

Bethel United Church

October 19 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 October 19, 2025, and Pentecost 19. 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: Paula Grenke and our choir, Aidan Williamson, Liz Hughes and Kathleen Williamson.

Raising interest in and support for the Community Housing Initiative Perth (CHIP) is the focus of this year's Bethel Stewardship Project.

Community Housing Initiative Perth (CHIP) is a coalition of local citizens and organizations who feel strongly about the need to address Perth's housing crisis. In partnership with Carebridge Community Support and the Saumure Group, CHIP is committed to creating affordable housing solutions for neighbours in need of housing ... and we here at Bethel can help.

CHIP donations will be gratefully received as loose change/ undesignated funds during the Offering time on all October Sundays. There are special envelopes in the pews if you wish to use them. Contributions can also be made by cheque or through an e-transfer to Bethel United Church marking CHIP Project in the memo line.

Thank you for your support of this important undertaking.

If you have any questions, please speak to any member of the Stewardship Committee.

Joy Joynt celebrated her birthday yesterday. Are there any other celebrations?

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.

Minute For Mission

Supporting 40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism

The 40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism are underway, and now is the best time to join in. Wherever you are on the journey, today is the right day to take the next step. Across Canada and beyond, people are gathering in faith and courage to confront racism, to listen deeply, and to act for justice.

This is not a quick or easy process. The conversations can be uncomfortable. They reveal where racism lives—in systems, in communities, and within ourselves—and they push us to ask: *What does justice look like in real life?*

Every day in this program offers tools to walk this path: prayers that ground us, reflections that shift perspectives, stories and videos that bring lived experiences into focus, and action steps that help turn awareness into change. These resources are created by ministers, lay leaders, educators, and community members—people who bring lived experience, wisdom, and hope.

This work is not just about understanding racism. It's about dismantling it.

From October 14 to November 28, 2025, the 40 Days include:

- Live online events with dynamic speakers every Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. ET
- Weekly short videos with accompanying reflections and action items
- Downloadable resources designed for both groups and individuals

The learning doesn't stop there. All resources remain available online so that individuals, congregations, and community groups can keep learning, keep talking, and keep acting. Anti-racism is a lifelong journey.

Your Mission and Service gifts make this vital work possible, not just for 40 days, but every day. Through your generosity, the United Church of Canada continues to live into its commitment to becoming an anti-racist church, and to work toward a world where every person is treated with dignity, equity, and love. Thank you.

Call to Worship (Responsive)

But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD:

***I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts;
and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.***

Sung Call to Worship

MV 120 (vs 1)

"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 to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?**

My heart shall sing of the day you bring.

Let the fires of your justice burn.

**Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
and the world is about to turn!**

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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 look at our lives of faith in the context of our world today.

A moment of silent reflection: What evidence of faithfulness do you see here at Bethel and beyond?

Listen to God's words for you this morning from Luke 18:

And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you; he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

Opening Prayer

We are here with you today, O God,
eager to hear your Word and learn from it.
You have given us all the instruction
we need to live in ways that please you,
and we gather to worship you now.
Amen.

Opening Hymn VU 664 “What a Friend We Have in Jesus”

- ¹ What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear,
all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.**
- ² Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged; take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful, who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness; take it to the Lord in prayer.**
- ³ Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?
Christ the Saviour is our refuge; take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do our friends despise, forsake us? Are we tempted to despair?
Jesus' strength will shield our weakness,
and we'll find new courage there.**

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Passing the Peace

Prayer for Reconciliation

Gracious God, we are often slow to consult the wisdom of your sacred stories, or we dismiss them as irrelevant or incomprehensible.

When life presents us with problems, we wrestle with them in our own minds and turn to Google instead of God, thinking we need a search engine instead of listening to your stories and the other truths of our faith.

Today we confess that we rely on our own thinking, forgetting that we have the wisdom of our ancestors that have wrestled with your truths since the beginning of time.

Today we commit to persistence in our faith, to honesty in our doubt and to lives that recognize You in the problems thrown in our path. Amen.

Assurance of Love

My friends, God forgives us when our faith flags and falters. God is the enduring God who persists with us when we can't persist ourselves.

Thanks be to God for faithful forgiveness that endures to the end.

Theme Conversation

Things that keep you awake at night.

Our Scriptures Today

Genesis 32: 22-31

- Jacob wrestles in the middle of the night.

Luke 18: 1-8

- The unjust judge and the persistent widow

Reflection

Hymn

VU 271

"There's a Wideness in God's Mercy"

- ¹ There's a wideness in God's mercy
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in God's justice
which is more than liberty.**
- ² There is no place where earth's sorrows
are more felt than up in heaven;
there is no place where earth's failings
have such gracious judgement given.**
- ³ There is plentiful redemption
in the blood that Christ has shed;
there is joy for all the members
in the sorrows of the Head.**
- ⁴ Troubled souls, why will you scatter
like a crowd of frightened sheep?
Foolish hearts, why will you wander
from a love so true and deep?**
- ⁵ For the love of God is broader
than the measures of the mind,
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.**

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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

Lord God, just as the widow persisted, we persist in our prayers of intercession.

Lord, we lift our eyes to you.

Hear our cries for justice, mercy and peace.

We pray for all involved in our justice system, for police officers, judges, lawyers and all who uphold the law. We pray for all who work in our prisons and for all those serving prison sentences.

Lord, we lift our eyes to you.

Hear our cries for justice, mercy and peace.

We pray for the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, where Russian strikes have again targeted civilians. We pray for the tenuous peace in Palestine. And for aid workers everywhere. We pray for safe passage for trucks and workers to reach those in need.

Lord, we lift our eyes to you.

Hear our cries for justice, mercy and peace.

We pray for families everywhere. For pray for widows, orphans, the needy and the vulnerable. We pray for our own loved ones and for our communities. For those who are housed and unhoused. For those who struggle with addictions and mental health difficulties. For those who are care-givers and those in need of care.

Lord, we lift our eyes to you.

Hear our cries for justice, mercy and peace.

We pray for all who lift up your way of living. For all leaders in our churches. For all your people. You call us to pray, to work at it and not give up. You care about every detail in our lives, from the smallest to the more complex. We place all into your hands, for on you we can depend.

Lord, we lift our eyes to you.

Hear our cries for justice, mercy and peace.

Today we have special prayers for:

Joy	Janet	Bev	Rae
Myles	Carol	Kim	Fran
Liam	Dick	Pierre	Chris O
Joanne	Rev. Myra	Dianne	Scott
Abby	Jim	Michel	Michael

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

Closing Hymn

VU 642

"Be Thou My Vision"

**¹ Be thou my vision, O joy of my heart;
naught be all else to me save that thou art,
thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping thy presence my light.**

- 2 Be thou my wisdom, my calm in all strife;
I ever with thee, and thou in my life;
thou loving parent, thy child may I be,
thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.**
- 3 Be thou my battle shield, sword for the fight
be thou my dignity, thou my delight,
thou my soul's shelter, thou my high tower;
raise thou me heavenward, O power of my power.**
- 4 Riches I heed not, nor vain empty praise,
thou mine inheritance, now and always;
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,
great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.**
- 5 Great God of heaven, after victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O ruler of all.**

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Living our Faith this Week

Where do you need to persist in faith? Where do you need to draw on the wisdom from our sacred texts and our community? This week take some time to ask for help in direction in the places that you are struggling.

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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