

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

**July 30, 2023**

**10:30 a.m.**

**Ninth 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**

O Creator of the Cosmos, you know what the kin-dom of God is like, but you also remember what it was like before.

**Before creation and kin-doms, before mustard seeds and fine pearls, before yeast and bakers to make bread.**

So, you know what it is like to long for them, to imagine them into being,

**and it is from this longing for your kin-dom and for you that we enter our worship.**

Yes, come, let us praise and pray to our God of promise.

**Let us rejoice in the Good News together—nothing can separate us from the presence of God.**

**\*Hymn** “Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness”

VU 375

### **Prayer of Approach**

**O Spirit, who helps us in our struggles, and teaches us how to pray when we don’t know what to say or how to feel, we call on you from a sigh too deep for words. Within that sigh, we wonder, we question, and we hope that all things do, indeed,**

**work together for your good. And in this experience of being here together, in this time set apart to be side by side in community, we are reminded how connected we already are. Let us open ourselves to your presence here. Let us seek first, the kin-dom of God, and in our searching, may we be found by you, Beloved, the One who searches for us first.**

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 105:1–11, 45b** Make known what God has done

VU 828 Part One

**\*Hymn** "Small Things Count"

VU 361

### **All God's Children**

## Presentation of Our Gifts

### Invitation to Generosity

God surprises us with treasure hidden in familiar places, and pearls of great price, found through faithful searching. Let us offer back to God some of our treasure in gratitude for all we have discovered through our faith in Christ.

### Offertory

#### \*Presentation of Offering

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

#### \*Offertory Prayer

**Like the net that was thrown into the sea and brought in fish of every kind, we celebrate the multitude and diversity of gifts that have been shared here today. May God bless these treasures with the abundance of Christ’s love and passion to embody justice in our world. Amen.**

## Listening for the Word

### Sacred Scripture

**Romans 8:26–39** The Spirit intercedes for us when we cannot pray.

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart,

knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

'For your sake we are being killed all day long;  
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.'

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Matthew 13:31–33, 44–52** Five parables: mustard seed, yeast, treasure, pearls, net.

He put before them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.’

He told them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.’

‘The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

‘Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

‘Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

‘Have you understood all this?’ They answered, ‘Yes.’ And he said to them, ‘Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.’

**Anthem**

**Sermon**

**Reflective Music**

### **Responding to the Word**

#### **Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
We offer you our thanks this day  
for you are the true source of peace and healing for us  
in a world that feels out of joint so often.  
Today we pray for those who face choices and decisions about  
their health:  
for those trying to follow good diets and exercise enough;  
for any waiting for appointments or wondering if they should  
make another call;  
for those who find caring for their health frustrating,  
and for all feeling pain or anxiety as they wait for healing and  
peace.....  
God, in your mercy,  
**guide us in our choices and challenges.**

Lord Jesus Christ:  
We offer you our thanks on this day  
for you are the true source of wisdom and generosity  
in a world struggling to make ends meet.

Today we pray for all who face choices and decisions about their finances:

for those struggling with bills and budgets;  
for those torn between covering necessities and enjoying a treat;  
for all who have few choices because resources are limited, and for those who have many choices and want to make them wisely.

God, in your mercy,  
**guide us in our choices and challenges.**

Lord Jesus Christ:

We offer you our thanks on this day  
for you are the true source of love and forgiveness  
in a world full of criticism and self-doubt.

Today we pray for those facing choices and decisions about relationships:

for people we ought to call but just haven't;  
for those with whom we feel a grievance but haven't worked it through;  
for those we'd like to invite into closer relationship but haven't yet found the courage;  
and for those we miss dearly and need to tell how much we cherish them.

God, in your mercy,  
**guide us in our choices and challenges.**

Lord Jesus Christ:

We offer you thanks this day  
for you are the source of rest and right relationship for God's whole creation.

Today we pray for the earth and its well-being.  
Encourage us to care for the earth in our everyday lives



so its resources last for coming generations.  
Inspire us to live out our good intentions for the earth in our  
choices big and small  
so that your kin-dom may come on earth not by disaster but  
through our discipleship. Amen.

**\*Hymn** "Sent Forth by God's Blessing"

VU 481

### **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**

May the Kin-dom of Abundance and Diversity be with you. May  
it be among you. May it live and move and have its dwelling  
within you. And may we take the love we've found, our  
inseparable bond with the Creator, and bring it into fullness out in  
our world. Amen.

**\*Choral Benediction** "Go, Make a Diff'rence"

MV 209 (Chorus)

### **Postlude**

\*Please stand as you are able.