



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

Rev. Gregory Daly: Minister of Word & Sacrament

Rev. Carmen Llanos: Minister of Community Development

Music Director: Randy Vancourt

Readings: Betty McCulloch

October 4, 2020 – Worldwide Communion Sunday



WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Prelude

Call to Worship

All around us are signs of plenty; signs of gathering in; signs of harvest.

We come to gather the harvest of abundance so we may share.

Around us and within us is the presence of joy; of celebration; of love.

We come to witness to the joyful celebration of Christ's self-giving love.

Around the world this day: Christians worship at table with reverence.

We come as one, part of a worldwide movement of the Way of Jesus.

United by the Spirit

We come with open minds to learn from each other

We come with open hearts to embrace each other.

We come together to worship.

Response

O God of Every Nation

VU 677

*O God of every nation,
of every race and land,
redeem the whole creation
with your almighty hand;
where hate and fear divide us
and bitter threats are hurled,
in love and mercy guide us
and heal our strife-torn world.*

*Keep bright in us the vision
of days when war shall cease,
when hatred and division,
give way to love and peace,
till dawns the morning glorious
when peace on earth shall reign
and Christ shall rule victorious
o'er all the world's domain.*

Life & Work of the Church



Welcome to online worship

Today millions of Christians will collectively share in the sacrament of communion. In a world divided in many ways Birchcliff Bluffs United Church celebrates Christ's Table today as an act of solidarity. We invite you to prepare some bread, a slice or a small loaf of any kind of bread or cracker. It can be anything that you alone or you with others in your house may break and share. Prepare a cup or cups of juice — perhaps grape or cranberry — or wine, with or without alcohol. Remember, in John's gospel, Jesus' first miracle was to turn water into wine. If all you have is a glass of water, it's enough.

Set these elements out wherever you experience online worship. Perhaps you want to put them on a cloth or fabric that reminds you of a special time or a person deeply connected with you in your life or in our faith community. Perhaps you want to prepare a candle to place beside the bread and the cup, or a flower, a plant or the photograph of someone you wish to bring with you into this experience in this worldwide circle of faith.

Land Acknowledgement



As we prepare for worship, we 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, 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. We seek to be mindful of broken covenants and the need to strive to make right with all our relations.

Candle Lighting

As we worship today we are communing with Christian siblings from around the world: Christians from all places and all experiences. May this candle burn today to remind us of each other and our place in community with all creation, knowing that the light of Christ shines for all people all of the time offering connection, offering community, offering unconditional love.



*Holy Spirit, hear us,
help us while we sing;
breathe into the music
of the praise we bring.*

*Holy Spirit, shine now
on the book we read;
light its holy pages
with the truth we need.*

*Holy Spirit, prompt us
when we bow to pray;
speak within and teach us
what we ought to say.*

*Holy Spirit, help us
daily by your might,
what is wrong to conquer,
and to choose the right.*

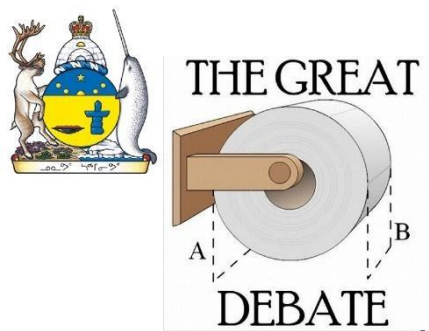
Prayer for Grace



***God of all who wander in the wilderness;
you go before us as a beacon and guide.
Lead us through difficulty and danger;
sustain us through isolation and desolation.
Journey with us as we challenge ourselves to live your
Way.
Bring us home to the place you have prepared for
us. Amen.***

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

And Now for Something Completely Different



Prayer of Illumination

Help us O God, to come to you with open lives to receive your words.

May we give them new life as we listen to what you have to say.

