



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

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

Minister of Community Development: Rev. Carmen Llanos

Music Director: Randy Vancourt

Reader: Norma Grech

September 18th, 2022

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Prelude

Call to Worship

Come, find a space for rest in this sacred space.

We come bringing our fears, our anxiety, our trepidation. We come knowing this space is safe.

God knows your weariness and feels your fatigue. Rest now for this is just a place where the Spirit holds you in peace.

Introit

Spirit of the Living God

VU 376

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Melt me, mould me, fill me, use me.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the living God, move among us all;
make us one in heart and mind, make us one in love:
humble, caring, selfless, sharing.
Spirit of the living God, fill our lives with love!

Land Acknowledgement

We 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 the 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.



Candle Lighting

We are thankful for all that we have and are. We light this Christ candle so this light will shine in our world touching all who are open to love.

Light candle here

May God's peace and justice bless those open to believe. Amen.

Opening Prayer

Creator, you know us deeply. Your fingerprints are on our hearts.

Every time we move, we are witnesses to your word and your way. Continue to create us in your image so that we might help create a world that reflects your desire for peace and understanding. Amen.

Hymn

Live Into Hope

VU 699

Live into hope of captives freed,
of sight regained, the end of greed.
The oppressed shall be the first to see
the year of God's own jubilee!

Live into hope the blind shall see
with insight and with clarity,
removing shades of pride and fear,
a vision of our God brought near.

Live into hope of liberty,
the right to speak, the right to be,
the right to have one's daily bread,
to hear God's word and thus be fed.

Live into hope of captives freed
from chains of fear or want or greed.
God now proclaims our full release
to faith and hope and joy and peace.

Life and Work

Scripture Psalm 79:5-9

How long, O LORD? Will you be angry forever?

Will your jealous wrath burn like fire?

⁶ Pour out your anger on the nations
that do not know you
and on the kingdoms
that do not call on your name.

⁷ For they have devoured Jacob
and laid waste his habitation.

⁸ Do not remember against us the iniquities of our ancestors;
let your compassion come speedily to meet us,
for we are brought very low.

⁹ Help us, O God of our salvation,
for the glory of your name;
deliver us and forgive our sins,
for your name's sake.

Gospel Reading Luke 16:1-13

The Parable of the Dishonest Manager

16 Then Jesus^[a] said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. ² So he summoned him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management because you cannot be my manager any longer.’ ³ Then the manager said to himself, ‘What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. ⁴ I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.’ ⁵ So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ⁶ He answered, ‘A hundred jugs of olive oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.’ ⁷ Then he asked another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He replied, ‘A hundred containers of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill and make it eighty.’ ⁸ And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly, for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. ⁹ And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth^[b] so that when it is gone they may welcome you into the eternal homes.^[c]

¹⁰ “Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much, and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. ¹¹ If, then, you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? ¹² And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? ¹³ No slave can serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”^[e]

Sermon I Never Told the Half Of It

Hymn

O World of God

VU 258

O world of God, so vast and strange,
profound and wonderful and fair,
beyond the utmost reach of thought
but not beyond our Maker's care!
We are not strangers on this earth
whirling amid the suns of space;

we are God's children, this our home,
with those of every clime and race.

O world where human life is lived,
so strangely mingling joy and pain,
so full of evil and of good,
so needful that the good shall reign!
It is this world that God has loved,
and goodness was its Maker's plan,
the promise of God's triumph is
a humble birth in Bethlehem.

O world of time's far-stretching years!
There was a day when time stood still,
a central moment when there rose
a cross upon a cruel hill;
in pain and death love's power was seen,
the mystery of time revealed,
the wisdom of the ways of God,
the grace through which our hurt is healed

Offering

We bring our gifts of time, talent, money, that they may be a blessing in a hurting world.

May they find the shadowed corners, and with their love shine light and hope where most needed. Amen.

Prayers of the People & Lord's Prayer

God of All, in the beginning you created things. Then you looked everywhere and said it was good.

How do you feel about it now? How do you feel about what we have done, the damage we cannot seem to keep ourselves from doing. Declare your word into our hearts, our minds, our lives – so that we might feel it, live it, and make your creation good once again...

We now take a moment to remember those we keep in our prayers.

Hear us we pray for we ask it in Jesus' name, saying,

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 them that 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,
Forever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

Called by Earth and Sky

MV 135

Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.

1 Precious these waters, endless seas,
deep ocean's dream,
waters of healing, rivers of rain,
the wash of love again.

Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.

2 Precious this gift, the air we breathe;
wind born and free.
Breath of the Spirit, blow through this place,
our gathering and our grace.

Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.

3 Precious these mountains, ancient sands;
vast fragile land.
Seeds of our wakening, rooted and strong,
Creation's faithful song.

Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.

4 Precious the fire that lights our way,
bright dawning day.
Fire of passion, sorrows undone,
our faith and justice one.

Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.

Benediction & Commissioning

So on behalf of Jesus the Christ I say to you, focus on the spirit that is light that you may be a beacon showing others a new way home.
May God's blessing go with you now and always. Amen.

Postlude

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Birchcliff Bluffs United Church Additional Lectionary

Jeremiah 8:18

New Revised Standard Version

The Prophet Mourns for the People

¹⁸ My joy is gone; grief is upon me;
my heart is sick.

Jeremiah 9:1

New Revised Standard Version

9 ^[a] O that my head were a spring of water
and my eyes a fountain of tears,
so that I might weep day and night
for the slain of the daughter of my people!

Psalm 79:1-9

New Revised Standard Version

Plea for Mercy for Jerusalem

A Psalm of Asaph.

- ¹ O God, the nations have come into your inheritance;
they have defiled your holy temple;
they have laid Jerusalem in ruins.
- ² They have given the bodies of your servants
to the birds of the air for food,
the flesh of your faithful to the wild animals of the earth.
- ³ They have poured out their blood like water
all around Jerusalem,
and there was no one to bury them.
- ⁴ We have become a taunt to our neighbors,
mocked and derided by those around us.
- ⁵ How long, O LORD? Will you be angry forever?
Will your jealous wrath burn like fire?
- ⁶ Pour out your anger on the nations
that do not know you
and on the kingdoms
that do not call on your name.
- ⁷ For they have devoured Jacob
and laid waste his habitation.
- ⁸ Do not remember against us the iniquities of our ancestors;
let your compassion come speedily to meet us,
for we are brought very low.
- ⁹ Help us, O God of our salvation,
for the glory of your name;
deliver us and forgive our sins,
for your name's sake.

1 Timothy 2:1-7

New Revised Standard Version

Instructions concerning Prayer

- ² First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, ² for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. ³ This is right and acceptable before God our Savior, ⁴ who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For

there is one God;
there is also one mediator between God and humankind,
Christ Jesus, himself human,
⁶ who gave himself a ransom for all

—this was attested at the right time. ⁷ For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth;^[a] I am not lying), a teacher of the gentiles in faith and truth.