

**Bethel United Church
September 7 2025**



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

Welcome and Announcements

Good morning and welcome to Bethel United Church in Rideau Ferry, Ontario. Today is September 7, 2025, and the thirteenth Sunday of Pentecost. My name is Rev. Lynne Gardiner, and I welcome all of you into this place, whether you are worshipping 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.

We will be holding our Anniversary Service on September 28th. Rev. Debbie Steele will be our guest preacher and we will be receiving new members into the Bethel Family that Sunday. If you are interested in becoming a member, please see me so that we can include you in this celebration.

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

Our Past, Present and Future

For 100 years, people of The United Church of Canada have faithfully come together to follow Jesus and help others. Through Mission and Service, we have supported people in need across Canada and around the world—bringing food to the hungry, shelter to the vulnerable, justice to the oppressed, and hope to communities.

This is ongoing work. And as we look ahead, we know the needs we face will not disappear—they will deepen. Poverty, injustice, and the climate crisis will continue to challenge us, but so will our call to respond with love, compassion, and courage.

That's why we are invited to take part in something extraordinary: the Centennial Legacy Campaign. This is the most ambitious initiative our church has ever taken on. Its goal is to inspire legacy gifts that will strengthen local communities of faith, Mission and Service, and The United Church of Canada Foundation.

These gifts will honour our past, sustain our present, and ensure that our church will keep meeting the world's needs for the next hundred years—offering security, faith, and community for generations to come, and sharing God's love boldly, generously, and without hesitation.

When we give to Mission and Service, we are not only helping today; we are also planting seeds of hope for tomorrow. Together, we can ensure that this ministry continues to grow, adapt, and serve in a world where it is increasingly needed.

Thank you for your generosity, your faithfulness, and the hope you bring to the future of our church and the world.

Call to Worship (Responsive, based on Psalm 139)

O Lord, you have searched me and known me.

You know when I sit down and when I rise up.

You discern my thoughts from far away.

You search out my path and my lying down.

You are familiar with all my ways.

You are before me and behind me.

***And so utterly known, supported and loved
we come to worship You, God our Maker.***

Sung Call to Worship

VU 376 (vs 1)

"Spirit of the Living God

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Melt me, mould me, fill me, use me.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

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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 recognize that we are called to be disciples of Jesus.

A moment of silent reflection: What is God's call on your life? What do you do that sets you apart as a disciple of Jesus? What have you had to sacrifice in your life to ensure that you are walking faithfully?

Listen to God's words for you this from Luke 14:

"Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple."

Opening Prayer

Gracious and loving God, we come before you this morning as clay in the Potter's hands. Like the vessel on the wheel in Jeremiah's vision, we acknowledge that we are works in progress—sometimes marred by our own choices, sometimes feeling broken or incomplete.

Yet we gather here in wonder and gratitude, knowing that you do not discard what is damaged. Instead, you lovingly reshape us, reform us, and make us new. Your hands are gentle yet strong, patient yet purposeful.

As we begin this time of worship, we yield ourselves to your transforming touch. Soften our hearts that have grown hard. Mold our spirits that have lost their way. Shape our lives according to your good and perfect will.

Help us to trust the process, even when the reshaping feels uncomfortable. Remind us that you see not only what we are, but what we can become in your hands.

Prepare us now to receive your Word, to lift our voices in praise, and to be formed more fully into the image of your child, the One we call our salvation. May this time together draw us closer to you and to one another. Amen.

- ¹ Beneath the cross of Jesus I fain would take my stand:
the shadow of a mighty rock within a weary land,
a home within the wilderness, a rest upon the way,
from the burning of the noontide heat and the burden of the day.**
- ² Upon the cross of Jesus my eyes at times can see
the very dying form of one who suffered there for me;
and from my smitten heart, with tears, two wonders I confess,
the wonder of his glorious love, and my unworthiness.**
- ³ I take, O cross, your shadow for my abiding place;
I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of his face,
content to let the world go by, to know no gain nor loss,
my sinful self my only shame, my glory all, the cross.**

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Passing the Peace

Prayer for Reconciliation

All time is in your hands, O God.

For you are the Lord of space and time.

As you have created the earth and all the universe,
so you have created time and history.

All the nations of the earth are in your hands.

To you alone belongs the power to create and destroy.

All this is beyond your imaging:

all we can do is bow before your majesty.

And yet, even if we cannot understand your ways, you understand us.

You know us better than we know ourselves, for in love, you created us,
knitting us together in our mother's wombs.

We praise you that each of us is fearfully and wonderfully made.

We praise you for all your wonderful works.

We praise you for your mysterious ways.

Through Christ,

we have the opportunity to turn away from evil

and know the power of your grace at work in our lives.

Yet the temptations remain and we fail to listen your invitation of love.

We are implicated in systems which enslave and exploit our siblings
who are also made in your image.

In our personal lives we are quick to anger, slow to love,
quick to feel wronged, slow to forgive.

Hear us as, in silence, we admit our failings and pray, once again, to know your forgiveness.

(silence)

Assurance of Love

May God grant grace anew to each of one of us
so that we find joy and peace in following Christ.

Theme Conversation

Dreams you had to prepare for.

Our Scriptures Today

Jeremiah 18: 1–11 God is the potter; we are the clay.

Psalms 139: 1–6, 13–18 God has searched me and known me.

Luke 14: 25–33 the cost of discipleship.

Reflection

Hymn

MV 161

"I Have Called You By Your Name"

- ¹ I have called you by your name, you are mine;
I have gifted you and ask you now to shine.
I will not abandon you; all my promises are true.
You are gifted, called, and chosen; you are mine.**
- ² I will help you learn my name as you go;
read it written in my people, help them grow.
Pour the water in my name, speak the word your soul can claim,
offer Jesus' body given long ago.**
- ³ I know you will need my touch as you go;
feel it pulsing in creation's ebb and flow.
Like the woman reaching out, choosing faith in spite of doubt,
hold the hem of Jesus' robe, then let it go.**
- ⁴ I have given you a name, it is mine;
I have given you my Spirit as a sign.
With my wonder in your soul, make my wounded children whole;
go and tell my precious people they are mine.**

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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

O God, as we go to our homes and our lives this coming week we ask you to send your Spirit into our lives, so that we can truly call ourselves your disciples.

Open our ears – that we may hear what you are saying to us in the things that happen and in the people we meet.

Open our eyes – so we can see the needs of people around us.

Open our hands – so that we can help when help is needed.

Open our lips – so we can tell of your Good News.

Open our minds – so we can discover new truth about you and the world.

Open our hearts – that we may love you and others as you have loved us.

Today, we have special prayers for:

Joy	Janet	Bill M	Rev Myra
Myles	Carol	Sue N	David
Liam	Dick	Norma	Jim
Joanne	Connie	Hailey	Bev
Abby	Rev. Arlyce	Kylie	Kim

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

Closing Hymn

VU 602

"Blest Be the Time That Binds"

- ¹ Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
the unity of heart and mind is like to that above.**
- ² Before our Maker's throne we pour our ardent prayers;
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
our comforts and our cares.**
- ³ We share each other's woes, each other's burdens bear;
and often for each other flows the sympathizing tear.**
- ⁴ This glorious hope revives our courage on the way;
that we shall live in perfect love in God's eternal day.**

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Living our Faith this Week

This week, take some time with yourself and look honestly at your walk of faith. What does it mean for you in this day and time to allow God to mold you and make you into a disciple? What do you need to change or sacrifice?

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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