



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: Betty McCulloch, Jessie Gordon, Kayin Paul

October 17, 2021

WORLD FOOD SUNDAY

WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

Prelude

Praise My Soul

Music: Sir John Goss

Call to Worship

One: We gather on sacred ground

All: On the rich earth that nourishes us

One: Under the great awning of sky that replenishes us

All: To once again listen to the voice

One: That warms our hearts say,

All: “Come, follow me.”

Opening Hymn

Draw The Circle Wide

MV 145

Words and music: Gordon Light

© 1994 Common Cup Company

Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

1. God the still-point of the circle,
‘round whom all creation turns;
nothing lost, but held forever,
in God’s gracious arms.

Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

2. Let our hearts touch far horizons,
so encompass great and small;

let our loving know no borders,
faithful to God's call.

Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

3. Let the dreams we dream be larger,
than we've ever dreamed before;
let the dream of Christ be in us,
open every door.

Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
standing side by side, draw the circle wide.
Draw the circle wide, draw the circle wide,
Draw the circle wide

Life & Work of the Church



Welcome to online worship

Whoever you are, however you identify, wherever you come from, you are welcome here at Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

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

As we light the candle today we remember all those who struggle with hunger and food security. Let's be thankful for the universe that feeds us, be aware that food is a sacred gift given to all and yet still withheld from many, and be inspired enough to make a difference.



Hymn

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

VU 651

Words: William Williams and Peter Williams

Music: John Hughes

1. Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
pilgrim through this barren land.
I am weak, but thou art mighty,
hold me with thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
feed me till I want no more,
feed me till I want no more.
2. Open now the crystal fountain,
whence the healing stream doth flow;
let the fire and cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through.
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer,
be thou still my strength and shield,
be thou still my strength and shield.
3. When I tread the verge of Jordan,
bid my anxious fears subside;
death of death, and hell's destruction,
land me safe on Canaan's side:
songs of praises, songs of praises
I will ever give to thee,
I will ever give to thee.

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

Hymn

Come, O Holy Spirit

MV 23

Words: Fred Kaan / Music: Ron Klusmeier

Words © 1972, 1998 Hope Publishing Co.

Music © 2000 Ron Klusmeier

1. Come, O Holy Spirit, set the Church on fire;
strike it as the lightning hits a posing spire.
Burn away the structures and consume the sham
of our holy systems: Come, in Jesus' name!

Refrain

Come, come, come, in Jesus name!
Take our hearts by storm.
All the world lies open
Pentecost is now!
I said a...
Come, come, come, in Jesus name!
Take our hearts by storm.
All the world lies open
Pentecost is now!

2. Blow away the cobwebs of our stubborn past.
Come, send flying from us myths unfit to last.
Wind of change, refresh us and disturb our calm;
teach us what true love is,
take our hearts by storm.

Refrain

3. Free us from the babble of our Babel mind;
spark in us a language all can understand.
Lighten then our darkness,
Come and show us how all the world lies open:
Pentecost is now!

Come, come, come, in Jesus name!
Take our hearts by storm.
All the world lies open
Pentecost is now!
I said a...

Come, come, come, in Jesus name!
Take our hearts by storm.
All the world lies open
Pentecost is now!
Amen!

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*

Isaiah 58:9b–11

If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail.

Scripture: Matthew 13:1–9

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!”

Thanks be to God

Hymn

O Love

VU 658

Words: George Matheson
Music: Elaine Hagenberg

O Love, O Love,
O Love that will not let me go,
O Love, I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
that in thine ocean depths its flow
may richer, fuller be.

O Joy, O Joy
O Joy that seeks me through the pain,
O Joy, I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
and feel the promise is not vain
that morn shall tearless be.

O Love, O Love,
O Love that will not let me go,
O Love, I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
that in thine ocean depths its flow
shall richer, fuller be

that morn shall tearless be
O Love, O Love, O Love
O Love that will not let me go

Hymn

What a Friend We Have In Jesus

VU 664

Words: Joseph Medlicott Scriven

Tune: Scarlet Ribbons

by Evelyn Danzig

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

Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged;
take it to you, all in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful,
who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness;
take it all to you in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden,
cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Saviour, still our refuge;
everything to you 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.

Reflection: Live Your Mission

In music there are times when no matter how much you rehearse, your best effort falls short. You finish playing what you believe is the most amazing piece of music ever, only to be met with silence or worse, indifference.

That day when Jesus was sitting in the boat in the middle of the sea, he was speaking to a worn-out crowd that felt just like that. His followers had been working hard—really hard—to share the

good news, but the message wasn't sinking in. Here they were, going from town to town, sharing Jesus' life-saving message that justice is attainable, that there are key values like kindness and generosity that, if lived out collectively, could save the world. Yet despite their important message, everywhere they went, they brushed up against people who were too preoccupied, too bored, too self-centred, or too stressed to listen. Each time a door slammed in their face, their discouragement ramped up. It wasn't supposed to be like this.

Even though Jesus was sitting in the middle of the sea, it's like he could see into the very hearts of those gathered that day. And in that calm, reassuring voice of his, he told them stories to help them understand themselves and make sense of their life. One of them was the parable of the sower:

Some seeds will fall on the path and the birds will eat them. Some will fall on rock and the sun will scorch them. Some will fall on thorns and be choked out. But some will fall on good soil and bear an unbelievable crop.

The Parable of the Sower was a pep talk of sorts. It wasn't the kind you would hear in a locker room, though. It wasn't about how great Jesus' followers were or how they would succeed at every turn. It was realistic: Some of the work you do is going to feel like a waste of time. Some of it will even be sabotaged. But keep going. Because there will be success. Trust me. Live your mission.

This is a millennia-old message we still need to hear. Especially on World Food Sunday.

690,000,000 people will go to bed hungry tonight. Think about that. 690,000,000 people aren't asking, "What will we eat for dinner?" No. 690,000,000 people are asking, "Will we eat dinner?" And they ask that question night after night.

Hunger is so pervasive you'd think that the whole earth was made of dust. That no crops could grow anywhere. But we know there's nothing wrong with Mother Nature; the problem lies in the choices we make for her.

Poverty, land grabbing, climate change, the commodification of food and water, conflict and political instability.... The causes of hunger are so complex, so intertwined, so systemic, it's natural to wonder how you and I are really ever going to make a difference.

It's like we are standing on that shore right along with Jesus' disciples and there are problems as big as the sea itself in front of us.

And even Jesus is sitting there admitting that addressing hunger isn't easy. He doesn't sugarcoat the outcome of our work: some seeds just aren't going to land where we need them to or create the results we want.

But, he says, some seeds will fall on good soil and the result will be phenomenal.

So live your mission.

Jesus got in the boat that day and rowed into the sea so he could look at the whole crowd at once, so his voice would carry across the water to each and every one of them, so they would take his parable to heart and hear him say: Live your mission.

The principles of food sovereignty: the right of people to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. Food is a sacred gift from God. Manna from heaven. No one should go hungry.

It's true that we aren't going to solve all the problems in the world, but for some people our support means the world. Right here in our own church we house the Bluffs Food Bank, and we all know the value of the work they do. This is what happens when seeds of generosity fall on good soil.

690,000,000 people may be going hungry tonight. But because of the efforts of people like those at the Bluffs Food Bank, that number decreases a little.

This is what happens when we live our mission.

It's like planting seeds—each seed contains the basic material needed to pull off a miracle. And like Jesus says, when they hit good dirt, miracles grow.

So we take Jesus' stories into our hearts and let them transform our lives. We stand on the shoreline like disciples have for millennia listening to the Parable of the Sower.

Now, let's get to work planting seeds. Let's live our mission.

Amen.

Hymn

Jesus, You Have Come To The Lakeshore

VU 563

Words, Music: © 1979 Cesáreo Gabaráin
Translation: Gertrude C. Suppe,
George Lockwood, Raquel Gutiérrez-Achón
© 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House

Jesus, you have come to the lakeshore
looking neither for wealthy nor wise ones;
you only asked me to follow humbly.

O Jesus, with your eyes you have searched me,
and while smiling, have spoken my name;
now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me;
by your side I will seek other seas.

Tú has venido la orilla,
no has buscado ni a sabios ni a ricos;
sólo quieres que yo te siga.

Señor, me has mirado a los ojos,
sonriendo has dicho mi nombre,
en la arena he dejado mi barca,
junto a ti buscaré otro mar.

You need my hands, full of caring
through my labours to give others rest,
and constant love that keeps on loving.

O Jesus, with your eyes you have searched me,
and while smiling, have spoken my name;
now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me;
by your side I will seek other seas.

Tú sabes bien lo que tengo;
en mi barca no hay oro ni espadas,
Tan sólo redes y mi trabajo.

Señor, me has mirado a los ojos,
sonriendo has dicho mi nombre,
en la arena he dejado mi barca,
junto a ti buscaré otro mar.

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Offering our Gifts

With God's help, our offering makes a difference in peoples' lives every day. Let us give generously as we worship God through the sharing of our time, skills, and offerings. We offer our gifts in response to God's call to care. We offer them with gratitude and love, trusting that they will help feed bodies, minds, and hearts.

HYMN

Worldwide Community of Grace

Words: Paul Chappel
Music: Lasst Uns Erfreuen

Worldwide community of grace
God's children in the earthly place
Singing praises, Alleluia!
This is where differences dissolve
And ancient arguments resolve
In communion, we are gathered
On a journey we're together
Alleluia!

