

## BELLS CORNERS UNITED CHURCH

April 7, 2024, 10 am 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter / Membership Sunday

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

### **Gathering Music:**

*\*Indicates stand as able*

### **Acknowledgement of Territory:** Rev. Lorrie Lowes

(Jamie Miller, Gathering, ACE 2022/2023 Year A. Used with permission.)

As we begin our worship service, we acknowledge that we are gathered on the unceded lands of the Algonquin-Anishinaabe peoples. For thousands of years, they have cared for the land even as the land cared for them. Guided by the wisdom of their traditions and their ancestors, they have been taught that the circle of life is embraced and embracing. Let us carry on this wisdom. Let us live into right relations with love and respect.

### **\*Hymn: In the Bulb There is A Flower - Voices United #703**

1 In the bulb there is a flower;	From the past will come the future;
In the seed, an apple tree;	What it holds, a mystery,
In cocoons, a hidden promise:	Unrevealed until its season,
Butterflies will soon be free!	Something God alone can see.
In the cold and snow of winter	
There's a spring that waits to be,	3 In our end is our beginning;
Unrevealed until its season,	In our time, infinity;
Something God alone can see.	In our doubt there is believing;
	In our life, eternity.
2 There's a song in every silence,	In our death, a resurrection;
Seeking word and melody;	At the last, a victory,
There's a dawn in every darkness	Unrevealed until its season,
Bringing hope to you and me.	Something God alone can see.

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### **Lighting of Christ Candle:** Acolyte: Ruth & Ian Howes

The radiance of Christ's light shines on us.

We are gathered together knowing that the Risen One is here among us.

With grateful hearts, let us welcome the light of Christ.

### **Sung Response: This Little Light of Mine - verse 1**

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine! 3x Let it shine! 3x

### **Welcome:**

Rev. Kim Vidal Good morning! I welcome and greet you in the name of

Jesus Christ on this second Sunday of Easter, also known as Low Sunday. After a spiritually intense and emotionally draining week, particularly the celebration of Easter Sunday, we are so ready for a low-key Sunday. Today, we are welcoming new members and we celebrate their presence among us. Join us for our coffee fellowship in the main hall with a welcoming cake and sandwiches provided by the Affirming Circle after the service and plan to stay for another workshop as we explore becoming an affirming ministry. Childcare will be provided. Highlight some announcements...

### **Centering for Worship:**

Friends, I now invite you to centre yourself in the presence of our welcoming God who calls us to gather with a joyful heart and alleluias. Let us gather in worship.

### **Call to Gather: (Responsively)** Rev. Lorrie

The door to the upper room was shut and barred,

**but the Risen Christ stood among them.**

The entrance of our hearts may be sealed,

**but the Spirit of Jesus embraced us all.**

The gateways to our lives may be rusty and stiff,  
**but the love of Christ opens the gate and welcomes all who hunger for God.**  
Let us worship the Holy One and give praise to God.

*Prayer of Approach:*<sup>1</sup> (Together)

**Creator God, we bring our doubts and our questions,  
and as you touch our second thoughts,  
you turn them into adventures.  
Come now, O spirit,  
and create a moment of awakening  
where we can sense you among us  
and the world can witness in us  
the good news that resurrection brings. Amen.**

*Special Music:*

*Welcoming New Members*

Marg Eddy – Transfer from St. Paul’s Richmond United  
Don & Anne McQuoids – Transfer from Emmanuel Foxboro United  
Virginia Notley – Transfer from Britannia United  
Dorothy Peck – Renewal of Baptismal Vows (formerly from the Anglican Church)

*Time for the Young at Heart:* Rev. Lorrie

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: Jesus is Alive Today* (Trad. East African)

Jesus is Alive Today x3	Yeh-su yu ha-ee leh-o x3
Oh praise his name!	Ah-see-fee-weh!
Jesus is Alive Today x3	Yeh-su yu ha-ee leh-o x3
Oh praise his name!	Ah-see-fee-weh!

*Prayer for Illumination: (Together)* Reader: Ellen Boynton

**Loving God, like Thomas, we were not in that room when Jesus appeared among the disciples breathing peace. With your Word of Life, help us to understand that the Risen Christ is in our midst. May we reflect on the Good News of your love as we listen to the scripture. Amen.**

*Psalm Hymn:* Behold How Pleasant – Voices United #133 (*Remain Seated*)

*Refrain:* Behold how pleasant, how good it is! 2x

- 1- How pleasant and harmonious when God’s people are together:  
fragrant as precious oil when running fresh on Aaron’s beard. *R*
- 2- How pleasant and harmonious when God’s people are together:  
fresh like the morning dew that falls on Zion’s holy hill. *R*
- 3- How pleasant and harmonious when God’s people are together:  
there is where God bestows the blessing, life forevermore. *R*

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<sup>1</sup> Inspired by the prayer of Peter Chynoweth, Gathering, Lent/Easter 2021, Year B.

