



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

Minister of Word & Sacrament: Rev. Dr. Ellen Redcliffe

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October 8, 2023

Fifteenth after Pentecost

THANKSGIVING SUNDAY

WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

Prelude

Lighting the Christ Candle

With thankful hearts we gather where the doors are open to all.

We come with open minds thankful to be children of the light.

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. The land where Birchcliff Bluffs United Church sits is part of the Williams Treaty. Today the meeting place around Toronto is still home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island. 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

Now Thank We All Our God

VU 236

Now thank we all our God,
with heart, and hands, and voices,
who wondrous things has done,
in whom this world rejoices;
who from our mother's arms
has blessed us on our way

with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us,
and keep us strong in grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ill
in this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God
for all that has been given,
the Son, and Spirit blest
who dwell in highest heaven,
the one eternal God,
whom heaven and earth adore;
for thus it was, is now,
and shall be evermore.

Call to Worship

With thankful hearts we are called to sing your praise.

We give thanks for the bounty of your creation.

We are thankful for the talents that you have developed in each of us.

So we gather to give thanks for all we have received in abundance.

Opening Prayer

Creator of all, you fill our lives with good things: joy, peace, grace, hope, love.

We revel in this harvest season in things of the fall: crops, color changes, the land getting ready for rest. In this season of plenty, give us hunger, we pray: hunger for right relations, hunger for a community of love, hunger for a world of justice. Amen.

RECEIVING GOD'S WORD

Scripture Psalm 65

Thanksgiving for Earth's Bounty

¹ Praise is due to you, O God, in Zion,
and to you shall vows be performed,

² **to you who answer prayer!**
to you all flesh shall come.

³ When deeds of iniquity overwhelm us,
you forgive our transgressions.

4 Happy are those whom you choose and bring near to live in your courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, your holy temple.

5 By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance,
O God of our salvation;
you are the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas.

**6 By your strength you established the mountains;
you are girded with might.**

7 You silence the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves,
the tumult of the peoples.

**8 Those who live at earth's farthest bounds are awed by your signs;
you make the gateways of the morning and the evening shout for joy.**

9 You visit the earth and water it; you greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water; you provide the people with grain, for so you have prepared it.

**10 You water its furrows abundantly, settling its ridges,
softening it with showers, and blessing its growth.**

11 You crown the year with your bounty;
your wagon tracks overflow with richness.

**12 The pastures of the wilderness overflow;
the hills gird themselves with joy;**

13 the meadows clothe themselves with flocks; the valleys deck themselves with grain;
they shout and sing together for joy.

Luke 17:11-19

Jesus Cleanses Ten Lepers

11 On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. **12** As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, **13** they called out, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" **14** When he saw them, he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were made clean. **15** Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. **16** He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. **17** Then Jesus asked, "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? **18** Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" **19** Then he said to him, "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well."

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn

Come, You Thankful People

VU 516

Come, you thankful people, come,
raise the song of harvest home!
All is safely gathered in,
safe before the storms begin;

God, our maker, does provide
for our needs to be supplied:
come to God's own temple, come,
raise the song of harvest home!

All the world is God's own field,
harvests for God's praise to yield;
wheat and weeds together sown,
here for joy or sorrow grown;
first the blade, and then the ear,
then the full corn shall appear:
Harvest-giver, grant that we
wholesome grain and pure may be.

Even so, God, quickly come
to your final harvest home!
Gather all your people in,
free from sorrow, free from sin;
there for ever purified,
in your presence to abide:
come, with all your angels, come,
raise the glorious harvest home.

Sermon A Thankful Heart

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn

We Praise You, O God

VU 218

We praise you, O God, our Redeemer, Creator;
in grateful devotion our tribute we bring.
We lay it before you; we kneel and adore you;
we bless your holy name, glad praises we sing.

We worship you, God of our mothers and fathers,
through trial and tempest, companion and guide.
When perils o'ertake us, you will not forsake us,
but faithful to your promise, you walk by our side.

With voices united our praises we offer
and gladly our songs of thanksgiving we raise.
Our sins now confessing, we pray for your blessing,
to you, our great Redeemer, forever be praise!

Offering

Whatever the growing conditions, regardless of the harvest, God calls us to live with respect in creation.

Through gifts that come from God's care and generosity, we give thanks for the hands that make this world a better place for all.

In gratitude may our offerings be a reflection of who we are and hope to be. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Holy Spirit of compassion, so long ago, you opened the hearts of a couple to notice those who were hungry on the street. This sent a wave of doubt amongst your people. We believed that there were no willing people to meet this need, no funds to do the work.

But then, through the Holy Spirit, you provided. You moved our hearts to do your will. The only hands to do this work are our hands. The only money to provide for this is our money and what we share.

Moment of silence

God of Compassion, you opened our hearts to those who are homeless and living on the streets. Move our hearts again, guide us as it strengthens our faith in you. Hear this our prayer for we offer it in the name of our Creator, saying...

**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 yours is eternity, the power, and the glory,
For ever and ever, Amen.**

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

For The Fruit of All Creation

VU 227

For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God.
For the gifts to every nation, thanks be to God.
For the ploughing, sowing, reaping,
silent growth while we are sleeping,
future needs in earth's safekeeping,
thanks be to God.

In the just reward of labour, God's will is done.
In the help we give our neighbour, God's will is done.
In our worldwide task of caring
for the hungry and despairing,

in the harvests we are sharing,
God's will is done.

Commissioning and Benediction

Through Christ God calls us to new places, new hopes, new lives.

Through the Spirit, we go out with lives full ready to share God's love.
Go with God's blessing, Jesus' peace, the Spirit's direction. 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 that 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

Morning Has Broken

- 1 Morning has broken like the first morning,
blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!
Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!
- 2 Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven,
like the first dewfall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,
sprung in completeness where God's feet pass.
- 3 Ours is the sunlight! Ours is the morning
born of the one light Eden saw play!
Praise with elation, praise every morning,
God's recreation of the new day!

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