

April 28th Full Order of Service

Dr. Shane Andrus

✝ You are invited to stand as you are able

Announcements/Life and Work of the Church

✝Introit: (VU 412 vs 1)

✝Opening Prayer

✝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 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 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

"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.”

✠Call to Worship

One: Family of God, welcome to this community of faith.

All: We come seeking God’s love.

One: God’s love is here for us.

All: May the Spirit help us to understand how we are connected to God.

One: In love, we abide in Christ Jesus.

All: Through worship, may our minds be renewed, and connection to God strengthened.

One: Together let us worship God, as we gather in the Name of our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. Amen.

✠Opening Hymn: (VU 660) “How Firm A Foundation”

Prayer of Confession

One: Merciful God, we often find it difficult to love others, and to love ourselves, as You ask. We criticize ourselves and others harshly.

All: Forgive us. Redirect our priorities, and renew our commitment to live out Your love, even when that demands

more of us than we expect.

One: And I invite each of us now to enter into a moment of silence for self-reflection and private confession . . .

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: Hear the promise of the Savior's teachings: at peace with God, with yourself, and with one another. And be assured, you are forgiven.

All: Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER (VU 959)

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READINGS (Read by Margaret Laing)

Epistle

1 John 4:7-12; 19-21

Good News Translation

God Is Love

⁷ Dear friends, let us love one another, because love comes from God. Whoever loves is a child of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹ And God showed his love for us by sending his only Son

into the world, so that we might have life through him. ¹⁰ This is what love is: it is not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the means by which our sins are forgiven.

¹¹ Dear friends, if this is how God loved us, then we should love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God, but if we love one another, God lives in union with us, and his love is made perfect in us.

¹⁹ We love because God first loved us. ²⁰ If we say we love God, but hate others, we are liars. For we cannot love God, whom we have not seen, if we do not love others, whom we have seen. ²¹ The command that Christ has given us is this: whoever loves God must love others also.

One: This is the witness of the Church.

All: Thanks be to God.

Anthem: “God So Loved the World”

Gospel

John 15:1-8

Good News Translation

Jesus the Real Vine

¹⁵ “I am the real vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He breaks off every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and he prunes every branch that does bear fruit, so that it will be clean

and bear more fruit. ³ You have been made clean already by the teaching I have given you. ⁴ Remain united to me, and I will remain united to you. A branch cannot bear fruit by itself; it can do so only if it remains in the vine. In the same way you cannot bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵ “I am the vine, and you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will bear much fruit; for you can do nothing without me. ⁶ Those who do not remain in me are thrown out like a branch and dry up; such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire, where they are burned. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, then you will ask for anything you wish, and you shall have it. ⁸ My Father's glory is shown by your bearing much fruit; and in this way you become my disciples.

One: This is the Good News of Jesus Christ.

All: Praise to Christ, the Living Word.

SERMON: “Finding My Resiliency”

✠HYMN: (VU 147) “What Wondrous Love Is This”

MINUTES FOR MISSION “Healing Through Story Telling” (Read by Judy Taylor)

Storytelling is a powerful way to preserve and share history.

The theatre performance, Bunk #7, does just that.

Bunk #7 shares the true story of six boys rioting against the mistreatment and many forms of abuse they received at

Edmonton Indian Residential School in St. Albert, Alberta, in the early 1960s. Written by the late Nisga'a MLA Larry Guno, the play is based on his own experience at the residential school and named for his bunk number.

The cast features Indigenous youth and young adults, offering a powerful way for the cast and audiences to learn and share the story of cultural resilience. In November 2021, the play premiered at Raven Theatre in British Columbia to a full audience. With overwhelming support, the performers went on a tour of northwestern BC to share the transformative journey. Performances in fall 2023 were once again met with great support.

Your gifts to [Mission and Service](#) open opportunities for storytelling to move forward in an impactful and powerful way. Thank you for your generosity.

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory accompanied with reflection music

✠Doxology (537 vs2) "Your Work, O God Needs Many Hands"

✠Offertory Prayer

✠A NEW CREED (VU 918)

✠CLOSING HYMN: (VU 232) "Joyful, Joyful"

✠BENEDICTION/COMMISSIONING

✠CHORAL AMEN: VU 974

**✠SENDING FORTH HYMN (VU 958 2X) “Halle, Halle,
Halle”**

POSTLUDE: