



**Birchcliff Bluffs United Church**

**Ministers:** All the People – wherever and however they gather

**Rev. Gregory Daly:** Minister of Word & Sacrament

**Rev. Carmen Llanos:** Minister of Community Development

**Music Director:** Randy Vancourt

**Reader:** Beth Moore

**February 21, 2021 – Black History Month - First Sunday of Lent**

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

**Prelude**

**Forty Days and Forty Nights**

Music: Leighton G. Hayne

**Call to Worship**

As long nights give way to long days  
and winter sleep to fresh beginnings,

*We come today to be reminded of God's love for us.*

Like the green shoots of renewed life,  
stirring beneath the soil,

*We welcome an awakening of God's word in our lives.*

In this time of reflection and repentance,

*We affirm our identity, we claim our security, as children of God.*

*Let us worship God together.*

**Response**

**Now Quit Your Care**

**VU 109**

Words: Percy Dearmer © 1964 Oxford University Press  
Music: French carol

*Now quit your care and anxious fear and worry;  
for schemes are vain and fretting brings no gain.*

*Lent calls to prayer, to trust and dedication;*

*God brings new beauty nigh;*

*reply, reply, reply with love to love most high;*

*reply, reply, reply with love to love most high.*

*Then shall your light break forth as does the morning;  
your health shall spring, the friends you make shall bring  
God's glory bright, your way through life adorning;  
and love shall be the prize.*

*Arise, arise, arise and make a paradise!*

*Arise, arise, arise and make a paradise!*

## Life & Work of the Church

*Welcome to online worship*



## Land Acknowledgement

As we prepare for worship, we 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 territory of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississauga's of the Credit and Scugog, 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. We seek to be mindful of broken covenants and the need to strive to make right with all our relations.



## Candle Lighting

*God, as we journey through this holy season of Lent, give us strength and courage to make the changes that are needed in our lives. Open our hearts and minds to your steadfast presence and help us to put our trust in you. Amen.*

## Opening Hymn

### O Jesus, Let Me Walk with Thee

Words: Washington Gladden

Music: Henry Percy Smith

VU 560

*O Jesus, let me walk with thee  
in lowly paths of service free;  
teach me your secret, help me to bear  
the strain of toil, the fret of care.*

*Help me the slow of heart to move  
with some clear, winning word of love;  
teach me the wayward feet to stay,  
and guide them in the homeward way.*

*Teach me the patience; still with thee,  
in closer, dearer company,  
in work that keeps faith sure and strong,  
in trust that triumphs over wrong.*

*In hope that sends a shining ray  
far down the future's broadening way,  
in peace that only you can give,  
with you, O Jesus, let me live.*

## Prayer for Grace

*In covenant, we come to worship you, O God.*

*In these times when treaties, pacts, and agreements offered by humanity are limited by time and commitment; when their tenets are side stepped and ignored, we recall your covenant with us.*

*Your everlasting covenant includes not just us, but our children and grandchildren and their descendants, all humanity, and all the living creatures that are with us,*

*Your covenant with the earth shows itself in sky, in land, and water, in all its beauty, reminding us that you will keep your promise of being always with us.*

*Help us to be covenant people, keeping our promises and living in truth.*

*We come to worship you, the God of our covenant. Amen.*

## WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

## And Now For Something Completely Different



*I just realized  
that in my imagination  
the wilderness is always somewhere else;  
a foreign landscape i actively have to enter  
in the act of being faithful.*

*truthfully,  
the wilderness is always where i am  
right now  
and faith is the courage to stay with it  
when I'd rather pretend i am  
anywhere else.*

## Hymn

### Lift Every Voice and Sing

Words: James Weldon Johnson  
Music: J. Rosamond Johnson

*Lift ev'ry voice and sing,  
till earth and heaven ring,  
ring with the harmonies of liberty.  
Let our rejoicing rise  
high as the list'ning skies,  
let it resound loud as the rolling sea.*

*Sing a song full of the faith  
that the dark past has taught us.  
Sing a song full of the hope  
that the present has brought us.*

*Facing the rising sun  
of our new day begun,  
let us march on till victory is won.*

*God of our weary years,  
God of our silent tears,  
You who have brought us thus far on the way,  
You who has by your might  
led us into the light,  
keep us forever in the path, we pray.*

*Lest our feet stray from the places,  
our God, where we met you;  
lest our hearts,  
drunk with the wine of the world,  
we forget you;*

*Shadowed beneath your hand,  
may we forever stand,  
true to our God,  
true to our native land.*

### **Prayer of Illumination**

*Help us O God, to come to you with open lives to receive your words.  
May we give them new life as we listen to what you have to say.  
Open our hearts as we embark on this journey with each other and with  
you. Amen*



### **Isaiah 58: 1-12**

New Revised Standard Version

Shout out, do not hold back!  
Lift up your voice like a trumpet!  
Announce to my people their rebellion,  
to the house of Jacob their sins.  
<sup>2</sup> Yet day after day they seek me  
and delight to know my ways,  
as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness  
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;  
they ask of me righteous judgments,  
they delight to draw near to God.

<sup>3</sup>“Why do we fast, but you do not see?  
Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?”  
Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day,  
and oppress all your workers.

<sup>4</sup>Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight  
and to strike with a wicked fist.  
Such fasting as you do today  
will not make your voice heard on high.

<sup>5</sup>Is such the fast that I choose,  
a day to humble oneself?  
Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,  
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?  
Will you call this a fast,  
a day acceptable to God?

