12

¹ When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on the mountainside, and after he sat down and the disciples had gathered around, ² Jesus began to teach them:

³ "Blessed are those who are poor in spirit: the kingdom of heaven is theirs. ⁴ Blessed are those who are mourning: they will be consoled. ⁵ Blessed are those who are gentle: they will inherit the land. ⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice: they will have their fill. ⁷ Blessed are those who show mercy to others: they will be shown mercy. ⁸ Blessed are those whose hearts are clean: they will see God. ⁹ Blessed are those who work for peace: they will be called children of God. ¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of their struggle for justice: the kingdom of heaven is theirs. ¹¹ You are fortunate when others insult you and persecute you, and utter every kind of slander against you because of me. ¹² Be glad and rejoice, for your reward in heaven is great; they persecuted the prophets before you in the very same way."

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn

For The Faithful

VU 707

1 For the faithful who have answered
when they heard your call to serve,
for the many ways you led them
testing will and stretching nerve,
for their work and for their witness
as they strove against the odds,
for their courage and obedience
we give thanks and praise, O God.

2 Many eyes have glimpsed the promise,
many hearts have yearned to see.
Many ears have heard you calling
us to greater liberty.
Some have fallen in the struggle,
others still are fighting on.
You are not ashamed to own us.
We give thanks and praise, O God.

3 For this cloud of faithful witness,
for the common life we share,
for the work of peace and justice,
for the gospel that we bear,
for the vision that our homeland
is your love - deep, high, and broad -
for the different roads we travel
we give thanks and praise, O God.

Sermon Blessed Are the Saints Among Us

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn

I'm Gonna Eat at the Welcome Table

TLUS 28

1 I'm gonna eat at the welcome table,
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table,
Alleluia,
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table,
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table
Alleluia.

2 I'm gonna eat and drink with my Jesus
I'm gonna eat and drink with my Jesus
alleluia,
I'm gonna eat and drink with my Jesus
I'm gonna eat and drink with my Jesus
Alleluia.

3 I'm gonna join with all God's children,
I'm gonna join with all God's children,
alleluia,
I'm gonna join with all God's children,

I'm gonna join with all God's children,
Alleluia.

4 Here all the world will find a welcome,
Here all the world will find a welcome,
 alleluia,
Here all the world will find a welcome,
Here all the world will find a welcome,
 Alleluia.

5 We're gonna feast on milk and honey,
We're gonna feast on milk and honey,
 alleluia,
We're gonna feast on milk and honey,
We're gonna feast on milk and honey,
 alleluia.

Offering

Generous God, we give thanks for all who have gone before us, whose generosity helped build communities of faith, justice, and love. Bless these gifts and bless our lives, that what we offer may bring comfort to those who mourn, hope to those who struggle, and justice and peace to your world. Let us sing:

Offering Hymn

What Can I Do?

MV 191

What can I do? What can I bring?
What can I say? What can I sing?
I'll sing with joy. I'll say a prayer.
I'll bring my love. I'll do my share.

COMMUNION

This is Christ's table. It belongs not to a particular congregation, denomination, or generation, but to the whole beloved community of God.

Here we gather with saints we know and saints whose names have been forgotten. With those who came before us, those sitting beside us, and those who will come long after us. Here there is room for the joyful and the grieving, the certain and the questioning, the weary and the hopeful.

So come, not because you have everything figured out, but because grace has already made room for you.

Come, for all is ready.

God is with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to God.

Let us give thanks to God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

God of every generation, we give you thanks.

Before us came generations who looked toward you with hope: ancestors who told stories around fires and tables, prophets who dreamed of justice, teachers who passed on wisdom, ordinary people who loved their neighbours and quietly changed the world.

Some are remembered in books and monuments. Many are not. Yet every one is known to you.

Again and again, when your people wandered, you called them home. When systems of power crushed the vulnerable, you raised up prophets. When despair seemed stronger than hope, you planted new possibilities.

And so we join our voices with that great multitude no one can number, with every generation of saints, with all creation, singing the song of your holiness:

Holy, holy, holy God,

God of love and life,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of God.

Hosanna in the highest.

Holy God, your love took flesh in Jesus. He sat with people others rejected. He touched those others avoided. He welcomed children. He challenged the powerful. He proclaimed good news to the poor.

And on a hillside, surrounded by ordinary people carrying ordinary burdens, Jesus spoke a blessing: Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are those who mourn. Blessed are the meek. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice. Blessed are the merciful. Blessed are the peacemakers. Jesus showed us a world shaped not by domination, wealth, violence, or status, but by mercy, justice, peace, and love.

On the night before he died, Jesus gathered with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and shared it with them, saying: "Take and eat. This is my body, given for you. Whenever you eat this, remember me."

After supper, Jesus took the cup, gave thanks, and shared it with them, saying: “This cup is the new covenant, poured out in love for you and for many. Whenever you drink from it, remember me.”

