



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

Minister of Word & Sacrament: Katie Vardy

Music Director: Randy Vancourt

Reader: Norma Grech

September 15th, 2024

17th Sunday after Pentecost

WE GATHER AS GOD’S PEOPLE

Prelude

Lighting the Christ Candle

We light this candle to remind us that the light of Christ is always with us.

May this light guide our steps to new life.

The candle is lit.

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. 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 Beauty of the Earth

VU 226

1 For the beauty of the earth,
for the glory of the skies,
for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies,
God of all, to you we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.

2 For the beauty of each hour
of the day and of the night,
hill and vale, and tree and flower,
sun and moon, and stars of light,
God of all, to you we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.

3 For the joy of human love,
brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth, and friends above,
for all gentle thoughts and mild,
God of all, to you we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.

4 For each perfect gift sublime
to our race so freely given,
graces human and divine,
flowers of earth and buds of heaven,
God of all, to you we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.

Call to Worship

Come from the West and the East;
gather from the South and North.

**We come: young ones and older,
in all of the diversity with which God has created us.**

Come, learners and teachers,
healers and leaders,
join together musicians and choir.

We come to lift hearts and voices in praise and prayer.

We gather as God's beloved people.

Let us worship God in song and in prayer;
let us trust and risk as we seek to be faithful.

Let us pray together today.

Amen.

Life and Work

Opening Prayer

**Generous and loving God,
be with us this day and always.
Direct us on how we should follow your path.**

**Guide us and keep us safe.
Give us strength when we grow weary and lose our way.
Stay by our side in times of uncertainty and sorrow.
Give us love,
give us strength,
and give us grace.
In Jesus' name we pray,
Amen.**

RECEIVING GOD'S WORD

Scripture Psalm 19

The heavens declare the glory of the Creator;
the firmament proclaims the handiwork of Love.

**Day to day speech pours forth
and night to night knowledge is revealed.**

There is no speech nor are there words;
their voice is not heard;

**Yet does their music go out through all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.**

In them a tent for the sun is set,
which is like a bridegroom on their wedding night
as they sing love's song and celebrate the dance of life.

**Its rising is in eternity,
and its circuit to infinity;
there is nothing hid from the sunlight.**

The law of Love is perfect, reviving the soul;

The testimony of Love is sure, make wise the simple;

The precepts of Love are right, rejoicing the heart;

The authority of Love is pure, enlightening the eyes;

The spirit of Love is wondrous, enduring forever;

The rites of Love are true, awakening compassion.

More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold;

sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.

Moreover by them are the loving alerted;

in keeping them there is great reward.

But who can discern their own weaknesses?

Cleanse me, O Love, from all my hidden faults.

Keep me from boldly acting in error;

let my fears not have dominion over me!

**Then shall I become a beneficial presence,
freely and fully surrendered to your Love.
Let the words of my mouth
and the meditation of my heart
find favor in your Heart
O my Beloved, my strength and my joy!**

Mark 8:27-38

Peter's Confession of Faith

²⁷ Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi, and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" ²⁸ And they answered him, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." ²⁹ He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah." ³⁰ And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

³¹ Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes and be killed and after three days rise again. ³² He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³ But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

³⁴ He called the crowd with his disciples and said to them, "If any wish to come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷ Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸ Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of God with the holy angels."

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn

Will You Come and Follow Me (1, 2, 4, 5)

VU 567

1 Will you come and follow me
if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know
and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown,
will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown
in you and you in me?

2 Will you leave yourself behind
if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind
and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare
should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer prayer
in you and you in me?

4 Will you love the 'you' you hide
if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside
and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found
to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound
in you and you in me?

5 Christ, your summons echoes true
when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you
and never be the same.
In your company I'll go
where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow
in you and you in me.

Sermon

Peter's Broken Heart

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn

I Want To Be a Christian In My Heart

1 Oh, I want to be a Christian
in my heart, in my heart.
Oh, I want to be a Christian in my heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Oh, I want to be a Christian in my heart.

2 Oh, I want to be more loving
in my heart, in my heart.
Oh, I want to be more loving in my heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Oh, I want to be more loving in my heart.

3 Oh, I want to be more holy
in my heart, in my heart.
Oh, I want to be more holy in my heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Oh, I want to be more holy in my heart.

4 Oh, I want to be like Jesus
in my heart, in my heart.
Oh, I want to be like Jesus in my heart.
In my heart, in my heart,
Oh, I want to be like Jesus in my heart.

Offering

**Living, loving God, who models what love looks like,
may you bless all that we give for your purpose in the world.
In your blessing, may we become the model of what love looks like:
self-giving and self-sacrificing as we share with friends,
with neighbors, with strangers,
and especially with those we name our enemies.
Amen.**

Prayers of the People

Receive our prayers, O Holy One.

Help us to know your Grace, help us to do better,
and bless the people, places, and things, that we have offered to you.

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

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

- 1 I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus;
no turning back, no turning back.

- 2 The world behind me, the cross before me;
the world behind me, the cross before me,
the world behind me, the cross before me;
no turning back, no turning back.

- 3 Though none go with me, I still will follow;
though none go with me, I still will follow;
though none go with me, I still will follow;
no turning back, no turning back.

- 4 Will you decide now to follow Jesus?
Will you decide now to follow Jesus?
Will you decide now to follow Jesus?
No turning back, no turning back.

- 5 I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus;
no turning back, no turning back.
No turning back, no turning back.

Commissioning and Benediction

God created everything as a gift of love for all to share.

**May we go out into the world and continue to make God's dream come true.
Amen.**

Go now into the world, with a daring and a tender heart -
go in peace, the world is waiting.
And whatever you do, do it for love,
remembering that you follow Jesus.
And may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit
be with us all, now and ever.
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

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