



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

Reader: Shirley Scott

January 31, 2021 – Epiphany 5

WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

Prelude

Renew My Spirit, Lord

E. Aaron Jones

Call to Worship

Do you come feeling like the world doesn’t care?
That people only look out for themselves?

*We come yearning to be loved,
to know deeply that love makes a difference.*

Do mistakes from the past rise up to bite you,
giving rise to feelings of failure or inadequacy?

*We come to be loved for who we are and because,
maybe in part, of whose we are.*

Do you wonder what the meaning of life is?
What makes life worthwhile and significant?

*We come seeking a word, a story,
a message of hope that transforms.*

Then come. Let us sing, worship, and seek together.

Response

Don’t Be Afraid

MV 90

Words: John L. Bell and Graham Maule

Music: John L. Bell

© 1995, 2007 by WGRG, Iona Community

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)

Life & Work of the Church

Welcome to online worship



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

Opening Hymn

Ring From Your Steeple

Words & Music: Michael Saward
© 1982 Hope Publishing Co.

VU 403

- 1 Ring from your steeple, bells of gladness!
This is the day the world was born;
God's voice rang out across the darkness,
light filled the sky that primal morn.
- 2 Ring from your steeple, bells of victory!
This is the day death's sting was drawn;
God's voice rang out, the tomb was empty,
hope sprang alive that Easter morn.
- 3 Ring from your steeple, bells of power!
This is the day when, at the dawn,
God's voice rang out through wind and fire,
fresh came the Spirit on that morn.
- 4 Ring from your steeple, bells of heaven!
This is the day when none shall mourn;
God's voice rings out this one-in-seven,
joy fills the church this Sunday morn.

Opening Prayer



*Wandering Christ; we are not careful what we wish for.
When we wished our lives were not so boring,
you sent us challenging new people in our lives.
When we asked for adventure, you asked us to help the world.
We asked for good weather,
and your sunlight lit up what was hidden in the shadows.
God, don't you know what we are asking for?
Or is it we who don't know what we are asking for? Amen*

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

And Now for Something Completely Different



Hymn

Healer of Our Every Ill

Words & Music: Marty Haugen
©1991 G.I.A. Publications

VU 619

Healer of our every ill,
light of each tomorrow,
give us peace beyond our fear,
and hope beyond our sorrow.

1. You who know our fears and sadness,
grace us with your peace and gladness.
Spirit of all comfort, fill our hearts.

Healer of our every ill,
light of each tomorrow,
give us peace beyond our fear,
and hope beyond our sorrow.

2. In the pain and joy beholding,
how your grace is still unfolding.
Give us all your vision, God of love.

Healer of our every ill,
light of each tomorrow,
give us peace beyond our fear,
and hope beyond our sorrow.

3. Give us strength to love each other,
every sister, every brother.
Spirit of all kindness, be our guide.

Healer of our every ill,
light of each tomorrow,
give us peace beyond our fear,
and hope beyond our sorrow.

Psalm 111

Praise God!

I will give thanks to God with my whole heart,
in the company of the upright, in the congregation.

² Great are God's works,
studied by all who delight in them.

³ Full of honour and majesty is God's work,
with righteousness that endures forever.

⁴ God has gained renown by wonderful deeds;
God is gracious and merciful.

⁵ Providing food for those who fear God;
God is ever mindful of the covenant made with the people.

⁶ God has shown the power of God's works,
in giving them the heritage of the nations.

⁷ The works of God's hands are faithful and just;
God's precepts are trustworthy.

⁸ They are established forever and ever,
to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.

⁹ God sent redemption to the people;
and has commanded this covenant forever.
Holy and awesome is God's name.

¹⁰ The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom;
all those who practice it have a good understanding.
God's praise endures forever.

Mark 1: 21-28

They went to Capernaum; and when the Sabbath came, Jesus entered the synagogue and taught. ²² They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³ Just then there was in their synagogue a person with an unclean spirit, ²⁴ and they cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.” ²⁵ But Jesus rebuked the Spirit, saying, “Be silent, and come out of this person!” ²⁶ And the unclean spirit, convulsing and crying with a loud voice, came out of the person. ²⁷ They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” ²⁸ At once Jesus’ fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

These are Jesus' words for us to consider in our lives today.

Thanks be to God

Sermon

Ringling Bells



Hymn

Ring the Bells of Heaven

Text: William O. Cushing

Music: George F. Root

1. Ring the bells of heaven! There is joy today,
For a soul, returning from the wild!
See the Saviour meets them out upon the way,
Welcoming the weary, wand'ring child.
*Glory! Glory! How the angels sing;
Glory! Glory! How the loud harps ring!
'Tis the ransomed army, like a mighty sea,
Pealing forth the anthem of the free.*
2. Ring the bells of heaven! There is joy today,
For the wand'rer now is reconciled;
Yes, a soul is rescued from their sinful way!
And is born anew a ransomed child.

*Glory! Glory! How the angels sing;
Glory! Glory! How the loud harps ring!
'Tis the ransomed army, like a mighty sea,
Pealing forth the anthem of the free.*

3. Ring the bells of heaven! Spread the feast today!
Angels, swell the glad triumphant strain!
Tell the joyful tidings, bear it far away!
For a precious soul is born again.
*Glory! Glory! How the angels sing;
Glory! Glory! How the loud harps ring!
'Tis the ransomed army, like a mighty sea,
Pealing forth the anthem of the free.
'Tis the ransomed army, like a mighty sea,
Pealing forth the anthem of the free.*

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Offering



Prayers of the People



*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

Christ Has No Body Now But Yours

MV 171

Words: Adapt. by Stephen C. Warner from St. Teresa of Avila
© 2003 World Library Publications
Music: © 2006 Rick Gunn

*Christ has no body now but yours,
no hands but yours.
Here on this earth, yours is the work,
to serve with the joy of compassion.*

1. No hands but yours to heal the wounded world,
no hands but yours to soothe all its suffering,

no touch but yours to bind the broken hope
of the people of God.

*Christ has no body now but yours,
no hands but yours.
Here on this earth, yours is the work,
to serve with the joy of compassion.*

2. No eyes but yours to see as Christ would see,
to find the lost, to gaze with compassion;
no eyes but yours to glimpse the holy joy
of the city of God.

*Christ has no body now but yours,
no hands but yours.
Here on this earth, yours is the work,
to serve with the joy of compassion.*

4. Through ev'ry gift, give back to those in need;
as Christ has blessed, so now be his blessing,
with ev'ry gift a benediction, be
to the people of God.

*Christ has no body now but yours,
no hands but yours.
Here on this earth, yours is the work,
to serve with the joy of compassion.*

Benediction & Commissioning



Postlude

How Can I Keep From Singing

Robert S. Lowry

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Other Resources for Today

Historical Perspective on Leprosy
[Historical perspective \(stanford.edu\)](#)

The Leprosy Mission of Canada
[What we do - effect:hope](#)

Other Lectionary Readings

Deuteronomy 18: 15-20

The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. ¹⁶ This is what you requested of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: “If I hear the voice of the LORD my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die.” ¹⁷ Then the LORD replied to me: “They are right in what they have said. ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. ¹⁹ Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet^[c] shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. ²⁰ But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die.”

1 Corinthians 8: 1-13

Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ² Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; ³ but anyone who loves God is known by him.

⁴ Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “no idol in the world really exists,” and that “there is no God but one.” ⁵ Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—⁶ yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

⁷ It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸ “Food will not bring us close to God.” We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. ⁹ But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰ For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? ¹¹ So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. ¹² But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³ Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.