

BELLS CORNERS UNITED CHURCH
September 25, 2022 – 10 am
Creation Time 3 - 16th Sunday after Pentecost
Creation encourages: seek my intelligence!

** The live service will be broadcasted and recorded on YouTube, check your email for the link.
The audio recording of the live service should be available by phone Monday afternoon at 613- 820-8104*

Spark for the Congregation:

(Natasha Pearen, Gathering, Pentecost 2, 2022 Year C. Used with Permission)

What does it mean to be designated by God as caretakers for all that lives on our planet? The Jeremiah passage can offer us new insight if we receive it as God's cry about the sick state of the earth. How can we be the balm of healing in the world?

Eco-Challenge: This week, the Ottawa West End Community Chaplaincy (OWECC) has issued a challenge for us that involves being aware of the blessings in our lives – many of which come to us at a cost to the environment or to the unfair use of human resources in third world countries. Pick up your “Thanksgiving Calendar” today from the narthex table and, as you count your blessings, consider how these advantages we enjoy affect the environment and those who take part in the manufacturing process. (Funds raised through this calendar activity will be equally shared between OWECC and BCUC)

Gathering Music:

Opening Hymn: Spirit God, Be Our Breath **MV 150**

1. Spirit God: be our breath, be our song.
Blow through us, bringing strength to move on.
Our world seems inward, defensive, withdrawn...
Spirit God, be our song.

2. Patient God: soothe our pride, calm our fear.
Comfort us. When we know you are near
We grow more certain, our vision is clear.
Patient God, calm our fear.

3. Loving God: be our voice, be our prayer.
Reaching out, joining hands as we share,
We seek your guidance through friendship and care.
Loving God, be our prayer.

4. Spirit God, be our breath, be our song.
Blow through us, bringing strength to move on.
Through change, through challenge, we'll meet the new dawn...
Spirit God, be our song.

Welcome & Centering for Worship **Rev. Lorrie**

Good morning! And, in the name of Jesus, our mentor and guide, welcome to this time of worship as we leave the warm summer days behind us, a time when the vibrant colours remind us that there is beauty in change. It is great to be gathered here together.

We have some sad news today. I would like to ask that you keep Diane and all the Dormer family in your prayers this week as they deal with the loss of Bill – a man who was so active in this congregation for many years and who has had to deal with difficult health issues for such a long time. He will be greatly missed by this faith family and by all his friends and loved ones. We also want to acknowledge that today marks one year since the passing of Susan TeGrotenhuis. I know this is a difficult day for Abe, Katrina, and Heidi and we are glad that they are here among a faith family who cares for them deeply. We hope that you can feel the love and support that surrounds you here.

There are many announcements today both in our slides and on the website. I would just like to highlight a couple of them:

You may have noticed the colourful calendars on the narthex table. This is a fundraising initiative of OWECC. Each day of the calendar for the month of October features a blessing in our lives that we may take for granted and offers an opportunity to make an offering in thanks. OWECC recognizes that it is not just the chaplaincy that has suffered financially over the past few years of Covid, but that our supporting churches have also suffered – and so, the proceeds from these offerings will be equally split between the chaplaincy and our church.

As well, you will see some information in the announcements and on posters in the hallway to announce that we are working on a new Photo Directory for BCUC. This was an initiative that began just about the time that the world shut down to prevent the spread of the pandemic. I think it is even more appropriate that we are doing this now - we may need these new photos in order to recognize each other as we emerge from our Covid cocoons! Our last Photo Directory was done in 2016! Even if you had your picture taken when we first started this process two years ago, please come sit for a new one! There is no obligation to buy prints but every opportunity to do so if you wish. They will be ready in time for Christmas gift giving.

Please take the time this week to read the other announcements in your email or on the website. It is a busy time of year when many things are happening in the church.

And now, let's welcome Jesus into our midst with the lighting of a candle as we prepare our hearts and minds for worship.

Lighting of Christ Candle:

Acolytes: TeGrotenhuis family

(Beth W. Johnston, Gathering Pentecost 1 2022, p34. Used with permission.)

In a time of change and confusion, we need a source of unwavering light.

In a time of transition and change, we need a light to show us the way.

May the light of Christ be this light for every one of us.

May it shine in our hearts all of our days.

***Call to Gather: (Responsively)**

Rev. Kim Vidal

(Beth W Johnston, Gathering Pentecost 2 2022, p25. Used with permission)

God's promise of new life for us and for all of creation is clear.

All we want is the old one back again.

God's promise of the renewing of the whole of creation comes.

We want to preserve the advantages we have.

We receive your promise of good news and abundance for all.

**But we worry if it will cost us too much when everyone has enough,
and when all of creation is cared for.**

May we accept the challenge of living into God's care for all creation.

In worship, may we embrace true faith and living the gospel.

Opening Prayer: (Responsively)

(Richard Bott, Gathering Pentecost 2 2019, p 28. Used with permission.)

O God, as we look at the land, the water, the air, and all its inhabitants,
we can hear and feel their cries.

Help us to notice,

Help us to act,

Help us to heal.

With our words and our actions, let us be re-creators in your love.

In Christ's name we pray.

Amen.

Special Music

Storytime and Prayer of Jesus:

Rev. Kim

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

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.

***Hymn: What Can I Do? MV191**

What can I do? What can I bring?

What can I say? What can I sing?

I'll sing with joy. I'll say a prayer.

I'll bring my love. I'll do my share.

