

BELLS CORNERS UNITED CHURCH
September 17, 2023 – 10 am **Creation Time 2**

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

Gathering Music: *(Time for Quiet Reflection)*

* **Hymn: River – More Voices #3** *Words & Music © 2003 Julian Pattison*

1 River, rush-a-down to the ocean blue,
River from a mountain high.
River, as you do what rivers do,
River, draw the Spirit nigh.

3 Water, let me drink of your healing pow'r,
Water, strength and life you give.
Water, as I travel with each hour,
Water, help my body live.

2 Spirit, come-a-down to the river-side,
Spirit, spark of wondrous thought.
Spirit, I am free for you to guide,
Spirit, pray that I be taught!

4 River, flow-a-down where you ran before,
River, source of clearer view.
River, as I walk your rocky shore,
River, see my journey through.
See my journey through...

Lighting of Christ Candle:

Acolytes: Wightman Family

We light this candle as a reminder of the light of Christ given to us all,
a symbol of God's presence each and every day.
For the light of Christ within us and around us, thanks be to God!

Sung Response: A Light is Gleaming – Voices United #82 *(Refrain only)*

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness, God's radiant love is shining bright. living in the light.

Welcome & Centering for Worship:

Rev. Kim Vidal

Good morning! Welcome to this sacred place of belonging where we embrace God's presence and the sacredness of life. Welcome in the spirit of Jesus Christ in whom we live and move and have our being. Welcome friends and guests. Join us for coffee and fellowship after the service in the main hall.

announcements: - Two Canoes – One River Event

- Asian Dinner & Sabbatical Highlights – Sept 22, 6:30 pm. Tickets are available after the service and in the office. Volunteers are needed to help.

- The West Ottawa Interfaith Bridge dinner is happening on Saturday, Sept 30th from 5:30 to 8:30pm at the Jami Omar Mosque. To purchase tickets, look for Alison Bridgewater in the main hall.

Friends, this day, we offer our gratitude for the gifts of the earth lavishly offered to us by a loving Creator. May we do so with praise and thanksgiving and a commitment to care for the earth and to serve each other. Let us now gather in worship.

Call to Gather: (Responsively) Rev. Lorrie Lowes

(Heather McClure, Gathering, Pentecost 1 2017, Year A. Used with Permission)

We gather in the love of God to worship,
hoping to find some new way of knowing our God.

We come seeking you, Creator God.

**We gather in the love and fellowship of one another,
offering our friendship, care, and support, ready to serve.**

We come seeking you, Jesus the Christ.

**We gather in awe of a Holy, loving presence,
yearning for an experience beyond ourselves.**

We come seeking you, Holy Spirit.

We gather to pray, to play, to dance and sing in your Holy presence.

Come now, worship and experience the holy,

alive in the presence of God, working in Christ Jesus

and living in the mystery of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer of Approach: (Unison) (Kate Crawford, Gathering, Pentecost 2, 2017, Year A. Used with Permission)

You, who created the earth and the air;

you, who designed the sky and the sea;

you, who spoke and things were made;

you have called us your people,

and beckoned us here.

You set a longing in our hearts,

for a world where peace and justice are done,

and creation is cared for in love.

We worship you, in spirit and in truth. Amen.

Time for the Young at Heart: Rev. Lorrie

The Prayer of Jesus / 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

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.

**Song: Listen, God Is Calling - More Voices #97*

Listen, God is calling, through the Word inviting,
offering forgiveness, comfort and joy.

Prayer for Illumination: (Unison)

Reader: Jordan Berard

Open these words to us, Holy God, and open us to the Word.

Let this reading guide our understanding and inspire our living. Amen.

Psalm Reading: Psalm 148 - Voices United pg871 with sung response

The Gospel Reading: Matthew 18: 21-35 (NRSVUE)

Forgiveness

²¹ Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive?" ²² Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

As many as seven times?" ²² Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

²³ "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred

denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

May these words challenge us to act out our faith. **Thanks be to God.**

Ministry of Music: Servants of Peace – Quinn/Scott

BCUC choir

Sermon: "Seventy-Seven Times!"

