

**BELLS CORNERS UNITED CHURCH**  
**EASTER 6 - May 14, 2023 – 10 am**  
**Christian Family Sunday / Celebrating Mothers**

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

**Gathering Music: Praise the Mother**

BCUC band

*\*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: Come Let Us Sing of a Wonderful Love – Voices United #574**

(Words: Robert Walmsley, 1900; Music: Adam Watson)

1 Come let us sing of a wonderful love,  
tender and true, tender and true,  
out of the heart of the Father above,  
streaming to me and to you:  
wonderful love, wonderful love  
dwells in the heart of the Father above.

3 Jesus is seeking the wanderers yet;  
why do they roam? why do they roam?  
Love only waits to forgive and forget;  
home, weary wanderers, home!  
Wonderful love, wonderful love  
dwells in the heart of the Father above.

2 Jesus, the Saviour, this gospel to tell,  
joyfully came, joyfully came,  
came with the helpless and hopeless to  
dwell, sharing their sorrow and shame,  
seeking the lost, seeking the lost,  
saving, redeeming at measureless cost.

4 Come to my heart, O thou wonderful love!  
Come and abide, come and abide,  
lifting my life till it rises above  
envy and falsehood and pride:  
seeking to be, seeking to be  
lowly and humble, a learner of thee.

**Lighting of Christ Candle:** Acolytes: Wightman Family (Samuel Taylor Coleridge)

On this Christian Family and Mothering Sunday, we light this Christ candle to remind us that  
“The love of a mother is the veil of a softer light between the heart and God.”

**Sung Response: Lord Prepare Me to Be a Sanctuary - More Voices #18**

Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy tried and true;  
with thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you.

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**Welcome & Centering for Worship:** Rev. Kim Vidal

Good morning! In the name of Jesus Christ, I welcome and greet as we celebrate Christian Family Sunday. God invites us into the right relationships with each other as sisters and brothers, mothers and fathers, grandpas and grandmas, cousins and relatives in the name of Love. Today is also Mother's Day. This is a day to pay respect and honour all mothers, nurturers and life givers, past or present.

A warm welcome all. Please join us in the Main Hall after the service for cake, coffee, refreshments and conversation. Highlight some announcements...

Friends, I now invite you to centre yourselves in the presence of our welcoming God who loves us unconditionally like a mother. Let us worship together.

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

Sisters, brothers, children, welcome to this place!

**Mothers, fathers, sing praises to God.**

Grandmas, grandpas, share the story.

**Aunts, uncles, dance with joy.**

Family by love, Christ's own body.

**Family by Spirit, God calls us as one.**

As one family, we gather to worship our God.

**Prayer of Approach: (Unison)** (Beth W. Johnston, Gathering, L/E 2017, Year A. Used with permission)

**We come as one family:**

**seeking your presence,**

**celebrating our faith,**

**supporting one another,**

**walking together through change.**

**Be with us today.**

**Make us all aware of your**

**never-ending love and care. Amen.**

**Special Music: Welcome to This Circle**

Bell Canto director: Erin Berard

**Time for the Young at Heart**

Rev. Lorrie Lowes

*The 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.**

**Celebration of Baptism:** Emilia Marion Ruth Morris

Daughter of Elly & Conor Morris; sister of Cian.

**\*Song:** Dance with the Spirit – More Voices #156

(Words and Music: Jim Strathdee, 1995)

Dance with the Spirit early in the mornin',

**walk\*** with the Spirit throughout the long day.

Work and hope for the new life a-bornin',

listen to the Spirit to show you the way.

**\*alternatives:** "move" or "sing"

**Prayer for Illumination: (Unison)**

Reader: Monica Peck

**Mothering God, continue to surprise us and breathe your spirit freshly upon us as your church, that renewed in faith we may know your wisdom through your Word.**

**Amen.**

***The Gospel Reading:*** John 14: 15-21 (NRSV Updated Edition) **The Promise of the Holy Spirit**

<sup>15</sup>“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. <sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. <sup>17</sup> This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him because he abides with you, and he will be in you. <sup>18</sup>“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. <sup>19</sup> In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. <sup>20</sup> On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. <sup>21</sup> They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me, and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.”