And so we remember. We remember his life. We remember his love. We remember his death. We proclaim the mystery of resurrection. And we trust that love is stronger than death.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Let us pray:

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and cup. Make them for us signs of your grace. As grain scattered across fields becomes one bread, gather us into one beloved community. Gather the living and the dead, the remembered and the forgotten, the grieving and the rejoicing, until that day when hunger is no more, when tears are wiped away, and all creation gathers at your feast of justice and peace. Amen.

The bread we break is a sharing in the body of Christ. **Though we are many, we are one body.** *(The bread is broken.)*

The cup we share is a sharing in the love of Christ. **We drink from one cup of grace.** *(The cup is poured out.)*

These are the gifts of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

SHARING THE MEAL

(Please come forward through the middle aisle to receive the elements. Please eat the elements as you receive them, discarding the cup into the bin next to the folks serving Communion.)

Prayer After Communion

Let us pray:

God of the living and the dead, you have welcomed us again to your table. We give thanks for this bread and cup, for this community, and for the communion of saints surrounding us. Having been fed by grace, send us out to live the Beatitudes: to comfort those who mourn, to hunger and thirst for justice, to practise mercy, to make peace, and to trust that love is stronger than death. Until we gather again at your table, keep us faithful, hopeful, and courageous. Amen.

Grateful for the life you give us,
thankful for your Holy Son,
joyful in your Spirit flowing
over all, O God of Love.
Grateful for the Bread of Heaven,
thankful for your Holy Word,
joyful in your mercy flowing,
we will praise you.

Prayers of the People

God of all the saints,
on this day of remembrance and hope, we give thanks for the great communion of people whose lives have shown us something of your love.

We remember those whose names are written in history and those whose faithfulness was known only to a few. We remember parents and grandparents, teachers and mentors, friends and neighbours, activists and peacemakers, caregivers and truth-tellers, and ordinary people who quietly chose compassion again and again. We remember especially those whom we love and see no longer. Hold them within your eternal love, and hold us in the tenderness of our remembering.

God of comfort, be near to all who mourn today. For those whose grief is fresh, for those whose grief has become a familiar companion, and for those whose relationships with the dead were complicated, unfinished, or painful, make room for every kind of remembering.

Jesus called blessed those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, and so we pray for all who hunger for justice today: for people living in poverty, for those without secure housing or enough food, for refugees and displaced people, for communities experiencing racism, hatred, violence, or exclusion, and for all whose voices have been ignored or silenced.

Jesus called the peacemakers blessed, and so we pray for places torn apart by war and violence. Give courage to those working for peace, wisdom to those entrusted with leadership, and strength to communities refusing to surrender their hope.

Jesus called the merciful blessed, and so we pray for all who need tenderness today: those who are ill, lonely, exhausted, afraid, or overwhelmed; those caring for someone they love; and those whose needs are known to us now in the silence of our hearts. *[Silence may be kept.]*

God of every generation, you have called ordinary people again and again to participate in your extraordinary work of love. May we honour the saints not simply by remembering them, but by continuing the work they have placed into our hands. Make us merciful. Make us courageous. Make us hungry for justice. Make us makers of peace.

And together, surrounded by the communion of saints, we pray in the words Jesus taught his friends, saying: Divine Creator, our Holy Parent, our Mother and...

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kin-dom 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 kin-dom, the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

Sing With All The Saints in Glory

1 Sing with all the saints in glory,
sing the resurrection song!
Death and sorrow, earth's dark story,
to the former days belong.
All around the clouds are breaking;
soon the storms of time shall cease;
in God's likeness we awaken,
knowing everlasting peace.

2 Oh, what glory, far exceeding
all that eye has yet perceived!
Holiest hearts for ages pleading
never that full joy conceived.
God has promised, Christ prepares it;
there on high our welcome waits.
Ev'ry humble spirit shares it.
Christ has passed th' eternal gates.

3 Life eternal! Heav'n rejoices:
Jesus lives who once was dead.
Shout with joy, O deathless voices!
Child of God, lift up your head!
Life eternal! Oh, what wonders
crowd on faith: what joy unknown,
when amid earth's closing thunders,
saints shall stand before the throne!

Bread for the Journey

Who is a "saint" who has shaped your life, and what part of their love, faith, or courage are you called to carry forward?

Commissioning

Saints of God, go into the world with courage.

We will seek the way of mercy and justice.

Go as peacemakers, truth-tellers, and people of compassion.

We will follow the way of Jesus.

Go, surrounded by the great communion of saints.

We go to love God and love our neighbours. Amen.

Benediction

May the God of every generation hold you, may Christ walk beside you, and may the Spirit give you courage to join the saints in the holy work of mercy, justice, peace, and love. Go in peace. Amen!

Choral Response

Peace Is Flowing Like a River

1 Peace is flowing like a river,
Flowing out through you and me;
Flowing out into the desert,
Setting all the captives free.

2 Joy is flowing like a river,
Flowing out through you and me;
Flowing out into the desert,
Setting all the captives free.

3 Love is flowing like a river,
Flowing out through you and me;
Flowing out into the desert,
Setting all the captives free.

Postlude

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