

BELLS CORNERS UNITED CHURCH
March 17, 2024, 10 am 5th Sunday in Lent

* *The live service will be broadcasted and recorded on YouTube, check your email for the link.*

Gathering Music:

**Indicates stand as able*

Hymn: Come Touch Our Hearts - More Voices #12

1. Come touch our hearts that we may know compassion,
 from failing embers build a blazing fire;
 love strong enough to overturn injustice,
 to seek a world more gracious, come touch and bless our hearts.

2. Come touch our souls that we may know and love you,
 your quiet presence all our fears dispel;
 create a space for spirit to grow in us,
 let life and beauty fill us, come touch and bless our souls.

3. Come touch our minds and teach us how to reason,
 set free our thoughts to wonder and to dream;
 help us to open doors of understanding,
 to welcome truth and wisdom, come touch and bless our minds.

4. Come touch us in the moments we are fragile,
 and in our weakness your great strength reveal;
 that we may rise to follow and to serve,
 steady now our nerve, come touch and bless our wills.

5. Come touch us now, this people who are gathered,
 To break the bread and share the cup of peace;
 That we may love you with our heart, our soul, our mind, our strength, our all,
 Come touch us with your grace.

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Lighting of Christ Candle: Acolyte: *Peter Chynoeyth, Gathering L/E 2021, p32. Used with permission.)*

Light and warmth are returning to the land outside these walls.

Light and warmth are represented in the light that glows from this flame.

May the symbol of this lit candle remind us of the reality of the land and the light and warmth of our presence with God.

Sung Response: Don't Be Afraid – More Voices #90

Don't be afraid. My love is stronger,	N'avez pas peur, mon amour est plus fort,
My love is stronger than your fear.	Il est plus fort que votre peur.
Don't be afraid. My love is stronger	N'avez pas peur, mon amour est plus fort;
And I have promised, promised to be always near.	Je vous ai promis d'être toujours là.

Welcome: Rev. Lorrie Lowes

Centering for Worship:

Call to Gather: (Responsively) Rev. Kim Vidal *Louise Hart, Gathering L/E 2018, p30. Used with permission.*

Come, join us in this sanctuary,

Where people come to praise God.

Come, join us in this sanctuary,

Where people look for quiet and comfort.

Come, join us in this sanctuary,
Where people come for wisdom and healing.
Come, God is with us. Let us worship.
We come to be with God.

Opening Prayer: (Together) *Daryl Webber, Gathering L/E 2021, p34. Used with permission.*

We oftentimes forget the sacred and eternal covenant we have with you, O God.
We trade a boundless spirit for a distrustful, mundane, and adventureless attitude.
Yet you are faithful.

In our Lenten season this year, help us to be open to your invitation to engage Christ's life
and be formed anew by our covenant with you.

Place opportunities along our journey;

Awaken us to that life you have given us.

This we pray as we remember Jesus' life and love. Amen.

Time for the Young at Heart: Rev. Kim Vidal

The Prayer of Jesus / Lord's Prayer:

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kin-dom 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 kin-dom, the power and the glory, Forever and ever, Amen.

***Children's Song: Behold, I Make All Things New** - More Voices #115

Behold, (*behold,*) behold, (*behold,*) I make all things new,
beginning with you and starting from today.

Behold, (*behold,*) behold, (*behold,*) I make all things new,
my promises true, for I am Christ the way.

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Prayer for Illumination: (Together) Reader: Marion Dugas (Fern Gibbard, Gathering L/E 2015, p35. Used with permission)

Open to us your words of life so they may be written as a new covenant upon our hearts. Amen.

Responsive Psalm Reading: Psalm 51 Voices United 776-777

Sung Response: God, I call to you for help, in your mercy hear my prayer.

Have mercy on me, O God, in your great kindness,

in the fullness of your mercy blot out my offences.

Wash away all my guilt, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my faults, and my sin is always before me. R

Against you, you only, have I sinned, and done evil in your sight,

so that you are justified in your sentence, and blameless in your judgement.

