

**BELLS CORNERS UNITED CHURCH**  
**EASTER 6 / 174<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sunday    May 5, 2024 – 10 am**

*\* 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: Let Us Build A House - More Voices #1**

- 1     Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live,  
      A place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive.  
      Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace;  
      here the love of Christ shall end divisions:  
          All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.
  
- 2     Let us build a house where prophets speak, and words are strong and true,  
      where all God's children dare to seek to dream God's reign anew.  
      Here the cross shall stand as witness and as symbol of God's grace;  
      here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:     All are welcome...
  
- 3     Let us build a house where love is found in water, wine and wheat;  
      a banquet hall on holy ground, where peace and justice meet.  
      Here the love of God, through Jesus, is revealed in time and space;  
      as we share in Christ the feast that frees us:  All are welcome...
  
- 4     Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone  
      to heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they've known.  
      Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image of God's face;  
      let us bring an end to fear and danger:     All are welcome...
  
- 5     Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard  
      and loved and treasured, taught and claimed as words within the Word.  
      Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace;  
      let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:  All are welcome...

***Lighting of Christ Candle:***

Acolytes: Yvonne McCartney & Leven Woo

On this anniversary Sunday, we light this Christ candle to honour and to celebrate who we are as a faith community. We do so by giving thanks for the varieties of gifts that we share and of the love that binds us together.

May the light of Christ be our guide today and in the years to come.

***Sung Response: Jesus Bids Us Shine - Voices United #585 verse 1***

Jesus bids us shine with a clear pure light, like a little candle burning in the night;  
in this world of darkness we must shine – you in your small corner, and I in mine.

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

Good morning! I welcome and greet you in the name of Jesus Christ on this 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter. Today we are celebrating 174 years of ministry at Bells Corners United Church. We give thanks for the many ways God nurtures and feeds us, guides our roots to sink deep, and with God's grace and blessing, bears fruits of love, justice, kindness and wisdom. Happy birthday BCUC! Announcements...

Let us now centre ourselves in the presence of God who made us witnesses in the world and called us to be a loving faith community. Let us gather in worship.

*Call to Gather: (Responsively)*

**Rev. Lorrie Lowes**

People of God, welcome.

**We are part of God's household, a caring community of worship, learning, sharing, and serving.**

We are here to celebrate the precious memories of loved ones,

**for relationships that grow dearer with time, and the stories that bind us together.**

God never stops creating, redeeming, and sustaining within us, among us, and throughout the whole of creation.

**May the Spirit of Christ be present in our gathering and accompany us in our scattering.**

May we come to worship the God who transforms all life.

*Prayer of Approach: (Together) Inspired by a prayer posted in [www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca)*

**Loving God, Your Spirit calls us to be church.**

**With the faithful who went before and those who will come after, you offer us the gifts needed to be the Body of Christ, people of God, co-creators of your new world.**

**Remind us to listen to your voice when our ears are closed to your call, to pay attention when our eyes lose sight of self-giving, to have a grateful heart when we misuse your generosity.**

**Be present with us in the midst of our joy and sorrow, pain and healing, despair and hope. We ask this prayer in the name of Jesus, the head of this church. Amen.**

*Special Music:* CGS Erin Berard

*Time for the Young at Heart:*

Rev. Lorrie

*The Lord's Prayer in Movements:* Voices United #959 (Congregational singing) Wendy Morrell

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil,  
for the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever.

*Hymn: Where Two or Three are Gathered* - More Voices #14

Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there, I am there.

*Prayer for Illumination: (Together)*

Reader: Monica peck

**God of yesterday, today and tomorrow, continue to surprise us and breathe your spirit freshly upon us as your church family; that renewed in faith, we may know your wisdom through these inspiring words. Amen.**

**Responsive Psalm: Psalm 98** (Ref 1) Voices United pg818

**Refrain: Sing a new song un-to God, who has done such mar-vel-lous things.**

Sing to God a new song, **for God has done marvellous things.**

Your right hand and your holy arm have brought victory.

**You have made known your salvation, and revealed before the nations your saving power.**

You have remembered your steadfast love

And faithfulness to the house of Israel,

**all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. R**

Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth, **break into joyous praise, sing psalms.**

Sing psalms to God with the harp, **with the harp and melodious voice.**

With trumpets, and the sound of the horn **make a joyful noise before our sovereign God. R**

Let the sea roar, and all that fills it, **the world, and its inhabitants,**

Let the rivers clap their hands, **the hills sing together for joy before God.**

You come to judge the earth, O God, **to judge the world with righteousness,**

**and the peoples with equity. R**

**The Gospel Reading: John 15:9-17** (The Message) **Love One Another**

9-10 “I’ve loved you the way my Father has loved me. Make yourselves at home in my love. If you keep my commands, you’ll remain intimately at home in my love. That’s what I’ve done— kept my Father’s commands and made myself at home in his love.

