



**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:** Shirley Scott

**April 7, 2024**

**Second Sunday of Easter**

**Holy Humour Sunday**

**WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE**

**Prelude**

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

As we light this candle, we ask for the gift of understanding of God’s Word,

*The candle is lit.*

**May it become in us a trust that overwhelms all our doubts and fears. Amen.**

**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 traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently the Mississaugas of the Credit River.

**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 In, Come In and Sit Down**

**VU 395**

Come in, come in and sit down,  
you are a part of the family.  
We are lost and we are found,  
and we are a part of the family.

1 You know the reason why you came,  
yet no reason can explain;  
so share in the laughter and cry in the pain,  
for we are a part of the family.

Come in, come in and sit down,

you are a part of the family.  
We are lost and we are found,  
and we are a part of the family.

2 God is with us in this place,  
like a mother's warm embrace.  
We're all forgiven by God's grace,  
for we are a part of the family.

Come in, come in and sit down,  
you are a part of the family.  
We are lost and we are found,  
and we are a part of the family.

4 There's rest for the weary and health for us all;  
there's a yoke that is easy, and a burden that's small.  
So come in and worship and answer the call,  
for we are a part of the family.

Come in, come in and sit down,  
you are a part of the family.  
We are lost and we are found,  
and we are a part of the family.

### **Call to Worship**

Welcome to this Holy Humor Sunday service. It was celebrated by the early Church, a tradition to share laughter and song after Easter.

**We also celebrate the time when God played a joke on death by raising Jesus from the cross! Let us share the joy and laughter! Christ is risen, hallelujah!**

### **Life and Work**

### **Opening Prayer**

On this Holy Humor Sunday, we come to giggle, laugh and sing! Alleluia! God, Creator!  
**Alleluia! Christ the King! Let the spirit of the laughter push away our doubts and fears! Remembering the Easter story; death has lost its fearful sting! Amen.**

### **RECEIVING GOD'S WORD**

## Scripture

### Psalm 133 The Blessedness of Unity

<sup>1</sup> How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!

**<sup>2</sup> 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.**

<sup>3</sup> It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion.  
For there the LORD ordained his blessing, life forevermore.

### John 20: 19-31 Jesus Appears to the Disciples

<sup>19</sup> When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." <sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." <sup>22</sup> When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

<sup>24</sup> But Thomas, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

<sup>26</sup> A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." <sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." <sup>28</sup> Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" <sup>29</sup> Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

<sup>30</sup> Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. <sup>31</sup> But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

The Word of God for the People of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

### Hymn

### Sing Your Joy

VU 253

1 Sing your joy, proclaim God's glory!  
Rise and sing, the morning has come!  
Bless our God and praise all creation;  
song of the earth, and light from heaven:  
God is alive! Hallelujah!

2 All the earth is filled with rejoicing,  
light and life, the wonder of God!  
Christ has triumphed! Risen forever!  
Joy of our hearts, and hope of our dreaming:  
God is alive! Hallelujah!

3 May we learn to become your kingdom,  
may we be your kindness and truth!  
Love is our calling, gift of your presence;  
children of God, and spirit of Jesus:  
God is alive! Hallelujah!

4 Light our way, O God of the living,  
may we learn to see with new eyes!  
Jesus the Lord, our power and promise;  
light for the blind, and food for the hungry:  
God is alive! Hallelujah!

**Sermon      Do we laugh at God or with God?**

**Lord, thank you that, even in my most embarrassing moments, I can hide in your love.**

Leaning, leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms,  
Leaning, leaning, I'm leaning on the promises of God

**Lord, though my sins may be varied, your forgiveness covers them all.**

It is no secret what God can do  
What it done for others will be done for you  
With arms wide open God pardons you  
It is no secret what God can do.

