



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

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August 16th, 2020 – 11th Sunday After Pentecost



WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Prelude

Words of Welcome

Land Acknowledgement

We begin our time together with a recognition and acknowledgement of our relationship to the place we occupy. For millennia prior to the arrival of Europeans, the land and waters upon which Toronto and Scarborough have been built have been the traditional territories of many peoples and nations. This congregation worships together on the land of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, of the Seneca, and most recently of the Mississauga of the Credit and Scugog, part of the Williams Treaty. Today this place is the home of many diverse Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit people, who continue to experience discrimination, marginalization, and violence at the hands of our colonial state. Let us grieve together the broken covenants that have built this city and this country, remembering our obligation as people of God not simply to name injustice, but to serve alongside our neighbours in healing the planet's wounds. Let us pray especially this week for all those Land and Water Protectors across Turtle Island who are struggling as we speak to defend the integrity and health of God's Creation.

Candle Lighting



Call to Worship

Behold, a new sun has risen, and new possibility is in the air!
Though in the gloom of night we knew anger, we knew sadness, and we knew fear,

This morning God has made all things new!

In the light of God's new day, we know that we cherished and beloved.

With all our faults and all our fears,

We are gathered today to love.

With all our doubts and all our pains,

We are gathered today in peace.

Though we might find ourselves estranged by pain and by hurt,

We are gathered today with grace.

God binds our wounds, wipes away our tears, and walks alongside us as we seek to know New Life. Let us remember today, and every day, that God's care for us is inescapable, God's mercy unwavering, and God's love steadfast.

Let us give thanks and seek to love with such abandon.

Opening Hymn

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty

VU 315

Words: Reginald Heber (ca. 1820), Music: John Bacchus Dykes (1861),

Descant: Godfrey Hewitt © 1971

1. Holy, holy, holy! Lord God almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee;
holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!
2. Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee;
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,
which were, and art, and evermore shalt be.
3. Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee,
though the eye made blind by sin thy glory may not see,
only thou art holy; there is none beside thee,
perfect in power, in love, and purity.
4. Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name in earth and sky and sea;
holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Opening Prayer

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

Prayer of Illumination

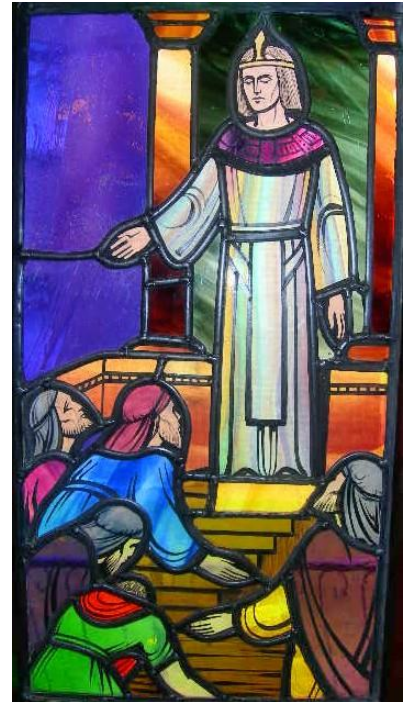
Genesis 45: 1-15 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

A reading from the Book of Genesis.

45 Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Send everyone away from me." So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ² And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. ³ Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵ And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶ For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. ⁷ God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸ So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. ⁹ Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay.

¹⁰ You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹ I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.' ¹² And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my own mouth that speaks to you. ¹³ You must tell my father how greatly I am honored in Egypt, and all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here." ¹⁴ Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck. ¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.



Second Hymn

Don't be Afraid

MV 90

Words: John L. Bell and Graham Maule (1995)

Music: John L. Bell (1995)

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Don't be afraid.

My love is stronger, my love is stronger than your fear.

Don't be afraid.

My love is stronger and I have promised,

Promised to be always near (*Repeat*)

Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32 New Revised Standard Version

A reading from Paul's letter to the church in Rome

11 I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. ^{2a} God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew.

²⁹ for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. ³⁰ Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, ³¹ so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy. ³² For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all

The word of God for the People of God

Thanks be to God

Sermon



Hymn

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

VU 271

Words: Frederick William Faber (1854)

Music: Johann Ludwig Steiner (1723)

1. There's a wideness in God's mercy,
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in God's justice
which is more than liberty.

2. There is no place where earth's sorrows
are more felt than up in heaven:
there is no place where earth's failings
have such gracious judgement given.

4. Troubled souls, why will you scatter
like a crowd of frightened sheep?
Foolish hearts, why will you wander
from a love so true and deep?

