

Bethel United Church May 4 2025 - Easter 3



❖ All **bolded** text is a congregational response.

Welcome and Announcements

Good morning and welcome to Bethel United Church in Rideau Ferry, Ontario. Today is May 4, 2025, the third Sunday of Easter. My name is Rev. Lynne Gardiner, and I welcome all of you into this place, whether you are worshiping with us in our sanctuary, or from home through our Live Streaming.

This week, our service is being led by: Ruth Anne Johnson, Aidan Williamson, Kathleen Williamson and Paul Kehoe.

A quick reminder of our regularly scheduled Bethel activities: Chat and Chew on Tuesdays at 1:30 and our Zoom Prayer and Share at 10am on Thursdays. If you have any questions about our weekly activities, you can access a calendar on our website: www.bethelchurchrideauferry.ca. The calendar will appear on the first screen and has all of our activities listed.

Tuesday, May 6th the UCW meets at 10am to set up for our lunch with Trinity UCW. Regular meeting begins at 11am.

Are there any celebrations this week? Where have you seen God at work this week?

Please join in singing our celebration song:

VU 958

"Halle, Halle, Halle"

Halle, halle, halle-lujah! Halle, halle, halle-lujah!

Halle, halle, halle-lujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

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Land Acknowledgment (Unison)

For thousands of years, First Nations people have walked on this land; their relationship with the land is at the centre of their lives and spirituality. We are gathered on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Peoples and acknowledge their stewardship of this land throughout the ages.

Mission and Service Story

Faith in Every Word: The Mohawk Bible Translation

Language carries the unique way a community understands the world. It shapes how people relate to one another, to the land, to the spiritual, and to the sacred. When a language is lost, a way of seeing the world is lost with it.

Preserving language enables future generations to engage in their rich culture in a rounded and essential way. Without understanding dialect-specific phrases and expressions, the vital wisdom of a culture can be lost. Language carries the unique way a community understands the world. It shapes how people relate to one another, to the land, to the spiritual, and to the sacred. When a language is lost, a way of seeing the world is lost with it.

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As part of the ongoing work of preserving the Mohawk language, a complete translation of the Bible into the Mohawk language was developed, through the devotion, knowledge, and artistry of Harvey Satewas Gabriel and supported by generations of women in the Gabriel family and the communities of Kanesatake and Kahnawake.

Those partnering on the Mohawk Language Bible have taken great care and effort in ensuring proper language interpretation and translation. Working in agreement with the Mohawk Nation, collaborators have taken the time to listen to each other and learn in order to move the project forward.

Your gifts to Mission and Service allow projects that preserve language and culture to flourish. Thank you for helping to uplift voices, preserve heritage, and walk in respectful relationship.

Ohiatonhseratokénti: The Holy Bible in Mohawk is available for purchase through the UCRD bookstore.

Call to Worship (Responsive)

You meet us in the most surprising places, Risen Christ;
on the road, for the apostle Paul, on the beach, for the disciples,
so, why not here, for us.

Come to where we are and call us.

Gather us in, in your name, and all the people say: **Amen.**

Sung Call to Worship

VU 411 (sing twice)

“O God We Call”

**O God we call, O God we call, from deep inside we yearn,
from deep inside we yearn, from deep inside we yearn for you.**

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Lighting of the Christ Candle and the World Candle

Today as we light our Christ Candle and our World Candle we think about times we have changed our mind and the implications of changing our mind.

A moment of silent reflection: What does it take for you to change your mind? Are you a 'gut instinct' kind of person or a person who 'looks at all the data'? Can you hear the voice of God calling you to a different way of living and being?

Listen to God's words for you this morning from John 21:

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep.

Opening Prayer (From Psalm 30: 10-12)

Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me!

O Lord, be my helper!"

You have turned my mourning into dancing;

you have taken off my sackcloth

and clothed me with joy,

so that my soul may praise you

and not be silent.

O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever. Amen

Opening Hymn MV 28 "**God of the Bible (Fresh as the Morning)**"

**¹ God of the Bible, God in the Gospel,
hope seen in Jesus, hope yet to come,
you are our centre, daylight or darkness,
freedom or prison, you are our home.**

Refrain Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,
God always faithful, you do not change.
Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise,
God always faithful, you do not change.

