

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

April 16, 2023

10:30 a.m.

2nd Sunday of Easter

Covenanting of Elders

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** “Bless the Lord” (Taize) X4

Bless the Lord, my soul
And bless God's holy name
Bless the Lord, my soul
Who leads me into life.

Call to Worship

Thomas said, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

We are in a transitional space, confused between brokenness and new opportunities.

Dear God, fill us with the power of Resurrection to embrace newness.

We are hiding like the disciples behind closed doors with fear and doubts, waiting for your appearance.

Come into our midst now, penetrate into our closed hearts bringing your peace.

Refresh us, O God, and empower us.

As we worship today, blow into us your gentle spirit.

***Hymn** “Joyful, Joyful We Adore You”

VU #232

Prayer of Approach

God of the risen Jesus, we praise you for the great love that you have shown to us in Jesus. Help us to embrace the New Life that the resurrected Christ is giving us. A Life beyond our doubts, faith over fear, courage in the face of confusion, belief in times of disbelief, and trust to follow in your way. As we worship today, help us to feel the presence of the resurrected Jesus in our midst, reminding us of your love and our purpose.

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 16

VU #738

***Hymn "Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Give Thanks"**

VU #179 vv. 1, 2

All God's Children

*Hymn "Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Give Thanks"

VU #179 vv. 3, 4

Call to Transformation and New Life

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Jesus presented his wounded and scarred body to his disciples. The body of the resurrected Jesus showcased the wounds caused by oppressive power structures, ugly human envy and fear of dismantling the status quo.

We praise you O God that the disciples were able to embrace the broken body of Jesus so that they could give their bodies to be broken to establish God's love in this world.

Even today, we witness the wounds of several bodies that raised their voice against injustice, legs broken because they marched for justice, hands broken because they pushed against oppressive forces, and bodies tortured because they identified with victims of injustice.

Give us courage O God, not to fear over these broken bodies but to embrace these bodies to gain strength and righteous anger to continue to work for justice.

Several bodies today tell us the stories of domestic violence, sexual violence and psychological wounds that never fully heal.

Help us, O God, not to neglect these bodies but to embrace them and support them in their healing.

Today, the wounded body of the earth and earth communities speaks to us and shares with us the stories of the brutality of colonization, industrial violence on the earth and suppression of the eco-wisdom of the indigenous and traditional communities.

Help us, O God, today to embrace the broken body of the earth and the victims of climate change. Give us your wisdom to see that resurrection occurs in restoring peace with the earth and earth communities.

Sung Assurance of God's unending Love

Friends, the risen Christ is in our midst, speaking words of peace, healing and hope this day. Do not doubt these gifts are for you. Be at peace with yourself and with one another. Amen.

Presentation of Our Gifts

Invitation to Generosity

The Risen Christ invited Thomas to touch the wounds in his hands and his side. When we give in Jesus' name, we can touch the wounds of the world with healing power. Give, knowing you will make a difference.

Offertory

***Presentation of Offering**

*** Offertory** "We Give You But Your Own"

VU #542

***Offertory Prayer**

Giver of every good and perfect gift, in Christ we see the power of love, in the act of giving. Receive our gifts given in gratitude. Bless all that we give so that your work in the world may continue. Amen.

Listening for the Word

Sacred Scripture

Acts 2:14a, 22–32

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: ‘Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say.

‘You that are Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know—this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. For David says concerning him,

“I saw the Lord always before me,
for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken;
therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;
moreover, my flesh will live in hope.
For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,
or let your Holy One experience corruption.
You have made known to me the ways of life;
you will make me full of gladness with your presence.”

‘Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying,

“He was not abandoned to Hades,
nor did his flesh experience corruption.”

This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.

John 20:19–31

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you.’ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.’ When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.’

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, ‘We have seen the Lord.’ But he said to them, ‘Unless I see the

mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Anthem

Sermon

Reflective Music

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Why is it, Lord, that we doubt your power when we see unexpected deaths? Why is it we doubt our abilities when uncertainty strikes us? Why is it, Lord I ask many questions to which I find no answers? God of resurrection,

receive our Prayers and Help us, to befriend our fear and doubts.

