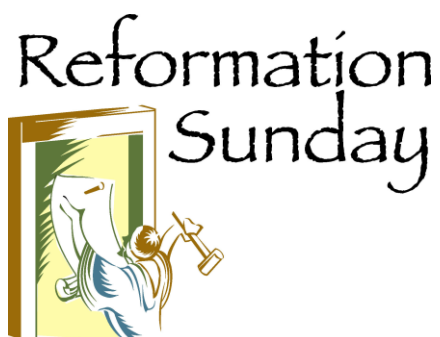




Bethel United Church October 26 2025

- ❖ All **bolded** text is a congregational response.
- ❖ Some of today's worship is from God Reforms Us, A Service for Reformation Sunday *by Rev. Ryan Slifka* and used with permission

Welcome and Announcements

Good morning and welcome to Bethel United Church in Rideau Ferry, Ontario. Today is October 26, 2025, and Reformation Sunday. 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 and our choir, Aidan Williamson, Barb Joynt and Kathleen Williamson.

A quick reminder of our soup & sandwich lunch today after worship. All of you are welcome; come and enjoy the community. Did you know that your donations to these lunches help the UCW continue to make its donations to various community organisations, which are listed in the Annual Report?

As our 2025 October Stewardship project draws to a close, the Stewardship Committee would like to thank the many members of the Bethel Family who have generously contributed to this important campaign supporting CHIP (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 and, in partnership with Carebridge Community Support and the Saumure Group, is committed to creating affordable housing solutions for neighbours in need of housing.

The October Stewardship campaign has been an opportunity for members of the Bethel Family to help in that important undertaking.

Contributions for the October Stewardship Project will still be welcomed this morning as unmarked offerings on the plate/through use of the special envelopes found in the pews/or by cheque or e-transfer to Bethel United Church marking CHIP Project in the memo line.

Thank you again for your support of this important initiative which will support neighbours in need of housing.

Bethel Stewardship Committee.

Are there any other celebrations?

Please join in singing our celebration song:

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

Healing with Horses: Transforming Through Trust

In Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory, the Healing with Horses program brings people together to share, listen, and connect with each other, the land, and the gentle strength of the horses guiding the healing journey.

Among them are four Ojibwe Spirit Horses, a rare and sacred breed. At one point in history, they were stolen from the community, but in an act of resilience and reconciliation, they have been returned to the land and the people who have always known and cherished them. Their presence is a living reminder of survival, restoration, and hope.

Supported by your Mission and Service gifts, the program blends equine therapy with Anishinaabe ways of knowing, the Medicine Wheel, and traditional teachings to support emotional, spiritual, and cultural healing. Children learn emotional regulation, adults reconnect with their inner strength, and participants find the courage to speak and be heard.

Thank you for supporting the Healing Fund through Mission and Service. Your generosity makes this life-changing work possible.

Call to Worship (Responsive, based on Psalm 90)

God is our dwelling place from year to year, age to age.

And yet, we become complacent, forgetting who we are.

God reforms us

and makes prosperous the work of our hands!

God's life surges forth through creation, like grass that renews every morning.

And yet we prefer to be dust, swept away in the wind of every new idea and new fad.

God reforms us

and makes prosperous the work of our hands!

God turns to us, and has compassion on us,
so the great work of our lives manifests Christ's glorious love to the world.
God reforms us

and makes prosperous the work of our hands!

Sung Call to Worship

MV 28 (chorus, only)

"Fresh As the Morning"

**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.**

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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 consider our faith in light of change and Reformation.

A moment of silent reflection: What parts of the church have you seen 'Reformed' over time? What parts still need Reforming? What about your own life of faith? Where do you need a Reformation?

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

Wondrous God:

Thirteen billion years ago your creative spark called creation into being.

Two thousand years ago you lit a spark of new creation in Christ.

Five hundred years ago, your grace reignited the hearts of men and women with names like Martin Luther, John Calvin, Katharina Zell, Ulrich Zwingli, and Argula von Grumbach.

Just when we think all is settled, everything is finished, closed, your power and presence explodes on to the scene yet again, bringing newness, bringing life.

Fill us with your power and presence, O God,

so we may, like our grandparents in faith carry your truth, your beauty, and your justice to the world you so love—a world in such need.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

- ¹ A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
our helper sure amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing:
for still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;
with power and malice great, and armed with cruel hate,
on earth he has no equal.**
- ² Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing,
were not the right man on our side,
the man of God's own choosing:
dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is he;
Lord Sabaoth his name, from age to age the same,
and he must win the battle.**
- ³ And though this world, with devils filled,
should threaten to undo us,
we will not fear, for God hath willed
the truth to triumph through us:
the prince of darkness grim, we tremble not for him;
his rage we can endure, for lo! his doom is sure,
one little word shall fell him.**
- ⁴ That word above all earthly powers, no thanks to them, abideth;
the Spirit and the gifts are ours
through Christ, who with us sideth:
let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also;
the body they may kill:
God's truth abideth still, God's kingdom is for ever.**

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Passing the Peace

Invitation to the Prayer for Reconciliation

An important outcome of the Protestant Reformation was the rediscovery of the doctrine of grace—the unmerited, unconditional love of God that reaches out to us even before we reach out to God. And as the great Reformer John Calvin once wrote, (*in The Institutes of the Christian Religion*) the knowledge of God begins with knowledge of ourselves. To know ourselves is to know our places of brokenness. And to know God is to know that in Christ, God's love stretches so deep and wide that it infiltrates every broken place in our hearts and in our world. God knows the depth of our hearts and will never turn away or turn us away. So let's offer up our lives in confession, trusting that we can be honest before God and each other without fear. Let us pray.

