

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

April 23, 2023

10:30 a.m.

3rd Sunday of Easter

Central Queens Mission Statement

Central Queens United Church is a loving and living community called to support the life stages of all people; celebrating the 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

Birthdays & Special Occasions

Lighting of the Christ Candle

There was a person who did such amazing things - said such wonderful things - that great crowds of people followed him everywhere. One day they ask him, "Who are you?" He said, "I am the light."

Quiet Preparation for Worship (Bible is brought forward during the quiet time)

Bible Presentation

***Introit** "Bless the Lord" (Taize) X4

Bless the Lord, my soul
And bless God's holy name
Bless the Lord, my soul
Who leads me into life.

Call to Worship

We have come from many places, following different roads.

We come hungry for greater understanding.

We have come to hear the wisdom of Scripture.

We come seeking companions on our journey.

We have come to discover the One revealed in the breaking of the bread.

We come to grow as followers of the Christ.

Come, let us worship God, made known in Christ Jesus.

***Hymn** "We Are One"

VU # 402 vv. 1, 2, 4

Prayer of Approach

Loving God, we welcome your living presence in our midst.

Share our joy and our thanks for the life you give us.

Sing with us! Dance among us! Pray with us!

Shower us with your love!

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

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, which 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,
forever and ever.
Amen.**

Psalm 116:1–4, 12–19 How can I repay you, God? VU # 836

***Hymn** “On More Step Along the World I Go” VU # 639 vv. 1, 2, 3

All God's Children

***Hymn** “On More Step Along the World I Go” VU # 639 vv. 4, 5

Call to Transformation and New Life

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

**Week by week we open our lives before you,
acknowledging ways we sometimes lose track of you.
We are driven and feel busy so we let
other things come before you in our lives.**

**Changes upend us and we don't know where to turn.
Forgive us when we forget that you are with us day by day.
Renew us in your love, we pray.**

Assurance of God's unending Love

On the Emmaus road, Jesus met friends who were discouraged and distracted by his death. Yet when he spoke God's word to them, their hearts burned within them. Hear God's word of unending love today. May the fire of God's love warm your hearts with God's promise of peace and new life.

Presentation of Our Gifts

Invitation to Generosity

Our lives overflow with God's blessing and goodness which is all around us. Out of the bounty of our lives, let us offer God our gifts with overflowing gratitude.

Offertory

***Presentation of Offering**

*** Offertory** "We Give You But Your Own"

VU # 542

***Offertory Prayer**

Generous God, you bless us with life, purpose and opportunities to serve in the world you love. We offer you our gifts in Christ's name, not seeking greater gain, but desiring to enrich life around us with your love. Amen

Listening for the Word

Sacred Scripture

Acts 2:14a, 36–41 Three thousand new followers of the Way.

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: ‘Folk of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say.

Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.’ Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what should we do?’ Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.’ And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, ‘Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.’ So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

Luke 24:13–35 Jesus’ appearance on the road to Emmaus.

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with

them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed

and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Anthem

Sermon

Reflective Music

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

God our Maker,

you have walked the Emmaus Road with your

faithful people in many generations,

people facing challenges and uncertainty,

people seeking your purpose and promise.

Thank you for your faithfulness to us in all situations.

Walk with us and with those for whom we pray this day,

that your grace and mercy may sustain our faith and hope.

God in your mercy,

hear our prayers.

We pray for children and young people

who must think about the future in these uncertain times.

Give them hope rooted in the knowledge that their lives matter.
Show them how to make a difference in the world,
whatever threats and challenges they face as they grow.

God in your mercy,
hear our prayers.

We pray for those for whom age or experience, illness or disability
create barriers to full participation in your world.
Give each one a sense of dignity and purpose.
Show them where their gifts are needed and how much they
matter to you.

God in your mercy,
hear our prayers.

We pray for communities challenged by forces beyond their
control:

economic uncertainty,
environmental stress,
natural disaster,
political strife.

Give courage to those facing these crises day by day,
and wisdom to those who lead others through them,
so that well-being may be restored and hope for the future
prevail.

God in your mercy,

hear our prayers.

We pray for our congregation, for our life together and our future.

That future feels so challenging.

It's hard to read the signs of our times and respond wisely.

Sustain our community and give us the courage to take new paths, so that you will find us faithful on our journey into that future.

We pray for the well-being of those lives linked to ours

who bring us both joy and heartache

because they matter so much to us and to you:

God in your mercy,

hear our prayers.

God our Maker, hear our prayers, spoken and unspoken,
and use us in ways we may not yet even imagine to respond to
others

with the love and mercy, we see in Jesus, who is the Christ.

Amen.

Responding to the Word

***Hymn** "Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song"

VU# 641

***Blessing**

Now go, facing the road ahead, confident the Risen Christ goes
with you.

And may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

***Choral Benediction**

Postlude

*Please stand as you are able.