We pray for those who live in perpetual fear due to the experience of tragic incidents in their lives. We remember those who live with depression, feeling alone and walking through the darkest valley. Help us to believe the resurrected Christ is with us, traveling through these difficult periods and helping us to process all our fears and doubts. God of Resurrection,

receive our Prayers and Help us, to befriend our fears and doubts.

We pray for those who are afraid to open their doors due to the fear of war, living as undocumented refugees, those unable to pay their bills, fear of embarrassment, and many who feel insecure due to threats and violence surrounding them. Open our eyes to see the presence of the resurrected Christ in the midst of this chaos, sharing our pain. God of Resurrection,

receive our Prayers and Help us, to befriend our fears and doubts.

We pray for those who are alienated and insulted because of their physical and emotional disabilities, gender and sexual orientation, economic status, race, and made to believe that they are inferior to others. Help us to see that the resurrected Christ is a disabled Christ with wounds in his hands and body giving us the courage to embrace our bodies and beings and celebrate it. God of Resurrection,

receive our Prayers and Help us to befriend our fears and doubts.

We remember all those loved ones who have died and rest in peace in your presence. We celebrate everything that they have taught us about life: to face challenges boldly, learn from failures, be ardent in faith, question the unknown, accept the mysteries, love the present and in creating paths for us and future generations. God of Resurrection,

resurrect in us the hope of life as Jesus did for his disciples and the many who lived in this world taught us. So that we continue to proclaim your peace and new life.

Responding to the Word

Covenanting with newly elected Elders

Scripture

Let us hear the message of scripture.

There are different ways of serving,
but the same God is served.

There are different abilities to perform service,
but the same God who gives ability to each of us.

The Spirit's present is shown in some way
in each person for the good of all.

Christ is like a single body which has many parts.

If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts suffer with it;
if one part is praised, all the other parts share its happiness.

All of us are Christ body, and each one is a part of it.

1 Corinthians 12

Statement of Purpose

Friends, we celebrate with joy and gratitude that you have been called by God, and chosen by the people of central Queens United Church faith community for leadership in the church.

This ministry is a blessing, an honour and a responsibility. It recognizes your special gifts and calls you to work among us, with us and on our behalf.

We thank you and challenge you to offer your best to God, and to all God's people.

Covenant Questions and Promises

Clerk of Session

The following persons have been elected by this Faith Community and accepted the office of Elder. Please stand as I speak your name:

Names

As you come to the duties of your office, let us make a covenant before God and with one another.

Elders stand

As a disciple of Jesus the Christ, will you continue to live out your faith with praise and Thanksgiving?

Will you carry out your responsibilities as an Elder
in this congregation with integrity and joy?

I will, God being my helper.

Congregation stands

Will you, the members of Central Queens United Church
honour the leadership of these people?
Will you assist them through daily prayer,
generous support and personal example,
so that, together, we may be a faithful Church of Jesus the Christ?

We will, God being our helper

Prayer

Loving God, you have called these people to serve you.
Send your Holy Spirit upon them and upon us all
that we may keep the promises we have made today.
Help them to fulfill their responsibilities.
May their leadership help us all
to reflect your love and grace always.
Amen.

Declaration

In the name of God: creator, Christ and spirit,
we recognize and affirm you
in your ministry as elders of
central Queens United Church.
Amen.

***Hymn** “O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee”

VU #560

***Blessing**

Let us step out into the world knowing
we are not alone when doubts and fears surround us.
The Risen Christ is with us
empowering and encouraging us
to transform our wounds into sources of liberation.
May the power of resurrection, the divine peace and the
transforming grace of the Triune God
Be with us now and forever more. Amen.

***Choral Benediction** “Go to The World”

VU #420 v.2

Postlude

*Please stand as you are able.