



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: Michelle Threndyle

August 20, 2023

Twelfth after Pentecost

WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

Prelude

Walk In The Light

Music: A.H. Brown

Lighting the Christ Candle

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Land Acknowledgement

We take a moment to acknowledge the sacred land beside the water on which we gather. 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 the Mississaugas of the Credit and Scugog. The lands where Birchcliff Bluffs United Church sits are 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 and we seek to be mindful of broken covenants and the need to strive to make right with all our relations.



Opening Hymn

Come and Seek The Ways of Wisdom

MV 10

Words: Ruth Duck / Music: Donna Kasbohm
Words © 1996 and Music © 1997 The Pilgrim Press

Come and seek the ways of Wisdom,
she who danced when earth was new.

Follow closely what she teaches,
for her words are right and true.

Wisdom clears the path to justice,
Showing us what love must do.

Listen to the voice of Wisdom,
crying in the market-place.

Hear the Word made flesh among us,
full of glory, truth, and grace.
When the word takes root and ripens,
peace and righteousness embrace.

Sister Wisdom, come, assist us;
nurture all who seek rebirth.
Spirit guide and close companion,
bring to light our sacred worth.
Free us to become your people,
holy friends of God and earth.

Call to Worship

We are blessed with creation, blue waters, deep sky, green growth, warm sun, so we gather to give thanks. Let us worship the Holy One.

Opening Prayer

God, we pray for stillness, for quiet, for focus. We come together as your people, thankful for your grace and aching for your presence. Send your spirit on us that we may be fed by your eternal love as we worship today. **Amen.**

Life and Work of the Church

Hymn

Step By Step

Words and Music: Albert Benjamin Simpson

It's so sweet to walk with Jesus,
Step by step and day by day;
Stepping in the very footprints,
Walking with you all the way.

Step by step, step by step,
I would walk with Jesus,
All the day, all the way,
Keeping step with Jesus.

Step by step I'll walk with Jesus,
Just a moment at a time;
Heights I have not wings to soar to
Step by step my feet can climb.

Step by step, step by step,
I would walk with Jesus,
All the day, all the way,
Keeping step with Jesus.

Here awhile, we walk with Jesus,
But the time will not be long,
'Til the night shall change to morning
And the sorrow into song.

Step by step, step by step,
I would walk with Jesus,
All the day, all the way,
Keeping step with Jesus.

Jesus keep me closer, closer,
Step by step and day by day;
Stepping in your very footprints
Walking with you all the way.

Step by step, step by step,
I would walk with Jesus,
All the day, all the way,
Keeping step with Jesus.

Receiving God's Word

Scripture Matthew 15:21-28 The Faith of a Canaanite Woman

²¹ Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. ²² A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly."

²³ Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us."

²⁴ He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."

²⁵ The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said.

²⁶ He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs."

²⁷ "Yes it is, Lord," she said. "Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table."

²⁸ Then Jesus said to her, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed at that moment. **Thanks be to God!**

Hymn

Creating God, Your Fingers Trace

VU 265

Words: Jeffrey Rowthorn / Music: Franz Josef Haydn

1 Creating God, your fingers trace
the bold designs of farthest space;
let sun and moon and stars and light
and what lies hidden praise your might.

2 Sustaining God, your hands uphold
earth's mysteries known or yet untold;
let waters fragile blend with air,
enabling life, proclaim your care.

3 Redeeming God, your arms embrace
all now despised for creed or race;
let peace, descending like a dove,
make known on earth your healing love.

Reflection

Responding to God's Word

Hymn

Take All The Lost Home

Music & Lyrics by Joe Wise

Take all the lost home
Remember their names names all
Their journey is yours, friend
Their faces are gray 'til you call

Walk close by the children
And learn their refrains
And leave your umbrellas
While you learn to walk in the rain

Remember the one cup you share in my name
The wine and the water are one and the same
All the same

Comfort the old ones
Be tender and strong
Rekindle the tired dreams
And sing them your song
Sing your song

The bread that is broken won't be one again
Unless in your healing you gather one and each grain

Take all the lost home
Walk close by the children
And comfort the old ones
'Til I come again, come again

Take all the lost home
Walk close by the children
Take all the lost home.

Offering

We offer ourselves and our gifts to God.

A sign of our commitment to serve God in all ways. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Encouraging God, open our hearts to hard words and deep truths.

Nudge us with your spirit to recognize the message you have for us this day. Inspire us, with your love, to take your message into our hearts and into our lives ...

Moment of silent prayer

**Gentle Creator, 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 and the power, and the glory,
For ever and ever, Amen.**

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me
African-American Spiritual

VU 575

I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, now, anytime!

I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, now, anytime!

I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, now, anytime!

I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, now, anytime!

I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, now, anytime!

I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, now, anytime!

I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, now, anytime!

I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, now, anytime!

Benediction & Commissioning

Embrace the beauty of life and the opportunities to serve. We strive to be the disciples we are meant to be. **Amen.**

Postlude

Perhaps It Sounds

(Glaubensstimme)

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