May these words renew us and give us assurance of hope in this time and in this place. **Thanks be to God!**

***Ministry of Music: Indescribable*** - Story & Reeves

BCUC band & Bell Canto

***Sermon:*** “The Advocate”

Rev. Kim

***Prayers of the People:*** Let us gather our hearts in this prayer written by Rev. Lorrie Lowes.

Today, O Shepherd God, on this Christian Family Sunday, we pray for all households created and blessed by your love. We give thanks and pray for our families especially for mothers, life-givers and nurturers. We thank you for families rooted in love, where character is formed and values are learned, where lives are filled with hopefulness and laughter.

We acknowledge that families sometimes disappoint us.

People fight; people hurt one another. Forgive us, gracious God.

Where there is pain, resentment, or bitterness, enter with your healing love.

Open our hearts to families who suffer abuse and violence.

Increase our compassion towards all with painful memories.

We pray with hope that all families may be a source of blessing and abundant life.

Today, O God, we pray for our faith family. We give thanks for the love and support our members give to each other through the years. We pray that this sense of caring community remains strong. Give us patience and resilience to see this hard time through. We pray with hope for the day that we can gather again as your children.

Today, O God, we pray for all those whose lives are especially difficult due to illness or injury, loneliness and isolation, grief, worry and stress. We pray that they feel your presence and find the strength and support they need to cope with the present and feel hope for the future. Keep our hearts open to the needs of our neighbours near and far so that we may be part of that strength and support. We pray with hope that your message of love will be enacted and felt.

Today, O God, we pray for peace in the world, particularly in places where war and violence are very present. In Ukraine, in Sudan, in Afghanistan, in Syria, in other countries in the world.

Today, O God, we pray for this planet we call Mother Earth; all of its inhabitants, and all of its resources. We pray for the people in Alberta, especially those who were evacuated and affected by the wildfires. We pray that we can be good stewards of this world and that we pay attention to how our way of life affects it. We pray with hope for the healing of the earth. All these we ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

***Musical Offering:***

***Invitation to Offer:***

Let us joyfully share our gifts of time, talents and resources as expressions of our gratitude 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: What Can I Do? - More Voices #191**

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.

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**\*Offertory Prayer: (Unison)**

**Loving God, you have blessed our lives with relationships that both inspire and challenge. We offer these gifts so that we might continue to build relationships with one another and with your whole creation. Bless these gifts that they may bring wholeness and life abundance to all your people. We pray. Amen.**

**\*Hymn: Would You Bless Our Homes and Families – Voices United #556**

(Words: Walter Farquharson, 1974; Music: Ron Klusmeier, 1974)

1 - Would you bless our homes and families,  
source of life who calls us here,  
in our world of stress and tension,  
teach us love that conquers fear.  
Help us learn to love each other  
with a love that constant stays;  
teach us when we face our troubles,  
love's expressed in many ways.

2 – When our way is un-demanding,  
let us use the time that's ours.  
To delight in simple pleasures,  
sharing joys in gentle hours.  
When our way is anxious walking  
and a heavy path we plod.  
Teach us trust in one another  
and in you, our gracious God.

3 – From the homes  
in which we're nurtured,  
with the love that shapes us there,  
teach us God, to claim as Family  
everyone whose life we share.  
And through all that life may offer,  
may we in your love remain,  
may the love we share in families  
be alive to praise your name.

4 - Let us reach beyond the boundaries  
Of our daily thought and care,  
Till the family you have chosen  
spills its love out everywhere.  
Help us learn to love each other  
with a love that constant stays;  
teach us when we face our trouble

**\*Sending Forth: (Responsively) Rev. Kim (www.campseashechurch.org.uk)**

May God who brought us to birth by the Holy Spirit,  
**strengthen us for the Christian life.**

May God who provides for all our needs  
**sustain us day by day.**

May God whose steadfast love is constant as a mother's care,  
**send us out to live and work for others.**

And the blessing of God: Creator, Christ and Comforter  
be with you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

**Sung Blessing: Arise, Shine – Voices United #886**

Arise, be clothed in the light. Arise, be clothed in the light.  
Your light has come. Your light has come. Hallelujah