



"The God of gods—it's God!—speaks out, shouts, "Earth!"
welcomes the sun in the east." Psalm 50

**Sixth Sunday after Epiphany
Transfiguration Sunday
Black History Month
Seasons of Love
Pancake Brunch
January 28, 2024
Manor Road United Church
A congregation of the United Church of Canada
240 Manor Road East, Toronto, ON, M4S 1R8
www.manorroadunitedchurch.com**

Service of Worship

February 11, 2024

“We are being invited to serve the holy wisdom that is already stirring in the hearts of people everywhere.” John Philip Newell

PRELUDE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE TERRITORY

We gather for the season of radical light, we honour the winds: of the north where we see the snow falling, the south where we meet where the winter sun is peeking over the horizon, of the west the land of closing day and restoration and in the east where we meet the new day to rise and discover the way of the morning. We thank the many First Nations who teach us the ways of water, earth, wind and sun, as our brothers and sisters and traditional inhabitants of the lands.

GATHERING MUSIC MV 62 “There Is Room for All”

**There is room for all in the shadow of God’s wing;
there is room for all, sheltered in God’s love.
And I rejoice and sing, “My refuge and my rock,
in whom I trust.” There is room for all, there is room for all!**

WORDS OF WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

The glory of God shines like a consuming fire.

Out of the cloud, God speaks:

This is my beloved Son; listen to him!

HYMN VU 232 “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You”

**Joyful, joyful we adore you, God of glory, life and love;
hearts unfold like flowers before you, opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive the gloom of doubt
away, giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.**

**Mortals join the mighty chorus which the morning stars began;
God's own love is reigning o'er us, joining people hand in hand.
Ever singing march we onward, victors in the midst of strife;
joyful music leads us sunward in the triumph song of life.**

OPENING PRAYER

God be with you.

And also with you.

Holy and mighty God, gather us among your faithful ones,
the people of your covenant.

**To stand in the light of your glory
and listen for the word of the Lord. Amen**

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE INVOCATION

May the angels of light glisten for us this day.

**May the sparks of God's beauty dance in the eyes of those we
love.**

May the universe be on fire with Presence for us this day. **Amen**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of all glory, beauty, and grace,
we have tried to hide from you - yet you have never hidden your love
for us.

**We have tried to search for you -
on mountaintops. Yet you have already revealed yourself to us
in the face of Jesus Christ.**

Forgive us, and transform us so that our lives may shine. **Amen**

SILENT REFLECTION

ASSURANCE

Our God comes and does not keep silence;
God speaks to us with grace and love.

Saying: You are my beloved child.

This is the good news: we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God.

SHARING CHRIST'S PEACE

The Peace of Christ be with you.

And also, with you!

(Please share the peace of Christ with a hand wave)

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE MV 13**

“O Let the Power Fall on Me”

**O let the power fall on me, my Lord, let the power fall on me;
O let the power from heaven fall on me, let the power fall on me.**

ENCOUNTERING THE CHILD WITHIN - Godly Play

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Speak to us, O Lord our God,
and let the fire of your Spirit burn brightly in our hearts.

**Open our minds to receive
the wisdom, hope and the life of the gospel. Amen**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

1st Reading 2 Kings 2:1-5,6-9,11- 12 Susan Johnson

Just before GOD took Elijah to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on a walk out of Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here. GOD has sent me on an errand to Bethel.” Elisha said, “Not on your life! I’m not letting you out of my sight!” So they both went to Bethel. The guild of prophets at Bethel met Elisha and said, “Did you know that GOD is going to take your master away from you today?” “Yes,” he said, “I know it. But keep it quiet.” Then Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here. GOD has sent me on an errand to Jericho.” Elisha said, “Not on your life! I’m not letting you out of my sight!” So they both went to Jericho. 5. The guild of prophets at Jericho came to Elisha and said, “Did you know that GOD is going to take your master away from you today?” “Yes,” he said, “I know it. But keep it quiet.” Meanwhile, fifty men from the guild of prophets gathered some distance away while the two of them stood at the Jordan. Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up, and hit the water with it. The river divided and the two men walked through on dry land. When they reached the other side, Elijah said to Elisha, “What can I do for you before I’m taken from you? Ask anything.” Elisha said, “Your life repeated in my life. I want to be a holy man just like you.” Suddenly a chariot and horses of fire came between them and Elijah went up in a whirlwind to heaven. Elisha saw it all and shouted, “My father, my father! You—the chariot and cavalry of Israel!” When he could no longer see anything, he grabbed his robe and ripped it to pieces.

2nd Reading 2 Corinthians 4:3,6 Grant Lorenz

If our Message is obscure to anyone, it's not because we're holding back in any way. It started when God said, "Light up the darkness!" and our lives filled up with light as we saw and understood God in the face of Christ, all bright and beautiful.

3rd Reading Mark 9:2-4,6,7, 9 Sarah Fearnly- Brown

Six days later, three of them *did* see it. Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain. His appearance changed from the inside out, right before their eyes. His clothes shimmered, glistening white, whiter than any bleach could make them. Elijah, along with Moses, came into view, in deep conversation with Jesus. Let's build three memorials—one for you, one for Moses, one for Elijah." Just then a light-radiant cloud enveloped them, and from deep in the cloud, a voice: "This is my Son, marked by my love. Listen to him." Coming down the mountain, Jesus swore them to secrecy. "Don't tell a soul what you saw."