Peace, peace that great eternal goal
Peace, peace by which we are made whole
Living, breathing, Alleluias!
Loving our neighbours is Christ's call

Living with love requires all
Prayers we offer, seeking guidance
Breathing deeply of God's goodness
Alleluia!

God is our shepherd and our strength
God guides along our journey's length
Every breath sings, Alleluia!
Christ greets us in the garden still
New life blooms forth by God's own will
Resurrection flows forever
So our praising blossoms wondrous
Alleluias!

Prayers of the People:

Creator God,

On this World Food Day, we ask that you may:

Bless farmers, fishers, gatherers, migrant workers...all agricultural workers here in Canada and around the world.

Bless those who transport, distribute, and prepare our food.

Bless those pouring their heart and soul into fostering and protecting clean water, healthy soil, and biodiversity.

Bless those who challenge the systems that treat food as a commodity rather than a sacred right.

Bless those working hard to understand where their food comes from and to have a healthy relationship with it.

Bless those who share what they can, so fewer will go hungry.

Bless the breakfast programs, community kitchens and shared gardens that we have in this city and elsewhere.

Bless the Bluffs Food Bank and the vitally important work it does right here in our own neighbourhood.

Bless our home kitchens, our tables, and all who gather around them.

Bless us as we bow our heads in thanksgiving for your abundant grace.

Bless us now as we pray in the way of Jesus, saying,



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

Peace For The Children

MV 149

Words & Music: © 1993 Doreen Lankshear-Smith

Peace for the children, peace, peace.
Peace for the children we pray.
Following the path of One of peace,
we work for healing, we work for peace;
peace for the children today.

Peace for all people, peace, peace.
Peace for all people we pray.
Following the path of One of peace,
we work for healing, we work for peace;
peace for all people today.

Peace in our families, peace, peace.
Peace in our families we pray.
Following the path of One of peace,
we work for healing, we work for peace;
Peace for our families today.

Peace for the nations, peace, peace.
Peace for the nations we pray.
Following the path of One of peace,
we work for healing, we work for peace;
Peace for the nations today.

Dona nobis pacem
Dona nobis pacem
Dona nobis pacem
Dona nobis pacem we pray

Peace for all creatures, peace, peace.
Peace for all creatures we pray.
Following the path of One of peace,
we work for healing, we work for peace;
Peace for all creatures today.

Peace for our planet, peace, peace.

Peace for our planet we pray.
Following the path of One of peace,
we work for healing, we work for peace;
Peace for our planet today.

Peace in the cosmos, peace, peace.
Peace in the cosmos we pray.
Following the path of One of peace,
we work for healing, we work for peace;
Peace in the cosmos today.
We pray for peace.

Benediction & Commissioning

Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.

And may God who is our Creator, and Jesus Christ who is our Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit who is our Sustainer inspire us to live our mission this day and forevermore. Amen.

Postlude

Go Now In Peace

Words: Don Besig / Music: Nancy Price
© 1988 Harold Flammer Music

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 He 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.

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Other Resources for Today

Lectionary Readings

Psalm 136 (VU 857)

Introduction: Jewish friends refer to Psalm 136 as “the Great Hallel,” and it is traditionally recited during the Passover meal. It speaks of God as the creative power that redeems and sustains us, not only delivering us in difficult times but also blessing us with food and life. For centuries, it has been adapted into forms of grace spoken before meals. Let’s sing with gratitude.

¹ Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good.

His love endures forever.

² Give thanks to the God of gods.

His love endures forever.

³ Give thanks to the Lord of lords:

His love endures forever.

⁴ to him who alone does great wonders,

His love endures forever.

⁵ who by his understanding made the heavens,

His love endures forever.

⁶ who spread out the earth upon the waters,

His love endures forever.

⁷ who made the great lights—

His love endures forever.

⁸ the sun to govern the day,

His love endures forever.

⁹ the moon and stars to govern the night;

His love endures forever.

¹⁰ to him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt

His love endures forever.

¹¹ and brought Israel out from among them

His love endures forever.

¹² with a mighty hand and outstretched arm;

His love endures forever.

¹³ to him who divided the Red Sea^[a] asunder

His love endures forever.

¹⁴ and brought Israel through the midst of it,

His love endures forever.

¹⁵ but swept Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea;
His love endures forever.

¹⁶ to him who led his people through the wilderness;
His love endures forever.

¹⁷ to him who struck down great kings,
His love endures forever.

¹⁸ and killed mighty kings—
His love endures forever.

¹⁹ Sihon king of the Amorites
His love endures forever.

²⁰ and Og king of Bashan—
His love endures forever.

²¹ and gave their land as an inheritance,
His love endures forever.

²² an inheritance to his servant Israel.
His love endures forever.

²³ He remembered us in our low estate
His love endures forever.

²⁴ and freed us from our enemies.
His love endures forever.

²⁵ He gives food to every creature.
His love endures forever.

²⁶ Give thanks to the God of heaven.
His love endures forever.