



**Richmond Hill United Church**  
An Affirming Ministry



**January 10, 2021: First Sunday after Epiphany**

The following resource is offered to help you worship at home, either on your own or online. Worship is livestreamed on Zoom. Log-in details are sent weekly by email to those on RHUC's contact list. For a recording of the service, click the following link: [www.facebook.com/RichmondHillUnitedChurch/](https://www.facebook.com/RichmondHillUnitedChurch/). This will take you to our Facebook page. We may be apart physically but we are still a community of faith spiritually, and digitally.

**Centred in Christ**

Welcome and Lighting the Community Candle: *As the candle in the sanctuary is lit, you are invited to light your own candle at home. We may be dispersed, but together we shine in love.*

Acknowledgement of the Land: *We take time to give thanks for the land and for the Indigenous communities who continue to steward it. We extend greetings in Mohawk, French and Japanese.*

Call to Worship (*inspired by Psalm 29*):

One: The voice of the Holy One spoke the cosmos into being.

**All: We come to celebrate God's creative presence around us.**

One: The voice of the Holy One was enfleshed in the life and love of Jesus.

**All: We come to give thanks for Christ's abiding companionship.**

One: The voice of the Holy One still echoes deep within and between us.

**All: We come to live out the gift of being embraced in the Spirit's grace.**

Opening Prayer

We are ready to enter the river of your grace, Holy One,  
Joined with Jesus, proclaimed beloved while the Spirit descended like a dove.  
We too are ready to hear those words and immersed in that blessing.  
In this time together may we be renewed in life and embraced in love,  
that as his companions we may share that same life and love  
with a world thirsting for meaning.  
We pray with the One called your beloved.  
**Amen.**

Hymn: "When Jesus Comes to Be Baptized" (*Voices United #100*)

- 1. When Jesus comes to be baptized,  
he leaves the hidden years behind,  
the years of safety and of peace,  
to bear the sins of humankind.**
- 2. The Spirit of the Lord comes down,  
anoints the Christ to suffering,  
to preach the word, to free the bound,  
and to the mourner, comfort bring.**
- 3. He will not quench the dying flame,  
and what is bruised he will not break,  
but heal the wound injustice dealt,  
and out of death his triumph make.**

4. **O Spirit help us be like Christ,  
and what is bruised he will not break,  
To walk in truth and justice now,  
And grow in Christian dignity.**
  
5. **We praise you, God, source of all life,  
We praise you, Christ, eternal Word,  
We praise you, Spirit, gracious gift,  
Your triune presence fills our world.**

Time to Be Centred: *We use the phrase “Be still and know that I am God” from Psalm 46 as a way to become centred, each time it is repeated the phrase being shortened. The final time we just say “Be.”*

**Be still and know that I am God.**

**Be still and know that I am.**

**Be still and know.**

**Be still.**

**Be.**

*(a short period of silence)*

**Amen.**

### **Reflecting Together as a Community**

Reading: Mark 1:4-11 (Read by Bill Warrick)

John the Baptist was in the wilderness calling for people to be baptized to show that they were changing their hearts and lives. Everyone in Judea and all the people of Jerusalem went out to the Jordan River and were being baptized by John as they confessed their sins. John wore clothes made of camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey.

He announced, “One stronger than I am is coming after me. I’m not even worthy to bend over and loosen the strap of his sandals. I baptize you with water, but he’ll baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

About that time, Jesus came from Nazareth, and John baptized him in the Jordan River. While he was coming out of the water, Jesus saw heaven split open and the Spirit, like a dove, descending on him. And there was a voice from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I dearly love; in you I am pleased.”

Anthem: “God Made Manifest” (Sheldon Curry; Sung by the Chancel Choir)

Excerpt from *A Testament of Devotion* by Thomas Kelly (Read by Bill Warrick)

Deep within us all there is an amazing inner sanctuary of the soul, a holy place, a Divine Center, a speaking Voice, to which we may continually return. Eternity is at our hearts, pressing upon our time-torn lives, warming us with intimations of an astounding destiny, calling us home unto Itself. Yielding to these persuasions, gladly committing ourselves in body and soul, utterly and completely, to the Light Within, is the beginning of true life. It is a dynamic center, a creative Life that presses to birth within us. It is a Light Within that illumines the face of God and casts new shadows and new glories upon the human face. It is a seed stirring to life if we do not choke it. It is the Shekinah of the soul, the Presence in the midst. Here is the Slumbering Christ, stirring to be awakened, to become the soul we clothe in earthly form and action. And [Christ] is within us all. (HarperSanFrancisco: 1992, ©1941, 9–10, 11)

Minute for Meditation: “Ar hyd y nos” (arr. Charles Callahan)

Remembering the Beloved

*We take time to remember how, like Jesus, we have been claimed as the beloved of God.*

Prayers of the People (composed by Jane Wedlock)

The Prayer of Jesus (composed by David Sorrill)

**O God, you love us like a good parent, and are present in every aspect of our existence. May your nature become known and respected by all; may your joy, peace, wholeness and justice be the reality for everyone as we live by the Jesus Way. Give us all that we really need to live every day for you, and forgive us our failures as we forgive others for their failures. Keep us from doing those things which are not of you, and cause us always to be centred on your love. For you are the true reality in this our now, and in all our future. Amen.**

Video Minute for Mission

Offering Prayer

O River of Grace, as Jesus stands in the river he experiences a profound sense of blessing. We share in his call as your beloved children, and like him are sent into the world to offer that same blessing. We are grateful then for the many gifts of this community, gifts of time and creativity, gifts of wisdom and prayer, financial gifts as well, all signs of our commitment to share your love in the world. **Amen.**

Hymn: "Three Things I Promise" (*More Voices* #176)

- 1. Three things I promise, Holy God, in age and youth, in life and death:  
to bless your Name, and cling to Christ, and listen for the Spirit's breath.**
- 2. Your love unfolded time and space, and life, and all that life became, and so,  
with thankful heart and voice, through good and ill, I bless your Name.**
- 3. I follow, serve, and cling to Christ amid our culture's tides and trends,  
for here your Name is most revealed: Majestic Love, and Best of Friends.**
- 4. Enlivened as the Spirit moves to cleanse, awaken, and renew, I  
pray that justice, peace and truth, may seed and grow in all I do.**
- 5. If I should live when vigour fades, and family and friends are gone,  
three acts of loving faith remain when days are slow and work is done.**
- 6. Revive and guide me, Living God, as day by day, until my death,  
I bless your Name and cling to Christ, and listen for the Spirit's breath.**

Blessing and Sending Forth

One: As we go forth from here:

**All: may we be strong in spirit, courageous in will, and gentle of heart.**

One: Each day may our actions be:

**All: rooted in wisdom, nurtured by hope and open to love.**

One: May we meet others as we would wish to be met:

**All: with a heart of compassion, in a spirit of healing & grounded in joy.**

Postlude: "Trumpet Tune" (Rosalie Bonighton)