



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

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September 28, 2025

Sixteenth after Pentecost

ORANGE SHIRT MUSIC SUNDAY

WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

Prelude

I Feel The Winds of God Today

VU 625

1 I feel the winds of God today;
today my sail I lift,
though heavy oft with drenching spray
and torn with many a rift;
if hope but light the water's crest,
and Christ my bark will use,
I'll seek the seas at his behest,
and brave another cruise.

2 It is the wind of God that dries
my vain regretful tears,
until with braver thoughts shall rise
the purer, brighter years;
if cast on shores of selfish ease
or pleasure I should be,
O let me feel your freshening breeze,
and I'll put back to sea.

3 If ever I forget your love
and how that love was shown,
lift high the blood-red flag above;
it bears your name alone.
Great pilot of my onward way,
you will not let me drift.
I feel the winds of God today;
today my sail I lift.

Welcome

Today we wear orange to remember and honour all the Indigenous children who went to residential schools.

Today we wear orange and we pray for the residential school and intergenerational survivors who are still struggling.

Today we wear orange and we are thankful for those who speak the truth, and who work to shine a light on injustice.

Today we wear orange in the name of compassion and the spirit of truth and reconciliation. Help us, God, to remember and act on this and every day

Lighting the Christ Candle

With open hearts, open minds and an open door, we gather here today. We light these candles for every child, past, present and yet to be, for every child matters.

We are conscious of the grace and peace that we all share and thankful for the flame that lights our way.

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 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 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 Hymn

For the Beauty of the Earth

VU 226

1 For the beauty of the earth,
for the glory of the skies,
for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies.
God of all, to you we raise
this, our hymn of grateful praise.

2 For the beauty of each hour
of the day and of the night,
hill and vale and tree and flower,
sun and moon and stars of light,

God of all, to you we raise
this, our hymn of grateful praise.

3 For the joy of human love,
brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth, and friends above,
for all gentle thoughts and mild,
God of all, to you we raise
this, our hymn of grateful praise.

4 For each perfect gift sublime
to our race so freely given,
graces human and divine
flowers of earth and buds of heaven
God of all, to you we raise
this, our hymn of grateful praise.

Call to Worship

Come, let us sing
Sing about peace and dignity for every person, every family,
about the Spirit that lies at the heart of each life and speaks to the depth of each heart.
Come, let us sing for joy;
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us rejoice with thanksgiving and extol all that is good,
with music and song.

Passing the Peace

We 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 with Peace, saying:

Peace be with you.

And also with you.

Life and Work

Opening Prayer

Creator God, we are on a continuing journey for understanding, healing, and reconciliation.
Much remains to be done. It has not been an easy path, but we seek to walk it together. We strive
to listen to each other's stories and seek to understand without judgement.
We are all your children. You embrace all in your love. You call us now to reflect that love to
each other. You call us to be siblings on the path to reconciliation. Amen.

1 You who dwell in the shelter of our God,
who abide in this shadow for life,
say to the Lord: 'My refuge,
my Rock in whom I trust.'

'And I will raise you up on eagle's wings,
bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of my hand.'

2 The snare of the fowler will never capture you,
and famine will bring you no fear:
under God's wings your refuge,
God's faithfulness your shield.

'And I will raise you up on eagle's wings,
bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of my hand.'

3 You need not fear the terror of the night,
nor the arrow that flies by day;
though thousands fall about you,
near you it shall not come.

'And I will raise you up on eagle's wings,
bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of my hand.'

4 For to God's angels is given a command
to guard you in all of your ways;
upon their hands they will bear you up,
lest you dash your foot against a stone.

'And I will raise you up on eagle's wings,
bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of my hand.'
'And hold you, hold you in the palm
of my hand.'

RECEIVING GOD'S WORD

Scripture

1 Timothy 6:6–19 First Nations Version: An Indigenous Translation of the New Testament

6 It is true that following the ways of the Great Spirit will lead to great possessions, but only when people are at peace with what they have. **7** For we came into this world with nothing and can take nothing with us when we leave it. **8** So, as long as we have food to eat and a roof over our heads, we should be at peace with what we have. **9** Those who long for more and more possessions stumble into temptation and are trapped by many foolish desires that drag them down and take them to a bad end. **10** For the love of possessions is the root of many evil, thorny branches. Some, who have made possessions their aim in life, have walked away from the good road and have been pierced by thorns that bring them much pain and sorrow.

11 But you, O man who follows the Great Spirit, run away from these things and pursue doing what is right, living in a sacred way, trusting, loving, never giving up, and walking softly and in a humble manner. **12** Fight the good fight of trusting Creator. Get a firm hold on the life of the world to come that never fades away, full of beauty and harmony. The Great Spirit called you to this life when you said yes to him and made it known before many people that you had chosen to walk the good road with Jesus, the Chosen One.

