

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

January 7, 2024

10:30 a.m.

1st After Epiphany

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

Welcome in the name of the Christ.

**Welcome to this place of worship, situated on the
unceded traditional lands of the Mi'kmaq people.**

Welcome to this place of retreat and refuge, worship and wonder.

It is good to be here.

It is indeed good to be together.

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 asked 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** "A Light is Gleaming" VU #82 (Chorus)

Call to Worship

Ascribe to God glory and honour!

The Voice of the Holy One hovers over the waters and speaks creation into being.

Ascribe to God strength and peace!

The Voice of the Sovereign One calls for justice, love and righteousness.

Ascribe to God power and gentleness!

The Voice of the Gracious One gives life and reigns forever and ever.

Come, let us open our lives to me God in this time of worship.

***Hymn** "Arise, Your Light Is Come" VU #79

Prayer of Approach

Triune God, you come among us in the fullness of your being and affirm the fullness of our humanity—mind, body and spirit. In you, we find joy and pleasure. In you, we claim peace and hope. In you, we arise to greet a new day and a new way of being.

Shape us in this time together that we might reflect your goodness and your way.

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 29

VU # 756

***Hymn "The First Nowell"**

VU #91 vv. 1-3

All God's Children

Hymn "The First Nowell"

VU #91 vv. 4-6

Presentation of Our Gifts

Invitation to Generosity

Let us return a portion of our abundance to the creative and liberating energy and work of God in the world. May our resources be used for the glory of God and in the name of the One who modeled abiding generosity.

Offertory

***Presentation of Offering**

*** Offertory**

***Offertory Prayer**

Holy One, receive our offerings as gifts of ourselves. Increase the gifts and uplift our generosity to new heights. May our giving bear fruit that sustains, nurtures and feeds a new world into being. Amen.

Listening for the Word

Sacred Scripture

Genesis 1:1–5

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the

darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

Mark 1:4–11

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

Anthem

Sermon

Reflective Music

Responding to the Word

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

God of Grace,
we turn to you in prayer with open and hopeful hearts.
We thank you for the work of your church in all its expressions
and for all that brings your love, healing and justice into the
world.

We pray for churches struggling financially,
for churches enmeshed in conflict,
for those that are tired and in need of renewal;
and for congregations with a new sense of mission and purpose.
Give them all wisdom and strength.

We thank you for the healing we have known in our lives:

for times we have been forgiven;
for relationships repaired and strengthened;
for comfort in times of grief;
for pain eased and recovery from illness.

While Covid 19 still haunts our communities,
we pray for those struggling with its lingering effects or fresh
infection.

And we pray for those in health care
coping with challenges that have no easy solution.
Give each one the hope and courage they need to face this new
year.

We pray for people around the world
who must confront danger and conflict daily;
for those working for justice in the face of oppression;
and for all who know hunger and homelessness

after drought and disaster.

Give them hope and courage to face this new year.

Strengthen us to serve you not only with our words, but also with our actions.

Help us to see others with your eyes,
and reach out with your compassion, especially where differences divide.

Teach us how to work together
and show what it means to follow you in changing times.

Amen.

***Hymn** In the Darkness Shines the Splendour

VU #92

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**

As we arise from this gathering of worship, in spirit or enfleshed,
follow The Voice into the world.

Claim your voice for the kin-dom.

Join our collective voices in spreading good news.

The Voice will be with you. Glory to God. Go in peace. Arise.

***Choral Benediction**

Postlude

*Please stand as you are able.