**Father's Day is that one time of the year when I get complete obedience from every member of my family. I tell them not to spend a lot of money on me—and they don't.**

Look for the silver lining  
when'er a cloud appears in the blue  
Remember somewhere the sun is shining  
And so the right thing to do is make it shine for you  
A heart full of joy and gladness  
will always banish sadness and strife

So always look for a silver lining  
and try to find the sunny side of life.

**Lord, help me to realize that the best way is to obey.**

This is my story, this is my song  
Praising my Saviour all the day long  
This is my story, this is my song  
Praising my Saviour all the day long

**“They wouldn’t take me out while I was living, I don’t want them to take me out when I’m dead.”**

Give me that old-time religion, Give me that old-time religion,  
Give me that old-time religion, it’s good enough for me.

**Lord, help me trust your guidance ...**

So I’ll cherish the old rugged cross  
Till my trophies at last I lay down  
I will cling to the old rugged cross  
And exchange it someday for a crown

**Lord, help me to accept all the good advice I can – some for today, the rest for tomorrow.**

My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior Divine  
Now hear me while I pray, take all my guilt away  
O let me from this day be wholly thine.

**Lord, help me to keep my eyes on you and off Lucy!**

Praying, let us work for peace,  
Singing, share our joy with all  
Working for a world that’s new  
Faithful, when we hear Christ’s call

### **RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD**

**Hymn**

**I’m Gonna Shout, Shout**

**MV 183**

I’m gonna shout, shout, shout out my love  
for Jesus, for Jesus!  
I’m gonna shout, shout, shout out my love  
for God’s most holy child!

For whatever I might do today,  
at home, at school, at work, at play,  
I've got Jesus' love deep down inside of me!

I'm gonna raise, raise, raise up my hands  
for Jesus, for Jesus!

I'm gonna raise, raise, raise up my hands  
for God's most holy child!

For whatever I might do today,  
at home, at school, at work, at play,  
I've got Jesus' love deep down inside of me!

I'm gonna dance, dance, dance all around  
for Jesus, for Jesus!

I'm gonna dance, dance, dance all around  
for God's most holy child!

For whatever I might do today,  
at home, at school, at work, at play,  
I've got Jesus' love deep down inside of me!

### **Offering**

Our offerings are an expression of our deep love that cradles us, feeds us, blesses and restores us and gives us others to love.

**We come together here to touch the Divine, to taste and experience goodness, in the presence and laughter of good friends. Amen.**

### **Prayers of the People**

God of all wisdom, laughter is missing today in so many places:

**Places of loneliness and grief. Too many bellies are taunt with hunger and not shaking with mirth. We think of burnt-out workers, people trying to find joy after three years of lockdown, peacemakers trying to bring calm to troubled waters. Today we laugh like Sarah as we are called to be bearers of new life. Let our voices and prayers rise to meet you ...**

*Moment of silence*

**Gracious God, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,  
For yours is the kingdom and the power, and the glory,  
For ever and ever, Amen.**

## BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

Sing a Happy Hallelujah

VU 224

1 Sing a happy hallelujah,  
sing it out with heart and style,  
we're the echo of God's laughter,  
we're the image of God's smile.

Hallelujah, all creation,  
hallelujah everyone!  
Hallelujah, all creation,  
hallelujah everyone!

2 We're the proof of God's good humour,  
we're the twinkle in God's eye,  
made to shine, reflect the glory,  
given light and space to fly.

Hallelujah, all creation,  
hallelujah everyone!  
Hallelujah, all creation,  
hallelujah everyone!

4 Every day sing hallelujah!  
We are loved, though so absurd,  
human, foolish, chosen people,  
God still takes us at our word!

Hallelujah, all creation,  
hallelujah everyone!  
Hallelujah, all creation,  
hallelujah everyone

### Commissioning and Benediction

Go from here renewed, restored and revitalized in your faith. Keep asking the questions that help us discover God's world and God's word.

**May we keep on renewing and transforming our faith showing that Jesus still remains among us. Hallelujah!**

**Amen.**

## **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**

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