

BELLS CORNERS UNITED CHURCH
January 29, 2023 – 10 am 4th SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

*Indicates stand as able

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

***Opening Hymn: A Light is Gleaming - Voices United #82**

Refrain:

A light is gleaming,
spreading its arms throughout the night,
living in the light.

Come share its gladness,
God's radiant love is burning bright,
living in the light.

1 When light comes pouring into the darkest
place, it hurts our eyes to see the glow.
Sometimes a word of hope reminds us of our
fears, our memories and tears. R

2 When night is round us and every shadow
grows, a star is there to light our way.
It tells a story of Jesus who came near to
say: "God's light will ever stay." R

3 And Jesus showed us a brighter path to
walk. He showed us things we hadn't seen.
Now we, like Jesus, can help creation shine,
and this will be a sign: R

4 So let us live in the brightness God has
giv'n, and let us rise to see the dawn.
We trust that God is here a sparkle and a
blaze, warming all our days. R

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Lighting of the Christ Candle:

Acolytes: Ruth & Ian Howes

(Peter Chynoweth, Gathering, ACE 2022/2023, Year A. Used with Permission.)

Reader 1: This is a day when light is important.

Light of new insight. Light to overcome shadows and despair.

Reader 2: Light of hope. Light of promise.

Reader 1: May this Christ candle and the light it produces, be a sign of all of these things.

Welcome & Announcements

Rev. Kim Vidal

Good morning! I welcome and greet you in the name of Jesus Christ, on this 4th Sunday after Epiphany as we reflect on the Beatitudes. Join us for coffee and fellowship after the service in the main hall. *(Highlight some announcements)*

Friends, blessed are you as we worship God in spirit and in truth.

Call to Gather: (Responsively)

Rev. Lorrie Lowes

(Rod Sykes, Gathering ACE 2016-2017, Year A. Used with permission.)

The chatter of many voices surrounds us;

images of the good life lure us from every side.

There are many choices. So let us be clear. Let us be focused.

In many ways, God speaks but the message is always the same.

Love. Peace. Justice.

These are the gifts of God.

We welcome those blessings as we gather today.

Prayer of Approach: (Responsively – Congregation leading)

(Gord Dunbar, Gathering ACE 2015-2016, Year C. Used with permission.)

Are you here, Source of Love?

Look around you, Love is here within many voices.

Are you here, Source of Love to lead me?

Look around you. I'm here in a variety of hands reaching out to serve.

I'm here in a multitude of hearts open to love.

Are you here, Source of Love to bring me hope?

I'm here in this community of faith.

I'm here to call you, sustain you and to give you hope.

We hear you Source of Love in the silence, in the song, in the word. We see you in the wonder of complex weaving of the whole creation.

We feel you in the joyful promise of grace-filled friendships.

Come, Source of Love, embrace us and make us whole. Amen.

Special Music: That's How We Walk – Colligan

CGS director : Erin Berard

Time for the Young at Heart: Rev. Lorrie

Prayer of Jesus /The Lord's Prayer: (Unison)

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.

****Hymn: The Church is Wherever – Voices United #579***

(Words: Carol Rose Ikeler, 1959; Music: English Carol, arr. F.R.C. Clarke, 1971)

1. The church is wherever God's people are praising,
singing God's goodness for joy on this day.

The church is wherever disciples of Jesus
remember his story and walk in his way.

2. The church is wherever God's people are helping,
caring for neighbours in sickness and need.

The church is wherever God's people are sharing
the words of the Bible in gift and in deed.

Prayer for Illumination: (Unison)

Reader: Cathy Dowsett

As we open the pages of scripture this day, may the Source of Blessings help us to understand these words. May they comfort, challenge and guide us in our living. Amen.

The Reading: Matthew 5: 1-12 (The Message & NRSV Updated Edition)

Cathy: The gospel reading is taken from Matthew chapter 5 verses 1 to 12. This passage is popularly known as The Beatitudes or Blessings. Rev. Kim and I will offer you with two translations – one from The New Revised Standard Version and Eugene Peterson’s the Message:

Cathy: When Jesus saw his ministry drawing huge crowds, he climbed a hillside. Those who were apprenticed to him, the committed, climbed with him. Arriving at a quiet place, he sat down and taught his climbing companions. This is what he said:

Kim: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Cathy: You’re blessed when you’re at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and God’s rule.

Kim: “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”

Cathy: You’re blessed when you feel you’ve lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you.

Kim: “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.”

Cathy: You’re blessed when you’re content with just who you are—no more, no less. That’s the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can’t be bought.

Kim: “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”

Cathy: You’re blessed when you’ve worked up a good appetite for God. God is food and drink in the best meal you’ll ever eat.

Kim: “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.”

Cathy: You’re blessed when you care. At the moment of being ‘care-full,’ you find yourselves cared for.

Kim: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”

Cathy: You’re blessed when you get your inside world—your mind and heart—put right. Then you can see God in the outside world.

Kim: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

Cathy: You’re blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That’s when you discover who you really are, and your place in God’s family.

Kim: “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Cathy: You’re blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution. The persecution drives you even deeper into God’s kingdom.

Kim: “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

Cathy: Not only that—count yourselves blessed every time people put you down or throw you out or speak lies about you to discredit me. What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort and they are uncomfortable. You can be glad when that happens—give a cheer, even! — for though they don’t like it, *I do!* And all heaven applauds. And know that you are in good company. My prophets and witnesses have always gotten into this kind of trouble.

This the Gospel of Christ. **Praise to you, Jesus Christ!**

May God’s wisdom dwell where the word is spoken. **Thanks be to God!**

Sermon: “Blessed Are You!” Rev. Kim

Prayers of the People: Rev. Kim

Let us gather our hearts in this prayer written by Rev. Paul A. Carr:

God of the prophets, God of Christ:

we are reminded today that your blessings
do not necessarily follow the logic of the world.

The world believes that the rich are blessed,
but Jesus reminds us that it is the poor who are blessed,
the poor in spirit and the materially poor as well.

We pray for a more just world in which all have enough and none are left behind.

Though we fear death and avoid its inevitable arrival,
Jesus tells us that those who mourn are blessed.

Help us to experience the truth of this mystery;
bring healing and wholeness to those who are sick;
and comfort those of us who have lost loved ones.

While people covet power, Jesus blesses the meek;
instruct us, O God, in the ways of humility;

help us to stand in solidarity with the oppressed and marginalized;
show us your presence in the faces of those the world forgets.

Give us a hunger and thirst for righteousness;
fill our hearts with love, overflowing with mercy;
make our hearts pure, and give us a vision of your glory.

In a society divided by race, gender, class, ideology, sexual orientation,
and so many other labels we alone have created,

remind us that we are created in your image,
each of us a beautiful reflection of you, each of us your beloved child.

Help us then to end our conflicts and wars,
help us to be peacemakers and agents of reconciliation.

Gracious God, you have so richly blessed us with life,
with love and joy, with hope in the midst of despair.

Help us to be the salt of the earth.

Help us to be the light of the world,
sharing with others that which we have received,

boldly proclaiming the good news of your love,
finding the seeds of your kingdom within us

and letting your way grow in our lives and throughout the world. Amen.

Musical Offering: Canon of Peace – Hopson BCUC Choir

(A canon is a piece of music where a melody is played and then imitated, one or more times, after a short delay)

Invitation to Offer: Rev. Kim

God’s love has always been abundant, in every time and place. We are grateful to a generous and loving God for every sign of new life. I now invite you to offer your time, talents and

treasures as a sign of our gratefulness to God's blessings. 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: We Give Our Thanks - More Voices #187

1. We give our thanks to God, (4X)
5. We give our hearts to you, (3X) because you first loved us.

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***Offertory Prayer: (Unison)**

Source of Blessings, for the talents and gifts delightfully given to us, we bring you our offering. May we use them to spread your love and hope for the world. Amen.

Hymn: Blest Are They – Voices United #896

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|---|--|---|---|
| 1 | Blest are they, the poor in spirit,
theirs is the kingdom of God.
Blest are they, full of sorrow,
they shall be consoled. | 3 | Blest are they who show mercy,
mercy shall be theirs.
Blest are they the pure of heart,
They shall see God! R |
| | <i>Refrain</i>
Rejoice and be glad!
Blessed are you, holy are you!
Rejoice and be glad!
Yours is the kingdom of God. | 4 | Blest are they who seek peace;
they are the children of God.
Blest are they who suffer in faith,
the glory of God is theirs. R |
| 2 | Blest are they, the lowly ones,
they shall inherit the earth.
Blest are they who hunger and thirst,
they shall have their fill. R | 5 | Blest are you who suffer hate,
all because of me.
Rejoice and be glad
yours is the kingdom;
shine for all to see. R |

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***Sending Forth: (responsively) Rev. Kim (ministrymatters.com)**

Go forth, celebrating faith.
Go forth, celebrating hope.
Go forth, celebrating love.

**We go forth to be the transformed people that God calls us to be.
We go to transform the world.**

Go forth with the knowledge that you are always surrounded and embraced
by God, the Source of Blessings. **Amen.**

***Sung Blessing: Peace Be With You – More Voices #215 sing twice**

Peace be with you, peace forever, Peace be with you, my friends.
Till we meet again, may God be with you. Peace, peace, peace.