



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: Judy Chlebak

August 25, 2024

14th Sunday after Pentecost

WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

Prelude

Introduction

Land Acknowledgement

We now take a moment to acknowledge the sacred land beside the water on which we gather. 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 lands where Birchcliff Bluffs United Church sits are 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

I Am a Child of God

MV 157

1 I am a child of God,
I am a glimpse of God’s new creation.
I am a child of God,
I am a child of God.

2 I am an endless prayer,
I am a yearning for contemplation,
I am an endless prayer,
I am an endless prayer.

4 I am a cry for peace,
I am commitment and dedication,
I am a cry for peace,
I am a cry for peace.

5 I am a song of joy,
I am the moment of jubilation,
I am a song of joy,
I am a song of joy.

RECEIVING GOD'S WORD

Reflection

Hymn

Dance With The Spirit

MV 156

Dance with the Spirit early in the mornin',
walk with the Spirit throughout the long day.
Work and hope for the new life a-bornin',
listen to the Spirit to show you the way.

Dance with the Spirit early in the mornin',
move with the Spirit throughout the long day.
Work and hope for the new life a-bornin',
listen to the Spirit to show you the way.

Dance with the Spirit early in the mornin',
sing with the Spirit throughout the long day.
Work and hope for the new life a-bornin',
listen to the Spirit to show you the way.

Scripture

Psalm 111 Praise for God's Wonderful Works

Praise the LORD!

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

² Great are the works of the LORD,
studied by all who have pleasure in them.

³ Full of honor and majesty is God's work,
whose righteousness endures for ever.

⁴ God is renowned for wonderful deeds;
the LORD is gracious and merciful.

⁵ He provides food for those who are afraid;
and is ever mindful of God's covenant.

⁶ God has shown his people 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;
all his precepts are trustworthy,
⁸ they are established for ever and ever,
to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.
⁹ God sent redemption to all people;
and commanded a covenant for ever.
Holy and awesome is God's name!
¹⁰ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;
all those who practice it have a good understanding.
God's praise endures forever!

John 6:51-58

⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread which I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

⁵² The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” ⁵³ So Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; ⁵⁴ those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day. ⁵⁵ For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. ⁵⁶ Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which the ancestors ate, and they died; but the one who eats this bread will live forever.”

Hymn

God Take My Hand

VU 638

- 1 God, take my hand and lead me upon life's way;
direct, protect and feed me from day to day.
Without your grace and favour I go astray;
so take my hand, O Saviour, and lead the way.
- 2 God, when the tempest rages, I need not fear;
for you, the Rock of Ages, are always near.
Close by your side abiding, I fear no foe,
for when your hand is guiding, in peace I go.
- 3 God, when the shadows lengthen and night has come,
I know that you will strengthen my steps toward home,
and nothing can impede me, O blessed Friend!
So, take my hand and lead me unto the end.

Sermon

1 Like a healing stream in a barren desert,
Spirit water bringing life to dusty earth,
God is trickling through our lives
as in a dream unfolding,
promising revival and rebirth
like a healing stream

2 Like a gentle rain on a thirsty garden,
Spirit water come to nourish tiny seed,
God is bubbling through the soil
to coax a new creation
yearning for an end to want and need
like a gentle rain.

3 Like a river strong with a restless current,
Spirit water rushing on to distant shore,
God is carving out a channel
in a new direction,
calling for an end to hate and war
like a river strong.

4 Like a mighty sea reaching far horizons,
Spirit water with a love both deep and wide,
God is working in our hearts
to shape a new tomorrow:
God will always challenge and provide!
Like a mighty sea, like a river strong,
like a gentle rain, like a healing stream.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

1 There is a time that we must rise
There is a time that we must stand
There is a time that we must come
together
For blessed are our lives
Blessed our love

and blessed the promise gathered now.

3 There is a time we know the way
There is a time we watch and pray
In living faith we make our way
together
For blessed are our lives
Blessed our love
and blessed the promise gathered now.

Prayers of the People

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your 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 thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory,
Now and forever, Amen.**

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

Wherever You May Go

MV 216

Wherever you may go, I will follow,
and your people shall be my people too.
Wherever you may go, I will follow,
for I would be faithful, loyal and true.

1 Say the word and I will stay,
I will never go away,
we will travel side by side
and God's love will be our guide.

Wherever you may go, I will follow,
and your people shall be my people too.
Wherever you may go, I will follow,
for I would be faithful, loyal and true.

2 From beginning to the end
I will always be your friend,
when you need me, I'll be there,
you can trust my faithful care.

Wherever you may go, I will follow,

and your people shall be my people too.
Wherever you may go, I will follow,
for I would be faithful, loyal and true.

Commissioning and Benediction

Choral Benediction

For The Faithful Who Have Answered

VU 707

1 For the faithful who have answered
when they heard your call to serve,
for the many ways you led them
testing will and stretching nerve,
for their work and for their witness
as they strove against the odds,
for their courage and obedience
we give thanks and praise, O God.

2 Many eyes have glimpsed the promise,
many hearts have yearned to see.
Many ears have heard you calling
us to greater liberty.
Some have fallen in the struggle,
others still are fighting on.
You are not ashamed to own us.
We give thanks and praise, O God.

3 For this cloud of faithful witness,
for the common life we share,
for the work of peace and justice,
for the gospel that we bear,
for the vision that our homeland
is your love - deep, high, and broad -
for the different roads we travel
we give thanks and praise, O God.

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