



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

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November 10th, 2024

25th Sunday after Pentecost

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

Prelude

I Vow To Thee, My Country

Gustav Holst

Lighting the Christ Candle

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

We come with open hearts and open minds, thankful that we are children of the light of Christ.

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. The land we are worshipping on today is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, and is home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

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 Healing of the Nations

VU 678

1 For the healing of the nations,
God, we pray with one accord;
for a just and equal sharing

of the things that earth affords.
To a life of love in action
help us rise and pledge our word.

2 Lead us forward into freedom,
from despair your world release;
that, redeemed from war and hatred,
all may come and go in peace.
Show us how through care and goodness
fear will die and hope increase.

3 All that kills abundant living,
let it from the earth be banned:
pride of status, race or schooling,
dogmas that obscure your plan.
In our common quest for justice
may we hallow life's brief span.

4 You, Creator-God, have written
your great name on humankind;
for our growing in your likeness
bring the life of Christ to mind;
that, by our response and service,
earth its destiny may find.

Call to Worship

On this day of Remembrance, O God, we give thanks:

**For peacekeepers and pacifists;
for those who served on the front lines, and those who protest and march;
for those who volunteered and those who waited anxiously at home;
for those who hoped that things would get better,
and those who could not stand by and wait.**

We give thanks for those who believed that the world could be a better place.

**We remember those who paid the ultimate sacrifice,
trusting that others could and would carry the torch.**

We give thanks for those who were once enemies who have become friends and allies.

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 of Christ that is in each of us, and that we are called to reconciliation and community.

Let us greet those around you with the Peace of Christ, saying:

The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

Life and Work

Opening Prayer

Let us pray:

**O God, at this annual time of remembrance,
our thoughts turn to the violence,
fear and pain of war.
Come gently in our worship this morning
that we may know your peace –
not the peace of violence ignored and fear repressed,
but the true peace of evil confronted,
injustice exposed,
and reconciliation achieved.
We pray in the name of the Prince of Peace.
Amen.**

RECEIVING GOD'S WORD

Scripture Psalm 146

Praise God, O my soul. As long as I live I will praise God.

Yes, as long as I have life I will sing praises to God.

Put not your trust in princes, nor in any mortal,
for in them there is no help.

**When they breathe their last they return to dust;
then their plans come to nothing.**

Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
**whose hope is the Maker of heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them,**

the One who keeps faith forever,
**who gives justice to the oppressed,
who gives food to the hungry.**

God sets prisoners free, restores sight to the blind.

**God straightens those who are bent;
loves those who are just.**

God cares for the stranger in the land,
and sustains the widow and orphan;

but the way of the wicked God turns to ruin.

God shall reign forever, O Zion,
your God of all generations.

Mark 12:38-44 Jesus Denounces the Scribes & The Widow's Offering

³⁸ As he taught, he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces ³⁹ and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! ⁴⁰ They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

⁴¹ He sat down opposite the treasury and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. ⁴² A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. ⁴³ Then he called his disciples and said to them, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. ⁴⁴ For all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

VU 333

1 Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.

2 Come, almighty to deliver;
let us all thy grace receive;
suddenly return, and never,
nevermore thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.

3 Finish, then, thy new creation;
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see thy great salvation
perfectly restored in thee,
changed from glory into glory,
till in heaven we take our place,

till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise.

Sermon To Be Noticed

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn

We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky

MV 143

1 We cannot own the sunlit sky,
the moon, the wildflow'rs growing,
for we are part of all that is
within life's river flowing.
With open hands receive and share
the gifts of God's creation,
that all may have abundant life
in ev'ry earthly nation.

2 When bodies shiver in the night
and weary, wait for morning,
when children have no bread but tears,
and war-horns sound their warning,
God calls humanity to wake,
to join in common labour,
that all may have abundant life
in one-ness with their neighbour.

3 God calls humanity to join
as partners in creating
a future free from want or fear,
life's goodness celebrating,
that new world beckons from afar,
invites our shared endeavour,
that all may have abundant life
and peace endure forever.

Remembrance

Just a Common Soldier

Last Post

Moment of Silence

Rouse

In Flanders Fields

Offering

Accept, O God, our gifts freely given.

May they be signs of freedom for others;

freedom from hunger, from oppression, from conflict, from violence.

Use these gifts, as you use us, for your purposes in the world.

Amen.

Prayers of the People

Trusting that God receives all our prayers and responds to each of them in love, let us pray together saying: Gracious God, **make us instruments of your peace.**

Loving God,

we come before you, grateful for your presence that sees,
knows, and cares for all who are overlooked and struggling.

On this day of remembrance, we honor those who gave their lives for peace
and pray for the ongoing work of healing in our world.

Gracious God, **make us instruments of your peace.**

We lift up to you those affected by conflict and war across the globe.

Bring comfort to families displaced and torn by violence,
and wisdom to leaders to seek paths of peace and justice.

May we stand in solidarity with all who seek safety,
especially the vulnerable and forgotten.

Gracious God, **make us instruments of your peace.**

For those who are impoverished or marginalized,

who bear the weight of unseen sacrifices in our communities and nations,
we pray for justice and compassion.

Guide us to advocate for fair policies,

for affordable housing, food security, and access to education and health care.

May our leaders and all of us be moved by the needs of those who struggle
and inspired to act with integrity and compassion.

Gracious God, **make us instruments of your peace.**

God of peace,

we remember those who are grieving and brokenhearted,

especially those impacted by recent natural disasters
and the effects of climate change.

Be their strength and comfort.

Help us be stewards of your creation,
caring for the earth and each other in ways that
honor your vision of wholeness and justice.

Gracious God, **make us instruments of your peace.**

Lord, open our eyes to truly see each other,
as Jesus saw the widow at the Temple,
with compassion and understanding.

Empower us to be agents of your love,
seeing the "nobodies" as somebodies, each worthy of dignity and care.

Gracious God, **make us instruments of your peace.**

Inspire us to make a difference, however small,
trusting that with you,
even our smallest efforts can bring forth your kin-dom of peace
and hope for all creation.

And now, as a community of faith,
we pray all this, using the ancient words you taught us, saying:
Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name
Thy Kindom 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.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the Kindom, the power, and the glory forever and ever.
Amen.

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

Let There Be Light

VU 679

1 Let there be light,
let there be understanding,
let all the nations gather,
let them be face to face;

2 open our lips,
open our minds to ponder,
open the door of concord
opening into grace;

3 perish the sword,
perish the angry judgement,
perish the bombs and hunger,
perish the fight for gain;

4 hallow our love,
hallow the deaths of martyrs,
hallow their holy freedom,
hallowed be your name;

5 your kingdom come,
your spirit turn to language,
your people speak together,
your spirit never fade;

6 let there be light;
open our hearts to wonder,
perish the way of terror,
hallow the world God made.

Bread for the Journey

In a world that often overlooks the sacrifices of the most vulnerable, how can I intentionally notice and advocate for those who are unseen or unheard in my own community?

Commissioning and Benediction

Having gathered, remembered, heard, given, and prayed,
**we ask, Almighty God, for your blessing,
and for your continual presence in our lives.**

Remind us that no matter where we go, you are there.

**No matter how bleak the world becomes,
all it takes is one ray of light for a new day to be upon us once again.
Amen.**

You have heard the words of healing and of peace.
You have been blessed by the Spirit of God.
Go now into God's world to be the spirit of hope,

peace and blessing for others,
knowing that God is always with you.
Go in peace. Amen.

Choral Response

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

Jerusalem

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