Rev. Kim

Prayers of the People: Rev. Kim

(With inspiration from Joe Milner, St. Louis University, <https://liturgy.sluhostedsites.org>)

God of us all, as the season changes once again and we move from summer freedom back to the regular routines of life – work, school, clubs, and committee meetings, help us to remember to look beyond our own busy-ness to both the beauty and the needs around us.

The words of Matthew challenge us to look at the world with new eyes, to put our egos aside and remain faithful to Jesus' teachings on forgiveness. May we strive to become the people God need us to be, in the world as God envisioned it.

We pray: For this church that we may be servants of one another, particularly of those in need, and that this church be an example of love lived out in the world.

We pray: For greater awareness, that we may recognize our common humanity in spite of differences in race or culture, or status, and that we strive to accompany one another along the journey of life.

We pray: For a spirit of humility, that we may recognize all our gifts as gifts from God, gifts to be used and shared. And we pray that we may recognize our need for one another in our quest to become our fullest selves.

We pray: For a clearer recognition of healthy and unhealthy ambitions, that we may be aware of the motivations that stir our hearts, and respond to those that lead us closer to God and toward greater wholeness in ourselves, our communities, and the world.

We pray: For the poor and powerless in our society, that we may hear their voices, understand their pain, and humbly walk alongside them through life's challenges, that we use our privilege to empower others rather than to lift ourselves.

We pray: For all who have been impacted by hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, wars or wildfires, that God will strengthen them, remove the obstacles which they encounter, and guide them to the assistance they need.

We pray: For healing and strength, that the Good News of Jesus may bring hope to the sick and strength to those who care for them. We pray especially for those in our faith family who are facing illness, injury, and grief. Let them feel the love with which we hold them.

We pray: For all of the burdens in our hearts, voiced or held in silent thought.

All these we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Musical Offering: What a Wonderful World – Weiss/Thiele arr. Brymer BCUC Choir

Invitation to Offer: Rev. Kim

God invites us to take part in caring for the earth and for one another. The gift of creation reminds us of God's abundant generosity and invites us to live with gracious offering of our time, talents and treasures. 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: We Plough the Fields – Voices United #520 v3**

We thank you then, O Maker, for all things bright and good,
the seedtime and the harvest, our life, our health, our food;
accept the gifts we offer for all your love imparts,
and, what from us you long for, our humble, thankful hearts.

Refrain: All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above;
We thank you God, O Holy God, for all your love.

***Offertory Prayer: (Unison)** (Kate Gregory, Pentecost 2, Gathering 2017, Year A. Used with Permission)

**Creator God, you gave us gifts and we have used them:
we offer them now to you in love and wonder.
Be pleased to accept our gifts in Jesus' name. Amen.**

Hymn: “Great is Thy Faithfulness” - Voices United #288

1 Great is thy faithfulness, God our Creator,
there is no shadow of turning with thee;
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;
as thou has been thou forever wilt be.

Refrain: Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed thy hand hath provided --
great is thy faithfulness, ever to me!

2 Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
join with all nature in manifold witness
to thy great faithfulness, mercy and love. R

3 Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow --
wondrous the portion thy blessings provide.

Words © 1923 Chisholm, Music © 1923 Runyan, Hope Pub. Descant © 1995 Segger

***Sending Forth: (Responsively) Rev. Kim**

(Bob Root, Pentecost 2, Gathering 2023, Year A. Used with Permission.)

May the blessing of God, whose love for us is generous beyond the telling of it;
the blessing of Jesus, whose stories lead us on to good pathways;
and the blessing of the Spirit, who moves within us and around us,
go with us as we leave this place.
Blessings be with you! **Amen.**

Sung Blessing: Shalom Cheverim – Songs for a Gospel People #114

Shalom good friends! Shalom good friends! Shalom, Shalom!
Till we meet again, till we meet again, shalom, shalom.

Sjalom chers amis! Sjalom chers amis! Sjalom, sjalom!
Jusqu'aurevoir, jusqu'aurevoir, sjalom, sjalom.