

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

July 9, 2023

10:30 a.m.

Sixth 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** “Let Us Praise Your Name” (Taize) X4

Let us praise your name,
God our Saviour, alleluia, alleluia!
Praise and bless your name,
God our Saviour, praise and bless your name, alleluia!

Call to Worship

O Spirit of the First Song, the Origins of a Lullaby, we come here today with our burdens in tow.

Would you grant us comfort, O Gentle Jesus? Our pain has no place to land, no cradle for our sorrows to rock in.

And say to us: 'Yes, I've got you now. There, there, dear child, there, there.'

There, there, to the rhythm of a heartbeat, like a grandmother consoling her kin. There, there.

There, there, like the psalmist singing in satisfaction. It's alright now. We made it home. *There, there.*

There, there, shouts the activist out in the streets. That's enough now, never again. There, there.

For you are here, right here, ever with us—burden-sharer, light-maker, right here.

And it is from this ancient hum that we worship you.

It is from this rest that we know you.

It is from such a place that we praise you, right here, again.

Amen.

Prayer of Approach

O God of Heaven and Earth, who is glorified in the wisdom of children—the experts of presence and oneness.

May we evoke your humble heart within us.

May we wonder what it might mean to feel our exhaustion *and* your love, at the exact same time.

May we consider all you’ve tried to show, give or say to us that we weren’t yet ready for. Prepare our souls to yoke with yours, to share in the Good News that revives every living thing. We ask this in your name and energy.

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 45:10–17 A song for the anointed ruler VU 769

***Hymn** “Each Blade of Grass” MV 37

All God’s Children

Call to Transformation and New Life

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Spirit of God, you are always among us, and yet at times we are too busy to notice. Not recognizing you in the stranger on the street or the stranger in me—who does not do the things I want, but rather the things I hate. Perhaps we thought our certainty would keep us safe or ignorance would keep us pain-free, but you show us the way of trust and awareness is what paves the path of peace. Forgive and help us, O God, by the power grace and connection. Amen.

Words of Grace

No matter the weight of our burdens or the age of our weariness, let us come before our rest-giving God. Rest from our shame and unbelief. Rest from egos and false idols. Rest to open us up to grace that says, I feel so much better since I laid my burdens down. Rest for the receptivity to our yes. Yes to forgiveness, yes to repair, and yes to being fearfully and wonderfully made. Amen.

Presentation of Our Gifts

Invitation to Generosity

Our God plays the flute for us. Do we not hear it? Shall we not respond with a dance? Shall we not come to each other with thanksgiving, and in turn share the gifts that we have? How might we be abundant? And in what ways are we still in need? Let us bring it all as an offering, through our faith and humanity.

Offertory

***Presentation of Offering**

*** Offertory** “You Nourish Us” VU 545

***Offertory Prayer**

What weighs us down doesn’t just disappear in the wind, but rather lightens because the load is shared. So, God of Our Yoke, may we prosper in solidarity. May what feels hard, be the “right” kind of hard—one that strengthens us in growth and connection. Let the cycle of suffering finally have its last day, and the Year of Jubilee begin with us. Amen.

Listening for the Word

Sacred Scripture

Genesis 24:34–38, 42–49, 58–67

So he said, ‘I am Abraham’s servant. The LORD has greatly blessed my master, and he has become wealthy; he has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female slaves, camels and

donkeys. And Sarah my master's wife bore a son to my master when she was old; and he has given him all that he has. My master made me swear, saying, "You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I live; but you shall go to my father's house, to my kindred, and get a wife for my son..."

'I came today to the spring, and said, "O LORD, the God of my master Abraham, if now you will only make successful the way I am going! I am standing here by the spring of water; let the young woman who comes out to draw, to whom I shall say, 'Please give me a little water from your jar to drink,' and who will say to me, 'Drink, and I will draw for your camels also'—let her be the woman whom the LORD has appointed for my master's son." 'Before I had finished speaking in my heart, there was Rebekah coming out with her water-jar on her shoulder; and she went down to the spring, and drew. I said to her, "Please let me drink." She quickly let down her jar from her shoulder, and said, "Drink, and I will also water your camels." So I drank, and she also watered the camels.

Then I asked her, "Whose daughter are you?" She said, "The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bore to him." So I put the ring on her nose, and the bracelets on her arms. Then I bowed my head and worshipped the LORD, and blessed the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me by the right way to obtain the daughter of my master's kinsman for his son. Now then, if you will deal loyally and truly with my master, tell me; and

if not, tell me, so that I may turn either to the right hand or to the left...'

And they called Rebekah, and said to her, 'Will you go with this man?' She said, 'I will.' So they sent away their sister Rebekah and her nurse along with Abraham's servant and his men. And they blessed Rebekah and said to her,

'May you, our sister, become
thousands of myriads;
may your offspring gain possession
of the gates of their foes.'

Then Rebekah and her maids rose up, mounted the camels, and followed the man; thus the servant took Rebekah, and went his way. Now Isaac had come from Beer-lahai-roi, and was settled in the Negeb. Isaac went out in the evening to walk in the field; and looking up, he saw camels coming. And Rebekah looked up, and when she saw Isaac, she slipped quickly from the camel, and said to the servant, 'Who is the man over there, walking in the field to meet us?' The servant said, 'It is my master.' So she took her veil and covered herself. And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done.

Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent. He took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death. Rebekah welcomes Isaac as her husband.

Matthew 11:16–19, 25–30

‘But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market-places and calling to one another, “We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.” For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, “He has a demon”; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, “Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners!” Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds...’

At that time Jesus said, ‘I thank you, Holy One, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by the one who sent me; and no one knows the Son except God, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. ‘Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.’

Anthem

Sermon

Reflective Music

Responding to the Word

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

***Hymn** “May the God of Hope Go with Us”

VU 424

Extinguishing of the Christ Candle

See the **light is now changed**. The smoke twirls around and spreads out. **But it is still here!** It touches us.

Like the smoke, **it clings to us**.

We now **take the Light with us** as we leave and carry it to others as we go about our daily lives. **Go and live in the light**, share the light.

***Benediction**

O God of Rejuvenation, may we leave this place feeling alive, awake, and made for this day. In you there is hope for satisfaction, while our hunger for justice remains everlasting. May we find strength in gentleness and relief to heavy loads. And may we carry your promise of refuge with us wherever we go. Amen.

***Choral Benediction** “When You Walk from Here”

VU 298

Postlude

*Please stand as you are able.