

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

November 12, 2023

10:30 a.m.

24 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** "Come Touch Our Hearts"

MV #12 v.3

Call to Worship

As the sea gathers its waters
for the next waves on the shore:
so God's people gather for loving.

As the notes of harmony congregate
for the sound of music:
so God's people cluster in community.

As the wind sweeps the air
into great clouds of beauty:
so God's people wonder at creation.

As this day, this week begins:
so God's people gather for worship and praise.

***Hymn** "Faith of our Fathers"

VU #580

Prayer of Approach

**Steadfast God, you visit us in our aloneness
but we express you best in our togetherness.
May our time together model the best we can
be, an expression of the Kin-dom you call us to
embody. Open our minds to you Spirit, and shape
our minds to engage the week before us.**

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 78:1–7

VU #792 Part One

***Hymn** “Spin Me a Story”

All God's Children Sing vv. 1, 2

All God’s Children

Hymn “Spin Me a Story”

All God's Children Sing v. 3

Presentation of Our Gifts

Invitation to Generosity

As the people of ancient days said to Joshua, let us proclaim that we will serve the Holy One. Let us choose this day to serve with all the gifts and resources we have been given to the glory of God and in generous hope for the world.

Offertory

***Presentation of Offering**

*** Offertory** “We Will Take What You Offer”

MV #196

***Offertory Prayer**

Discerning God, receive our offerings and gifts for your kindom. Let them be a blessing to those in need of encouragement, material goods and evidence of your presence among us. Magnify them beyond our imagining and grant us insight into the possibilities before us for ministry and witness. We are grateful to give. Amen.

Listening for the Word

Sacred Scripture

Joshua 24:1–3a, 14–25

Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors—Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan and made—‘Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose

this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.'

Then the people answered, 'Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.'

But Joshua said to the people, 'You cannot serve the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm, and consume you, after having done you good.' And the people said to Joshua, 'No, we will serve the LORD!' Then Joshua said to the people, 'You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD, to serve him.' And they said, 'We are witnesses.' He said, 'Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel.' The people said to Joshua, 'The LORD our God we will serve, and him we will obey.' So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem.

Matthew 25:1–13

‘Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, “Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.” Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.” But the wise replied, “No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.” And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, “Lord, lord, open to us.” But he replied, “Truly I tell you, I do not know you.” Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

Anthem

Sermon

Reflective Music

Responding to the Word

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

God of life,

you open our eyes on the world you love
and show us your presence and your purpose.
We see the wonder of your creation
and the compassion you offer through friend and stranger.
For these gifts we give you thanks.
We pray for those who cannot recognize these gifts
and find themselves lost and alone.
Open their eyes to your presence and our companionship.
God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of justice,
you open our eyes on the world
and show us struggle and conflict.
We see the stressful times around us and the burdens many must
carry.
We pray for those whose businesses are struggling;
for producers unsure they will receive a fair return;
for workers uncertain about their jobs or looking for new work;
for families feeling the stress of economic uncertainty.
Open their eyes to new possibilities
and open our eyes to ways we can support them.
God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of compassion,
you open our eyes on the world
and show us suffering and despair.
We see the challenges for health care right around the world.
We pray for communities struggling with AIDS, malaria, and
chronic hunger
and for those nearby facing illness, delays in treatment and
uncertain outcomes.

Give strength and energy to those who provide care
and courage and hope to all who wait for healing.
Open their eyes to your mercy
and open our eyes to needs we can meet.
God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of wisdom,
you open our eyes on the world and show us its complexities.
We see countries locked in old animosities
and communities overwhelmed by fresh upheaval.
We pray for those displaced by current conflicts and natural
disasters.
Open the eyes and ears of leaders to the suffering of their people,
and to solutions as yet untried;
and open our eyes to ways we can participate in resolving
situations
which break your heart and ours.
God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

***Hymn** “Arise, Your Light is Come”

VU #79

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**

Now may the love of truth guide you,
the warmth of love hold you, and
the spirit of peace bless you,
this day and in the days to come.

Amen. May it be so.

***Choral Benediction** “May the Blessing of God go Before You” VU #962

Postlude

*Please stand as you are able.