Prayer for Reconciliation

Living God,

You are the One who is always on the move,
always creating and re-creating, always doing a new thing.

And yet, we confess, O Lord, that our lives can become static,
routinely paralyzed by doubt and fear.

We remain ossified in patterns of greed, covetousness, and self-interest.

We doubt your promises of abundant, everlasting life and so we live in
dread of our neighbours, our friends, and our enemies.

Our souls remain still. We do not love as you love.

Nor do we live as you would have us live,
with courage, generosity or the boldness of the gospel.

So in the silence of our hearts, we offer up to you those things we have
done and those we have left undone.

(short silence)

Forgive us, O God.

Renew us by your Spirit, and reform us with your compassion, remaking us
more fully in to the image of Christ, and as nimble servants of your reign.

Amen.

Assurance of Love

Friends,

the good news of the gospel is that God's love in Christ stretches so deep
and so wide that it infiltrates every broken place in our hearts
and in our world.

Our hatred is met with love, our cruelty is met with compassion,
our sins and our trespasses are met with forgiveness.

It is greater than anything you have ever done, or could do.

Open your hearts to let the love of God in, because in Christ you are
forgiven, freed, made new.

Believe in this great good news. Amen

Theme conversation

Reformation you have seen

Our Scriptures Today

Luke 18: 9-14

The Gathered Glories

(By Malcolm Guite from "Sounding the Seasons)

*Though Satan breaks our dark glass into shards
Each shard still shines with Christ's reflected light,
It glances from the eyes, kindles the words
Of all his unknown saints. The dark is bright
With quiet lives and steady lights undimmed,*

*The witness of the ones we shunned and shamed.
Plain in our sight and far beyond our seeing
He weaves them with us in the web of being
They stand beside us even as we grieve,
The lone and left behind whom no one claimed,
Unnumbered multitudes, he lifts above
The shadow of the gibbet and the grave,
To triumph where all saints are known and named;
The gathered glories of His wounded love.*

Reflection

Hymn

VU 716

"My Life Flows On"

- ¹ My life flows on in endless song,
above earth's lamentation.
I hear the sweet, though far off hymn
that hails a new creation.
Through all the tumult and the strife,
I hear the music ringing:
It finds an echo in my soul –
how can I keep from singing?**
- ² What though my joys and comforts die?
My Saviour still is living.
What though the shadows gather 'round?
A new song Christ is giving.
No storm can shake my inmost calm,
while to that Rock I'm clinging:
since Love commands both heaven and earth,
how can I keep from singing?**
- ³ When tyrants tremble, sick with fear,
and hear their death knells ringing:
when friends rejoice both far and near,
how can I keep from singing?
In prison cell and dungeon vile
our thoughts to them are winging:
when friends by shame are undefiled,
how can I keep from singing?**

⁴ **I lift my eyes; the cloud grows thin;
I see the blue above it;
and day by day this pathway smooths,
since first I learned to love it.
The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart,
a fountain ever springing:
all things are mine since I am Christ's -
how can I keep from singing?**

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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

God of Grace and God of Glory,
on this Reformation Sunday, we give you thanks for the saints who have
gone before us.

For those who faced trouble and trial, and even death,
for the sake of the message of your mercy and in the spirit of Pentecost,
the right to hear and read the scriptures in their own languages.

We pray especially for those who now face trouble, trial, even death,
for those members of the body of Christ who face persecution.

For your beloved children everywhere—regardless of tradition—
who live under the threat of religious persecution.

For people, especially those of us who are Indigenous, who face the
extinction of our own languages through neglect, oppression, or cultural
pressure.

We pray that all may hear the good news of the Prince of Peace in ways that
resonate, and cause us to drop our weapons and defences for the sake of
the kingdom.

We pray that you may help us not only walk in the shoes of our forebears,
but fill them.

May all of us gathered here today be as captivated by the life you have
given us in Christ that we are freed to reach our friends, neighbours, and
enemies with your unconditional love.

Lord, we pray for the world you love in hope, and in trust,
that we and your church might carry the light that has been passed down
through the centuries,
so we might be a beacon of your love to the world.

Today we have special prayers for:

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

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

Closing Hymn VU 382 "Breathe On Me, Breath of God"

- 1 Breathe on me, breath of God, fill me with life anew,
that I may love what thou dost love,
and do what thou wouldst do.**
- 2 Breathe on me, breath of God, until my heart is pure,
until my will is one with thine, to do and to endure.**
- 3 Breathe on me, breath of God, till I am wholly thine,
until this earthly part of me glows with thy fire divine.**
- 4 Breathe on me, breath of God: so shall I never die,
but live with thee the perfect life of thine eternity.**

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Living our Faith this Week

Are you needing a Reformation? Is Bethel needing a Reformation? This week, consider the changes we need to make as individuals and as a Community.

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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