

Westminster United Church

October 13, 2024

✝ You are invited to stand as you are able

Announcements/Life and Work of the Church

✝ Passing the Peace of Christ (Mark 10)

In Christ we are mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters to one another. As members of God's family, let us share God's peace with one another.

✝ Introit: "Come Let Us Sing" (VU 222 vs 2)

✝ Opening Prayer (Job 23 Hebrews 4)

Almighty God, we long to rest in your gentle arms. We need your compassion as we face the challenges and disappointments of life. When our hearts are hard, and our concern is only for ourselves, turn us back to you. Remind us of your saving love and keep us close to you, Lord. