



**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:** Iain Hamilton

**May 5, 2024**

**Sixth Sunday of Easter/Communion**

**WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE**

**Prelude**

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

God is with us in this place-

**Feel the love as worship and give thanks for all that is.**

*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 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**

**Praise our God with the Sound of Trumpet**

**VU 245**

1 Praise our God with the sound of trumpet,  
praise our God with the harp and lute,  
praise our God with the gentle-sounding flute.  
Praise our God in the field and forest,  
praise our God in the city square,  
praise our God anytime and anywhere.

Praise our God in the wind and sunshine,  
praise our God in the dark of night,  
praise our God in the rain or

snow or in the morning light.  
Praise our God in the deepest valley,  
praise our God on the highest hill,  
praise our God, never let your voice be still.

2 Praise our God with the crashing cymbal,  
praise our God with the pipe and string,  
praise our God with the joyful songs you sing.  
Praise our God on a weekday morning,  
praise our God on a Sunday noon,  
praise our God by the light of sun or moon.

Praise our God in the time of sorrow,  
praise our God in the time of joy,  
praise our God every moment,  
nothing let your praise destroy.  
Praise our God in the peace and quiet,  
praise our God in your work or play,  
praise our God everywhere in every way!

### **Call to Worship**

As we gather in your presence, O God,

**Strengthen us in thought, word and deed that we might truly be filled with new possibilities.**

### **Life and Work**

### **Opening Prayer**

Holy One, maker and keeper of creation, we gather to sing your praise.

**Open our eyes to the new life you offer instead of trying to create our own ways.  
May we always make room for strangers as your spirit moves among us. Amen.**

## **RECEIVING GOD'S WORD**

### **Scripture Psalm 98**

<sup>1</sup> Sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things;  
his right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.

**<sup>2</sup> The LORD has made his salvation known  
and revealed his righteousness to the nations.**

<sup>3</sup> He has remembered his love and his faithfulness to Israel;  
all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

**<sup>4</sup> Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth,  
burst into jubilant song with music;**

<sup>5</sup> make music to the LORD with the harp,  
 with the harp and the sound of singing,  
<sup>6</sup> **with trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn—  
 shout for joy before the LORD, the King.**  
<sup>7</sup> Let the sea resound, and everything in it,  
 the world, and all who live in it.  
<sup>8</sup> **Let the rivers clap their hands,  
 let the mountains sing together for joy;**  
<sup>9</sup> let them sing before the LORD, for he comes to judge the earth.  
 He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with equity.

**John 15:9-17**

<sup>9</sup> “As God has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. <sup>10</sup> If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept God's commands and remain in God's love. <sup>11</sup> I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. <sup>12</sup> My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup> Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. <sup>14</sup> You are my friends if you do what I command. <sup>15</sup> I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from God I have made known to you. <sup>16</sup> You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name God will give you. <sup>17</sup> This is my command: Love each other.

The word of God for the People of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Hymn**

**Blest Be the Tie That Binds**

**VU 602**

- 1 Blest be the tie that binds  
 our hearts in Christian love;  
 the unity of heart and mind  
 is like to that above.
- 2 Before our Maker's throne  
 we pour our ardent prayers;  
 our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,  
 our comforts and our cares.
- 3 We share each other's woes,  
 each other's burdens bear;  
 and often for each other flows  
 the sympathizing tear.
- 4 This glorious hope revives  
 our courage on the way;

that we shall live in perfect love  
in God's eternal day.

**Sermon      How to Love**

**RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD**

**Hymn**

**Grateful**

**MV 182**

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.

1 You are more than we imagine,  
Ancient, Holy, Living God.  
Even when we doubt your presence  
you are faithful to your Word.

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.

2 May our lives proclaim your justice,  
may our voices sing your praise.  
May our hands work in your service  
to the glory of your name.

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.

### **Offering**

Creator God, today we share a portion of what we have that all your people may be filled, nourished and know your love.

**Thank you for opening our hearts to the needs of others. Amen.**

### **Communion**

God is with us! **We are not alone!**  
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to God.**  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Holy Mystery that is Wholly Love,  
**you are beyond complete knowledge,  
above perfect description.  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;  
Source of Life, Living Word, and Bond of Love,  
you are creative and self-giving,  
generously moving.  
In all the near and distant corners of the universe.  
nothing exists that does not find its source in you.**

Even when we turn away from you, you are with us;  
your presence never fails us, your gifts of hope and new life transform us.

**We praise you for Jesus Christ,  
eternal as your love, our bond to one another.  
We rejoice with all your people of every time and place,  
and with angels and archangels,  
to proclaim the glory of your name:**

In this meal we remember Jesus, his promises,  
and the price he paid for who he was, what he said, and what he did.

On the night before Jesus died, he took a loaf of bread,  
gave thanks, broke it, and said,  
“Take and eat; whenever you do this, remember me.”  
After supper, Jesus took the cup, and poured, saying,  
“This is the new covenant, remember me.”

**We do remember.**

**We remember his life of love, his friendship, his teaching, his dying, and his rising to life again.**

**In sharing this meal, we live out the mystery of our faith:**

The body of Christ, **the bread of life.**

The lifeblood of Christ, **the cup of blessing**

The gifts of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God!**

**Sharing the Meal**

**Prayer after Communion**

Thank you, O Christ, for this feast of life.

**We are fed by your love;**

**we are strengthened by your life.**

**We are sent forth into this world to live**

**into the visions God has laid on our hearts.**

**We are now commissioned to:**

**feed as we have been fed,**

**forgive as we have been forgiven,**

**love as we have been loved.**

**Thanks be to God...**

**Creator, 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**

**I'll Fly Away**

1 Some bright morning when this life is o'er

I'll fly away

To that home on God's celestial shore

I'll fly away

I'll fly away, oh, Glory

I'll fly away

When I die, Hallelujah, by and by  
I'll fly away

2 When the shadows of this life have gone  
I'll fly away  
Like a bird from prison bar has flown  
I'll fly away

I'll fly away, oh, Glory  
I'll fly away  
When I die, Hallelujah, by and by  
I'll fly away

3 Oh how glad and happy when we meet  
I'll fly away  
No more cold iron shackles on my feet  
I'll fly away

I'll fly away, oh, Glory  
I'll fly away  
When I die, Hallelujah, by and by  
I'll fly away

4 Just a few more weary days and then  
I'll fly away  
To a land where joy shall never end  
I'll fly away

I'll fly away, oh, Glory  
I'll fly away  
When I die, Hallelujah, by and by  
I'll fly away  
Yeah, when I die, Hallelujah, by and by  
I'll fly away  
(repeat)

### **Commissioning and Benediction**

May you feel the oneness of our of this connection-

**And leave here knowing our connection to God makes a difference.  
Amen.**

## **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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