

**Central Queens Pastoral Charge
United Church of Canada**

March 14, 2021

10:30 a.m.

Forth Sunday in Lent

Central Queens Mission Statement

Central Queens United Church is a loving and living community called to support the life stages of all people; celebrating joy and sharing in pain. Through faith and fellowship we are united by God's love to live and serve as Disciples of Christ.

Gathering for Worship

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

In Jesus' name, welcome!

First-time participant or one who's been here many days;
child or elder or somewhere in-between;
stewards, caretakers, disciples of Jesus, children of God—
neighbours all, loved and loving.

Welcome. Welcome in Christ's name!

Birthdays & Special Occasions

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Once there was someone who said such amazing things and did such wonderful things that people began to follow him. But they didn't know who he was. So one day they simply had to ask him,

"Who are you?" He replied, "I am the Light."

Quiet Preparation for Worship

Bible Presentation

***Introit** "Come All You People" MV #2 X2

***Call to Worship**

Give thanks to the Most Holy, for God is good;
God's steadfast love endures forever.

God gathers God's people from the east and from the west, from the north
and from the south.

Let us thank God for such all-embracing love.

Let us praise God for God's wonderful works to humankind.
**We will worship God with thanksgiving and tell of God's deeds
with songs of joy.**

***Hymn** "Open My Eyes, That I May See" VU #371

Prayer of Approach

**Gracious God,
great and wonderful are your works!
Your steadfast love is everlasting.
You have come among us in Christ Jesus to save us.
Where there is darkness, you bring light.
Where there is sadness, you speak words of hope.
Where there is despair, you bring new possibilities.
You bring healing for the sick, and forgiveness for the sinner.
You bring justice for the oppressed, speaking truth instead of
lies. Stir us with your Spirit, O God, in this time of worship.**

**Awaken our joy and reverence as we offer you our songs, our
silence, our prayers and praises, for you are our God,
Creator, Redeemer and Holy Spirit.**

With Jesus, we share in the ancient prayer...

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom 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 kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Psalm 107:1–3, 17–22

VU # 831 Parts One and Two

Hymn

“Jesus Bids Us Shine”

VU #585 vv. 1, 2

All God's Children

Hymn

“Jesus Bids Us Shine

VU #585 v. 3

Prayer of Confession

O God of Comfort and God of Challenge,
we come to you this morning the way the Israelites did,

full of complaints and dissatisfaction.

Nothing is enough; we do not recognize your blessing at work in our day to day lives.

Forgive us.

**In our complaints, challenge us as you did the Israelites,
to consider the bigger picture
of oppression, injustice, and inequality around us.**

**Forgive us when we close our eyes
for fear of what you might show us;
Lift up loving and compassionate leaders
to open our eyes until we see what you see in our world.**

Moment of Silence

Kyrie

Assurance of God's Love

We are blessed because God's image resides deep within each of us. So return God's blessing by the way we love others.

Presentation of Our Gifts

Offertory Invitation

Consider the steadfast love of God in every breath you breathe. May that steadfast love inspire you to give generously. so that we may live into God's Reign of peace and compassion through the offerings of our own church. We are invited to give as we are able, to give as we have been called.

Offertory

"Your Work, O God, Needs Many Hands"

VU #537

***Presentation of Offering**

***Offertory Prayer**

**O Generous One, we give thanks to you
for your steadfast love that endures forever.
May these gifts be used to feed the hunger and satisfy the thirst
of all those you love throughout your creation. Amen.**

Listening for the Word

Sacred Readings

Numbers 21:4–9

From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Sea of Reeds, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food.” Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said to Moses, “Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.” So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

John 3:14–21

And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may

have eternal life. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

Anthem

Sermon

Responding to the Word

Pastoral Prayer

Generous and gracious God,
with your great mercy, you have made us alive together in
Christ. By your grace you open up new possibilities for us,
you have shown us immeasurable riches through your love for us,
and we offer you our deepest gratitude, now and always.
We pray that each person will know the fullness of your gifts
in ways that touch their deepest needs.

We pray for those dear to us and all those we've come to lean on
in the months of the pandemic...

We pray for those who are struggling in isolation or frustration...
for all those who experience illness or pain in body, mind or
spirit...

for all who have lost someone or something central to their lives
and have to cope with grief and loss...

May all these, your children, know your love.

We pray for peace and safety in the world...

for countries struggling to care for their citizens and to rebuild
their economies...

for all who do not receive the respect and consideration they
deserve...

for all those persecuted for their faith or their views...

for all who are disenfranchised and long to live in freedom...
May all these, your children, know your grace and mercy.

We pray for your church around the world and for the
congregations we know...

for the work of the church across Canada and the faithful
ministries they lead in this time of working at a distance...

for the learning we have gained in outreach during the pandemic
and all who have connected to your church in new ways...

May your church in all its many expressions know your love.

We pray for the concerns on our hearts this day,

for the fears and frustrations we struggle with...
for any troubled relationships...
for the doubts and the hopes which compete within us...
for any need of healing and support...
May we, your children, know your grace and mercy. Amen.

***Hymn** “Draw the Circle Wide” MV #145

***Blessing**

Let us rejoice: God so loves the world!
May God your Maker
send you back into the world with creative energies refreshed.
May Christ the Light
illuminate your fearful moments.
And may the Holy Spirit of steadfast love
guide you until we worship together again.
This day and forevermore. Amen!

Choral Benediction “Don't Be Afraid” MV #90

Postlude

*Please rise as you are able.