

## **Order of worship on February 4, 2024**

(CCLI: License Number #3156883) (Welcoming Elder: Kevin Johnston)

### **We Gather**

- Welcome and Announcements
- Responsive call to worship
- Praise song – BOP 307 God of the sparrow, God of the whale
- Prayer for worship and Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance
- Praise song – BOP 579 Oh, I know the Lord's laid his lands on me
- Prayer for children

### **We Listen**

- Prayer for illumination
- First reading: 1 Corinthians 9:16-23
- Second reading: Psalm 147:1-11 (Refrain 2)
- Third reading: Isaiah 40:21-32
- Sermon: The source of your strength
- Praise song – BOP 662 Those who wait on the Lord
- Communion
- Prayer for the people

### **We Respond**

- Offering, Doxology (BOP 830) & Dedication
- Song for the Journey – BOP 675 Precious Lord, take my hand

### **We Serve**

- Benediction

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### **Responsive Call to Worship**

God has invited us to come.

#### **So we gather.**

God has spoken to the world.

#### **So we listen.**

God has given us glimpses of grace and mercy.

#### **So we wait, longing for healing, eager for hope.**

God has been faithful to all generations.

#### **So we offer our praise to God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.**

### **Praise song – BOP 307 God of the sparrow, God of the whale**

### **Prayer For Adoration and Confession**

Creator God, Source of all life, in you, all creatures are connected, all creation are redeemed and made new. Day by day, you reveal yourself to us. In the beauty of the heavens, we see your glory. In the bounty of the earth, we know your generosity. In strength for our bodies and minds, we experience your energy. Delighting in all that we have seen, heard, and known, we worship you, one God – Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit – holy and loving, now and always.

Creator God, Source of love and mercy, we confess to you our sins of busy-ness. Sometimes we're so busy that we overlook those we love. Sometimes we think that we're so busy, we make excuses and avoid important commitments. Sometimes we make ourselves busy and neglect you. Forgive us, God. Calm our minds and hearts, so we can set priorities and honour you and your people around us.

**This time we come to you in prayer that you taught us how to pray:** (The Lord's Prayer:) **Our Father** in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. **Give us** today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. **Save us** from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. **For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

### **Words of Assurance**

Dear friends, while it is true that we have all sinned, it is a greater truth that we are forgiven through God's love in Jesus Christ. To all who humbly seek the mercy of God, I say, in Jesus Christ our sin is forgiven.

Be at peace with God, be at peace with yourself and be at peace with one another.

**May the Peace of the Lord be with you.** Let us take few moments to greet each other and share our peace.

### **Praise Song: 579 Oh, I know the Lord's laid his hands on me**

### **Prayer for children**

#### **Prayer for Illumination:**

O God, with your Holy Spirit, focus our attention as we listen to the Scriptures. Help us absorb your Word more deeply, so we come to know you better, and serve you with greater purpose for Christ's sake. We seek your help in your word. Be with us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

- First reading: 1 Corinthians 9:16-23
- Second reading: Psalm 147:1-11 (Refrain 2)
- Third reading: Isaiah 40:21-32

**"This is the word of the Lord / Thanks be to God."**

### **Sermon: The source of your strength**

When I was in my 20s, with my old church outreach team, we did a lot of street evangelism. We went to Metro Library at Yonge and Bloor downtown, Pearson Airport Terminal 3 when Korean Air arrives, various places in University of Toronto, York University, Ryerson, and Eaton Centre. In some good days, we went to Harbour Front too. We visited so many places around GTA with the gospel.

One day, when we went to Metro Library, I happened to meet a gentleman in front of the restroom. He was on the way. I stopped him, "Hi, excuse me. Have you heard of God?" He was so curious, and we spent a good hour talking about God. Our team was able to lead so many people to Christ. Sometimes, they accepted Christ as we shared the gospel.

We used small booklets called The Four Spiritual Laws, Bridge to Life, or Evangelism Explosion.

We felt like we became salesmen. We were selling Jesus Christ. But, we have to face numerous 'NO's. Dealing with NO was one of the most important challenges we had to overcome. Of course, we knew that the people did not reject us, but Jesus Christ. However, we couldn't help ourselves feeling rejected. Even though we experienced the difficult emotion of rejection, we were able to overcome because we were with God, and we were with God together.

Two months ago, I showed this bundle of chopsticks. If one pair of chopsticks, we can easily break them. But, a bundle of them, it is extremely hard or impossible to break them with bare hands.

Today's passage gives us an image of a person or people suddenly having wings like an eagle and soaring up in the sky. It's like Harry Potter or Percy Jackson stories. A magical story having wings and overcome the difficulties.

V28, imagine and celebrate this picture of the help and power of our God. **"Have you not known? How you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."**

In this passage, who's walking? Running? And flying? Is it God who is doing the actions? No, it's not God. **THOSE WHO WAIT FOR THE LORD** shall soar like eagles, run without fatigue, and walk and not get tired. **THOSE WHO WAIT FOR THE LORD**

Isaiah is talking about God's people who rely upon God, who are strengthened by God, who have the power of God in their lives.

I believe the Bible. I believe the Living God. I believe the power of God.

Also, I know and I admit that I am not almighty. I am weak. I have some evil desires. I have fear. I make mistakes. I am selfish.

But, still, I stand before the Lord. I still believe the God who made the universe. I believe the God who cares for every single person who calls upon His name. I believe God loves me. I believe God loves each person in this church. I believe that God loves and knows each person who has worries, disappointments, and tiredness when coming to our church and serving the Lord faithfully. I still believe that God purchased our church with the precious blood of His own Son Jesus Christ. And I mean, not the building, but us, God's people who gathered here.

One of the most famous and powerful prophets, Elijah did great works. He displayed the power of God to all people. He defeated 850 prophets of false gods. They eagerly poured out their hearts with all their energy and emotions and life calling their gods. Elijah stood in front of 850 enthusiastic prophets of foreign gods. He called out our God. God answered and showed his power. God Almighty was lifted and praised and worshipped. Elijah was the person God used.

But, the foreign queen who served the foreign gods, after the defeat, she was mad at Elijah and she said, "I am going to kill Elijah." That Elijah who defeated the 850 passionate prophets of foreign gods was scared of the threat of one person.

**1 King 19:4, “But [Elijah] himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die: “it is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my ancestors.”**

Then he fell asleep. What was the reaction of God?

“What are you doing now!! There are lots to do! Wake up! And work!!”

Our God is NOT a slave master. Our God is the loving Father.

**“Suddenly an angel touched [Elijah] and said to him, ‘Get up and eat.’ He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. He ate and drank, and lay down again.”**

God provided a rest for Elijah. And again, second time, God fed him again and let him sleep.

What does our Isaiah passage say? Everyone can become tired. **Who can compare with our God! There is no other gods. Who made all things you see? Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is the Lord, the everlasting God.**

We are tired, aren't we? We are piling up fatigue. Where do we get the source of our strength to make this church alive? How can we manage our deficit? What's going to happen if we fall? There are only few core people sustaining the life of this church!

This is true. But, at the same time, this is SO NOT TRUE.

Who is holding the life of St. Andrew's?

Who is holding the life of Elijah? Who is holding the life of the people of Israel?

Who's holding my life and your life?

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless.

This might NOT sound realistic. Calling on the name God, is it gonna solve all the problems we face? Relying upon the unseen God, is this all we can do?

Like I mentioned last week, Friedrich Nietzsche said that, we are making God remain dead.

What if Elijah stayed silent before the presence of 850 prophets of foreign gods?

What if we hold onto the life of our own church?

I have no practical answers for the challenges we face. But, one thing I know is that God is holding our church. I really wanted to encourage what we are doing through last week's message. And today, I really want to encourage all of us to gather our hearts in the presence of our living God. We started prayer gathering today at 10:15am just before the worship. It will be continued. Please come and pray together. And please let us pray for our church together.

God is still alive with his awesome power. God is still working faithfully and diligently for his own churches. God is still alive and working in his own people and through his own people.

Are you too tired? Then, rest, like Elijah. God will give you rest. In his time, God will strengthen you again. After God fed Elijah, this is what happened. **1 King 19:8, “then [Elijah] went in the strength of that food for forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God.”**

**Isaiah 40:31, “those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.”**

Let us, together, hold onto the promise of God. Let us wait for the Lord. Let us wait for his time. Let us gather our hearts and let us pray together for the life of God, for the glory of God, for the power of God, for the love and grace of God, to be displayed through our lives and through our church. Let us have God as the source of our power and strength.

This is the message of the Lord for us today.

### **Praise song – BOP 662 Those who wait on the Lord**

**Communion At The Lord’s Table** This is the time for Communion at the Lord’s Table.

Comfort, O comfort my people, says our God. In the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.’ Let us come to the Table of the Lord and remember who he is and what he has done for us.

As we join the Lord’s Table, let us confess our faith with the Apostles’ Creed.

