



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

Guest Musician: Daniel Giverin

Reader: Shirley Scott

November 26, 2023

Reign of Christ Sunday

WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

Prelude

Wexford Carol

Lighting the Christ Candle

We light the candle today to mark this, the final Sunday in our liturgical calendar. Next Sunday we once again begin the Advent journey that leads us to Christmas. This candle lights our way as we travel, anticipating the gifts of hope, peace, joy and love.

As we light this candle we are called to remember that it is in mercy we find our peace, and it is in the world we find our calling.

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 territory of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently the Mississauga’s of the Credit and Scugog, all part of the Williams Treaty. 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, Children, Join to Sing

VU 345

1 Come, children, join to sing: Hallelujah!
Praise to our Servant King: Hallelujah!
Let all with heart and voice,
saved by God's gracious choice,
now in this place rejoice: Hallelujah!

2 Come, lift your hearts on high: Hallelujah!
Let praises fill the sky: Hallelujah!

Christ calls his people friends,
the helpless he defends,
a love that never ends: Hallelujah!

3 Praise yet our Christ again: Hallelujah!
Raise high the joyous strain: Hallelujah!
The whole creation o'er
let all God's love adore,
Singing for ever more: Hallelujah!

Call to Worship

We come to this place searching...

for truth, honesty and hope.

We come to this place caring...

for family, friends, neighbours and strangers.

We come to this place with a desire...

for justice, peace, unity and harmony.

We come here for inspiration to be the best people we can be...

to others and ourselves, today and always.

Life and Work

Opening Prayer

Voice of the voiceless, power of the powerless,
We seek a community of wholeness,
A realm of peace,
In which all who hunger and thirst are nourished.
In which the stranger is welcomed,
The hurting are healed,
And the captive set free.

**In which we are guided by truth and love,
with all people united
in a reign of justice and compassion.
Amen.**

RECEIVING GOD'S WORD

Hymn

Make A Joyful Noise (Psalm 100)

VU p. 820

Make a joyful noise all the earth!
Worship your God with gladness.
Make a joyful noise all the earth.
Come to this place with a song!

1 Know that your God has made you.
Know it's to God we belong.
And come to this place with joyfulness and praise.
Worship your God with a song!

Make a joyful noise all the earth!
Worship your God with gladness.
Make a joyful noise all the earth.
Come to this place with a song!

2 Enter these gates, thanks giving.
Enter these courts with praise.
Sing thanks to your God and bless the holy Name.
Worship your God with a song!

Make a joyful noise all the earth!
Worship your God with gladness.
Make a joyful noise all the earth.
Come to this place with a song!

3 Ages through endless ages,
seasons of endless years,
the love of our Maker ever shall endure.
Worship your God with a song!

Make a joyful noise all the earth!
Worship your God with gladness.
Make a joyful noise all the earth.
Come to this place with a song!

Scripture

Matthew 25:31–46 The Sheep and The Goats

31 “At the appointed time the Promised One will come in glory, escorted by all the angels of heaven, and will sit upon the royal throne, 32 with all the nations assembled below. Then the Promised One will separate them from one another, as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. 33 The sheep will be placed on the right hand, the goats on the left.

34 “The ruler will say to those on the right, ‘Come, you blessed of my God! Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the

world! 35 For I was hungry and you fed me; I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me; 36 naked and you clothed me. I was ill and you comforted me; in prison and you came to visit me.'

37 Then these just will ask, 'When did we see you hungry and feed you, or see you thirsty and give you drink? 38 When did we see you as a stranger and invite you in, or clothe you in your nakedness? 39 When did we see you ill or in prison and come to visit you?' 40 The ruler will answer them, 'The truth is, every time you did this for the least of my sisters or brothers, you did it for me.'

41 "Then the ruler will say to those on the left, 'Out of my sight, you accursed ones! 42 I was hungry and you gave me no food; I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink. 43 I was a stranger and you gave me no welcome; naked and you gave me no clothing. I was ill and in prison and you did not come to visit me.' 44 Then they in turn will ask, 'When did we see you hungry or thirsty, or homeless or naked, or ill or in prison, and not take care of you?' 45 The answer will come, 'The truth is, as often as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me.'

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn

People Look East (v. 1, 2, 4, 5)

VU 9

- 1 People, look east. The time is near
of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today:
Love the guest is on the way.
- 2 Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
one more seed is planted there:
give up your strength the seed to nourish,
that in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east and sing today:
Love the rose is on the way.
- 4 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim
one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather,

bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today:
Love the star is on the way.

- 5 Angels, announce with shouts of mirth
Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming
with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today:
Love the Lord is on the way.

Guest

Daniel Giverin

Reflection

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn

Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding

- 1 Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding!
"Christ is near," we hear it say.
"Cast away the works of darkness,
all you children of the day!"
- 2 Startled at the solemn warning!
Let the earthbound soul arise
Christ, its sun, all sin dispelling
Shines upon the morning skies.
- 3 See, the Lamb, so long expected,
comes with pardon down from heav'n.
Let us haste, with tears of sorrow,
one and all, to be forgiv'n;
- 4 So, when next he comes in glory
and the world is wrapped in fear,
he will shield us with his mercy
and with words of love draw near.

Offering

We are called to give of our time, our talent, our abilities,
so that we may help make a better world.
We offer our gifts with thanksgiving in our hearts,
and songs of hope and praise on our lips.

Amen.

Prayers of the People

One week from today we start our journey through Advent, a road where we begin anew learning and receiving the gifts of hope, peace, joy and love. May our hearts discover and hold fast to these true messages on the journey to Christmas.

We are called to act and seek justice for all people who long for food, clothing, shelter and peace. Open our eyes that we may see when, where and how to help.

Let us bring comfort and healing to the sick, the lonely, those who grieve and the prisoner in body, mind or spirit. We know we walk together on our upcoming Advent journey, just as in all our journeys. May our hearts and minds keep focused on who and what we are called to be.

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

Moment of silence

And now, in the words we have been taught to pray, 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

God, Whose Love Is Reigning o'er Us

VU 399

1 God, whose love is reigning o'er us,
source of all, the ending true;
hear the universal chorus
raised in joyful praise to you:
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
worship ancient, worship new.

2 Word of God from nature bringing
springtime green and autumn gold;
mountain streams like children singing,

ocean waves like thunder bold:
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
as creation's tale is told.

3 Holy God of ancient glory,
choosing man and woman, too;
Abr'am's faith and Sarah's story
formed a people bound to you.
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
to your covenant keep us true.

5 Lift we then our human voices
in the songs that faith would bring;
live we then in human choices
lives that, like our music, sing:
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
joined in love our praises ring!

Commissioning and Benediction

Let us go forth to be faithful servants.

We will not hide our gifts but share them with everyone we meet.

Let us go forth to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

We will not hold back our compassion, but will offer it to all.

Let us go forth to be the Spirit's hope and peace.

We will be the grace, the joy, the wonder others need in their lives.

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

O Come Divine Messiah

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