11-15 “I’ve told you these things for a purpose: that my joy might be your joy, and your joy wholly mature. This is my command: Love one another the way I loved you. This is the very best way to love.

Put your life on the line for your friends. You are my friends when you do the things I command you.

I’m no longer calling you servants because servants don’t understand what their master is thinking and planning. No, I’ve named you friends because I’ve let you in on everything I’ve heard from the Father.

16 “You didn’t choose me, remember; I chose you, and put you in the world to bear fruit, fruit that won’t spoil. As fruit bearers, whatever you ask the Father in relation to me, he gives you. 17 “But remember the root command: Love one another.

Hear the good news of love and hope in this time and in this place. **Thanks be to God!**

**Ministry of Music: The Journey – Harris**

BCUC Choir

**Sermon: “Jesus: A Friend for the Journey”**

Rev. Kim

**Prayers of the People:** O God our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,

our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home. We offer our prayers today as we mark another year in the life and ministry of our congregation here at Bells Corners United Church. We pray that your Holy Spirit may continue to inspire us in our call to serve others, as we offer vibrant worship services and as we commit ourselves to a loving community following the example of Jesus, our friend for the journey.

May we continue to pass on our faith, hope and love to succeeding generations; that we may serve the communities in which we live and the wider world with commitment, vision and enthusiasm. Use us to be your heart and your hands, as we comfort the sorrowful, offer strength for the anxious, compassion for the sick, and concern and love for all.

We pray for all who hold positions of responsibility in worship and music, teaching, caring, social outreach and administration; and for each member and adherent, young and old alike, with their diverse gifts; that together we may fulfill our call eagerly, conscientiously, and with imagination, strengthened by your Spirit and upheld by one another’s prayers.

God of healing, we pray for those dealing with pain and suffering, loneliness, homelessness, poverty, disability, hunger, addictions, and broken relationships. We pray for those who are ill, those who are homebound; those who are grieving the loss of loved ones; and those who are worried or depressed.

Spirit of Life, as we celebrate this anniversary time, we cannot only look backwards at our history but we must also celebrate the present and look forward with optimism. Walk with us into the coming years in the life of this church.

May we who this day celebrate and remember who we are as people of faith in our constant walk with you, may go forward

in hope and in joy. You, who journey with us, hold our lives together in the thread of your amazing grace. We rejoice with hope and great joy, remembering Jesus Christ, the mover and shaker of our faith as we abide in his love now and in the years to come. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

**Musical Offering: Walk in the Light – Trad. Arr. Houghton** BCUC Choir

**Invitation to Offer:** God is gracious and good, and so we respond to everything God is doing in the life of this faith community and the world by offering a portion of the bounty we have received. We are invited to 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: Your Work O God –** Voices United #537, verse 1  
Your work, O God, needs many hands to help you everywhere,  
and some there are who cannot serve unless our gifts we share.

**\*Offertory Prayer: (Together)** Deborah Ambridge-Fisher, Gathering, Lent/Easter 2021, Year B. Used with permission  
**Creator God, take these gifts that represent the fruits of our love for you, for our community and for ourselves. Use these gifts, as you use us, to spread your message of love throughout the world. Amen.**

**\*Hymn: Be Thou My Vision –** Voices United #642

1 Be thou my vision, O joy of my heart; naught be all else to me, save that thou art,  
thou my best thought, by day or by night, waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

2 Be thou my wisdom, my calm in all strife; I ever with thee, and thou in my life;  
thou loving parent, thy child may I be, thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.

3 Be thou my battle shield, sword for the fight; be thou my dignity, thou my delight,  
thou my soul's shelter, thou my high tower; raise thou my heavenward, O power of my power.

4 Riches I heed not, nor vain empty praise, thou mine inheritance, now and always;  
thou and thou only, first in my heart, great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.

5 Great God of heaven, after victory won, may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall, still be my vision, O ruler of all.

**Sending Forth: (Responsively) Rev. Kim Vidal** David Sparks, Gathering, Pentecost 2 – 2020 Year A. Used with permission  
Friends, on this Anniversary Sunday, live wholeheartedly; **God calls us to make every minute count.**  
Live adventurously; **God calls us to uncharted places and challenging situations.**  
Live faithfully; **God calls us to remember where our true allegiance lies.**  
Live compassionately; **God calls us to notice and to work alongside those ignored or forgotten.**  
As we go from this time of worship, may we be inspired to live as God calls us to live.  
**May we go knowing that God goes with us in this adventure called life. 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*