

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

**June 1, 2025**

**10:30 a.m.**

**7th Sunday of Easter**

**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**

Welcome in the name of the Christ.

**Welcome to this place of worship, situated on the  
unceded traditional lands of the Mi'kmaq people.**

Welcome to this place of retreat and refuge, worship and wonder.

**It is good to be here.**

It is indeed good to be together.

**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** "Open Our Hearts"

MV #21

**Call to Worship**

Creator God, today we give you thanks  
**for believing we can be born again.**

Creator God, today we give you thanks  
**for the glorious diversity from which all creation springs.**

Creator God, today we give you thanks  
**for the grace to know we are not always right, and the courage to change.**

Creator God, today we give you thanks  
**for the longing to reshape structures that place the individual above the community.**

Creator God, today we give you thanks  
**for the beauty, resistance, and hope that rise up even in this sometimes broken world.**

**\*Hymn** "Oh A Song Must Rise"

MV #142

## **Prayer of Approach**

**O Creator,  
be near us now  
as we lean toward what is possible—  
not just what has been.**

**You have not left us without a guide.  
You sent one in human form,  
to reveal the dignity,  
the unspoken beauty,  
the sacred worth in every person.**

**You have stitched the seasons  
into the fabric of the earth—  
each turning leaf and falling snow  
a quiet reminder  
of the planet's deep, revolving grace.**

**We are not made sinful by design,  
as fear and doctrine sometimes claim—  
but born of your image,  
alive with the wild capacity  
to love beyond measure,  
to heal what has been broken,  
to reconcile what was once torn.**

**So we open our hands  
to the mystery of this day,  
trusting that the sacred is already here.**

**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.**

**Responsive Reading** Psalm 97

VU # 817-818

**\*Hymn** "Draw the Circle Wide"

MV #145 vv. 1, 2

## **All God's Children**

**Hymn** "Draw the Circle Wide"

MV #145 v. 3

## **Presentation of Our Gifts**

### **Invitation to Generosity**

The ways we give of ourselves  
are as many as the stars in the night sky—  
each one a quiet gesture  
woven into the vastness of creation.

You are invited now  
to give not for reward,  
but because your presence matters,  
your care has weight,  
and what we create together  
can shape the world  
in ways we may never fully see.

Let this be an act of trust,  
a movement of love,  
a widening of the circle  
where all may find belonging.

We give as we are able, we give as we are called.

**\*Presentation of Offering**

**\* Offertory** “We Give Our Thanks”

MV #187 v. 1

**\*Offertory Prayer**

**We give thanks, O Creator,  
for the quiet courage to give—  
not to earn,  
not to gain,  
but to join the sacred work  
of mending, blessing, and building.**

**May these gifts,  
offered with open hands and honest hearts,  
be used in the service of compassion,  
community,  
and the unfolding beauty of your world. Amen.**

## **Listening for the Word**

### **Prayer for Understanding**

O God—  
you are the first light in the morning,  
and the last hush at night.

You are where things begin,  
and where they come to rest.

By your Spirit,  
help us open our eyes and our hearts—  
to see what is true,  
and to follow it.

Let your Word  
be not only something we hear,  
but something we live—  
with grace,  
with wonder,  
with intention. Amen.

### **Sacred Scripture**

#### **Acts 16:16–34**

16 One day, as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling.

17 While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, “These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation.”

18 She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.

19 But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities.

20 When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, "These men are disturbing our city; they are Jews

21 and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to adopt or observe."

22 The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods.

23 After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely.

24 Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.

26 Suddenly there was an earthquake, so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken, and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened.

27 When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped.

28 But Paul shouted in a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here."

29 The jailer called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down

trembling before Paul and Silas.

30 Then he brought them outside and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

31 They answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

32 They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.

33 At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptized without delay.

34 He brought them up into the house and set food before them; and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God.

### **John 17:20–26**

20 "I ask not only on behalf of these but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word,

21 that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

22 The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one,

23 I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

24 Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.



25 “Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you, and these know that you have sent me.

26 I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

## **Anthem**

**Sermon**    *When Liberation Costs the Powerful*

## **Reflective Music**

### **Responding to the Word**

## **Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession**

Faithful God,  
We give you thanks—  
not for answers that come easily,  
but for your steadfast love that holds us when nothing else seems certain.

In every time of trial, you do not leave us comfortless.  
You move quietly beside us—  
    in the dark before the dawn,  
    in the silence before the song.

Surprise us again with your grace, O God.  
Stir your Spirit among us,  
draw us back together—  
not only for worship, but for witness.

**Renew our faith, O God, and give us courage to serve with love.**

God of peace,  
you sent Jesus among us—

not as a soldier,  
not as a scholar,  
but as a servant,  
with words that healed and hands that fed.  
Through him, you reconciled the world to yourself.

Let his peace still work its way  
into the raw edges of this world.  
We name before you now the places and people  
on our hearts—  
where hatred festers,  
where hope feels far off,  
where reconciliation is most needed.....

**Let your peace come, O God, and let it begin with us.**

O God,  
do not let us grow used to indifference.  
Shake us when we begin to sleep through the suffering of others.  
When the world builds walls, give us courage to build tables.  
When despair speaks louder than truth,  
give us the boldness to speak your better story.

**Inspire us to be makers of peace, bearers of light, and builders of hope.**

God of fellowship,  
we give thanks for the church,  
for the cracked beauty of your people,  
gathered in all our difference and desire.  
Renew our life together—  
correct us when we lose our way,  
encourage us when we are faithful,

and give us a vision wide enough to hold your love for the whole world.

Bless those who lead and those who serve—  
ministers and elders, musicians and cleaners,  
committee chairs and quiet prayers.

Pour your Spirit upon the United Church—  
upon our Moderator, Carman  
and all who discern your will in community.

**May your wisdom guide, your Spirit move, and your love prevail.**

God who calls us into the future,  
we pray for students graduating this season—  
those stepping into the next thing with trembling hands and  
hopeful hearts.

Guide their choices.

Sustain their spirits.

And for those graduating from our theological schools—  
may they remember that the call to ministry is not into certainty,  
but into trust.

**Bless them with courage, grace, and deep joy in their calling.**

Comfort those who grieve,  
those who live with illness,  
and those who carry quiet burdens no one else sees.  
Strengthen the weary.

Calm the anxious.

Be near to those whose faith feels thin,  
and to those still searching for truth that rings true.

**Hold us, Holy One, and do not let us go.**

Faithful God,  
You have not given us all the answers—  
but you have given us Christ,  
and a calling.

By your Spirit, fill us with enough faith to follow,  
enough courage to act,  
and enough love to make it matter.

**Send us now, as your people, into the world you so deeply love.  
Amen.**

**\*Hymn** “Jesus, Stand among Us”

VU #396

### **Changing the Light**

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**

“Even a wounded world is feeding us. Even a wounded world  
holds us, giving us moments of wonder and joy. I choose joy over  
despair. Not because I have my head in the sand, but because joy  
is what the earth gives me daily and I must return the gift,” —  
Robin Wall Kimmerer

### **\* Blessing**

May the light of dawn awaken your heart.  
May the peace of dusk settle your soul.

May the Spirit's gentle presence  
go with you always.  
Go in peace and be a blessing.

**Amen.**

\*Choral Benediction "Peace Be With You"

MV #215

Postlude

\*Please stand as you are able.