### **The Apostles’ Creed (BOP 539)**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.**  
**Amen.**

*(Great Prayer of Thanksgiving:) (Please say BOLD print together)*

L: The Lord be with you. **P: And also, with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts. **P: We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **P: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

L: It is our joy and privilege to praise and worship you. Living God, you are truly living. Show us your life and comfort your people, we pray. Reveal your glory and your plans for us in your own time. Help us patiently wait for you. As we wait for you, help us join the worship with all the saints. With the cloud of witnesses, **we lift our hearts in joyful praise:**

**(Sanctus) Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of Your glory, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

L: Holy are you, Eternal One. Jesus, you are the Messiah, Son of the Living God. You are life. You are power. You are truth. You are the way. You are love. You are Light. You are righteousness. You are grace. You are all in all. Live in us. Live in the centre of our hearts. Because we live with your life, **we proclaim the mystery of faith:**

**P: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

L: Indwelling Holy Spirit, thank you for opening our eyes. Thank you for opening our ears. Thank you for interceding for us. Make us wind and flame, so with your power, we want to offer our lives to become your hands and feet. Lead us and guide our steps. Through Christ, by Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour are yours, almighty God, for ever and ever. Amen.

**Breaking of the BREAD and Pouring the WINE – prepare your Bread and Wine**

“This is the **body** of Christ, broken for you.” (BREAD)

Take, eat, remember, and believe that the precious body of our Lord Jesus Christ was given for the complete forgiveness of all our sins. (Let us take it)

“This is the **blood** of Christ, poured out for you.” (CUP)

Take, drink, remember, and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed for the complete forgiveness of all our sins. (Let us drink it)

**Prayer for the people:**

BE GLORIFIED. BE GLORIFIED. BE GLORIFIED, LORD. Through our personal and through our church’s worship and ministries. We are weak. We easily fall. And we are selfish. We are swayed by our easily shakable emotions. Gracious Father, we come to you with humble hearts. We come to you with desperate hearts, like Elijah. We’ve done it enough. We are tired. We can’t see what’s next. Help us be honest before you. Help us bring all our concerns and burdens before you. Help us giving up holding unto ourselves. Help us believe you. Help us have you in the centre of our hearts and see how our Living God works actively and powerfully in the lives of the people who calls upon your name. And let us experience your miracles in our lives.

We pray for your church. There are tiredness. Thank you for our passion and love for you and for our church. Strengthen us and fill us with joy and thanksgiving as we are diligently and faithfully serving you and your church. Through what we do, God, help us experience your power. We do it with our own power, but we can only do it because you fill us with your power. So, as we do it, help us realize that it’s not us, but it is you that work through us. There are people who are serving behind the scene. They come in the middle of the week and take care of the building, corner to corner, managing bills, serving renters, sharing our love and life to the people in need. Strengthen them. Encourage them. You know their hearts. You know their works. You know their difficulties. You know their desperateness. Like the promise from Isaiah passage, let us wait for you and let us experience your power just like Elijah was able to run for 40 days and 40 nights. Help us come to you in our prayers, so we truly discern what you want from our church at this time. And give us courage to accept what you are speaking to our hearts and give us energy to walk with you.

As we gather together, or as we are scattered in our personal lives, we want to honour you and we want to remember how you loved us and we want to make your love known to the people who are struggling with empty hearted. You alone are God the Creator, so you alone can fill the vacuum we have. Use us to make your name be known to this chaotic and wandering and hurting world.

Give life to your church. Show your love through us. And spread the good news through us. And shine your light through your church. Because you purchased us with your precious life and gave us your life, we are that precious and valuable. Thank you. In Jesus' precious and glorious name, we pray. Amen.

**Invitation to the offering:** Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is our God who takes care of his creation. It is the love of our Father who provides. It is the grace of our merciful God who heals and comforts. Let us have God drive our lives. Let us offer our hearts to him. Let us praise God and honour him with the Doxology (BOP #830.)

**Offering prayer:**

Generous God, we bring our offering to you, trusting that you will bless our gifts and use them in ways we cannot even imagine. Jesus touched so many lives in so many different ways. We ask that these gifts will touch many lives, too, with your healing and hope in these challenging times. Living God, show us your power. Loving God, give us faith and fill our hearts with you. Make us overflowing, help us experience your abundance. Fill our church with your hope. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

**Song for the Journey BOP 675 Precious Lord, take my hand**

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. We are not living with our own strength. God is holding our hands and walking together. Know that our Living God is with you. Accept that our Almighty God is helping you, every day. And let us remember that the precious life of Jesus Christ was poured out for our life. That's the cost of our life. And believe that God is the captain of his church. When you are too tired, come to the presence of our Living God. Cast all your burdens to our Loving Father.

**Benediction:** May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, now and always. Amen.