

BELLS CORNERS UNITED CHURCH

July 16, 2023

Worship Leader: Rev. Lorrie Lowes

Women in the Bible – Deborah

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

Gathering Music:

*** Hymn:** Morning Has Broken – VU409

1. Morning has broken like the first morning
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!
Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!
2. Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven,
Like the first dewfall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,
Sprung in completeness where God's feet pass.
3. Ours is the sunlight! Ours is the morning
Born of the one light Eden saw play!
Praise with elation, praise every morning,
God's recreation of the new day!

Lighting of Christ Candle:

Acolyte: Eithne Barker

Each time we gather in this place of worship, we light this candle...
as a reminder that where we are gathered, Christ is with us...
as a reminder that we are called to be bearers of the light in times of shadow...
as a reminder that love illumines everything, even us...
as a reminder that this love-light is meant to shine forth in the world.
Let us bear the light... let us be the light.

Sung Response: Where Two or Three are Gathered – More Voices 14

Where two or three are gathered in my name
I am there, I am there.

Welcome & Centering for Worship:

Rev. Lorrie Lowes

Good Morning! I welcome you this morning, friends, family and visitors, for the third service in our series on women in the Bible. This week, we will hear about Deborah, a woman who was less an outsider than many of the other women in our scriptures, in fact she was a person with power - a judge and a prophet.

Please join us in the Main Hall after the service for coffee, refreshments and conversation. announcements... Camp Awesome ... Summer office hours... Charles Barker's birthday Friends, I now invite you to centre yourselves in the company of this faith family and in the presence of the Spirit, as we gather for worship.

Call to Gather: (Responsively) (Jean Leckie, Gathering Pentecost 1 2021. Used with permission.)

Our God has blessed us with power and responsibility.

We give thanks for our blessings.

Our God has called on us to defend the meek and protect the truth.

We seek wisdom to do what is right.

Our God desires our praise and worship.

We raise our voices with joy and gladness.

Prayer of Approach: (Unison) (Robin Wardlaw, Gathering Pentecost 1 2021. Used with permission.)

Wisdom of God, we awaken and the day calls to us.

May we find you in our days.

We gather here and your Spirit calls to us.

May we find you in our midst.

When we worship, we experience the world as you experience it,

Where your word and the world lead us today. Amen.

Time for the Young at Heart

Erin Berard

The Prayer of Jesus / The 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.

***Song: Following Where Jesus Leads** © Kate Abba and Julia Adams

Prayer for Illumination: (Unison)

Reader: Alison Bridgewater

(Sheryl McLeod, Gathering Pentecost 1 2021. Used with permission.)

We gather this day to experience something new in the old, old stories.

We gather this day to simply be with you.

Open our senses, Loving God, so that we may experience you extravagantly
and know you more deeply. Amen.

The Scripture Reading: Judges 4 (The Living Bible)

4 After Ehud's death the people of Israel again sinned against the Lord, ²⁻³ so the Lord let them be conquered by King Jabin of Hazor, in Canaan. The commander-in-chief of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-hagoiim. He had nine hundred iron chariots and made life unbearable for the Israelis for twenty years. But finally they begged the Lord for help.

⁴ Israel's leader at that time, the one who was responsible for bringing the people back to God, was Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth. ⁵ She held court at a place now called "Deborah's Palm Tree," between Ramah and Bethel, in the hill country of Ephraim; and the Israelites came to her to decide their disputes. ⁶ One day she summoned Barak (son of Abinoam), who lived in Kedesh, in the land of Naphtali, and said to him, "The Lord God of Israel has commanded you to mobilize ten thousand men from the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun. Lead them to Mount Tabor ⁷ to fight King Jabin's mighty army with all his chariots, under General Sisera's command. The Lord says, 'I will draw them to the Kishon River, and you will defeat them there.'" ⁸ "I'll go, but only if you go with me!" Barak told her. ⁹ "All right," she replied, "I'll go with you; but I'm warning you now that the honor of conquering Sisera will go to a woman instead of to you!" So she went with him to Kedesh.

¹⁰ When Barak summoned the men of Zebulun and Naphtali to mobilize at Kedesh, ten thousand men volunteered. And Deborah marched with them. ¹¹ (Heber, the Kenite—the Kenites were the

