

## **January 7<sup>th</sup> Full Order of Service**

### **Announcement/Life and Work**

**Introit (VU 59 vs1) "Joy to the World"**

### **Opening Prayer**

Eternal God, you revealed your Son to us at his baptism, anointing him with the Holy Spirit.

**Keep all of us who are born of water and the Spirit faithful to our calling, in His name. Amen.**

### **Procession of Christ Candle**

"Long, long, long ago, before there was anything, before there was a world, before there was light, before there was darkness, there was God: Creator and Source of Life. God moved and God breathed the world into being, and God said, "Let there be light." We present this worship candle as a visible reminder of the Creator's great light and love."

### **Land Acknowledgement**

"Today as we gather to worship let us remember that we worship God on the historic and unceded territory of nations of Treaty 7. As Christ's people, let us be people of Love, of Truth, and Reconciliation. May we live with respect on this land, and peace and friendship with its people."

### **Affirming Vision Statement**

"As a community church that gathers from many smaller communities in the Medicine Hat area, Westminster United Church publicly declares our commitment to creating a space where people are welcome, safe, and encouraged to participate

in the life of the church inclusive of: Sexual orientation, gender identity, two spirited people, differing abilities, age, ethnic background, race, marital status, or economic circumstance.

Participation in the life of the church includes leadership, membership, sacraments, marriage, and celebrating milestones of life's journey.

We celebrate the richness of diversity, and we commit ourselves to openness, growth, education and to influencing the community for social justice.

In our dedication to living our God's word and with God's help, we devote ourselves to proactive learning and inclusion."

### **Lighting of the Affirming Candle**

"Not quite as long but still very long ago, One was born who embodied the light of the Creator in a way that sparked a movement and a new understanding God. We light this rainbow candle as a visible reminder of the radical inclusivity shown to us by Jesus, who calls us to follow him."

### **Lighting of Peace Candle**

"We light the candle of Peace to remind ourselves that Christ is the Prince of Peace. We pray for peace for ourselves and for the world."

### **Call to Worship**

Come, all who love and worship the Lord,  
**and who, by faith and baptism, wish to follow in his footsteps.**  
Come, all who cherish the hope given to us  
**in the image of the Holy Spirit descending upon our Saviour at  
his baptism;**  
**He who was born as one of us, and was destined to die for all  
of us.**  
Come to this, our service of worship, praise, and thanksgiving.  
**Amen.**

✠ **OPENING HYMN (VU 20) “On Jordan’s Bank”**

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Loving God,  
**you know us, in both our vices and our virtues.**  
**Grant us your wisdom, Lord, to know and love ourselves as  
you love us,**  
**Help us to constantly confront our faults  
and meet the knowledge of them with the same mercy you  
have shown to us.**  
**Our deepest desire is that we might grow in goodness and be  
at peace  
with you, with our brothers and sisters, and within ourselves.**

### **WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

Rest assured, brothers and sisters,  
all who confess and desire to live into the goodness of God

are entirely forgiven in God's abundant grace granted to us in Christ.

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

### **THE LORD'S PRAYER (VU 959)**

### **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

Wisdom calls from the Scriptures!

**May the Word of God enlighten us!**

## **GENESIS 1:1-5**

### **The Account of Creation**

**1** In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.<sup>[a]</sup> **2** The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

**3** Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. **4** And God saw that the light was good. Then he separated the light from the darkness. **5** God called the light "day" and the darkness "night."

And evening passed and morning came, marking the first day.

One: This is the witness of Israel.

**ALL: Thanks be to God for the Word.**

**Psalm: VU 756 Psalm 29**

## **Glory, glory, glory to our God**

Ascribe to God, you powers of the heaven,  
ascribe to God all glory and strength!

**Ascribe due honour to God's holy name,  
and worship in the beauty of holiness. R**

## **Glory, glory, glory to our God**

God's voice is over the waters -  
God's glory thundering across the great waters.

**God's voice is power, God's voice is full of majesty.**

God's voice shatters the cedars,  
splinters the cedars of Lebanon.

