

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

**September 24, 2023**

**10:30 a.m.**

**Seventh After Pentecost**

**Sixteenth Anniversary**

**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 “Rise Up, Rise Up”

MV 130

## Call to Worship

Praise the Lord! Praise the name of the Lord!

**Praise the Lord! Give thanks to our God!**

God has blessed us and brought us to this time.

**God has blessed us and brought us to this place.**

In our 16 years together, our Family Tree has weathered winters, storms, periods of drought.

**In our 16 years together, our Family Tree has enjoyed gentle sunshine, nourishing rains, the leisurely warmth of summer blessings.**

For 16 years, God has nurtured and fed us, caused our roots to sink deep.

**For 16 years, God has shown us grace, growing fruit of abundant varieties.**

For 16 years, God has made us his witnesses in the world.

**For 16 years, God has placed us in loving relationship with one another.**

Praise the Lord! Praise the name of the Lord!

**Praise the Lord! Give thanks to our God!**

Praise the Lord for 16 years! Praise our God for 16 more!

**Praise the Lord for evermore! Oh, praise the name of the Lord!**

\*Hymn “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”

VU 651

## **Prayer of Approach**

**Mighty God, we enter your presence with thanksgiving and hope. You have formed us as your people. You join us on the journey of life through valleys, upon mountains and on the plains. We set our attention and seek your wisdom, encouragement and grace. Reveal your will and display your glory among your people as we worship your holy name.**

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 105:1–6, 37–45**

**VU 828 Parts 1 and 4**

**\*Hymn** “Each Blade of Grass”

MV 37 vv. 1, 2

### **All God’s Children**

**\*Hymn** “Each Blade of Grass”

MV 37 v. 3

### **Call to Transformation and New Life**

#### **Prayer for Transformation and New Life**

**God of abundance, forgive us for embracing a worldview that capitalizes on scarcity. Help us to know that you have given us enough for our journey. You have created us wonderfully and uniquely. Forgive us for comparing ourselves with our neighbour when we are called to love them. Help us to embrace how you have made us as individuals who may bring our singular gifts to our common life. Amen.**

#### **Assurance of God's unending Love**

Beloved, you are enough. God loves you as you are for who you are. We, collectively, have enough and may share in a common life where all may flourish and live in harmony as our Creator intended and designed. You are free to embrace the life that is uniquely yours.

## **Presentation of Our Gifts**

### **Invitation to Generosity**

Philippians 1:2 encourages us to “Live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel.” May we live generous lives that reflect the fullness of the gospel, unity of the spirit, and faith in our God and God’s church.

### **Offertory**

#### **\*Presentation of Offering**

**\* Offertory**      “What Can I Do”

MV 191

#### **\*Offertory Prayer**

**Great God, please receive our gifts for the glory of your name and the blessing of your people. May we be dedicated stewards of your abundance and use these gifts for the benefit of your kindom. Amen.**

## Listening for the Word

### Sacred Scripture

#### Exodus 16:2–15

The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. The Israelites said to them, ‘If only we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.’

Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days.’ So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, ‘In the evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your complaining against the LORD. For what are we, that you complain against us?’ And Moses said, ‘When the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening and your fill of bread in the morning, because the LORD has heard the complaining that you utter against him—what are we? Your complaining is not against us but against the LORD.’

Then Moses said to Aaron, ‘Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, “Draw near to the LORD, for he has heard your complaining.”’ And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked towards the wilderness, and the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. The LORD spoke to Moses and said, ‘I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, “At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.”’

In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, ‘What is it?’ For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, ‘It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat.

### **Matthew 20:1–16**

‘For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the labourers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the market-place; and he said to them, “You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.” So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, “Why are you standing here idle all day?” They said to him,

“Because no one has hired us.” He said to them, “You also go into the vineyard.” When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, “Call the labourers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.” When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, “These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.” But he replied to one of them, “Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?” So the last will be first, and the first will be last.’

**Anthem**

**Sermon**

**Reflective Music**

**Responding to the Word**

**Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession**

Almighty God, we give you thanks  
for the work you have done in this place  
over the past sixteen years.

**We give you thanks for your love and faithfulness.**

**When we called on your name,  
you made your presence known to us.**

When we prayed, you heard us.

**When we proclaimed and heard your Word, and shared your  
Sacraments, you have been in our midst.**

You have accepted our humble sacrifices of praise and  
thanksgiving.

**You have listened to our confessions and forgiven us.**

You have sent your Holy Spirit to heal and comfort our hurts,  
our sorrows, our infirmities, and our losses.

**Continue to empower us with your Spirit, O Lord,  
that we might live your Gospel through our lives.**

Help us as we move into the next sixteen years  
to witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ  
in all that we do and say.

**Show us how we may give care and support to the needy,  
love and mercy to the broken and forlorn.**

Break down those prejudices and barriers which divide us,  
and make us all one in you.

**Show us new ways of loving one another and those around us.**

Renew us by the Spirit, so that we might be challenged to move  
beyond our ruts, our apathy and our anxieties of inadequacy.

**Grant that we may continually grow in the Spirit, being rooted  
firmly in your love. Empower us to joyfully and fruitfully  
carry out your mission of service and love in our neighbourhood  
and abroad.**

Continue to comfort, heal, and lift up the broken and afflicted among us. By the promise of your presence, bring us your healing love.

**Hear our prayer, O Lord.**

Bring us at last to the joy of your eternal kin-dom, where, with the faithful of this church who have gone before us and with all your saints, we may evermore praise your name.

**Hear our prayer, O Lord.**

Blessed Lord, draw our hearts to you, guide our minds, fill our imaginations, control our will and make us wholly yours.

**Use us as you will, to the glory of your holy name and the welfare of your people; through Jesus the Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**

**Amen.**

**\*Hymn**            “Now Thank We All Our God”

VU 236

### **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.

### **\*Blessing**

May the love of God assure you, the hope of God guide you, and the peace of God sustain you as you go receiving and extending God's grace in the world. Amen.

**\*Choral Benediction**      “Deep In Our Hearts”

MV 154

**Postlude**

\*Please stand as you are able.