

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

March 20, 2022

10:30 a.m.

Third Sunday in Lent

Central Queens Mission Statement

Central Queens United Church is a loving and living community called to support the life stages of all people; celebrating 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)

Lenten Litany

Jesus entered the temple and saw how it was being used to oppress the people. Rock is used to build so many structures -- physical and organizational -- that separate people and keep life from touching us. We place our trust in structures rather than in God and in our relationships.

The third rock is placed

The rock of trust.

May God's spirit walk with us.

***Introit** "Don't Be Afraid"

MV #90

Call to Worship

Seek the Lord while God may be found. Call upon God who is near.

We will return to the Lord our God.

God's thoughts are not our thoughts. God's ways are not our ways.

We come, seeking new paths to follow.

As the heavens are higher than the earth so are God's ways higher than ours.

We come as pilgrims on the journey, praising God along the way.

Let us worship God with thankful hearts!

***Hymn** "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy"

VU #271

Prayer of Approach

God, Creator --- Life Giver,
in you we live and move and have our being.
In your depths we find meaning;
in your heights we find light and joy.
You are the source of peace and hope for all who turn to you.
You alone have been our help and our guide;
you give us strength and courage when we face challenges.
In you we find rest and welcome along the way.
We praise you, O God, for your steadfast love.
Draw near to us once more in this time of worship.
Reveal your ways for us
and prepare us for the days ahead so that
our lives may witness to your great love
as we follow Jesus.

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,**

for ever and ever.

Amen.

Psalm 63:1-8

VU #781

***Hymn** "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus"

VU #357 vv. 1-3

All God's Children

***Hymn** "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus"

VU #357 vv. 4-5

Prayer of Confession

**God of unconditional love,
we confess that our thoughts are so often not your thoughts;
our ways are rarely your ways.
Our tempers are short and we fail to act with kindness.
Our confidence is fragile and we treat others without respect.
Our faith falters and we lose track of you.
Forgive the many ways we fail you and others,
inspire us to follow you more faithfully. Amen.**

Assurance of Unending Love

God's love abounds.
God is with us.
God's everlasting arms embrace us.
Each of us is beloved, affirmed and set free.
Amen.

Presentation of Our Gifts

Offertory Invitation

God has given us life and breath,

and created a world of beauty and order.
In Christ we know God's generous kindness.
Our gifts are tokens of gratitude for all that we
have received in Christ and in creation.
May our gifts speak to the thankfulness of our hearts.

Offertory

***Presentation of Offering** "Christ Has No Body Now But Yours"
MV #171 (Chorus)

***Offertory Prayer**

**Loving God, accept these our gifts, we pray.
Bless them and use them to inspire
peace in places of unrest,
love in places of resentment,
joy in places of fear, and
hope in places of loss,
all for the sake of Jesus Christ,
our friend and Liberator. Amen.**

Listening for the Word

Sacred Scripture

Isaiah 55:1-9

Ho, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk

without money and without price.

Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labour for that which does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.

Incline your ear, and come to me;
listen, so that you may live.

I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.

See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
a leader and commander for the peoples.

See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,
for God has glorified you.

Seek the LORD while he may be found,
call upon the Most Holy while God is near;
let the wicked forsake their way,
and the unrighteous their thoughts;
let them return to the LORD, that they may find mercy,
and to our God, for abundant pardon.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Luke 13:1-9

At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.”

Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’ He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

Anthem

Sermon

Reflective Music

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

God of Hope,
When the world is confusing and frustrating,
you bring light and hope.
We give you thanks for lessons learned, for changes of heart,
for fresh discoveries made, and new paths followed.
We pray this day for those who are confused or afraid.
for those who feel anger or despair.

Silence

O God, give us hope in our time.

Turn our hearts to you.

God of Peace,

there is so much conflict, hostility and antagonism
around us and within us.

Personal relationships are often tense;
the world community is at odds.

We pray for understanding to prevail
in relationships at home and at work,
in our community and our country.

And we pray for diplomacy to end conflict and threat among
nations. We especially remember, and hold before you
Ukraine -- her leaders and people.

Silence

O God, give us peace in these times.

Turn our hearts to you.

God of Joy,

we give you thanks for moments of joy and
celebration in our lives,

for small pleasures given and received through times of isolation.

We remember those who feel left out or bitter,
those who are anxious or in distress.

We pray for those who face loss and hardship in these
uncertain times,

and all who know sorrow and suffering,
naming before you those on our hearts this day.

Silence

O God, give us joy in our time.

Turn our hearts to you.

God of community and compassion,
we thank you for your steadfast presence
in the face of all that brings uncertainty and worry these days.
Bless our congregation and every church that is struggling;
inspire us to consider renewed ministry and mission
after months of restricted gatherings.
Reawaken our love for one another
and our desire to worship and serve together in Jesus' name.
Sustain leaders who feel exhausted by the challenges they've
faced and renew our stewardship with gratitude for your love.

Silence

O God, give us strength in our service.

Turn our hearts to you.

God of love,
receive these prayers and the unspoken prayers of our hearts.
Deepen our trust in you for the days ahead,
for we offer ourselves as Jesus' friends and followers. Amen.

Responding to the Word

***Hymn** "To Show By Touch and Word"

VU #427

***Benediction**

As we go forth with lives orientated toward new ways of being,
may God be with us in our hunger and thirst.

May our ears be ever inclined, listening for the good news.

May praises be on our lips even in the bleakest valley
and may the God of peace equip us with every good thing
to carry out God's desire for the world.

Amen.

***Choral Benediction "Peace Be with You"**

MV #215

Postlude

*Please stand as you are able.