

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

January 29, 2023

10:30 a.m.

Fourth Sunday After Epiphany

Health and Human Service Sunday

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** “What Does the Lord Require of You” VU #701

Call to Worship

O Foot Washing God, who bends down,
who comes prepared with water and linens,
who first loved us, so that we may know how to love,
we gather here in your Spirit of service.

You taught us how no one is greater than the other,
no messenger outranks the sender.

And so, we come to worship both as givers and receivers,
the washers and the washed.

We unite at the basin and the table, finding the grace only you
can give,

to embolden us to go and do likewise.

On this Health and Human Service Sunday, let us wrap our towels
around our waists,

ready to partake in communal care.

Let us root ourselves in ritual, steadying us for the Good News at
hand,

and the beginnings of healing yet to come. Amen.

***Hymn** “Come Touch Our Hearts” MV #12

Prayer of Approach

Spirit of Extravagant Welcome,
help us to invite all parts of ourselves into worship today.
Guide us to see no stranger within us or around us
as we care for our world as the Body of Christ.

**Help us to break down all barriers to belonging
and the systems sustained by suffering and greed.
For, in discipleship, there is abundance through togetherness
and your acceptance of all we feel, carry and desire.
So, today, and on any given Sunday,
use all that we come here with
to build a sanctuary for you.**

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 15

VU #736

***Hymn "God of the Sparrow"**

VU #229 vv. 1-4

All God's Children

*Hymn “God of the Sparrow”

VU #229 vv. 5-6

Call to Transformation and New Life

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

In the beginning was the Word, but also the Conversation,
a way of being through relating, knowing and witnessing.
Made in your image, we come to confess, but even more so to
converse—

**to bring you our woes and wrongdoings, our soul-searching and
longing for deeper understanding.**

Like Paul, we don't always do the things we want to do, but rather
the things we hate.

**Help us to reflect on how we got to this moment and what might
need healing in us.**

Ignite our hearts with the courage to apologize, to center the care
of those we've caused harm.

**Sift through our ramblings on how to repair, to find methods of
mending that honour complexity and boundaries.**

And journey alongside us as we change our ways, to make
discipleship a practice,

as we learn, and re-learn, through conversation with you. Amen.

Assurance of God's unending Love

Presentation of Our Gifts

Invitation to Generosity

Today, as you present your offering, I invite you to do so believing that great things are possible for those who see great human need as a call to advance the love and compassion of the church of Jesus Christ. Let us be that kind of church, as our forebears have taught us.

Offertory

***Presentation of Offering** “You Nourish Us”

VU #545

***_Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving**

The friendship of Christ is with you!

And also with you!

Let us present our acts of service as an offering to our God.

And our hearts and minds to be opened.

O Spirit within community,

in you may our offering be fruitful.

Through the basin and towel, you show us the Gospel.

Through the bread and the cup, you feed us the Good News.

We are the Body of Christ. Amen.

Listening for the Word

Sacred Scripture

Micah 6:1–8

Hear what the LORD says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains,
and let the hills hear your voice.

Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the LORD,
and you enduring foundations of the earth;
for the LORD has a controversy with his people,
and he will contend with Israel.

‘O my people, what have I done to you?
In what have I wearied you? Answer me!
For I brought you up from the land of Egypt,
and redeemed you from the house of slavery;
and I sent before you Moses,
Aaron, and Miriam.

O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised,
what Balaam son of Beor answered him,
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,
that you may know the saving acts of the LORD.’

‘With what shall I come before the LORD,
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings,
with calves a year old?
Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
with tens of thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?’
He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

Matthew 5:1–12 Beatitudes for Essential, a paraphrase.

Blessed are you on the frontlines, who have sustained risk, toil, and exhaustion. You who have ridden every wave of this crisis and know its depths in ways others never will.

Blessed are you, for the kin-dom of God is yours.

Blessed are you donned in PPE, who have protected, sweated, and explained it a thousand times over. You who have stayed firm for the sake of life.

Blessed are you, for the kin-dom of God is yours.

Blessed are the understaffed, who have shown up, reached out, and adjusted beyond measure. You who make a way out of no way.

Blessed are you, for the kin-dom of God yours.

Blessed are you who de-escalate, who have stepped in, listened, and navigated through winds of tension. You who know the eye of the hurricane.

Blessed are you, for the kin-dom of God is yours.

Blessings be upon your trauma, your grief, shock and disappointment. Yours is the experience of prophets and healers who have gone before you.

Holy are you, for the kin-dom of God is in you.

Blessed are you on a mission, who seek justice, love kindness and walk humbly with our God. You whose care is an expression of your faith.

Holy are you, for the kin-dom of God is in you.

Blessed are the inspired, who found new ways to care,

collaborate, and solve seemingly impossible problems. You whose service is an expression of the Creator.

Holy are you, for the kin-dom of God is in you.

Blessed is the work, yes, but holy are you, too.

God no longer calls us servants, but friends.

Let us remember our essential belovedness
as we work for the kin-dom of God together.

Anthem

Sermon

Reflective Music

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Responding to the Word

***Hymn** “Christ Has No Body Now but Yours” MV #171

***Blessing**

Friends, may you be blessed with the growing edge of the Spirit,
where hope emerges alive and dissipates all despair.

Let us forage for such grace in the most forgotten places.

Let us find in relationships all we thought we had lost.

And as we go forth from this space,

may we take with us the medicines of compassion and service
to make the world a more just place for all. Amen.

***Choral Benediction** “Dance With the Spirit” MV #156

Postlude

***Please stand as you are able.**