



**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:** Janet Bawcutt

**May 12, 2024**

**Seventh Sunday of Easter /Christian Family Sunday**

**WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE**

**Prelude**

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

Lift your spirits and tune your heart to receive all God has planned for us this day.

*The candle is lit.*

**We give thanks for those who bless us with their presence this day.**

**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 Let Us Sing**

**VU 222**

1 Come, let us sing to our God this song,  
we have stood silently too long;  
surely our God deserves our praise,  
so joyfully give thanks for our days.

2 O thirsty soul, come drink at the well;  
God's living waters will never fail.  
Surely our God will help you to stand,  
strengthened and comforted by God's hand.

3 You dwell among us and cause us to pray,  
and walk with each other following your way;  
our precious brothers and sisters will grow  
in the fulfilling love they know.

4 Deserts shall bloom and mountains shall sing  
to the desire of all living things.  
Come, all you creatures, high and low,  
let your praises endlessly flow.

### **Call to Worship**

Gather round all who seek God's word and have a love for all creation.

**As we celebrate this Family Sunday we find joy in the loving relationships among us.**

### **Life and Work**

### **Opening Prayer**

As we gather, we come to listen for God's voice and to grow in fullness that honors our created nature for love.

**Free us, living God, to perceive your whispers of direction. May we act with compassion and make a difference in this, your world. Amen.**

## **RECEIVING GOD'S WORD**

### **Scripture    Psalm 1    The Way to Happiness**

God blesses all who refuse evil advice and do not follow sinners or join in sneering of God.

**Instead, the law of the Lord makes the people happy, and they think about it day and night.**

They are like trees growing beside the stream, trees that produce fruit in season and always have leaves. Those people succeed in everything they do.

**That is not true of those who are evil, because they are like straw blown by the wind. Sinners will not have an excuse on the day of judgement, and will have no place with the people of God.**

The Lord protects everyone who follows, but the wicked follow a road that leads to ruin.

### **John 17:6-19**

6 "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; 8 for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. 9 I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I

have been glorified in them. 11 And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. 14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 15 I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. 16 They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

The word of God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God.**

**Hymn**

**Are You a Shepherd**

**MV 126**

1 Are you a shepherd, good shepherd who leads us  
safely through danger, while calming our fears?  
Are you a father who shelters and feeds us,  
shares in our laughter and wipes away tears?

Yes, you are shepherd, parent and teacher,  
but you are greater than all that we know.  
Holy and living, loving and giving,  
God, you are with us wherever we go.

2 Are you a mother, good mother who bears us,  
comforts, protects us and helps us to rest?  
Are you a teacher who daily prepares us,  
challenging students to offer their best?

Yes, you are shepherd, parent and teacher,  
but you are greater than all that we know.  
Holy and living, loving and giving,  
God, you are with us wherever we go.

3 Great, gentle shepherd, forever beside us,  
lead all you children in paths that are right.  
Great, loving parent, wise teacher, you guide us.  
We want to love you and bring you delight.

Yes, you are shepherd, parent and teacher,  
but you are greater than all that we know.

Holy and living, loving and giving,  
God, you are with us wherever we go.

**Sermon      Golden Rule**

**RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD**

**Hymn**

**Who Is My Mother**

**MV 178**

Who is my mother, who is my brother?  
All those who gather round Jesus Christ:  
Spirit blown people born from the Gospel  
sit at the table, round Jesus Christ.

Differently abled, differently labeled,  
widen the circle round Jesus Christ:  
crutches and stigmas, culture's enigmas,  
all come together round Jesus Christ.

Love will relate us colour or status  
can't segregate us round Jesus Christ:  
family failings, human derailings  
all are accepted round Jesus Christ.

Bound by one vision, met for one mission  
we claim each other, round Jesus Christ:  
here is my mother, here is my brother,  
kindred in Spirit, through Jesus Christ.

**Offering**

With all that we have and all that we are, we come...

**Prepared to share what we have so others may have as well. Amen.**

**Prayers of the People**

In our loving and trusting relationships we embrace God's love sharing fully what is in our hearts.

**We know we love you and try to follow in Jesus' steps but so often we fail to live up to Jesus' standards. We are sorry when we disappoint you, yet all we hear from you is that you love us and you ask us to try again. That's when we feel the kiss on our cheek, the sign of your love and forgiveness and unconditional love ...**

*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**

**Would You Bless Our Homes and Families**

**VU 556**

Would you bless our homes and families,  
Source of life who calls us here;  
in our world of stress and tension  
teach us love that conquers fear.  
Help us learn to love each other  
with a love that constant stays;  
teach us when we face our troubles,  
love's expressed in many ways.

From the homes in which we're nurtured,  
with the love that shapes us there,  
teach us, God, to claim as family  
every one whose life we share.  
And through all that life may offer,  
may we in your love remain;  
may the love we share in families  
be alive to praise your name.

Let us reach beyond the boundaries  
of our daily thought and care  
till the family you have chosen  
spills its love out everywhere.  
Help us learn to love each other  
with a love that constant stays;  
teach us when we face our troubles  
love's expressed in many ways.

### **Commissioning and Benediction**

We remember those who have shown us the way and invite us to live as part of God's family.

**We leave here to share the truth we have received and to live with the hope we  
cherish as part of the family. 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**

\* Permission to podcast/stream and reproduce the music and lyrics obtained from  
ONE LICENSE with license A-737645.  
All rights reserved.