



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: Betty McCulloch

Musical Guests: Daniel Giverin & Loralie Vancourt

March 17, 2024

Lent 5 - ST. PATRICK'S DAY SERVICE

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Prelude

Welcome

Lighting the Christ Candle

As we light this candle, may the blessing of light be on you,

Light without and light within.

Let the blessed sunlight shine upon you and warm your heart

Till it glows like a great fire,

And strangers may warm themselves, as well as friends.

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 traditional 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

Be Thou My Vision (v. 1, 2, 4, 5)

VU 642

1 Be thou my vision, O joy of my heart;
naught be all else to me save that thou art,
thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping thy presence my light.

2 Be thou my wisdom, my calm in all strife;
I ever with thee, and thou in my life;
thou loving parent, thy child may I be,
thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.

4 Riches I heed not, nor vain empty praise,
thou mine inheritance, now and always;
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,
great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.

5 Great God of heaven, after victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O ruler of all.

Call to Worship

Let us kindle our fires this morning in the presence of the holy angels of heaven.

**Kindle in my heart a flame of love to my neighbour,
to my foe, to my friend, to my kindred all,
to the brave, to the knave, and to all.**

Life and Work

Eh...Jesus? Yes, Peter...?

Opening Prayer

All of life reflects a creative presence and sustaining love.

**In the wind and the calm, in the sun and the moon, in the crash of waves and
waterfalls. In the rich abundance of the harvest and in the first buds of spring, in
the voices of those who love and care for all creation, in the embrace of those who
love and care for us. Come down, come in, come amongst us. Amen.**

RECEIVING GOD'S WORD

Scripture

Jeremiah 31:31-34 A New Covenant

³¹ "The day is coming," says the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. ³² This covenant will not be like the one I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt. They broke that covenant, though I loved them as a husband loves his wife," says the LORD.

³³ “But this is the new covenant I will make with the people after those days,” says the LORD. “I will put my instructions deep within them, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ³⁴ And they will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their relatives, saying, ‘You should know the LORD.’ For everyone, from the least to the greatest, will know me already. And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins.”

John 12:20-33 Jesus Predicts His Death

²⁰ Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the festival. ²¹ They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. “Sir,” they said, “we would like to see Jesus.” ²² Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.

²³ Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. ²⁵ Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

²⁷ “Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name!”

Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.” ²⁹ The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him.

³⁰ Jesus said, “This voice was for your benefit, not mine. ³¹ Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. ³² And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” ³³ He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn

Before the Earth Had Yet Begun

VU 301

(tune: The Wexford Carol)

1 Before the earth had yet begun
its journey round the burning sun,
before a seed of life had stirred,
there sounded God's creating Word.

In that bright dawning of the world,
‘ere ocean surged or wind unfurled,
the vaults of heaven with praises rang,
the morning stars together sang.

2 Thus when creation's God did take
the clay of earth our form to make,
God willed that to our race belong
the gifts of music, word, and song.

For mind can never comprehend,
our noblest words can but pretend
to grasp God's glory; praise alone
is our companion by that throne.

Musical Guest

Reflection

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn

Hail, Glorious St. Patrick

1. Hail, glorious St. Patrick, dear Saint of our Isle,
To us, thy poor children, be gracious the while;
We pray to thee high in the mansions above,
On Erin's green valleys to look down in love.

On Erin's green valleys, on Erin's green valleys,
On Erin's green valleys, look down in thy love.

2. Hail glorious St. Patrick, thy words were once strong
Against Satan's wiles and a heretic throng;
Not less is thy might where in Heaven thou art;
Oh, come to our aid, in our battle take part!

On Erin's green valleys, on Erin's green valleys,
On Erin's green valleys, look down in thy love.

4. Thy people now exiles on many a shore,
Shall love and revere thee till time be no more.
The fire thou has kindled shall ever burn bright,
Its warmth undiminished, undying its light.

On Erin's green valleys, on Erin's green valleys,
On Erin's green valleys, look down in thy love.

5. Ever bless and defend the sweet land of our birth,
Where the shamrock still blooms as when thou were on earth,
And our hearts shall yet burn, wherever we roam,
For God and Saint Patrick and our native home.

On Erin's green valleys, on Erin's green valleys,
On Erin's green valleys, look down in thy love.

Offering

**Accept these humble gifts we pray
and in our hearts forever stay.
With these gifts may we bring peace
that suffering, want and war may cease.
Amen.**

Prayers of the People

O God, You are above me, You are around me
You are in air, You are in earth.
You are beside me, You are within.

O God of heaven, you have made your home on earth in the broken body of Creation.
Kindle within us a love for all things that we may be instruments of your peace.

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

Moment of silence

And now, in the words Jesus taught us, we sing...

**Creator, in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your dominion come, your will be done
on earth, as in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors,
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil,
For yours is eternity,
the power, and the glory,
For ever and ever, Amen.**

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

Above the Hills of Time

Above the hills of time the cross is gleaming,
Fair as the sun when night has turned to day;
And from it love's pure light is richly streaming,
To cleanse the heart and banish sin away.

To this dear cross the eyes of all are turning,
Today as in the ages lost to sight;
And so for you, O Christ, our hearts are yearning,
As lonely shipwrecked sailors yearn for morning light.

The cross, O Christ, your wondrous love revealing,
Awakes our hearts as with the light of morn,
And pardon o'er our sinful spirits stealing,
Tells us that we, in you, have been reborn.

Like echoes to sweet temple bells replying
Our hearts, O God make answer to your love;
And we will love you with a love undying,
Until the day we gather to your home above.

Commissioning and Benediction

May the road rise to meet you

Go n-éirí an bóthar leat

May the wind be always at your back

Go raibh an ghaoth go brách ag do chúl

May the sun shine warm upon your face

Go lonraí an ghrian go te ar d'aghaidh

The rains fall soft upon your fields

Go dtíte an bháisteach go mín ar do pháirceanna

And until we meet again

Agus go mbuailimid le chéile arís

May God hold you in the hollow of His hand.

Go gcoinní Dia i mbos A láimhe thú

Amen.

Postlude

The Parting Glass

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