



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

Minister of Word & Sacrament: Katie Vardy

Music Director: Randy Vancourt

Reader: Iain Hamilton

January 25th, 2026

MUSIC SUNDAY

CELEBRATING FEBRUARY

WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

Prelude

Welcome

Lighting the Christ Candle

Like sunlight, like starlight, like moonlight, we are meant to shine.

Like a city on a hill, we are called to be a welcome sign pointing to home where love, welcome, and refuge is freely given.

The candle is lit.

Land Acknowledgement

We now take a moment to acknowledge the sacred land beside the water on which Birchcliff Bluffs United Church stands. It is the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, and is home to many diverse First Nations peoples.

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

The Gospel Train

Get on board, little children
Get on board, little children
Get on board, little children
There’s room for many a-more.

1 The gospel train’s a-coming,

I hear it just at hand
I hear the car wheel's rumbling
And rolling through the land.

Get on board, little children
Get on board, little children
Get on board, little children
There's room for many a-more.

2. I hear the train a-coming,
she's coming round the curve
She's loosened all her steam and brakes
And straining every curve.

Get on board, little children
Get on board, little children
Get on board, little children
There's room for many a-more.

3 The fare is cheap and all can go
The rich and poor are here
No second class aboard this train
No difference in the fare.

Get on board, little children
Get on board, little children
Get on board, little children
There's room for many a-more.

Get on board, little children
Get on board, little children
Get on board, little children
There's room for many a-more.

Call to Worship

Come let us sing of a wonderful love
A love that embodies joy, integrity, and compassion
in all facets of our lives
A love that dwells with the helpless and the hopeless
That seeks the lost and brings comfort
A love that lifts us up until we rise above all envy, falsehood and pride
A love that only wants to forgive and forget
And welcomes home the weary wanderer. Come let us sing of a wonderful love.

Hymn

Lift Every Voice and Sing

Lift every voice and sing,
'Til earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the list'ning skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.

Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on 'til victory is won.

God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
You who have brought us thus far on the way;
You who have, by Your might
Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.

Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met You,
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget You;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand,
True to our God,
True to our native land.
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand,
True to our God,
True to our native land.

Passing the Peace

We now pass the peace (*with a bow, or a wave, or a nod to our neighbours*) to remind us of the light that is in each of us, and that we are called to reconciliation and community.

Let us greet those around you, saying: Peace be with you.

And also with you.

Life and Work

RECEIVING GOD'S WORD

Scripture

Isaiah 9:1-4

⁹ Nevertheless, that time of darkness and despair will not go on forever. The land of Zebulun and Naphtali will be humbled, but there will be a time in the future when Galilee, which lies along the road that runs between the Jordan and the sea, will be filled with glory.

² The people who walk in darkness will see a great light.
For those who live in a land of deep darkness¹ a light will shine.

³ You will enlarge the nation of Israel,
and its people will rejoice.

They will rejoice before you
as people rejoice at the harvest.

⁴ For you will break the yoke of their slavery
and lift the heavy burden from their shoulders.

You will break the oppressor's rod.

Gospel Luke 5:1-11

⁵ One day as Jesus was preaching on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, great crowds pressed in on him to listen to him. ² He noticed two empty boats at the water's edge, for the fishermen had left them and were washing their nets. ³ Stepping into one of the boats, Jesus asked Simon, its owner, to push it out into the water. So he sat in the boat and taught the crowds from there.

⁴ When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Now go out where it is deeper, and let down your nets to catch some fish."

⁵ "Master," Simon replied, "we worked hard all last night and didn't catch a thing. But if you say so, I'll let the nets down again." ⁶ And this time their nets were so full of fish they began to tear!

⁷ A shout for help brought their partners in the other boat, and soon both boats were filled with fish and on the verge of sinking.

⁸ When Simon Peter realized what had happened, he fell to his knees before Jesus and said, "Oh, Lord, please leave me—I'm such a sinful man." ⁹ For he was awestruck by the number of fish they had caught, as were the others with him. ¹⁰ His partners, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were also amazed.

Jesus replied to Simon, "Don't be afraid! From now on you'll be fishing for people!" ¹¹ And as soon as they landed, they left everything and followed Jesus.

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn

Just a Closer Walk with Thee

1 I am weak but Thou art strong;
Jesus, keep me from all wrong;
I'll be satisfied as long
As I walk, let me walk close to Thee.

Just a closer walk with Thee,
Grant it, Jesus, is my plea,
Daily walking close to Thee,
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be.

2 Through this world of toil and snares,
If I falter, Lord, who cares?
Who with me my burden shares?
None but Thee, dear Lord, none but Thee.

Just a closer walk with Thee,
Grant it, Jesus, is my plea,
Daily walking close to Thee,
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be.

3 When my feeble life is o'er,
Time for me will be no more;
Guide me gently, safely o'er
To Thy kingdom shore, to Thy shore.