Guilty I have been from my birth, a sinner from the time of my conception.

But you desire truth in our inward being, therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean, **wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.**

Let me hear the sounds of joy and gladness, **let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.**

Turn away your face from my sins, **and blot out all my iniquities. R**

Put a new heart in me, O God, **and give me again a constant spirit.**

Do not cast me away from your presence, **do not take your holy spirit from me.**

Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and strengthen me with a willing spirit.

Then will I teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

O God, open my lips, **and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. R**

You desire no sacrifice, or I would give it; **you take no delight in burnt offerings.**
The sacrifice you accept, O God, is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. R

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34 A New Covenant New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

³¹ The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ No longer shall they teach one another or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD, for I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more.

May the light of Christ shine where the Word is spoken. **Thanks be to God!**

Ministry of Music: I Lift Up Mine Eyes – Allen Pote

BCUC Choir

Sermon: “Written on Your Heart”

Prayers of the People: *Bruce Sanguin is an ordained minister in the United Church of Canada. He is also a writer and a poet. As we lift up our joys and concerns today, I want to share his words with you. It is a prayer from his book, “If Darwin Prayed” – one we often use in our Lectionary Study. This one is entitled “Written on Our Hearts”.*

O God, we awaken to you.
We lift our hearts in celebration.
We thank you for all of this,
All of this that you have entrusted to us:
For the earth that feeds us,
And the air that fills us,
For the sun that gives us life,
And the water that overflows our cups.
We thank you for the resurrection that is today.

And for the new covenant
That you have written upon our hearts –
An inside-out love
Which nobody need teach us –
And for wisdom inscribed on the sacred scrolls of our souls,
Requiring no rewards or punishments to follow.
Simple reminders will do.

They are everywhere we turn:
In Jesus,
And throughout this wondrous universe –
Every body and every thing is a Post-it Note
Calling us back to a genetic covenant of love.
Thank you
For being there, and there, and there...
Amen.

Musical Offering: Gentle Voice – Susan & Lee Dengler

BCUC Choir

Invitation to Offer: The message God writes on our hearts includes pour love for the world. One way we show this love is by sharing our time, our talents, and our resources. I now invite you to offer your gifts of your gratitude to God's blessings. You will find the offering plates on the table as you enter the sanctuary. There are many additional ways you can financially support the work of the church – through PAR, by dropping into the office or by e-transfer. Thank you for your continued love and support of Bells Corners United Church.

***Offertory Hymn: When I Survey the Wondrous Cross -** Voices United #149, verse 4

Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.

***Offertory Prayer: (Responsively)** *Sandy Ferguson, Gathering L/E 2015, p35. Used with permission.*

**God, you gave us the gift of the law.
Then you gave us the gift of your son.
We offer thanks, through the sharing of these gifts
That they may witness to the world our faith in your Kin-dom to come. Amen.**

***Closing Hymn: Deep in Our Hearts -** More Voices #154

1. Deep in our hearts there is a common vision;
Deep in our hearts there is a common song;
Deep in our hearts there is a common story,
Telling Creation that we are one.

2. Deep in our hearts there is a core is a common purpose;
Deep in our hearts there is a common goal;
Deep in our hearts there is a sacred message,
Justice and peace in harmony.

3. Deep in our hearts there is a common longing;
Deep in our hearts there is a common theme;
Deep in our hearts there is a common current,
Flowing to freedom like a stream.

4. Deep in our hearts there is a common vision;
Deep in our hearts there is a common song;
Deep in our hearts there is a common story,
Telling Creation that we are one.

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***Sending Forth:** *Elaine Bidgood Sweet, Gathering L/E 2015, p36. Used with permission.*

With the imprint of God's covenant upon you,
You are sent out in the name of God
Forgiven, loved, freed.
Go in peace to serve with all God has given you.
And the people say **AMEN!**

Sung Blessing: Go Now in Peace – More Voices #211

Go now in peace .. guided by the light .. of Christ,
So you may be .. nourished by the Word .. of Life.
Repeat