



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

Rev. Gregory Daly: Minister of Word & Sacrament

Rev. Carmen Llanos: Minister of Community Development

Music Director: Randy Vancourt

Reader: Vicky Kennedy

February 28, 2021 – Black History Month



WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Prelude

Great God, What Do I See and Hear

From 'Klugs' Lieder, Wittenberg, 1535

Call to Worship

Friends, the God of hope is calling,

Offering refreshment to those who are weary and heavy laden.

*Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest.*

Friends, the God of peace is calling,

Offering tender words of comfort to those in distress.

*Come children, how often I have longed to gather you together
as a hen gathers her brood under her wings.*

Friends, the God of love is calling,

Offering friendship and communion to those who feel alone.

*Come everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money,
come buy and eat without money and without cost.*

Friends, come, God is calling us to worship.

It is an offer too irresistible to refuse.



Words: Joseph Medlicott Scriven
Music: Charles Crozat Converse

*What a friend we have in Jesus,
all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
all because we do not carry
everything to God in prayer.*

*Are we weak and heavy laden,
cumbered with a load of care?
Christ the Saviour is our refuge;
take it to our God in prayer.*

*Do our friends despise, forsake us?
Are we tempted to despair?
Jesus' strength will shield our weakness,
and we'll find new courage there.*

Life & Work of the Church



Welcome to online worship

Land Acknowledgement

As we prepare for worship, we 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 Mississauga's of the Credit and Scugog, part of the Williams Treaty. Today, the meeting place around Toronto is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island. We are grateful for the opportunity to live and work on this territory. We seek to be mindful of broken covenants and the need to strive to make right with all our relations.



Candle Lighting

*Loving God, as we journey through this season of Lent, may we be open to your presence. Give us the strength to make the changes that are needed in our lives and the courage to take on the work of transforming the world.
Amen.*

Prayer of Lamentation

*God, we lament a world where
the quality of a child's life can still be accurately predicted by the colour of their skin;
Black and Brown skin tones are perceived as weapons;
White supremacy goes unchallenged; discrimination is expected and planned for; and racism is
known to be woven into the fabric of society.
God, what shall we do?*

Sung refrain: MV 167 "Hush! Hush!"

Hush! Hush! Somebody's calling my name,
Hush! Hush! Somebody's calling my name,
Hush! Hush! Somebody's calling my name,
Oh my God, Oh my God, what shall I do?

*God, we remember our children who have inherited racism overtly through the teaching of hate,
and covertly through the lived experience of prejudice. We lament that children have the unfair
burden to unlearn the lessons of discrimination that they have been taught. We lament that
children are fighting against low expectations placed on them by a biased society. And we
lament the children who are angry when chastised for reflecting back the hateful language they
have been taught.
God, what shall we do?*

Sung refrain: MV 167 "Hush! Hush!"

I'm so glad that trouble won't last always.
I'm so glad that trouble won't last always.
I'm so glad that trouble won't last always.
Oh my God, Oh my God, what shall I do?

*God, we remember our parents and guardians who have experienced friends, loved ones, and
children dying from the physical and emotional wounds of anti-Black violence and who have
worked thanklessly and prophetically for equality. We lament the protectors who feel helplessly
unable to shield their loved ones from harm. We lament that our protestors are tired yet still
persevere without signs of rest or progress. We lament that there are people who live in fear of
hateful violence because of what they look like.
God, what shall we do?*

Sung refrain: MV 167 "Hush! Hush!"

Hush! Hush! Somebody's calling my name,
Hush! Hush! Somebody's calling my name,
Hush! Hush! Somebody's calling my name,
Oh my God, Oh my God, what shall I do?

God, we remember our elders, who created paths where there were none and sacrificed so that other generations could live in peace and freedom. We lament that they are forced to relive the violence of racism in both different and familiar forms. We lament that they are not able to live with the peace and dignity that they fought for. We lament that they are forced to watch their children suffer. We lament the elders who are tired, weary, and worn, with no signs of rest. God, what shall we do?

Sung refrain: MV 167 “Hush! Hush!”

I'm so glad I got my religion in time,
I'm so glad I got my religion in time,
I'm so glad I got my religion in time,
Oh my God, Oh my God, what shall I do?

God, we remember our Canadian ancestors, who despite great opposition and persecution thrived to become role models. We remember Lincoln Alexander, Mary Ann Shadd Cary, Viola Davis Desmond, Elijah McCoy, Portia White, Carrie Best, Fergie Arthur Jenkins, Wilbur Howard, and the Black leaders in our church who continue the struggle for inclusion and equity. We lament the stories that we do not know, the histories that we have failed to share and the names that we have forgotten. God, what shall we do?

Sung refrain: MV 167 “Hush! Hush!”

Hush! Hush! Somebody's calling my name,
Hush! Hush! Somebody's calling my name,
Hush! Hush! Somebody's calling my name,
Oh my God, Oh my God, what shall I do?
Oh my God, Oh my God, what shall I do?

*God, we remember...
we lament...
and we wait, trusting that you will comfort us,
while providing us direction. Amen*

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

And Now For Something Completely Different



*Rock-a-bye baby
Ring around the Rosie
Jack & Jill*

Hymn

God Says

MV 172

Words & music: Mary Bittner
© 2004 Wayne Leupold Editions, Inc.

*God says, "Be still so you may hear
the words I whisper in your ear.
If you will listen, you will know
I'm with you always where you go."*

*God says, "Look up and see the prize
I've placed here right before your eyes.
Find beauty in the things of earth,
a cause for wonder and rebirth."*

*God says, "Come here! I need your voice,
Please teach my people to rejoice.
In who you are, in what you do,
your life will show my love for you."*

*God says, "Reach out! The world's in need
and wants a word, a song, a deed.
I send you forth to speak, to sing,
to act for Christ in everything."*

Prayer of Illumination

*Help us O God, to come to you with open lives to receive your words.
May we give them new life as we listen to what you have to say.
Open our hearts as we embark on this journey with each other and with
you. Amen*



Psalm 22: 23-31 New Revised Standard Version (with inclusive language)

You who worship YHWH. give praise!