Open our hearts as we embark on this journey with each other and with you. Amen

Matthew 21: 33-46

The Message Translation

³³⁻³⁴“Here’s another story. Listen closely. There was once a person, a wealthy farmer, who planted a vineyard. After fencing it, digging a winepress, and putting up a watchtower, the person turned it over to the farmhands and went off on a trip. When it was time to harvest the grapes, the farmer sent servants back to collect the profits.

³⁵⁻³⁷“The farmhands grabbed the first servant and beat them up. The next one they murdered. They threw stones at the third but the servant got away. The farmer tried again, sending more servants. They got the same treatment. The farmer was at the end of their rope and decided to send their heir. ‘Surely,’ the farmer thought, ‘they will respect my child.’

³⁸⁻³⁹“But when the farmhands saw the farmer’s child arrive, they rubbed their hands in greed. ‘This is the heir! Let’s kill them and have it all for ourselves.’ So they did.

⁴⁰“Now after the trip, when the farmer arrives home at the vineyard, what do you think should be done with the farmhands?”

⁴¹“Kill them—a rotten bunch, and good riddance,” the local leaders answered. “Then assign the vineyard to farmhands who will hand over the profits when it’s time.”

⁴²⁻⁴⁴Jesus said, “Right—and you can read it for yourselves in your own texts:

The stone the masons threw out

is now the cornerstone.

This is God’s work;

we rub our eyes, we can hardly believe it!

“This is the way it is with you. God’s kingdom will be taken back from you and handed over to a people who will live out a kingdom life. Whoever stumbles on this Stone gets shattered; whoever the Stone falls on gets smashed.”

⁴⁵⁻⁴⁶When the religious leaders heard this story, they knew it was aimed at them. They wanted to arrest Jesus and put him in jail, but, intimidated by public opinion, they held back. Most people held Jesus to be a prophet of God.

Hymn

Live Into Hope

VU 699

*Live into hope of captives freed,
of sight regained, the end of greed.
The oppressed shall be the first to see
the year of God's own jubilee!*

*Live into hope the blind shall see
with insight and with clarity,
removing shades of pride and fear,
a vision of our God brought near.*

*Live into hope of liberty,
the right to speak, the right to be,
the right to have one's daily bread,
to hear God's word and thus be fed.*

*Live into hope of captives freed
from chains of fear or want or greed.
God now proclaims our full release
to faith and hope and joy and peace.*

Exodus 12: 1-4, 7-9, 12-20

New Revised Standard Version

Then God spoke all these words:

²I am the God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; ³you shall have no other gods before me.

⁴You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

⁷You shall not make wrongful use of God's name, God will not acquit anyone who misuses God's name.

⁸Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor and do all your work.

¹²Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that God is giving you.

¹³You shall not murder.

¹⁴You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵You shall not steal.

¹⁶You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

¹⁷You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's spouse, or servant, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.

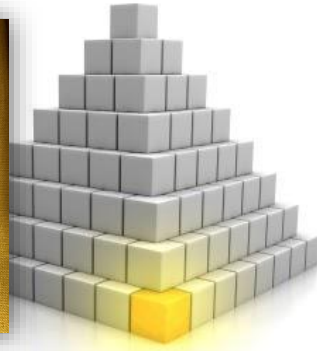
¹⁸When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid and trembled and stood at a distance, ¹⁹and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die." ²⁰Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of God upon you so that you do not sin."

The word of God for the People of God

Thanks be to God

Sermon





Hymn

Deep In Our Hearts

MV 154

*Deep in our hearts there is a common vision;
deep in our hearts there is a common song;
deep in our hearts there is a common story,
telling Creation that we are one.*

*Deep in our hearts there is a common purpose;
deep in our hearts there is a common goal;
deep in our hearts there is a sacred message,
justice and peace in harmony.*

*Deep in our hearts there is a common longing;
deep in our hearts there is a common theme;
deep in our hearts there is a common current,
flowing to freedom like a stream.*

*Deep in our hearts there is a common vision;
deep in our hearts there is a common song;
deep in our hearts there is a common story,
telling Creation that we are one.*

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Offering our Gifts to God



God has abundantly bestowed upon us the gift of life. Our best response is to offer our whole lives as agents for God's mission in the world. Give as you are able to build the community of God in our homes, our congregation and around the world.

