

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

March 27, 2022

10:30 a.m.

Fourth 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

In Jesus, we find light for the world, but sometimes we prefer to live in the shadows. Sometimes, we prefer not to see what happens in our own emotional and spiritual life. Sometimes, we

prefer not to know what happens in the world around us. And in the shadows, we stumble on the rocks. When we choose not to see or know, we choose to turn away from God.

The fourth rock is placed

The rock that causes us to stumble.

May God's spirit walk with us.

***Introit** “Don't Be Afraid”

MV #90

Call to Worship

Happy are those who experience the grace of God;

who find forgiveness and mercy from the Holy One.

Happy are those who experience the steadfast love of God;

who find peace even in times of trial.

Happy are those who experience rest in God;

who find sabbath to renew their spirit.

***Hymn** “Seek Ye First the Kingdom”

VU #356

Prayer of Approach

Holy God,

after times of broken relationships, painful injustices, and

feeling deserted, we enter this season yearning for restoration

and your comforting love. In this time of wilderness and

reflection, we evaluate the relationships between us and our

neighbours. This morning, fill our weary souls with hope. Lead us

on roads of renewal, and focus our minds as we ponder our

callings in your realm.

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 32

VU #759

***Hymn** **"God of the Sparrow"** VU #229 vv. 1-4

All God's Children

***Hymn** **"God of the Sparrow"** VU #229 vv. 5, 6

Prayer of Confession

**Holy Breath,
there are moments when our decisions do not take into
consideration the well-being of our neighbours. There are times
when our reactions turn inward instead of building healthy
reconciliation. How is it that we are holding back our**

neighbour's rebirth? How are our implicit and explicit biases restricting God's grace and radical love? How do our actions and biases impede our own spiritual growth?

Urge us to be life-giving agents of your love. May each of our steps be healing not only to us, but to our siblings on the journey. Amen.

Assurance of Unending Love

God, our Divine Parent. You run towards us with infinite love and grace. May the kindness we experience transform our minds, hearts, and souls. May we extend God's grace as we run towards our Divine Parent.

Presentation of Our Gifts

Offertory Invitation

Even when our gifts become dormant, God stirs our hearts, calling us to bring to life our gifts once again.
I wonder what gifts may God be challenging us to revive?
How can these treasures, talents, and time create equitable communities?

Offertory

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

***Offertory Prayer**

God of blessings.

With gratitude, we celebrate the offerings we share with you and this community today. May they enliven our spirits, building excitement around us, and creating a culture of giving. Open us to new possibilities for using our gifts to build the dignity of all and to strengthen all whom we meet. Amen.

Listening for the Word

Sacred Word

Joshua 5:9-12

The LORD said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.” And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the Passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. On the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.” So he told them this parable:

“There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.”’ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

“Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf,

because he has got him back safe and sound.’ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”

Anthem

Sermon

Reflective Music

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Gracious God,
you have called us together as your people,
to be the church of the Christ.
Make us one in faith,
breaking bread together, and telling the good news,
so that the world may believe you are love,
turn to your ways and live in the light of your truth.

Faithful God,
embrace us with your hope.

Creator God,
you made all things and called them good.
We pray for the earth in its vulnerability,

depleted by our lifestyle choices and our economic expectations.
Inspire reverence for the earth in all people.
Guide us all to make wiser choices for the sake of your creation.
Help us use resources wisely, with future generations in mind,
guarding the fragile balances you have set between many
precious species.

Faithful God,
embrace us with your hope.

Jesus Christ, Prince of peace,
you taught us of God's reconciling grace
in the story of a parent who welcomed back his wandering son
and invited his jealous son to open his heart.
Speak to the hearts of all your people
in this time when so many neighbours and nations sit in judgment
on each other,
provoking conflict and resentment.
Teach us how to seek peace on earth together.
Call those in positions of power and influence to work for the
common good.
Turn us away from anger, fear,
violence or vanity,
which can turn neighbour against neighbour and nation against
nation.
May all who claim your name be known as makers of the peace.

Faithful God,
embrace us with your hope.

O Christ, healer of hearts and hopes,
you desire health and wholeness for each one of us:
We pray that those who have lost their livelihoods
may find true abundance.

Grant rest and renewal to those who are broken in body, mind or spirit, and bring comfort and hope to all who face loss and loneliness.

In silence we lift before you the names of those on our hearts today:

Silence

Faithful God,
embrace us with your hope.

Spirit of power and promise, embrace us with hope this day so that we may live faithfully, encouraging each other by the commitment we see in Jesus Christ. Amen.

Responding to the Word

***Hymn** "O God, How We Have Wandered" VU #112

***Benediction**

May our spirits come alive in this season of Lent when we run to our loving Parent God with the hopes of strengthening our bonds.

May our spirits come alive in this season of Lent when we embrace our Divine Neighbour Christ, with the hopes of reconciliation.

May our spirits come alive in this season of Lent when we breathe with the Spirit, our Divine Encourager, in the hopes of peace.

Amen.

***Choral Benediction** “Peace Be with You”

MV #215

Postlude

*Please stand as you are able.