Prayer for Illumination: (Unison)

Reader: Alison Bridgewater

(Beth W Johnston, Gathering Pentecost 2 2022, p39. Used with permission)

God of the ages,

Through these passages from long ago, touch us and teach us in the here and now. You are our God, and you call us just as you called others long ago. Open hearts to receive your call this day. Amen.

The Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 8:18 - 9:1 (The Message)

18-22 I drown in grief.
I'm heartsick.
Oh, listen! Please listen! It's the cry of my dear people
reverberating through the country.
Is GOD no longer in Zion?
Has the King gone away?
Can you tell me why they flaunt their plaything-gods,
their silly, imported no-gods before me?
The crops are in, the summer is over,
but for us nothing's changed.
We're still waiting to be rescued.
For my dear broken people, I'm heartbroken.
I weep, seized by grief.
Are there no healing ointments in Gilead?
Isn't there a doctor in the house?
So why can't something be done
to heal and save my dear, dear people?

* * *

9 1-2 I wish my head were a well of water
and my eyes fountains of tears
So I could weep day and night
for casualties among my dear, dear people.
At times I wish I had a wilderness hut,
a backwoods cabin,
Where I could get away from my people
and never see them again.
They're a faithless, feckless bunch,
a congregation of degenerates.

Hear what God Creator is saying to all of us.
We listen and we respond with action.

Ministry of Music:

Sermon: "Is There No Balm in Gilead?"

Rev. Lorrie

Moment of Reflection:

Prayers of the People:

Rev. Lorrie

Awaken us this day, Holy One, to the reality of the world around us.

Help us see the wonder of your creation,

The joy and beauty that is present in each day.

Awaken us to all the reasons for celebration in our lives.

As a faith community, we celebrate the birthdays of David Stafford, Noah Berard, and Ellen Boynton today.

We need reasons to celebrate, O God, in this time that seems so full of bad news.

Help us see that reasons to celebrate are still here, every day.

But, open our eyes and our hearts also to the things that make us sad...

The things that make us afraid...

The things that make us uncomfortable...

Awaken us to the wounds and the sorrows in the world that need healing.

Help us see the places where we have caused harm, even without intention.

Help us see the places where we can be healers.

Help us see that the balm of Gilead is not an elusive magic potion but something that is already in our hands.

Give us the patience and the perseverance to do what we can, here and now, to ease immediate pain, to soothe the wounds and the worries, to open the path to the long process of true healing.

Give us the vision and the hope to know that relationships can be mended: our relationships with others, our relationship with the earth, our relationship with you.

Help us be the balm of Gilead that Jeremiah sought.

Help us heed his ancient words,

And help us heed the modern words that Bruce Sanguin offers in this new prayer:

("Coming to Our Senses" by Bruce Sanguin, [If Darwin Prayed](#))

O Holy One,

We are an impetuous lot,

Demanding that our every whim be catered to,

And allowing desire to lead us down the path of indignity.

We walk upon the earth as the prodigal species,

Taking the inheritance of a fourteen-billion-year-old universe

And a five-billion-year-old planet,

And squandering it in dissolute living.

Now, O Source of All Inheritance,
We come to our senses.
Now, O compassionate One,
We see the error of our ways.
Now, O Forgiver of Foolishness,
We seek to make amends.

Awaken us to a wonder that issues in humility
And drops us to our knees.
Transform our desire into a burning willingness
To reconcile ourselves with one another,
To heal our relationship to other species,
To see life as pure gift,
And to return with an offering of humility
To your awaiting arms.
Amen

Music Offering: For the Beauty of the Earth – arr. North BCUC Choir
(borrowed from Wall St United Church, Brockville)

Minute for Social Action: **Ellie Topp**

Invitation to Offer: **Rev. Kim**

(Fern Gibbard, Gathering Pentecost 1 2022, p47. Used with permission.)

How privileged we are that the Creator, God of heaven and earth, who cares intimately for all creation, asks and allows us to work to bring the life and hope, the peace and justice of God's kin-dom into reality.

The work of the church requires support in many ways: through prayer, through volunteers, and through donations. We are not passing the offering plates this morning as we continue to follow health protocols, but you will find those plates on the table in the narthex. There are many additional ways you can financially support the work of the church – through PAR, by dropping into the office or using the mail slot by the kitchen door, or by e-transfer. Thank you for your continued love and support to Bells Corners United Church.

Offertory Prayer: (Responsively)

(David Sparks, Gathering Pentecost 2 2016, p43. Used with permission.)

Graceful God,
As we offer, you meet us,
As we offer, you challenge us,
As we offer, you empower us,

**As we offer, you encourage us,
As we offer, you use our talents.
Bless our offering. Amen.**

***Closing Hymn: There Is a Balm in Gilead VU612**

Refrain:

There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole.
There is a balm in Gilead to heal the sin-sick soul.

1. Sometimes I feel discouraged, and think my work's in vain,
But then the Holy Spirit revives my soul again. (*Refrain*)
2. If you cannot preach like Peter, if you cannot pray like Paul,
You can tell the love of Jesus and say, "He loves us all." (*Refrain*)
3. I may feel small and helpless, but I can do my part.
I'll be the balm to those I meet and that will be a start. (*Refrain*)

New Refrain:

There is a balm in Gilead to create this world anew
I can spread the balm of Gilead in everything I do.

***Sending Forth:**

Rev. Lorrie

(Beth W. Johnston, Gathering Pentecost 1 2022, p49. Used with permission.)

The world is waiting for a message of love and new life; go and proclaim this message
with all that you have.

We go, knowing that we are not alone. Amen!

Sung Blessing: Go Now in Peace (Besig)

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 (Spirit) from above
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love. Amen.