



**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:** Beth Moore

**March 12, 2023**

**Lent 3**

**WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE**

**Prelude**

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

We live in a world of many divisions: class, gender, religion, race, and politics.

**Our lines of separation diminish our togetherness and diminish our humanity.**

Like the Samaritan woman at the well, we are thirsty for a drink that will quench our deepest yearnings.

**Yet, we remain thirsty and we live a life of quiet desperation.**

(third candle extinguished)

**Call to Worship**

Let us keep our senses attuned, attentive to the Beloved.

**Even when what we experience makes us uncomfortable or afraid, we do not turn away.**

**Response**

**Come Let Us Sing**

**VU 222**

- 1 Come, let us sing to our God our song,  
we have stood silently too long;  
surely our God deserves our praise,  
so joyfully thank God for our days.
- 2 O thirsty soul, come drink at the well;  
God's living waters will never fail.  
Surely our God will help you to stand,  
strengthened and comforted by God's hand.
- 4 Deserts shall bloom and mountains shall sing  
to the desire of all living things.  
Come, all you creatures, high and low,  
let your praises endlessly flow.

## 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 Mississaugas 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 Prayer

O Christ, you said, *ask, and it will be given to you; search and you will find; knock and the door will be opened for you.*

**Therefore, O God, we pray that you will quench our deepest thirst for acceptance, love and peace. Fill our cup with your spirit till it overflows. May we drink to our hearts content at your well. May we live a life of blessing by giving to others what you give to us with generosity, courage, and hope. Amen.**

## Hymn

### Like a Healing Stream

MV 144

1 Like a healing stream in a barren desert,  
Spirit water bringing life to dusty earth,  
God is trickling through our lives as in a dream unfolding,  
promising revival and rebirth  
like a healing stream

2 Like a gentle rain on a thirsty garden,  
Spirit water come to nourish tiny seed,  
God is bubbling through the soil to coax a new creation  
yearning for an end to want and need  
like a gentle rain.

3 Like a river strong with a restless current,  
Spirit water rushing on to distant shore,  
God is carving out a channel in a new direction,  
calling for an end to hate and war  
like a river strong.

4 Like a mighty sea reaching far horizons,  
Spirit water with a love both deep and wide,  
God is working in our hearts to shape a new tomorrow:  
God will always challenge and provide!  
Like a mighty sea, like a river strong,  
like a gentle rain, like a healing stream.

## Life and Work of the Church

### Pie Day Video

#### Scripture Psalm 95:1-7 A Call to Worship and Obedience

- <sup>1</sup> O come, let us sing to the LORD;  
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
- <sup>2</sup> Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;  
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!
- <sup>3</sup> For the LORD is a great God  
and a great King above all gods.
- <sup>4</sup> In his hand are the depths of the earth;  
the heights of the mountains are his also.
- <sup>5</sup> The sea is his, for he made it,  
and the dry land, which his hands have formed.
- <sup>6</sup> O come, let us worship and bow down;  
let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!
- <sup>7</sup> For he is our God,  
and we are the people of his pasture  
and the sheep of his hand.  
O that today you would listen to his voice!

#### Gospel John 4 Selected verses

- <sup>5</sup> So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.
- <sup>6</sup> Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.
- <sup>7</sup> A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."
- <sup>9</sup> The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?"
- <sup>10</sup> Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."
- <sup>11</sup> The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?"
- <sup>13</sup> Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,  
<sup>14</sup> but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life."

<sup>15</sup> The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.”

“Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him.

<sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

<sup>28</sup> Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people,

<sup>29</sup> “Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?”

<sup>39</sup> Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I have ever done.”

<sup>40</sup> So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days.

<sup>41</sup> And many more believed because of his word.

<sup>42</sup> They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world.”

The Word of God for the people of God.

**Thanks be to God!**

**Hymn**

**I Heard the Voice of Jesus**

**VU 626**

1 I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
‘Come unto me and rest;  
lay down, O weary one, lay down  
your head upon my breast.’  
I came to Jesus as I was,  
weary and worn and sad;  
I found in him a resting place,  
and he has made me glad.

2 I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
‘Behold, I freely give  
the living water; thirsty one,  
stoop down, and drink, and live.’  
I came to Jesus, and I drank  
of that life-giving stream;  
my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,  
and now I live in him.

3 I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
‘I am this dark world’s light;  
look unto me, your morn shall rise,

and all your day be bright.'  
I looked to Jesus, and I found  
in him my star, my sun;  
and in that light of life I'll walk  
till travelling days are done.

**Sermon      May I Have This Dance**

Could I have this dance for the rest of my life?  
Could you be my partner every night?  
When we're together, it feels so right  
Could I have this dance for the rest of my life?

**Hymn**

**Dance with the Spirit**

**MV 156**

Dance with the Spirit early in the mornin',  
walk with the Spirit throughout the long day.  
Work and hope for the new life a-bornin',  
listen to the Spirit to show you the way.

Dance with the Spirit early in the mornin',  
move with the Spirit throughout the long day.  
Work and hope for the new life a-bornin',  
listen to the Spirit to show you the way.