**2 God in the struggles, God in our hunger,
suffering with us, taking our part,
still you empow'r us, mothering Spirit,
feeding, sustaining, from your own heart. Refrain**

**3 Those without status, those who are nothing,
you have made royal, gifted with rights,
chosen as partners, midwives of justice,
birthing new systems, lighting new lights, Refrain**

**4 Not by your finger, not by your anger
will our world order change in a day,
but by your people, fearless and faithful,
small paper lanterns, lighting the way. Refrain**

**5 Hope we must carry, shining and certain
through all our turmoil, terror and loss,
bonding us gladly one to the other,
till our world changes facing the cross. Refrain**

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Passing the Peace

Prayer for Reconciliation

Our souls will not be silent, our hearts will not stop singing
as we offer our gratitude to you, God of mystery and majesty,
Thank you for each breath, each heart-beat, each time you call our name.
Thank you for the world we inhabit, wondrous and marvelous.
Thank you for the life around us, people, plants, creatures and critters.
Thank you that we belong to you,
gathered around the fire of your embrace.
Yet, we confess, like Peter, we often make bad decisions,
denying your presence in our lives, refusing to believe what we know,
trying to control the narrative, instead of walking your way.
In the quiet we bring to you those things that we need to confess; things
we have said or not said, actions we have taken or failed to take, and we
lay them before you. Amen

Assurance of Love

Just as we see you standing on the beach, risen Christ, looking at Peter
with eyes of love and giving him a mission of tender kindness, we see you
standing before us also. We know that we are forgiven, loved and called
into the same mission. AMEN

Theme Conversation

What do people who don't go to church think we do in church?

Our Scriptures Today

- Acts 9: 1-20
- John 21: 1-19

Reflection

Hymn

VU 508

"Just As I am"

¹ Just as I am, without one plea,
but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

² Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
sight, riches, healing of the mind,
yea, all I need, in thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

³ Just as I am, though tossed about
with many a conflict, many a doubt,
fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

⁴ Just as I am, thy love unknown
has broken every barrier down;
now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

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Invitation to the Offering

Offering Response

VU 542

"We Give You But Your Own"

**We give you but your own, whate'er the gift may be;
all that we have is yours alone, we give it gratefully.**

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Offering Prayers

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

We pray for our Catholic siblings as they continue to mourn the passing of Pope Francis. In the words of the Rev. Charissa Suli, President of the Uniting Church in Australia, "with deep sorrow, we mourn the passing of Pope Francis, a shepherd of grace and compassion."

We pray for all ministers, priests, pastors and leaders of churches around the world, that they might lead with deep kindness, feeding and tending the flock with love and humility.

We pray for people who have come new to faith, that they might receive the spiritual nourishment they need to continue to travel on in the way of Jesus. We pray for people who have given up on the faith, who have been disillusioned, disappointed or distressed by the actions of others, or have failed to find nourishment and meaning where they were looking. Meet them where they are, risen Christ, and surprise them with the wonder of your presence. Lead them into a new way of believing that brings life and healing.

We pray for those people who have, like Saul, waged persistent persecution on some or all of the followers of Jesus. Open eyes, hearts and minds to the possibility of a more loving and inclusive world where difference is celebrated and respected and the river of grace flows deep.

We pray for the seekers, the lost and the wanderers who walk in and out of our doors and hope for something to bring them back to life. May we meet them with freshness and hope. May we be waiting on the shore with a feast at the ready. May we turn up when you nudge us to go, and witness to your presence and your breath of life that sustains us.

We pray for ourselves. We believe, oh yes, we believe, but sometimes we need help in our unbelief. We fall into patterns and ways that are not helpful to us or others. We dismiss things that are new, and hesitate to cast our nets on the other side, even when you tell us to. Stop us in our tracks if we are heading the wrong way, dazzle us with your presence so we can't miss you. Bless your church as we gather on the beach around the fire, and you feed us and we witness your call to us, again and again,

Today we have special prayers for:

Leona	Abby	Janet	Howard
Joy	Connie	Carol	Tom
Liam	Manfred	Dick	Nick
Maddi	Shannon	Grant	
Joanne	Betty	Kim	

And together as a community, we pray the prayer that Jesus taught us so long ago: ***"Our Father....."***

Closing Hymn VU 567 *"Will You Come and Follow Me"*

¹ Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?

Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?

**Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?**

- 2 Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?**
- 3 Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?
Will you set the prisoners free and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean, and do such as this unseen,
and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?**
- 4 Will you love the 'you' you hide if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?**
- 5 Christ, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.**

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Living our Faith this Week

Where are you being asked to change your mind? What thoughts and actions are limiting you from following Jesus? This week take a look at your own 'Road to Damascus' and where you might need to pursue a different way of being.

Commissioning and Benediction

Sung Benediction

**Go now in peace, never be afraid,
God will go with you each hour of everyday.
Go now in faith, steadfast strong and true,
Know God will guide you in all you do.
Go now in love, and show you believe.
Reach out to others, so all the world can see.
God will be there, watching us in love.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.**

Amen. Amen. Amen

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