

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

March 21, 2021

10:30 a.m.

Fifth 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**

Come, all who desire to know God.

Come, all who yearn to see Jesus.

Come, all who thirst for the Spirit.

God is in our midst this day.

So let us praise God's holy name.

**We will worship God with heart, mind, strength and soul, and
declare God's goodness to us.**

***Hymn** "God, We Praise You for the Morning" VU #415

Prayer of Approach

Creating God,

Loving Child,

Guiding Spirit,

**with springtime sun and the promise of new life,
like seeds planted, you wake us from our slumbers.**

**We raise you up in praise for you are faithful to us
through every season of the year and every season of life.**

**We are grateful for your patience and persistence,
ever drawing us near even through the times we cannot draw
near each other.**

Your promise of hope is seen in the Christ,

**drawing life out of death, freedom out of fear.
Even as Jesus' cross looms on the horizon in this season of Lent,
we praise you for his courage and compassion
which bring renewal to us in the midst of our challenges.
We praise you, O God, for the love that never lets us go.**

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 51:1–12 *Put a new heart in me, O God* VU # 776

Hymn "Long Before the Night" VU #282 vv. 1,3

All God's Children

Hymn "Long Before the Night" VU #282 vv. 4,5

Prayer of Confession

**Jesus, our friend our Liberator,
as we ponder your giving of self,
we recognize the self-centred ways in which we sometimes lead
our lives.**

**You entrust us with the task of sharing your unconditional love
in this world, yet we often fall short.**

**We get lost in our own plans and worries and neglect to show
love,**

even to those right beside us.

We find some people too difficult to care for.

We think some people unworthy of your love and ours.

**Our own needs seem insurmountable and we cannot reach out
to someone else.**

Forgive us, Holy One.

Renew a right spirit within us,

so that we may find the courage to go on

and be the compassion that risks all in your name.

Moment of Silence

Kyrie

Assurance of God's love

Jesus said, come to me all you who labour and are heavy laden
and I will give you rest. Friends, trust that peace and forgiveness
are God's gifts to us this day. Be renewed by the power of the
Spirit that moves with us into each new day.

Hymn "Behold, Behold, I Make All Things New"

MV #115

Presentation of Our Gifts

Offertory Invitation

Jesus reminds us that a seed surrenders its life to the ground in order to bear much fruit. What we surrender to God in our offering will also bear much fruit in the world, for the sake of the Christ. As springtime begins, sow the seeds of God's love as you offer your gifts. We give as we are able, we give as we are called.

Offertory "Your Work, O God, Needs Many Hands" VU #537

*Presentation of Offering

*Offertory Prayer

God of growth and new life, with our gifts we offer you our thanks and praise for the promise of spring and the promise of resurrection in Jesus the Christ. Bless our gifts and through them, accomplish more than we can ask or imagine, as they bear fruit in the world you love, through Christ we pray. Amen.

Listening for the Word

Sacred Readings

Jeremiah 31:31–34 *I will write my law on their hearts.*

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law

within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

John 12:20–33 *Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth.*

Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour. “Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

Anthem

Sermon

Responding to the Word

Pastoral Prayer

Steadfast God,
in the midst of unending change and challenge,
we give you thanks for your presence to sustain us.
While we find it hard to understand why things happen,
we are grateful that you are with us.
You understand our fears; you support and guide us;
and you give us courage to face the unknown.
We give thanks that you intend goodness for us;
that your gift of faith is a solid rock which supports us;
and that prayer gives us the hope you keep working in ways seen and
unseen for goodness to prevail.

Loving God,
in this time of uncertainty when there is much to be anxious about,
we pray for the world you love.
Send your healing Spirit to guide countries and communities
as they respond to COVID-19.
Bless the work of medical researchers and frontline health care workers
in these stressful times.
Bless the plans to offer vaccine to all who want it
and give us patience and common sense as we wait our turns for
vaccination.

Send your healing Spirit to bring peace with justice to the troubled places
..... *Name places where peace and justice might be a reality.*

Bring care and comfort to those who have been hurt in conflict,
wisdom to those who offer leadership in their communities,
and courage to those who advocate for the most vulnerable.

Send your healing Spirit to mend relationships
between religious groups and cultural groups
who find themselves in tension or turmoil.

We pray for mutual respect to grow
between peoples who look at each other with suspicion
and among people who have experienced painful histories with each other.
Open our hearts and minds
to those whose situations and concerns we don't understand
and bring your gift of reconciliation to us all.

Send your healing Spirit to people we know and the earth you love.
We remember before you friends in grief...

(Pause & Reflect)

relationships marked by tension...

(Pause & Reflect)

those facing difficulty at work or finding work...

(Pause & Reflect)

disagreements in our church or community...

(Pause & Reflect)

concerns about the environment we depend on...

(Pause & Reflect)

We pray for the continuing ministry of the church
in our neighbourhoods and around the world.

As we prepare to celebrate Easter and Christ's resurrection,
help us plan safely and creatively.

Send your healing Spirit to raise our hearts and our hopes
with the promise of new life in Christ.

Restore to us the joy of your salvation and sustain in us all a willing spirit.
Amen.

***Hymn**

"I See a New Heaven"

VU #713

***Blessing**

Dear God. We thank you for today,
for being with us, accepting our worship and prayers,
and for guiding us on our way.
Bless us as we go, and in turn, may we bless others.
In Jesus' name. Amen.

Choral Benediction

"Don't Be Afraid"

MV #90

Postlude

*Please rise as you are able.