Communion

Invitation



The Great Thanksgiving

God be with you all.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts;

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to God!

It is right to give God our thanks and praise!

We raise our voice in song together

Sanctus and Benedictus MV 203

Words: © 2005 William S. Kervin and Paul Stott

Music: traditional melody, England and Ireland

O holy, holy, holy God, O God of time and space.

All earth and sea and sky above bear witness to your grace!

Hosanna in the highest heav'n, creation sings your praise.

And blessed is the One who comes and bears your name always!

The bread of life,

nourishes our deprived bodies.

The cup of blessings,

revives our thirsty souls.

The gathered community,

strengthens our growing faith.

And so, in the Spirit of the risen Christ, we sing together

Memorial Acclamation MV 204

Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen,

Christ will come again! (x2)

God, we remember and give thanks for your Son,
and we ask that you bless and pour your spirit on these simple things, bread and wine:

Make this broken bread whole in our taking.

Make this full cup overflow in our sharing.

With these elements nourish and sustain us,
our way, our truth, our life;
our Creator, our Redeemer, our Sustainer.
Praise be to you, now, tomorrow, and forever.

Great Amen MV 205

Amen, amen, O Holy One! Hosanna and Amen! (x2)

...Sharing of the meal...

Prayer after Communion:



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

Each Blade of Grass

Words: Keri K. Wehlander, 2005.

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*Each blade of grass, ev'ry wing that soars,
the waves that sweep across a distant shore,
make full the circle of God.*

*Each laughing child, ev'ry gentle eye,
a forest lit beneath a moon-bright sky,
make full the circle of God.*

*Each silent paw, ev'ry rounded stone,
the buzz that echoes from a honey'd comb,
make full the circle of God.*

*Each fire-brimmed star, ev'ry outstretched hand,
the wind that leaps and sails across the land,
make full the circle of God.*

Each icy peak, ev'ry patterned shell,

*the joyous chorus that the dawn foretells,
make full the circle of God.
Each cosmic hue, ev'ry creature's way,
all form the beauty of this vast array,
making full the circle of God.*

Benediction & Commissioning



Postlude

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Other Resources for Today

A little 10 Commandments comedy from CBC for today:

<https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/2686105576>

Other Lectionary Readings

Psalm 19

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

¹The heavens are telling the glory of God;
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.

²Day to day pours forth speech,
and night to night declares knowledge.

³There is no speech, nor are there words;
their voice is not heard;

⁴yet their voice goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.

In the heavens God has set a tent for the sun,

⁵which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy,
and like a strong person runs its course with joy.

⁶Its rising is from the end of the heavens,
and its circuit to the end of them;
and nothing is hid from its heat.

⁷The law of God is perfect,
reviving the soul;

the decrees of God are sure,
making wise the simple;

⁸the precepts of God are right,
rejoicing the heart;

the commandment of God is clear,
enlightening the eyes;

⁹the fear of God is pure,
enduring forever;

the ordinances of the LORD are true
and righteous altogether.

¹⁰More to be desired are they than gold,
even much fine gold;

sweeter also than honey,
and drippings of the honeycomb.

¹¹Moreover by them is your servant warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.

¹²But who can detect their errors?
Clear me from hidden faults.

¹³Keep back your servant also from the insolent;
do not let them have dominion over me.

Then I shall be blameless,
and innocent of great transgression.

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable to you,
O God, my rock and my redeemer.

Philippians 3: 4b-14 **NRSV**

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ^scircumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ^eas to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

⁷Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ^sMore than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ^vand be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ^uI want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ^uif somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.