

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

January 18, 2026

10:30 a.m.

2nd Sunday After Epiphany

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** "Come, O Holy Spirit"

MV #23 v.1

Call to Worship

Come, you who are searching for words
when old names no longer fit.

We come, hoping to be named anew.

Come, you who stand at the edge of questions,
wondering what might follow if you dare to step forward.

We come with courage not yet certain, but willing.

Jesus turns and asks, "*What are you looking for?*"

We are looking for life.

We are looking for meaning.

We are looking for ourselves.

"Come and see," he says.

**We come, trusting that in the seeing,
we may begin to be.**

Prayer of Approach

Holy Mystery,
you meet us not as an answer,
but as a presence.

You do not overwhelm us with certainty,
but stand quietly among us,
asking the gentle question
that unsettles and awakens:
What are you looking for?

In a world that urges us
to hide,
to conform,
to shrink our becoming,
you invite us into the courage to be —
to stand in the truth of who we are,
unfinished and beloved.

Draw near to us in this time of worship.
Not to fix us,
but to accompany us.
Not to erase our doubts,
but to bless our questions.

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 40:1-11

VU #764

***Hymn** "Will You Come and Follow Me"

VU #567 vv. 1, 2, 3

All God's Children

Hymn "Will You Come and Follow Me"

VU #567 vv. 4, 5

Presentation of Our Gifts

Invitation to Generosity

The first disciples did not receive instructions —
they received an invitation: "*Come and see.*"
Generosity begins there:
in the willingness to step toward life,

to trust that what we offer —
our time,
our care,
our resources —
can become part of a larger story.

We give today not out of fear or obligation,
but as an act of courage —
the courage to believe that love shared
does not diminish,
but deepens.

***Presentation of Offering**

*** Offertory** “In the Bleak Mid-Winter”

VU #55 v. 4

***Offertory Prayer**

**Giver of every good gift,
receive what we offer —
not as payment,
but as participation.**

**Bless these gifts,
that they may help create spaces
where people are
seen,
named,
and invited
to become more fully themselves, more fully alive.**

**May what we give strengthen the courage to be
in this community and beyond.
Amen.**

Listening for the Word

Prayer for Understanding

Living Word,
as we listen to the ancient stories
of calling and naming,
open our hearts beyond familiarity.

Help us hear the question beneath the words,
the invitation beneath the story.

Give us courage —
not only to understand,
but to allow ourselves to be addressed,
to be known,
and to be changed.
Amen.

Sacred Scripture

Isaiah 49:1-7

Listen to me, O coastlands;
pay attention, you peoples from far away.
The Holy One called me before I was born;

while I was still forming in the womb,
I was named.

The Holy One made my mouth like a sharp sword;
in the shadow of divine presence I was hidden.
I was shaped into a polished arrow,
kept safe in the quiver of love.

And the Voice said to me,
“You are my servant, my people Israel,
through whom my glory will be revealed.”

But I said,
“I have laboured in vain;
I have spent my strength for nothing and emptiness.”
Yet my cause rests with the Holy One,
and my worth is held by my God.

And now the Holy One speaks—
the One who formed me in the womb for service,
to gather Jacob back,
to bring Israel home.
I am honoured in the sight of the Holy One,
and my God has become my strength.

And the Voice says:
“It is too small a thing
that you should only restore the tribes of Jacob
and gather the survivors of Israel.
I will give you as a light to the nations,

that my saving power
may reach to the ends of the earth.”

Thus says the Holy One,
the Redeemer of Israel,
to one deeply rejected,
despised by nations,
enslaved by rulers:
“Those in power will see and rise;
leaders will bow in awe,
because of the Holy One, who is faithful—
the One who chooses you.”

John 1:29-42

²⁹ The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared,
“Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

³⁰ This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks
ahead of me because he was before me.’ ³¹ I myself did not know
him, but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might
be revealed to Israel.” ³² And John testified, “I saw the Spirit
descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.

³³ I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize
with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend
and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ ³⁴ And I
myself have seen and have testified that this is the Chosen
One.”

³⁵ The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples,
³⁶ and as he watched Jesus walk by he exclaimed, “**Look**, here is
the Lamb of God!” ³⁷ The two disciples heard him say this, and
they followed Jesus. ³⁸ When Jesus turned and saw them
following, he said to them, “What are you looking for?” They said
to him, “Rabbi where are you staying?” ³⁹ He said to them, “**Come
and see.**” They came and saw where he was staying, and they
remained with him that day. It was about four o’clock in the
afternoon. ⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and followed
him was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. ⁴¹ He first found his
brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah”
⁴² He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, “You
are Simon son of John. You are to be called Peter”

Anthem

Prayer

Let the words of my mouth,
and the listening of all our hearts,
be held in your grace, O God.
May your peace rest upon us
and guide us into what is true and life-giving.
Amen.

Sermon “Staying with the Question”

Reflective Music

Responding to the Word

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

God of presence,
you walk alongside those
who are learning how-to- be.

We pray for all
who feel unseen or unnamed —
for those struggling with identity,
with illness,
with loss,
with fear of no longer belonging.

Give them courage to be.

We pray for those
standing at thresholds —
new beginnings,
painful endings,
uncertain futures.

Give them courage to take the next step.

We pray for leaders and communities,
for churches and institutions,
that they may be places
of invitation rather than exclusion,
listening rather than control.

Give us courage to become what love requires.

We pray for ourselves,
when anxiety threatens to define us,
when doubt feels louder than hope.

Remind us that even our questions
can be holy ground.

We place all these prayers
into your patient, listening heart.
Amen.

***Hymn** “I, the Lord of Sea and Sky”

VU #509

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.

***Blessing**

May you hear the question
that calls you deeper into life.

May you find the courage to be —
not as the world demands,
but as love invites.

And may the One who says, “*Come and see,*”
walk with you
as you discover who you are becoming.

And now, may the grace of Christ attend you,
the love of God surround you, and the Holy Spirit keep you.
Amen.

***Choral Benediction** “Hope Shines as the Solitary Star” MV #220

Postlude *Please stand as you are able.