descendants of Moses' father-in-law Hobab—had moved away from the rest of his clan, and had been living in various places as far away as the Oak of Zaananim, near Kedesh.)¹² When General Sisera was told that Barak and his army were camped at Mount Tabor,¹³ he mobilized his entire army, including the nine hundred iron chariots, and marched from Harosheth-hagoiim to the Kishon River.¹⁴ Then Deborah said to Barak, “Now is the time for action! The Lord leads on! He has already delivered Sisera into your hand!” So Barak led his ten thousand men down the slopes of Mount Tabor into battle.¹⁵ Then the Lord threw the enemy into a panic, both the soldiers and the charioteers, and Sisera leaped from his chariot and escaped on foot.¹⁶ Barak and his men chased the enemy and the chariots as far as Harosheth-hagoiim, until all of Sisera's army was destroyed; not one man was left alive.¹⁷ Meanwhile, Sisera had escaped to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, for there was a mutual-assistance agreement between King Jabin of Hazor and the clan of Heber.¹⁸ Jael went out to meet Sisera and said to him, “Come into my tent, sir. You will be safe here in our protection. Don't be afraid.” So he went into her tent, and she covered him with a blanket.¹⁹ “Please give me some water,” he said, “for I am very thirsty.” So she gave him some milk and covered him again.²⁰ “Stand in the door of the tent,” he told her, “and if anyone comes by, looking for me, tell them that no one is here.”²¹ Then Jael took a sharp tent peg and a hammer and, quietly creeping up to him as he slept, she drove the peg through his temples and into the ground; and so he died, for he was fast asleep from weariness.²² When Barak came by looking for Sisera, Jael went out to meet him and said, “Come, and I will show you the man you are looking for.” So he followed her into the tent and found Sisera lying there dead, with the tent peg through his temples.²³ So that day the Lord used Israel to subdue King Jabin of Canaan.²⁴ And from that time on Israel became stronger and stronger against King Jabin, until he and all his people were destroyed.

May we find wisdom in the ancient stories of our faith. Amen.

Ministry of Music: As the Deer Pants for the Water – pg766 Ladies quartet

Sermon: “Deborah: a Woman Warrior”

Rev. Lorrie Lowes

Prayers of the People: Rev. Lorrie

Holy One, As we hear the ancient stories through our modern lens, we are struck by the roles that people in the background played in the history of our quest to know you and follow your path to building your kin-dom on earth. Be with us this month as we uncover the stories of women who heard your call and took the risk to answer at a time when women's voices were suppressed.

God of us all, We come to you this day, full of gratitude for our many blessings.

But we also come seeking guidance and help.

We open our hearts and minds to your Wisdom.

Lord, hear our prayers, and in your mercy answer.

We pray for our world, for all that you have created and all the gifts it gives to us.

Grant us the wisdom to use these gifts in a way that supports and nurtures all it encompasses, from the planet itself to all that inhabit it.

We pray for the environment as it struggles to heal itself from the stress we humans have put upon it...

We pray for the creatures of the air, the land, and the water...

We pray for people everywhere, our brothers and sisters around the world, as they cope with the climate crisis and hardships such as war, injustice, hunger, and fear...

We pray for Canada and for the leaders who we have chosen to guide us through these turbulent times.

Grant them the wisdom and the compassion to take us in a direction that is pleasing to you and beneficial to all...

Lord, hear our prayers, and in your mercy answer.

We pray for this faith community,

For those who are suffering from illness, both physical and mental...

For those who are feeling isolated and lonely... For those feeling anxious...
For those who are missing loved ones through distance, illness, or death...
Grant us the wisdom to see where we can reach out to each other to both give and receive caring support.
We bring to you these prayers we express out loud and all the prayers we hold in the silence of
our hearts...
Lord, hear our prayers, and in your mercy answer. Amen.

Musical Offering: Behold How Pleasant – pg 856 Ladies quartet

Invitation to Offer:

We are invited to offer our ourselves in service to others. And now we are invited to share our
gifts for the work of the church – in our own community and throughout the world.
You will find the offering plates on the narthex table. 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: Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow – VU #541***

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God all creatures, high and low;
Give thanks to God in love made known: Creator, Word, and Spirit, One.

****Offertory Prayer: (Unison)*** (adapted from Frances Flook, Gathering Pentecost 1 2015. Used with permission.)

God of justice, God of grace,

We pray that through this offering we will begin to be more fully your people. Through
these gifts and our lives may we help in bringing the dream of your kin-dom to this world.

****Hymn: My Soul Cries Out – MV120***

1. My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great,
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things
that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,
and my weakness you did not spurn,
so from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?

Refrain: My heart shall sing of the day you bring.

Let the fires of your justice burn.

*Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
and the world is about to turn!*

2. Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me,
and your mercy will last from the depths of the past
to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame,
and to those who would for you yearn,
you will show your might, put the strong to flight,
for the world is about to turn. *Refrain*
3. From the halls of power to the fortress tower,
not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice tears,

ev'ry tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more, for the food they can never earn;
there are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed,
for the world is about to turn. *Refrain*

4. Though the nations rage from age to age,
we remember who holds us fast:
God's mercy must deliver us
from the conqueror's crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forebears heard is the promise which holds us bound,
'til the spear and rod can be crushed by God,
who is turning the world around. *Refrain*

***Sending Forth:** (Anna Atkinson, Gathering Pentecost 1 2022. Used with permission.)

May the One we serve, bless you and keep you.

May the One who governs us, show you a shining smile, for you are good in the Maker's sight!

May the One who rules by love alone, grant you peace. Amen.

Sung Blessing: Like A Rock - More Voices #92

Like a rock, like a rock, God is under our feet.

Like the starry night sky, God is over our head.

Like the sun on the horizon, God is ever before.

Like the river runs to ocean, our home is in God evermore.

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