RESPONSE

Hear the Wisdom told to us through the Ages.
Thanks be to God.

HYMN VU 806 "O God, Our Help in Ages Past"

**O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home;
Time like an ever-rolling stream, soon bears us all away;
we fly forgotten, as a dream, dies at the opening day.**

SERMON "Elijah Struck the Water"

Rev. Dr. John Joseph Mastandrea

SILENT REFLECTION

DIVERSITY CREED

For The Great Diversity, You Have created Creator, we come to you with both the joys and the sorrows of our hearts.

We are grateful for the gift of life and the joy that it can bring.

For families and friends who love us. For allies who stick up for us,

even when we cannot risk sticking up for ourselves.

For the great diversity you have created in our world.

We pray for those who suffer from discrimination because of their gender identity or sexual orientation, or their skin colour, who worry about their employment or who cannot find a job. For those who must hide who they are to find housing. For those who are not safe on our streets.

For those who do not feel safe in their place of worship.

Help us to end homophobia, transphobia, and biphobia, and all forms of discrimination and hate.

Show us the way to make this world a better place for all.

—a prayer by Ruth Wood

COMMUNION

Communion is a holy sacrament for followers of Christ. In the United Church, we practice an Open Table; all are welcome to partake in communion, there is no requirement of baptism or membership.

God is with us!

We are not alone!

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God our thanks and praise.

It is good to give thanks to you, God, you call all people to follow your paths of justice and peace, beating their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. In this light we join with all people on earth and join in the never-ending hymn:

SUNG RESPONSE MV 203 “Sanctus and Benedictus”

O holy, holy, holy God,

O God of time and space.

**All earth and sea and sky above
bear witness to your grace.**

**Hosanna in the highest heav'n,
creation sings your praise.**

**And blessed is the One who comes
and bears your name al-ways!**

Holy are you and blessed is Christ your Son, for on the night he was betrayed he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, and gave it to his disciples, saying, “take, eat, this is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” When the supper was over, he took the cup and gave thanks, saying, “drink this, all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me.” Now we declare:

SUNG RESPONSE MV 204 “Memorial Acclamation”

**Sing Christ has died, Christ is risen,
Christ will come again!
Sing Christ has died, and Christ is risen,
Christ will come again!**

Send your Holy Spirit upon us. Let the bread we break be a true fellowship in the body of Christ. Let the cup we share be a true participation in the new covenant in his blood. By your Spirit empower us to serve. All glory and honor is yours.

SUNG RESPONSE MV 205 “Great Amen”

**Amen, Amen, O Holy One!
Hosanna and Amen!
Amen, Amen, O Holy One!
Hosanna and Amen!**

The body of Christ,
The bread of life.
The lifeblood of Christ,
The cup of blessing.
The gifts of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God!

SHARING THE MEAL

ANTHEM CHOIR

“Come to the Table, Come to the Lord” - Rebecca Fair

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

OFFERING OF OUR LIFE AND WORK

OFFERTORY INSTRUMENTAL

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE MV 85

“Take, O Take Me as I Am”

**Take, O take me as I am; summon out what I shall be;
set your seal upon my heart and live in me.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Gracious God, we give you thanks for the light of love around us
and the fire of faith within us.

Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will
quickly appear.

**Our righteousness will go before us, and the glory of God will be
our rear guard.**

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE VU 148 “Jesus Remember Me”

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Mighty and merciful one, you have come to us in glory; now we come
to you in prayer, saying,

Lord, by your Spirit, **grant what we ask.**

We pray for your glorious creation.

Stamp out fires of destruction, drive away clouds of pollution,
and restore the beauty of this world.

Lord, by your Spirit, **grant what we ask.**

Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will
quickly appear.

Our righteousness will go before us, and the glory of God will be our rear guard.

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE VU 148 “Jesus Remember Me”

**Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.
Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.**

We pray for those who are perishing. Feed those who are starving, comfort those who are suffering, and receive the dying into your arms. Lord, by your Spirit, **grant what we ask.**

We pray for those whom we love. Bless our families, friends, and neighbors, help them in times of trouble, and be near when they are afraid.

Lord, by your Spirit, **grant what we ask.**

Holy One, make us ready for the day when this world is transfigured, transformed, made new, when all things will shine.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

As a mother nurtures her children. Let us pray:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil, for the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. **Amen**

HYMN MV 120 “My Soul Cries Out”

My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great, and my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait. You fixed your sight on your servant’s plight and my weakness you did not spurn, so from east and west shall my name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?

Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember who holds us fast: God’s mercy must deliver us from the conqueror’s crushing grasp. This saving word that our forebears heard is the promise which holds us bound, ‘til the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around.

COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

SUNG RESPONSE MV 211

“Go Now in Peace, Guided by the Light”

**Go now in peace, guided by the light of Christ,
so you may be nourished by the Word of life.**

POSTLUDE

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