Dance with the Spirit early in the mornin',  
sing with the Spirit throughout the long day.  
Work and hope for the new life a-bornin',  
listen to the Spirit to show you the way.

**Offering**

We have been called to make a difference, both here and around the world.

**We now offer our gifts as one way of offering God's healing grace to a hurting world. Amen.**

**Prayers of the People**

We come before you, holy, loving and merciful God, giving you thanks for welcoming us to bring the deepest needs of our souls to you in prayer.

**We are reminded that the words that are shared in prayer, the feelings that we sometimes find too difficult to put into words, and even the moaning and groaning of our hearts are all received by you. As so we come before you as a family of your people to seek and accept your forgiveness...**

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

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

## **BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH**

### **Closing Hymn**

### **A Wonderful Time Up There**

Everybody's gonna have religion in glory,  
Everybody's gonna be singing that story,  
Everybody's gonna have a wonderful time up there,  
Oh glory hallelujah;  
Brother, there's a reckoning a-coming in the morning,  
Sister, get ready 'cause I'm giving you the warning,  
Everybody's gonna have a wonderful time up there.

1 Listen everybody 'cause I'm talking to you,  
Jesus is the only one can carry you thru,  
You better get ready for I'm telling you why,  
Jesus is a-coming from His throne on high;  
Many are the weary and the lone and sad,  
They're gonna wish they hadn't done the things they had,  
How're you gotta feel about the things He'll say  
on that judgment day?

Everybody's gonna have religion in glory,  
Everybody's gonna be singing that story,  
Everybody's gonna have a wonderful time up there,  
Oh glory hallelujah;  
Brother, there's a reckoning a-coming in the morning,  
Sister, get ready 'cause I'm giving you the warning,  
Everybody's gonna have a wonderful time up there.

2 When the tribulations seem to darken the way,  
That's the time to get down on your knees and pray,  
Ev'rybody's gonna have their troubles too,  
Gotta be so careful 'bout the things we do;  
We're going down the valley, going one by one,  
Gonna be rewarded for the things we've done,

When we get to heaven and the promised land,  
Then we'll understand.

Everybody's gonna have religion in glory,  
Everybody's gonna be singing that story,  
Everybody's gonna have a wonderful time up there,  
Oh glory hallelujah;  
Brother, there's a reckoning a-coming in the morning,  
Sister, get ready 'cause I'm giving you the warning,  
Everybody's gonna have a wonderful time up there.

Everybody's gonna have religion in glory,  
Everybody's gonna be singing that story,  
Everybody's gonna have a wonderful time up there,  
Oh glory hallelujah;  
Brother, there's a reckoning a-coming in the morning,  
Sister, get ready 'cause I'm giving you the warning,  
Everybody's gonna have a wonderful time up there.

### **Benediction & Commissioning**

We go from here as God's anointed ones.

**We recognize that the challenge means change; temptation calls us to resistance; compassionate work is a priority; and faith's path is surprising. Chosen to do God's work, God goes with us and we have nothing to fear. Amen.**

### **Postlude**

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**Birchliff Bluffs United Church**  
**Third Sunday in Lent**  
**Sunday March 12, 2023**  
**Additional Lectionary**

**Exodus 17:1-7**      **New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition**  
**Water from the Rock**

**17** From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. <sup>2</sup> The people quarreled with Moses and said, “Give us water to drink.” Moses said to them, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?” <sup>3</sup> But the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses and said, “Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?” <sup>4</sup> So Moses cried out to the LORD, “What shall I do for this people? They are almost ready to stone me.” <sup>5</sup> The LORD said to Moses, “Go on ahead of the people and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go. <sup>6</sup> I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink.” Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. <sup>7</sup> He called the place Massah<sup>[a]</sup> and Meribah,<sup>[b]</sup> because the Israelites quarreled and tested the LORD, saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

**Romans 5:1-11**      **New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition**  
**Results of Justification**

**5** Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we<sup>[a]</sup> have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> through whom we have obtained access<sup>[b]</sup> to this grace in which we stand, and we<sup>[c]</sup> boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. <sup>3</sup> And not only that, but we<sup>[d]</sup> also boast in our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character,



and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup> and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

<sup>6</sup> For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup> Much more surely, therefore, since we have now been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God.<sup>[e]</sup> <sup>10</sup> For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. <sup>11</sup> But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

<sup>27</sup> Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, “What do you want?” or, “Why are you speaking with her?” <sup>28</sup> Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, <sup>29</sup> “Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah,<sup>[i]</sup> can he?” <sup>30</sup> They left the city and were on their way to him.

<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, “Rabbi, eat something.” <sup>32</sup> But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” <sup>33</sup> So the disciples said to one another, “Surely no one has brought him something to eat?” <sup>34</sup> Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. <sup>35</sup> Do you not say, ‘Four months more, then comes the harvest’? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. <sup>36</sup> The reaper is already receiving<sup>[k]</sup> wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. <sup>37</sup> For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ <sup>38</sup> I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

<sup>39</sup> Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, “He told me everything I have ever done.” <sup>40</sup> So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. <sup>41</sup> And many more believed because of his word. <sup>42</sup> They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world.”