13 As you stand before the Great Spirit who gives life to all things, and before Jesus the Chosen One, who told the truth in a good way when he stood before Pilate, I call on you **14** to follow through with this way of life to which he has called you. Keep walking a path that no one can find fault with until the day comes when our Honored Chief, Jesus the Chosen One, will appear.

15 That day will be revealed when the time is right by the Blessed One who alone rules above all others, the Grand Chief Above All Chiefs. **16** He is the only one over whom death has no power. His life shines so bright no one can even come near him, and no human eye has ever been able to fully see him. To him belongs all honor and power to the time beyond the end of all days.

17 Instruct the ones who have many possessions in this present world not to see themselves as better than others. They must not put their hope in their many possessions, which cannot be depended on, but in the Great Spirit, who, from his great possessions, provides all we need to enjoy life. **18** Instruct them to walk in a good way, to possess many good deeds, and to be willing and ready to share with those in need. **19** In this way, they will be storing up and preparing themselves for the life of the world to come, the true life of beauty and harmony that never grows old or fades away.

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn**Many and Great, O God, Are Your Works****VU 308**

1 Many and great, O God, are your works,
Maker of earth and sky.
Your hands have set the heavens with stars,
your fingers spread the mountains and plains.
Lo, at your word the waters were formed;
deep seas obey your voice.

2 Grant unto us communion with you,
O star-abiding one.
Come unto us and dwell with us,
with you are found the gifts of life.
Bless us with life that has no end,
eternal life with you.

Music**Reflection****RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD****Hymn****Called by Earth and Sky****MV 135**

Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.

1 Precious these waters, endless seas,
deep ocean's dream,
waters of healing, rivers of rain,
the wash of love again.

Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.

2 Precious this gift, the air we breathe;
wind born and free.
Breath of the Spirit, blow through this place,
our gathering and our grace.

Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.

3 Precious these mountains, ancient sands;
vast fragile land.
Seeds of our wakening, rooted and strong,
Creation's faithful song.

Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.

4 Precious the fire that lights our way,
bright dawning day.
Fire of passion, sorrows undone,
our faith and justice one.

Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.

Offering

God, all that we have comes from you. Our offerings return but some of our gifts to do the work that Jesus walked among us to do. Use what we offer, gathered together with our time, our talents and our hearts, to help in the healing of your broken world. Amen

Prayers of the People

Creator God,

We are grateful that you came to us as a child, who grew out of a community that nurtured, supported, and taught you the way of your ancestors.

You have asked us to do the same: to treat every child as we would treat you, to love every person as you have loved us.

We are grateful that your power is rooted in love, not force;
your strength is displayed through community, not might.

You have taught us to work toward a better world where all of creation thrives,
and where every child matters.

We mourn the children who never made it home, the communities that were destroyed, the broken hearts, the stories never shared, and the shattered relationships.

Christ Child,

As you grew, you reminded us to always welcome and care for children.

We acknowledge the sinful ways of the past and we pray for healing,
so that we who live together can work together to build a better future
where all children are cherished, beloved, and given what they need to thrive.
So that we may treat all children as we would treat you.

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

Moment of silence

Please join together in this First Nations version of the words Jesus taught us.

O Great Spirit, our Creator from above,
we honour your name as sacred and holy.
Bring your good road to us,
where the beauty of your ways in the spirit-world above
is reflected in the earth below.
Provide for us day by day--
the elk, the buffalo, and the salmon.
The corn, the squash, and the wild rice.
All the things we need for each day.
Release us from the things we have done wrong,
in the same way we release others for the things done wrong to us.
Guide us away from the things that tempt us to stray from your good road,
and set us free from the evil one and all worthless ways.
Amen.

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

Each Blade of Grass

MV 37

1 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.

2 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 out-stretched hand,
the wind that leaps and sails across the land,
make full the circle of God.

3 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.

Commissioning and Benediction

Return now to the circle of life, knowing that the love of Creator God is with us, the compassion of Jesus inspires us, and the hope of the Spirit comforts us, today and always. May everyone we meet know we are God's people by our words and our actions as we seek to honour your work. Amen.

Choral Response

I Am Walking a Path of Peace

MV 221

I am walking a path of peace,
I am walking a path of peace,
I am walking a path of peace,
lead me home, lead me home.

I am walking a path of love,
I am walking a path of love,
I am walking a path of love,
lead me home, lead me home.

I am walking a path of hope,
I am walking a path of hope,
I am walking a path of hope,
lead me home, lead me home.

Postlude

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