<sup>6</sup>Is not this the fast that I choose:  
to loose the bonds of injustice,  
to undo the thongs of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to break every yoke?

<sup>7</sup>Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,  
and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
when you see the naked, to cover them,  
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

<sup>8</sup>Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing shall spring up quickly;  
your vindicator shall go before you,  
the glory of God shall be your rear guard.

<sup>9</sup>Then you shall call, and God will answer;  
you shall cry for help, and God will say, Here I am.  
If you remove the yoke from among you,  
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

<sup>10</sup>if you offer your food to the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in the darkness  
and your gloom be like the noonday.

<sup>11</sup>God will guide you continually,  
and satisfy your needs in parched places,  
and make your bones strong;  
and you shall be like a watered garden,  
like a spring of water,  
whose waters never fail.

<sup>12</sup>Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;  
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;  
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,  
the restorer of streets to live in.

**Mark 1:9-15**

New Revised Standard Version

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup> And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. <sup>11</sup> And a voice came from heaven, “You are my child, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

<sup>12</sup> And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. <sup>13</sup> He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

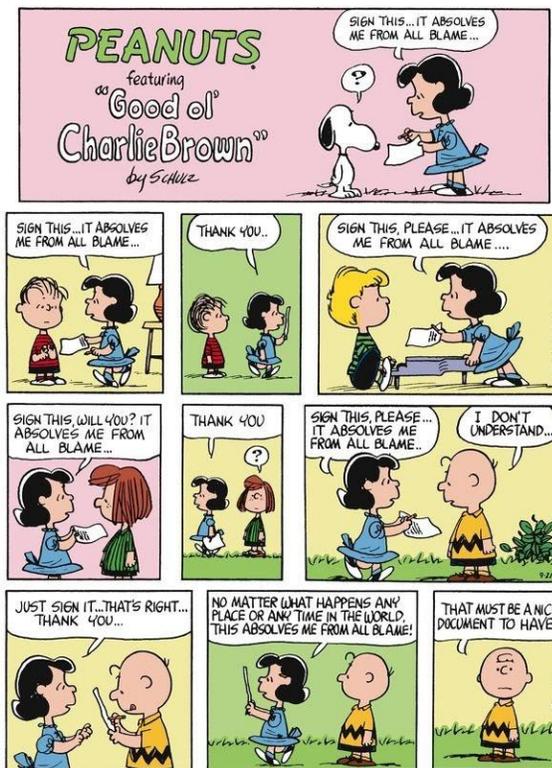
<sup>14</sup> Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, <sup>15</sup> and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”

This is the Gospel message for us to consider today.

*Thanks be to God*

**Sermon**

**Busy, Busy, Busy**



**Hymn**

**If We Just Talk of Thoughts and Prayers**

Words: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

*If we just talk of thoughts and prayers,  
and don't live out a faith that dares,  
and don't take on the ways of death,  
our thoughts and prayers are fleeting breath.*

*If we just dream of what could be,  
And do not build community,  
And do not seek to change our ways,  
Our dreams of change are false displays.*

*If we just sing of doing good,  
And don't walk through our neighbourhood,  
To learn its hope, to ease its pain,  
Our talk of good is simply vain.*

*God, may our prayers and dreams and songs,  
lead to a faith that takes on wrongs;  
that works for peace, and justice too,  
then will our prayers bring joy to you.*

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

### Offering



### Prayers of the People



*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 those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

### Closing Hymn

### My Life Flows On

VU 716

*My life flows on in endless song,  
above earth's lamentation.  
I hear the sweet, though far off hymn  
that hails a new creation.  
Through all the tumult and the strife,  
I hear the music ringing:  
It finds an echo in my soul -  
how can I keep from singing?*

*What though my joys and comforts die?  
My Saviour still is living.  
What though the shadows gather 'round?  
A new song Christ is giving.  
No storm can shake my inmost calm,  
while to that Rock I'm clinging:  
since Love commands both heaven and earth,  
how can I keep from singing?*

*I lift my eyes; the cloud grows thin;  
I see the blue above it;  
and day by day this pathway smooths,  
since first I learned to love it.  
The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart,  
a fountain ever springing:  
all things are mine since I am Christ's -  
how can I keep from singing?*

### **Benediction & Commissioning**



### **Postlude**

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## Other Resources for Today

And Now for Something Completely Different  
Cheryl Lawrie's blog: [writing – Hold this space](#)

## Other Lectionary Readings

### Psalm 25: 1-10

### New Revised Standard Version

To you, O God, I lift up my soul.

<sup>2</sup>O my God, in you I trust;  
do not let me be put to shame;  
do not let my enemies exult over me.

<sup>3</sup>Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;  
let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

<sup>4</sup>Make me to know your ways, O God;  
teach me your paths.

<sup>5</sup>Lead me in your truth, and teach me,  
for you are the God of my salvation;  
for you I wait all day long.

<sup>6</sup>Be mindful of your mercy, O God, and of your steadfast love,  
for they have been from of old.

<sup>7</sup>Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;  
according to your steadfast love remember me,  
for your goodness' sake, O God!

<sup>8</sup>Good and upright is the God;  
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.

<sup>9</sup>God leads the humble in what is right,  
and teaches the humble God's way.

<sup>10</sup>All God's paths are steadfast love and faithfulness,  
for those who keep God's covenant and decrees.

### 1 Peter 3: 18-22

### New Revised Standard Version

For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, <sup>19</sup> in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, <sup>20</sup> who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. <sup>21</sup> And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup> who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.