**Gospel Reading: John 20: 19-31 (NRSV Updated Edition)**

**Jesus Appears to the Disciples**

<sup>19</sup> When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” <sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” <sup>22</sup> When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

**Jesus and Thomas** <sup>24</sup> But Thomas (who was called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.” <sup>26</sup> A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” <sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” <sup>28</sup> Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” <sup>29</sup> Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”

**The Purpose of This Book** <sup>30</sup> Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. <sup>31</sup> But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah,<sup>[c]</sup> the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Hear what these words are saying to all of us. **We listen and we respond with action.**

**Ministry of Music:**

**Sermon:** “Jesus: A Peaceful Presence”      Rev. Kim

**Prayers of the People:** Let us gather our hearts in prayer.

Surprising God, like Thomas, we often find it difficult to see signs of your welcoming presence, to believe that your Spirit is alive among us. Through Jesus Christ, open our eyes to receive your gift of peace in our lives; for coming through the locked doors of pride and isolation when our fears overwhelm us; for revealing yourself to the disciples, when all they could think of was their grief and fear of the unknown. Thank you for teaching us to be patient with Thomas in our quest for proof and unanswered questions that we carry.

Like Thomas, we sometimes fail to experience the Spirit of Christ because we are not paying attention. Remind us that we experience him in the lives of those transformed by your grace. We have seen him in the faces of everyone whose love encourages us. Call us to bring healing to the scarred people and places of the world.

We thank you to all who are connected to us and who need care and compassion. We hold them in our hearts and pray for the healing of mind, body and soul. We pray for those awaiting medical test results and those who are facing treatment and surgery. We pray for those who are alone, who are alienated from their families, those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. We ask for your healing love and blessings for those who are in the hospitals and nursing homes. Sustain us with courage and comfort us with your peace. Now, in silence, we hear the deepest concerns of our hearts.

Empowering God, may we live the Easter Spirit of renewal, greening and growth, this day and always. Give us peace and remind us of your welcoming presence, especially as we have welcomed these new members to this faith community. Help us to see you this week, to take note, to experience the beauty of this earth or hear your grace in the words that someone speaks to us. These we pray in the name of Welcoming Christ. Amen.

**Musical Offering:**

**Invitation to Offer:**

Rev. Lorrie

We are recipients of the gifts of a beautiful creation, the good green earth and all living things that live here with us. We come together to thank God and to offer our gifts so that the ministry of this church will continue to grow and be a blessing to the world. I now invite you to offer your gifts of time, talents and resources as expressions 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: What Can I Do? - More Voices #191**

*(Words & Music: Paul Rumbolt and Michele McCarthy; arr. Alan C. Whitmore, 2005)*

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.

**\*Offertory Prayer: (Together)**

**Holy God, help us to share your love so that this offering is multiplied  
and brings relief to those needing them. In the name of Jesus, the Risen One. Amen.**

**\*Closing Hymn: "Go Make a Difference" - More Voices #209**

*Refrain:* Go make a difference. We can make difference.  
Go make a difference in the world. (2x)

1. We are the salt of the earth, called to let the people see,  
the love of God for you and me.  
We are the light of the world, not to be hidden but be seen.  
Go make a difference in the world.
2. We are the hands of Christ reaching out to those in need,  
The face of God for all to see.  
We are the spirit of hope; we are the voice of peace.  
Go make a difference in the world.
3. So let your love shine on, let it shine for all to see.  
Go make a difference in the world.  
And the spirit of Christ will be with us as we go.  
Go make a difference in the world!

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***Sending Forth:*<sup>2</sup> (Responsively) Rev. Kim**

May the Risen Christ come through the locked doors of our hearts  
**and make his home deep within us and in our world.**

May the Risen Christ find here hospitality and welcome,  
**justice and peace for all.**

May the blessing of God be ours as we leave:

**The blessing of doubt to be our guide;**

The blessing of peace to calm our troubled spirits;

**The blessing of friendship to be our companion.**

Go in peace. **Amen.**

***Sung Blessing: May the God of Peace* – More Voices #224**

May the God of peace.. and of all good,  
May the God of peace.. and of all good be always with you.  
Amen! May God's peace be with you. A..men!  
*repeat*

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<sup>2</sup> Bob Root, Gathering, Lent/Easter 2015.