

BELLS CORNERS UNITED CHURCH

January 14, 2024, 10 am 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

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

Gathering Music

**Indicates stand as able*

***Hymn: I, the Lord of Sea and Sky** – Voices United #509

1. I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in deepest sin my hand will save.
I who made the stars of night, I will make the darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

Refrain: Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.

2. I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain,
I have wept for love of them; they turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send? *Refrain*

3. I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame,
I will set a feast for them; my hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send? *Refrain*

Lighting of Christ Candle: Acolytes: Crow-Morris Family

Lift up your eyes and look around; wherever the Spirit takes you,
look for the light and follow Jesus, the Light of the world.

Sung Response: O Radiant Christ, Incarnate Word – Voices United #84 verse 4

O Light of Nations, fill the earth; Our faith and hope and love renew.
Come, lead the peoples to your peace, As stars once led the way to you.

Welcome: Rev. Kim Vidal Good morning! On this 2nd Sunday after Epiphany,

I welcome you to this sacred place of connections where God's presence and the sacredness of life are embraced by all.
Welcome in the spirit of Jesus Christ in whom we live and move and have our being.
Join us for coffee and fellowship after the service in the main hall. Highlight some announcements.

Centering for Worship:

Friends, in the church and in the world, in our tears and in our joy, we meet God, who offers light to the world. Let us come as faithful people, centering ourselves on this light as we worship together.

Call to Gather: (Responsively) Rev. Lorrie Lowes

(Heather McClure, Gathering, ACE 2016-2017, Used with permission.)

Epiphany is a time of revelation, a time when we see things
for the first time or in a new light.

Open our eyes to see your light, O God.

Epiphany is a time when we hear God's call
and all that God is calling us to be.

Open our ears to hear your calling, O God.

Epiphany is a time when we recognize God's grace,
abundant and overflowing.

Open our hearts to receive your grace, O God.

Epiphany is a time for worship,
that we might be called the light of Christ.

Let us open our lives to love God.

Opening Prayer: (Together) (Richard Bott, Gathering ACE 2022-2023, Year A. Used with permission.)

**God of all grace, Spirit of all love, Christ alive in our lives,
open us to the possibilities of today, we pray.
Give us minds that wonder, hearts that seek,
and lives that offer healing – so that wherever we go,
we might live the invitation to “come and see”
and to choose abundant life. Alleluia! Amen!**

Special Music: You Gotta Sing When the Spirit Says Sing – Trad. CGS with Erin Berard

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:*

Spirit, be our breath of life. Alleluia! 2x

Spirit, be our wind of change. Alleluia! 2x

Spirit, help us share our gifts. Alleluia! 2x

Spirit, help us live God’s love. Alleluia! 2x

Prayer for Illumination: (Together) Reader: Cathy Dowsett

**Light of the world, may your Word shine out from the deepest corners casting light
upon our path. Amen.**

Responsive Psalm Reading: Psalm 139 :1-6, 13 – 18 (Voices United pg861)

Sung Response: God, you have searched me, you know me through and through.

O God, you have searched me and known me.

You know when I sit down and rise up, you discern my thoughts from afar.

You discern my path and the places I rest,

You are familiar with all my ways.

Before a word is on my tongue, you know it, O God, completely.

You guard me from behind and before.

And lay your hand upon me.

It I beyond my knowledge, it is a mystery, I cannot fathom it. R

It was you who formed my inward parts’
you fashioned me in my mother’s womb.

I praise you, for I am fearfully, wonderfully made.

Wonderous are your works, that I know very well.

My frame was not hidden from you when I was being fashioned in secret

intricately woven in the mystery of clay.

**Your eyes saw my substance taking shape,
In your book my every day was recorded,
All my days were fashioned, even before they came to be. R**

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 3: 1-20 (NRSVUE) Samuel's Calling and Prophetic Activity

3 Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli. The word of the Lord was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.² At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; ³ the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was.⁴ Then the Lord called, "Samuel! Samuel!"⁵ and he said, "Here I am!"⁵ and ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie down again." So he went and lay down. ⁶ The Lord called again, "Samuel!" Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, my son; lie down again."⁷ Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. ⁸ The Lord called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. ⁹ Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

¹⁰ Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening." ¹¹ Then the Lord said to Samuel, "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle. ¹² On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. ¹³ For I have told him that I am about to punish his house forever for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God,¹⁴ and he did not restrain them. ¹⁴ Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be expiated by sacrifice or offering forever."

¹⁵ Samuel lay there until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the Lord. Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. ¹⁶ But Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son." He said, "Here I am." ¹⁷ Eli said, "What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also, if you hide anything from me of all that he told you." ¹⁸ So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. Then he said, "It is the Lord; let him do what seems good to him."

¹⁹ As Samuel grew up, the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. ²⁰ And all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of the Lord.

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

Ministry of Music: God, be in Our Hearts, be in Our Homes – Schram BCUC music

Sermon: "Sam is the Man!" Rev. Kim

Prayers of the People: Rev. Kim

Holy God, as you have called the young Samuel in his opportune time, you speak to us in unexpected places, and with unexpected voices. And we aren't always sure how to listen. We aren't always sure who to listen to. We aren't always sure if we're really hearing you. You do not only call us to follow you, but you also engage us to tell others about your presence and to pass on your love to the world. Strengthen us in our calling. When we see the world in turmoil, help us to respond. When we see poverty, help us to reach out. When we see grief, help us to give comfort. When we see despair, help us to bring hope and when we see hunger, help us to provide. Compassionate and loving God, shine your light in our hearts and minds to guide us in dealing with our personal fears and challenges. Continue to enliven and encourage all those who serve you in this church. Guide their wisdom and help the congregation gain insight into your message. You have given us the ability to make incredible things happen. Give us the strength to deliver your will in our daily actions and attitudes. Remind us again to listen, despite the tumult of the world, for Your holy presence that hovers near to whisper the true purpose of our lives. Help us to see You in the moment-by-moment possibilities to live honestly, to act courageously, and to speak from the wisdom of our hearts.

God of healing and comfort, you have called us to give a word of encouragement to those overcome with illness and grief and those who face diverse challenges in life. We pray for our sisters and brothers lifted up in our prayer chalice and for those who need healing and care. Touch them with Your healing spirit -- embrace them in your gentle love. We pray that those known to you, and those whose names are in our hearts, may receive strength and courage in your love. We pray for those who are in special need and named in our Prayer List. We name in silence all those for whom we have concern...

Compassionate God, we pray that you might speak to the hearts of all people throughout the world. May your light so shine for those who are full of fear; for those who experience conflict, prejudice, hatred, persecution, and poverty. Through the warmth of your light may they sense justice, feel your love, and know peace. All these we ask in Jesus name who calls us in the right directions. Amen.

Musical Offering: Just a Closer Walk with Thee – Lojeski BCUC Choir

Invitation to Offer: Rev. Lorrie

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: In Loving Partnership** – Voices United #603 verse 1

In loving partnership, we come, seeking O God, your will to do.
Our prayers and actions now receive, we freely offer them to you.

***Offertory Prayer: (Unison)**

Here is the work of our hands and the love of our hearts. Bless our offering and send your Spirit upon it so that our gifts may join the gifts of all your people. Amen.

***Closing Hymn: Will You Come and Follow Me?** Voices United #567

1. Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?

2. Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?

3. Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?
Will you set the prisoners free and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean and do such as this unseen,
and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?

4. Will you love the "you" you hide if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?

5. Christ, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In Your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

***Sending Forth: (Responsively)**

People of God, step forward into the world in which we live
and be light-bearers in word and in deed.

We leave with confidence knowing God is with us.

Share the light that is within you to bring healing and peace to the world.

We go knowing that God's loving presence,

Christ's enduring grace and the Holy Spirit's power will lead us. Amen.

Sung Blessing: One More Step Along the World I Go – Voices United #639 verse 1

One more step along the world I go 2x

From the old things to the new, keep me travelling along with you:

And it's from the old I travel to the new; keep me travelling along with you.