Just a closer walk with Thee,
Grant it, Jesus, is my plea,
Daily walking close to Thee,
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be.
(repeat)

Hymn

I'll Fly Away

1 Some bright morning when this life is over
I'll fly away
To a home on God's celestial shore
I'll fly away

I'll fly away, oh Glory
I'll fly away
When I die, Hallelujah, by and by
I'll fly away

2 When the shadows of this life have gone
I'll fly away
Like a bird from prison bars has flown
I'll fly away

I'll fly away, oh Glory
I'll fly away
When I die, Hallelujah, by and by
I'll fly away

3 Oh, how glad and happy when we meet
I'll fly away
No more cold iron shackles on my feet
I'll fly away

I'll fly away, oh Glory
I'll fly away
When I die, Hallelujah, by and by
I'll fly away

4 Just a few more weary days and then
I'll fly away
To a land where joy shall never end
I'll fly away

I'll fly away, oh Glory
I'll fly away
When I die, Hallelujah, by and by
I'll fly away
(repeat)

Hymn

Peace In The Valley

1 I am tired and weary but I must toil on
Till the Lord comes to call me away
Where the morning is bright and the Lamb is the light
And the night is fair as the day

There'll be peace in the valley for me some day
There'll be peace in the valley for me, I pray
No more sorrow and sadness or trouble will be
There'll be peace in the valley for me

2 There the flow'rs will be blooming, the grass will be green
And the skies will be clear and serene

The sun ever shines, giving one endless beam
And the clouds there will ever be seen

There'll be peace in the valley for me some day
There'll be peace in the valley for me, I pray
No more sorrow and sadness or trouble will be
There'll be peace in the valley for me

3 There the bear will be gentle, the wolf will be tame
And the lion will lay down by the lamb
The host from the wild will be led by a Child
I'll be changed from the creature I am

There'll be peace in the valley for me some day
There'll be peace in the valley for me, I pray
No more sorrow and sadness or trouble will be
There'll be peace in the valley for me.

Reflection

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn

We'll Understand It Better By and By

1 We are often tossed and driv'n on the restless sea of time;
Somber skies and howling tempests oft succeed a bright sunshine;
In that land of perfect day, when the mists have rolled away,
We will understand it better by and by.

By and by, when the morning comes,
All the saints of God are gathered home,
We will tell the story how we've overcome,
And we'll understand it better by and by.

2 We are often destitute of the things that life demands;
Want of food and want of shelter, thirsty hills and barren lands;
We are trusting in the Lord, and according to his Word,
We will understand it better by and by.

By and by, when the morning comes,
All the saints of God are gathered home,
We will tell the story how we've overcome,
And we'll understand it better by and by.

3 Temptations, hidden snares often take us unaware,
And our hearts are made to bleed for any thoughtless word or deed,
And we wonder why the test when we try to do our best,
But we'll understand it better by and by.

By and by, when the morning comes,
All the saints of God are gathered home,
We will tell the story how we've overcome,
And we'll understand it better by and by.

By and by, when the morning comes,
All the saints of God are gathered home,
We will tell the story how we've overcome,
And we'll understand it better by and by
And we'll understand it better by and by.

Offering

When all are afforded the chance to live and work in justice, we find that we have not lost anything, but rather we have gained more than we could have imagined. May the gifts we offer today be used to continue the work of peace, justice, and service in the world. Amen

Prayers of the People

Today we lift up every soul who has faced the sting of prejudice,
every child who wonders why they are left out,
every parent who carries the burden of explaining a world not yet ready for love.
We pray for every person whose skin, language, or identity
has made them a target of fear, of exclusion, of hate.

Break the chains of hatred that bind us, tear down walls of fear and indifference.
Let rivers of justice flow through our cities, lifting every soul to dignity.
We pray for the nations of the world, for every land that has ignored injustice,
for every government, every institution, every home, every heart that has tolerated prejudice
instead of challenging it.

Let the Spirit ignite in us a fire that cannot sleep,
a fire that will call out hatred wherever it hides,
and remind us that we are all your children,
all beloved, all worthy of love, dignity, and freedom.

Do not let us leave this place unchanged. Let us rise as one body in a hurting world.
Let us be bold, let us be brave, let us be love in action, until every child can live freely, every
voice is heard, every heart is free, and a world of justice and peace is made clear in our midst.

**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 you reign eternally, in power and in glory,
For ever and ever, Amen.**

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

Hymn to Freedom

Oscar Peterson

When every heart joins every heart
and together yearns for liberty,
That's when we'll be free.
When every hand joins every hand
and together moulds our destiny,
That's when we'll be free.

Any hour any day, the time soon will come
when we will live in dignity,
That's when we'll be free.
When everyone joins in our song
and together singing harmony,
That's when we'll be free.

When every heart joins every heart
and together yearns for liberty,
That's when we'll be free.
When every hand joins every hand
and together moulds our destiny,
That's when we'll be free.

Any hour any day, the time soon will come
when we will live in dignity,
That's when we'll be free.
When everyone joins in our song
and together singing harmony,
That's when we'll be free
We'll be free.

Bread for the Journey

Where has music helped you hold joy and sorrow together, and how might it be inviting you to listen more deeply in this season?

Commissioning and Benediction

Go now, to seek a place in a community,
where all people are known and acknowledged,
where partners and allies can be found,
where all people work toward love, fairness, and understanding.
Go with the hope that this community is possible, and all it needs is you.

Go now in peace. Amen.

Response

When The Saints

1 Oh when the saints go marching in,
Oh when the saints go marching in,
Oh how I want to be in that number,
When the saints go marching in.

2 Oh when the sun refused to shine,
Oh when the sun refused to shine,
Oh how I want to be in that number,
When the sun refused to shine.

3 Oh when the trumpet sounds its call,
Oh when the trumpet sounds its call,
Oh how I want to be in that number,
When the trumpet sounds its call.

4 Oh when the saints go marching in,
Oh when the saints go marching in,
Oh how I want to be in that number,
When the saints go marching in
Oh how I want to be in that number,
When the saints go marching in.

Postlude

* Permission to podcast/stream and reproduce the music and lyrics obtained from ONE LICENSE with license A-737645. All rights reserved.