



**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

**January 14, 2024**

**Baptism**

**WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE**

**Prelude**

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

In a cold world,

**The light of Christ can warm hearts.**

In a shadowed world,

**The light of Christ challenges us to ways of peace.**

In a world of despair,

**The light of Christ gives real hope.**

Let us share the light of Christ within us. Let us worship our God!

*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 River.**

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**

**God of Grace and God of Glory**

**VU 686**

1 God of grace and God of glory,  
on your people pour your power;  
now fulfil your church's story;  
bring its bud to glorious flower.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
for the facing of this hour.

2 Lo, the hosts of evil round us  
scorn your Christ, assail your ways;  
fears and doubts too long have bound us;  
free our hearts to work and praise.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
for the living of these days.

3 Cure your children's warring madness,  
bend our pride to your control;  
shame our wanton selfish gladness,  
rich in goods and poor in soul.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
lest we miss your kingdom's goal.

4 Set our feet on lofty places,  
gird our lives that they may be  
armoured with all Christlike graces,  
pledged to set all captives free.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
that we fail not them nor thee.

### **Call to Worship**

Let us give thanks to God.

**We join in songs of praise.**

We receive God's words for our lives.

**We recommit ourselves to God's will and ways.**

Thanks be to God.

### **Life and Work**

#### **Opening Prayer**

In a world filled with noise, you are our place of quiet.

**In a world filled with brokenness and loss, you ground our being. May the world be changed, that all be made whole. Amen.**

### **Baptism**

The sacrament of baptism proclaims and celebrates the grace of God.

**By water and the spirit, we are called, claimed and commissioned:**

We are called God's own, welcomed as children of God,

**We are claimed by Christ and united with Christ and united with one another**

**And the community of every time and place.**

**Presentation of Candidates:** Mary Cannings - Chair of Worship

On behalf of the congregation of Birchcliff Bluffs United Church, I present the following persons for initiation into the body of Christ through baptism:

**Jennifer Hudson**  
**Liliana Hudson-Henschke**

**Ellen:**

Do you believe in one God: Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer?

I do, by the grace of God.

Will you follow in the ways of Jesus, resisting oppression and evil, seeking justice, witnessing God's love for all creation?

I do, by the grace of God.

Will you join with the members of this congregation to share in the life and work and ministry of Jesus?

I will, by the grace of God.

Will you share your faith with each other growing in faith, hope and love?

We will, by the grace of God.

Let us pledge to these persons our support and care.

**As a baptized and a baptizing people, we commit ourselves to support and uphold you both within this community of faith.**

Let us say the Creed together:

**We are not alone,**

**we live in God's world.**

**We believe in God:**

**who has created and is creating,**

**who has come in Jesus,**

**the Word made flesh,**

**to reconcile and make new,**

**who works in us and others**

**by the Spirit.**

**We trust in God.**

**We are called to be the Church:**

**to celebrate God's presence,**

**to live with respect in Creation,**

**to love and serve others,**

**to seek justice and resist evil,**

to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,  
our judge and our hope.  
In life, in death, in life beyond death,  
God is with us.  
We are not alone.  
Thanks be to God.

**Prayer:**

Gracious God, we thank you for the gift of life and within it, the gift of water.  
**By water comes the growth of the earth. In the Jordan waters Jesus was  
baptized, now may your Spirit be upon us and what we do in your name.**  
Let this water be a sign for all of new life in Christ.

Jennifer, I baptize you in the name of God, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Jennifer, with this sign of the cross you are marked as Christ's forever. **Amen.**

Laying on of hands:

Jennifer, may the Holy Spirit, Love's power, guide you, inspire you and work within you, all the days of your life. **Amen.**

Liliana, I baptize you in the name of God, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Liliana, with this sign of the cross you are marked as Christ's forever. **Amen.**

Laying on of hands:

Liliana, may the Holy Spirit, Love's power, guide you, inspire you and work within you, all the days of your life. **Amen.**

**The Lord Bless Thee**

**VU 965**

The Lord bless thee and keep thee:  
the Lord make his face shine upon thee,  
and be gracious unto thee:  
the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee,  
and give thee peace.  
Amen.

(Mary) Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works. **Amen,**

(Barry) Receive our Holy Scriptures, and let God speak to you from these pages. **Amen**

## RECEIVING GOD'S WORD

Scripture Psalm 139:1-6,13-18

You have searched me, LORD, and you know me.

**<sup>2</sup> You know when I sit and when I rise;  
you perceive my thoughts from afar.**

<sup>3</sup> You discern my going out and my lying down;  
you are familiar with all my ways.