**God's voice makes Lebanon skip like a calf,  
Mount Hermon stampede like a wild young bull.**

God's voice forks into tongues of fire,  
God's voice shakes the wilderness,  
sets trembling the wilderness of Kadesh.

**God's voice causes the oaks to whirl,  
stripping the forest bare;  
and in the temple all cry: Glory! R**

## **Glory, glory, glory to our God**

God sits enthroned above the waters,  
**God is enthroned as sovereign forever.**

You give strength to your people, O God.

**Now give to your people the blessing of peace. R**

**Glory, glory, glory to our God**

One: This is the witness of the ancient song-writers.

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

## **Gospel Reading**

### **MARK 1:4-11**

<sup>4</sup>This messenger was John the Baptist. He was in the wilderness and preached that people should be baptized to show that they had repented of their sins and turned to God to be forgiven. <sup>5</sup>All of Judea, including all the people of Jerusalem, went out to see and hear John. And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River. <sup>6</sup>His clothes were woven from coarse camel hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. For food he ate locusts and wild honey.

<sup>7</sup>John announced: “Someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I’m not even worthy to stoop down like a slave and untie the straps of his sandals. <sup>8</sup>I baptize you with<sup>[a]</sup> water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit!”

## **The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus**

<sup>9</sup>One day Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and John baptized him in the Jordan River. <sup>10</sup>As Jesus came up out of the water, he saw the heavens splitting apart and the Holy Spirit

descending on him<sup>[b]</sup> like a dove. <sup>11</sup> And a voice from heaven said, “You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy.”

One: This is the Good News of Jesus Christ.

**ALL: Praise to Christ, the Living Word.**

**SERMON:**

**✠HYMN: (VU 385) “Spirit Divine, Attend Our Prayers”**

**MINUTES FOR MISSION “Learning Gospel at Camp”**

Lindsay Vautour, the United Church’s Engagement and Stewardship Associate, started attending a United Church camp at the tender age of five. There, she not only met lifelong friends and gained job skills as a counsellor, but it also helped chart her course to eventually work for The United Church of Canada.

“Coming from a financially tight background, I’m extremely grateful for the assistance available that let my brother and me attend camp every summer. I met so many different people from different cultures and regions, and got to learn their journeys in faith. I still keep in contact with some camp friends over 20 years later,” she says.

“One of my most prominent memories was with a fellow 13-year-old camper who told me that she loved camp because she could be herself without any expectations. She said, ‘I’m not the weird kid or the foster kid here, I’m just me,’” she recounts. “That’s something I resonate with because I wasn’t particularly

popular in school, but popularity never mattered at camp, and it's beautiful to know that that's a widely shared perception." Children come together at United Church camps across Canada to learn the gospel in a safe and supportive environment. Through campfire stories, hiking, music, canoeing, and so much more, campers gain confidence while enjoying unique activities and exploring their curiosity. At camp kids learn soft skills like self-confidence, patience, and organization as well as hard skills in sports, crafting, and music. Without the generosity of supporters, children who attend camp wouldn't be able to continue having such affirming and defining experiences. Your gifts through [Mission and Service](#) are deeply appreciated.

### **Invitation to the Offering**

In every day, there are blessings, great and small,  
for which to be thankful.

**Let those of us who have been inspired to share,  
and may all who need find their needs fulfilled.  
In Jesus' name, Amen.**

### **Offertory (Offering Gathered with Reflection Music)**

**Doxology (VU 537) "Your Work O God Needs Many Hands"**

### **Offertory Prayer**

God of life and freedom,  
we celebrate the revelation of Jesus  
as the Christ who makes all creation new.



**Accept all we offer you this day and make us new in him,  
who is Lord for ever and ever. Amen.**

**A NEW CREED (VU 918)**

**✠CLOSING HYMN: (VU 56) “Jesus, Our Brother”**

**✠BENEDICTION/COMMISSIONING**

**✠CHORAL AMEN (VU 974)**

**✠SENDING FORTH HYMN (VU 958) “Halle, Halle, Halle “**

**POSTLUDE:**