Daughters of Leah, daughters of Rachel, glorify YHWH

Sons of Jacob, fall down and worship!

²⁴ For God has not despised, not disdained, the suffering of those in pain!

God's face has not been hidden from me,

God heard me when I cried out.

²⁵ From you comes my praise in the great congregation;

my vows I will pay before those who worship YHWH.

²⁶ The poor shall eat and be satisfied;

those who seek shall praise YHWH.

May your hearts live forever!

²⁷ All the ends of the earth shall remember

and turn to YHWH;

and all the families of the nations

shall worship before God.

²⁸ For dominion belongs to YHWH,
who rules over the nations.

²⁹ To God, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;
before God shall bow all who go down to the dust,
and I shall live for God.

³⁰ Posterity will serve YHWH;
future generations will be told about God,

³¹ and proclaim YHWH's deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying that God has done it.

Mark 8: 31-38

The Message

Jesus began explaining things to them: "It is necessary that the Son of Man proceed to an ordeal of suffering, be tried and found guilty by the elders, high priests, and religion scholars, be killed, and after three days rise up alive." He said this simply and clearly so they couldn't miss it.

³²⁻³³ But Peter grabbed him in protest. Turning and seeing his disciples wavering, wondering what to believe, Jesus confronted Peter. "Peter, get out of my way! Satan, get lost! You have no idea how God works."

³⁴⁻³⁷ Calling the crowd to join his disciples, he said, "Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You're not in the driver's seat; *I* am. Don't run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me and I'll show you how. Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to saving yourself, your true self. What good would it do to get everything you want and lose you, the real you? What could you ever trade your soul for?"

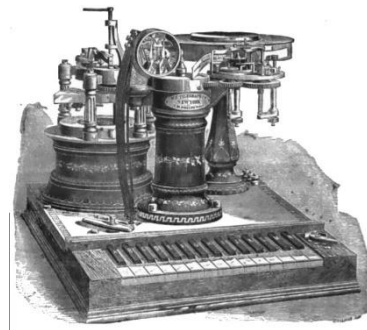
³⁸ "If any of you are embarrassed over me and the way I'm leading you when you get around your fickle and unfocused friends, know that you'll be an even greater embarrassment to the Son of Man when he arrives in all the splendor of God, with an army of the holy angels."

This is the Gospel message for us to consider today.

Thanks be to God

Sermon

You too?



Hymn

Take Up Your Cross

VU 561

Words: Charles William Everest

Music: Henry Baker

*Take up your cross, the Saviour said,
if you would my disciple be;
take up your cross with willing heart,
and humbly follow after me.*

*Take up your cross; let not its weight
fill your weak spirit with alarm;
Christ's strength shall bear your spirit up,
and brace your heart, and nerve your arm.*

*Take up your cross, heed not the shame,
nor let your foolish pride rebel;
your Saviour once accepted death
upon a cross, on Calvary's hill.*

*Take up your cross, and follow Christ,
think not till death to lay it down;
for only those who bear the cross
may hope to wear the glorious crown.*

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Offering



God has lovingly bestowed upon us the gift of life.

Our best response is to share that love by offering our whole lives as agents for God's mission in the world.

Give as you are able to build the community of God in our homes, our congregation and around the world.

Prayers of the People



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

Oh, I Want To Be a Christian In My Heart

African American Spiritual

*Oh, I want to be a Christian
in my heart, in my heart.*

*Oh, I want to be a Christian in my heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Oh, I want to be a Christian in my heart.*

*Oh, I want to be more loving
in my heart, in my heart.
Oh, I want to be more loving in my heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Oh, I want to be more loving in my heart.*

*Oh, I want to be more holy
in my heart, in my heart.
Oh, I want to be more holy in my heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Oh, I want to be more holy in my heart.*

*Oh, I want to be like Jesus
in my heart, in my heart.
Oh, I want to be like Jesus in my heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Oh, I want to be like Jesus in my heart.*

Benediction & Commissioning



Postlude

All the Way My Saviour Leads Me

Music: Robert Lowry

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Other Resources for Today

Prayer of Lamentation

Kehinde Wiley: [Kehinde Wiley Reimagines Old Portraits Because 'If Black Lives Matter, They Deserve to Be in Paintings' · Global Voices](#)

And Now for Something Completely Different

[The dark side of nursery rhymes - BBC Culture](#)

[The powerful truth behind lullabies \(calpoly.edu\)](#)

Sermon Poem

Jan Richardson: [The Painted Prayerbook](#)

Other Lectionary Readings

Genesis 17: 1-7, 15-16 **New Revised Standard Version**

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, YHWH appeared to Abram, and said to him, “I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ² And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.” ³ Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴ “As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵ No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶ I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and rulers shall come from you. ⁷ I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

¹⁵ God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶ I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; rulers of peoples shall come from her.”

Romans 4: 13-25 **New Revised Standard Version**

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵ For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶ For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the ancestor of all of us, ¹⁷ as it is written, “I have made you the ancestor of many nations”)—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸ Hoping against hope, he believed

that he would become “the ancestor of many nations,” according to what was said, “So numerous shall your descendants be.”¹⁹ He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb.²⁰ No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God,²¹ being fully convinced that God was able to do what God had promised.²² Therefore his faith “was reckoned to him as righteousness.”²³ Now the words, “it was reckoned to him,” were written not for his sake alone,²⁴ but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in God who raised Jesus from the dead,²⁵ who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.