

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

June 25, 2023

10:30 a.m.

Fourth After Pentecost

Communion

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** "In the Lord" (Taize) X4

**In the Lord
I'll be ever thankful,
In the Lord I will rejoice!
Look to God,
Do not be afraid.
Lift up your voices,
The Lord is near;
Lift up your voices,
The Lord is near.**

Call to Worship

Hey! I need you to hear something really important.

What is it?

You need to be ready. Are you ready?

Yes.

Really ready?

Absolutely! What's so important?

First, take a deep breath.

Okay, listen closely:

God is here in our midst;

God is listening to the stories we share;

God knows us, more deeply than we can imagine.

**What a wonderful reminder! As we rejoice in God's love,
let us come together and worship in the light of community.**

***Hymn** "When Long before Time"

VU 248

Prayer of Approach

**Our many-storied God,
you give name to the prayer sung through our living.
You created a world with so much potential for beauty.
It is through this world that we experienced the many stories
that make us who we are.
Help us to encounter you today,
during this time of beholding and wonder.**

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 86:1–10, 16–17

VU 803

***Hymn " 'Tis the Gift to Be Simple"**

VU 353

All God's Children

*Hymn "'Tis the Gift to Be Simple"

VU 353

A Celebration of Faith

We celebrate
that where people are gathered together in love
God is present and good things happen and life is full.

We celebrate
that we are immersed in mystery
that our lives are more than they seem
**that we belong to each other
and to a universe of great creative energies,
whose source and destiny is God.**

We celebrate
that the Spirit of God beat in the heart of Jesus of Nazareth
and God's good news was heard by the broken and wounded.

We are glad that the spirit of peace
is present with us, the church,
**as we gather to celebrate our common existence,
and the fidelity of God.**

And most deeply we believe
that in our struggle to love,
we incarnate God in the world.

And so aware of mystery and wonder,
caught in friendship and laughter,
**we become speechless before the joy in our hearts
as we celebrate the sacredness of life.**

Sharing The Peace

Let us take a moment to greet each other.

May a heart of peace rest with you.
And also with you.

You are invited to share the peace with your neighbours

Presentation of Our Gifts

Invitation to Generosity

God Listens.

God pauses.

God responds.

We listened.

We have paused.

And now we respond.

**We give as we are able, we give as we are called. Your offering
will now be presented.**

Offertory

***Presentation of Offering**

*** Offertory** “You Nourish Us”

VU 545

***Offertory Prayer**

**God, use our offering, an outpouring of our response to you,
as gifts for the world.**

**Through this giving,
may we be inspired to continue
offering in this -- your world. Amen.**

Listening for the Word

Sacred Scripture

Genesis 21:8-21

The child grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing with her son Isaac. So she said to Abraham, ‘Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not inherit along with my son Isaac.’ The matter was very distressing to Abraham on account of his son. But God said to Abraham, ‘Do not be distressed because of the boy and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be named after you. As for the son of the slave woman, I will make a nation of him also, because he is your offspring.’ So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar,

putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

When the water in the skin was gone, she cast the child under one of the bushes. Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot; for she said, 'Do not let me look on the death of the child.' And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept. And God heard the voice of the boy; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, 'What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid; for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. Come, lift up the boy and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make a great nation of him.' Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. She went, and filled the skin with water, and gave the boy a drink.

God was with the boy, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

Matthew 10:24–39

'A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

Whom to Fear

‘So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

‘Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

Not Peace, but a Sword

‘Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

For I have come to set a man against his father,
and a daughter against her mother,
and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;
and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household.

Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and

follow me is not worthy of me. Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

Anthem

Sermon

Reflective Music

Responding to the Word

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Hymn “Let Us Break Bread Together”

VU 480

Introduction

The members of the Jesus movement regularly ate a meal together when they met together.

It was a characteristic that they had in common with virtually every other social group in their world.

These meal traditions were not about personal salvation or payment for sin. Instead, they were about actions and offering hospitality, social identity and being in solidarity with those around them.

Communion than centres on celebration, presence and joy. I invite you to share in the deep history and mystery of those meals...

Thanksgiving

May God's presence be recognized with you.

And with you.

Life is a gift and we its celebration.

May we rejoice in the beauty of God's Creation.

We give thanks and praise for all that is good in the world.

For that mystery, we name as God...

For the person we name Jesus...

For the renewing strength and freedom of the Spirit...

**We give thanks for love, peace and justice,
for strength and freedom,
and for the presence of the Sacred in the midst of life.**

God of winter, spring, summer and autumn. God of all seasons.

God of lightning, wind and storm...

God of brisk winter mornings and sunny warm humid summer
days we open ourselves to all the possibilities life offers us.

Thus we join our celebration of life to all people, saying:

**Holy! Holy! Holy!
Heaven and earth are holy and good.**

Bread and Wine

We remember the times when Jesus faced difficult decisions and
destructive forces:

- in the days and nights of his searching,
- in finding ways to free others from images and ideas
that kept them captive and dependent and fearful of God,

- in breaking down social and religious barriers,
- in facing failure,
- in facing death.

When we too experience the winter of our lives
may we find the courage to let go
and trust in God's guiding, warming light.

And as we eat together at this table
we remember the importance and the words
and the actions of all meals in the tradition of Jesus...

Bread broken, Wine poured out

Jesus,
on the night before he died,
took bread,
and after giving thanks to God,
he broke it and said,
"This is my body, that is for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way,
he took the cup after supper, saying,
"This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood.
Whenever you drink it,
do it in remembrance of me."

Every time you eat this bread and drink the cup,
you proclaim Jesus' death and resurrection.

Come for all is ready. All are welcome at this table.

Response Prayer

Jesus, human like us,
reveals to us our true identity, temples of God's spirit.
Jesus, human like us,
reveals God's presence and active throughout human history.
Jesus, human like us,
reveals God-always-with-us in our everyday loving.
Jesus, human like us,
challenges us to let his story be our story also. Amen.

***Hymn** "Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ" VU 468

Extinguishing of the Christ Candle

As I extinguish the candle we see the smoke twirl around and spread until we can't see it anymore. Just because we can't see God, doesn't mean God isn't here. God goes with us as we leave, much like the smoke that fills the room, that gets in our hair and on our clothes. We take the Light with us as we leave and carry it to others as we go through our daily lives.

***Blessing**

God forth from here seeking Christ,
and be not surprised to find him
in those you least expect,
including yourselves! Amen.

***Choral Benediction**

Postlude

***Please stand as you are able.**