5. For the love of God is broader
than the measures of the mind;
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Offering our Gifts to God

The ministry of both Birchcliff Bluffs United Church and the United Church of Canada is made possible through the generosity of our congregations and our supporters. If you have any interest in donating to support the life and work of this church and others, you are invited to explore methods of financial support at bbuc.ca/donate.



Prayers of the People (Co-Written with members of Eglinton-St. George's Youth Group)

... Although it is not always easy, we have faith that with Your guidance, Spirit and presence we can live as disciples of Your son Jesus Christ, He who so long ago taught His followers to pray thusly:

*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

Behold, Behold, I Make All Things New

MV 115

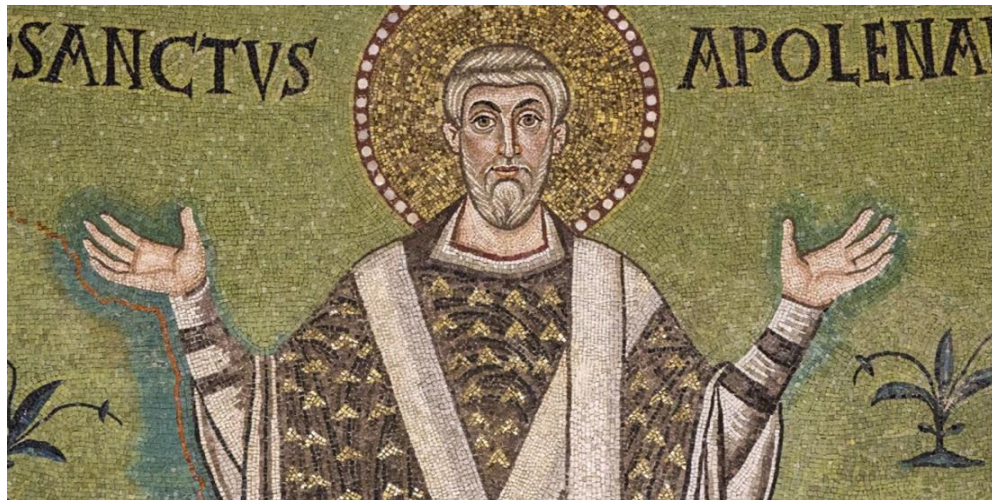
Words and Music: John L. Bell (1995)

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Behold, behold I make all things new,
beginning with you and starting from today.

Behold, behold I make all things new,
my promise is true for I am Christ the way. *(Repeat)*

Benediction & Commissioning



Postlude

Additional Lectionary Readings

Psalm 67 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

The Nations Called to Praise God

To the leader: with stringed instruments. A Psalm. A Song.

¹ May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face to shine upon us (*Selah*)

² that your way may be known upon earth,
your saving power among all nations.

³ Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

⁴ Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth (*Selah*)

⁵ Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

⁶ The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, has blessed us.

⁷ May God continue to bless us;
let all the ends of the earth revere him.

Psalm 133 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

The Blessedness of Unity

A Song of Ascents.

¹ How very good and pleasant it is
when kindred live together in unity!

² It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down upon the beard,
on the beard of Aaron,
running down over the collar of his robes.

³ It is like the dew of Hermon,
which falls on the mountains of Zion.
For there the Lord ordained his blessing,
life forevermore.

Isaiah 56: 1, 6-8 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

The Covenant Extended to All Who Obey

56 Thus says the LORD:

Maintain justice, and do what is right,
for soon my salvation will come,
and my deliverance be revealed.

⁶ And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD,
to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD,
and to be his servants,
all who keep the sabbath, and do not profane it,
and hold fast my covenant—
⁷ these I will bring to my holy mountain,
and make them joyful in my house of prayer;
their burnt offerings and their sacrifices
will be accepted on my altar;
for my house shall be called a house of prayer
for all peoples.
⁸ Thus says the Lord GOD,
who gathers the outcasts of Israel,
I will gather others to them
besides those already gathered.

Matthew 15: 10-28 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

Things That Defile

¹⁰ Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, “Listen and understand: ¹¹ it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles.”
¹² Then the disciples approached and said to him, “Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?” ¹³ He answered, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. ¹⁴ Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind.^[a] And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit.” ¹⁵ But Peter said to him, “Explain this parable to us.” ¹⁶ Then he said, “Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷ Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer? ¹⁸ But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. ¹⁹ For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. ²⁰ These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile.”

The Canaanite Woman’s Faith

²¹ Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²² Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.” ²³ But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, “Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.” ²⁴ He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” ²⁵ But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, help me.” ²⁶ He answered, “It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” ²⁷ She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” ²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed instantly.