**<sup>4</sup> Before a word is on my tongue  
you, LORD, know it completely.**

<sup>5</sup> You hem me in behind and before,  
and you lay your hand upon me.

**<sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,  
too lofty for me to attain.**

<sup>13</sup> For you created my inmost being;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

**<sup>14</sup> I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
your works are wonderful, I know that full well.**

<sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place,  
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.

**<sup>16</sup> Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in  
your book before one of them came to be.**

<sup>17</sup> How precious to me are your thoughts,<sup>[a]</sup> God! How vast is the sum of them!

**<sup>18</sup> Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand—  
when I awake, I am still with you.**

**John 1:43-51** Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

<sup>43</sup> The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me."

<sup>44</sup> Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. <sup>45</sup> Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

<sup>46</sup> "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked. "Come and see," said Philip.

<sup>47</sup> When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit." <sup>48</sup> "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked.

Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you."

<sup>49</sup> Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel."

<sup>50</sup> Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that." <sup>51</sup> He then added, "Very truly I tell you, you will see 'heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on' the Son of Man."

The Word of God for the People of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Hymn**

**Will You Come and Follow Me (v. 1, 2, 4, 5)**

**VU 567**

- 1 Will you come and follow me  
if I but call your name?  
Will you go where you don't know  
and never be the same?  
Will you let my love be shown,  
will you let my name be known,  
will you let my life be grown  
in you and you in me?
- 2 Will you leave yourself behind  
if I but call your name?  
Will you care for cruel and kind  
and never be the same?  
Will you risk the hostile stare  
should your life attract or scare?  
Will you let me answer prayer  
in you and you in me?
- 4 Will you love the 'you' you hide  
if I but call your name?  
Will you quell the fear inside  
and never be the same?  
Will you use the faith you've found  
to reshape the world around,  
through my sight and touch and sound  
in you and you in me?
- 5 Christ, your summons echoes true  
when you but call my name.  
Let me turn and follow you  
and never be the same.  
In your company I'll go  
where your love and footsteps show.  
Thus I'll move and live and grow  
in you and you in me.

Sermon      Come and See

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn

**Take My Life and Let It Be**

VU 506

1 Take my life, and let it be  
consecrated, all for thee;  
take my moments and my days;  
let them flow in ceaseless praise.

2 Take my hands, and let them move  
at the impulse of thy love;  
take my feet, and let them be  
swift and purposeful for thee.

3 Take my lips, and let them be  
filled with messages from thee;  
take my intellect, and use  
every power as thou shalt choose.

4 Take my will, and make it thine;  
it shall be no longer mine;  
take my heart, it is thine own;  
it shall be thy royal throne.

5 Take my love: and I will pour  
at thy feet its treasure store;  
take myself, and I will be  
ever, only, all for thee.

### Offering

Holy One, bless all that we offer: our time and finances, our energy and ideas, our care and compassion, our praise and prayers.

**Together may we create a community of faith, hope and love, in Jesus' name. Amen.**

### Prayers of the People

The drifting snow cushions sound and gently shapes the winter grime. Each uncertain flake is nothing and yet perfect and unique.

**Your blessings drift, each one perfect but tiny, until one morning we wake up to see our lives blanketed in love and we feel the gentle joy in such supply that we heap it up in all the corners of our being. Your goodness is felt by all this day especially by**

**Jennifer and Liliana who have chosen to be identified as a part of your family. By your grace and the movement of your Spirit, walk their path through life with them, showing them the way to go and the truth they should know...**

*Moment of silence*

**Eternal Spirit, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,  
For yours is the kingdom and the power, and the glory,  
For ever and ever, Amen.**

### **BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH**

**Closing Hymn**

**Teach Me, God, To Wonder**

**VU 299**

1 Teach me, God, to wonder, teach me, God, to see;  
let your world of beauty capture me.  
Praise to you be given, love for you be lived,  
life be celebrated, joy you give.

2 Let me, God, be open, let me loving be;  
let your world of people speak to me.  
Praise to you be given, love for you be lived,  
life be celebrated, joy you give.

3 Let me, God, be ready, let me be awake,  
in your world of loving my place take.  
Praise to you be given, love for you be lived,  
life be celebrated, joy you give.

4 Teach me, God, to know you, hear you when you speak,  
see you in my neighbour when we meet.  
Praise to you be given, love for you be lived,  
life be celebrated, joy you give.

### **Commissioning and Benediction**

Go and continue to be exceptional followers of Jesus.

**We take the message of inclusion and justice out into the community.**

Remember you are GOD's beloved wherever you go.

**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**

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