

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

July 23, 2023

10:30 a.m.

Eight After Pentecost

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** Sing Praises (Taize) X4

Sing praises, all you peoples,
sing praises to the Lord.
Sing praises, all you peoples,
sing praises to the Lord!

Call to Worship

From every direction, we come together.

We have made our way here today. And we greeted one another as we arrived.

No matter who we are, or from where we come, God meets us in this place. God meets us in the eyes of the stranger sitting next to us, and in the wonder of children's whispers.

Led by the spirit Of God, remind us that we are children of God.

Led by the spirit, let us be present to the community we create.

We are here. Gathered to listen and respond to God's blessings.

May our hearts, our minds and our lives be open to the winds of God's Spirit. Let us worship God.

***Hymn** "The Lone, Wild Bird"

VU 384

Prayer of Approach

God of many names, mother of all creation, father of all that is, womb of life, and wellspring of all that we can ever know, we know your presence here as we seek to embody your loving spirit and create your presence among us. We turn to you as we practice creating your kin-dom of heaven here on earth.

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 139:1–12, 23–24 God, you have searched me and known me. VU 861

***Hymn** “God of the Sparrow” VU 229

All God's Children

Presentation of Our Gifts

Invitation to Generosity

As recipients of the many ways in which God provides, let us share this generosity with others whose seeds have not yet taken root, whose plots need tending.

Offertory

*Presentation of Offering

* **Offertory** “Deep in Our Hearts” MV 154 v. 1

*Offertory Prayer

We dedicate these resources to doing God’s work among
God’s people.

**May these gifts plant seeds of justice for God’s children who
seek it; may they remind us to love more mercifully; may all
walk humbly as we learn to trod gently upon this earth. Amen.**

Listening for the Word

Sacred Scripture

Genesis 28:10–19a Jacob’s dream of the ladder.

Jacob left Beer-sheba and went towards Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the LORD stood beside him and said, ‘I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring.

Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.’ Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, ‘Surely the LORD is in this place—and I did not know it!’ And he was afraid, and said, ‘How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.’

So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called that place Bethel; but the name of the city was Luz at the first.

Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43

The parable of the weeds scattered among good seed.

He put before them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, “Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?” He answered, “An enemy has done this.” The slaves said to him, “Then do you want us to go and gather them?” But he replied, “No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.”’

Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.' He answered, 'The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

Anthem

Sermon

Reflective Music

Responding to the Word

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Thank you, O God,
for welcoming us into your presence.
Sometimes we can simply breathe in the wonders of your
creation, on a summer evening or in a quiet forest,
and know you are near.
Other times you surprise us with a word,
an unexpected kindness,
a sense of your tenderness with us in prayer.

Whenever, however, we meet you,
we are grateful for your presence
at the heart of our lives.

Assured of your great love for us,
we bring before you the people we love
and the situations that cause us deep concern.

Today we pray with those who rejoice at a baby's birth or a
summer wedding, and with those who mourn the loss of a friend
or loved one....

We pray with those whose work has found success and reward,
and with those who are anxious because there is no work to be
found...

We pray with those who feel bored, without enough to do this
summer, and with those who are exhausted, facing still more to
do...

We pray with those grateful for renewed good health,
and with those who find illness, anxiety or uncertain health
lingering...

We pray with those who have found peace or safety after turmoil,
and with those who fear what tomorrow might bring...

We pray with those who enjoy the love of family and friends
nearby, and with those who feel lonely or isolated...

Ever present God,
we thank you that you hear us in every situation of life,
for we all find ourselves in these situations sooner or later.
Help us to support each other,
standing together in gladness and challenge.
Strengthen our life together as your people.
Give us the generosity we meet in Jesus
to respond wisely to those whose lives touch ours –
inside and outside your church.
May our hands serve as your hands in all that we do. Amen.

***Hymn** “Called by Earth and Sky”

MV 135

Extinguishing of the Christ Candle

See the **light is now changed**. It has taken on a different form.
But it is still here! It's absorbed in you. It clings to you.
Go cradle and share the **Light. Share** it to others as we go about
your daily living. **Go and live in the light**, Carriers of the light.

***Benediction**

Friends, you are called to go forth and appreciate the weeds
among us, as we have each been in the weeds!

Go from this place during this harvest time and taste the ripeness
of a plump tomato, the sweetness and crunch of new carrots, the
crisp coolness of cucumbers.

Go with the knowledge that there is enough for all, be it God's earthly blessings that are so delicious and nourishing or God's love that connects us all.

Share in these gifts and know that we are all enough. Amen.

***Choral Benediction** "Go Make a Difference" MV 209 (Chorus)

Postlude

*Please stand as you are able.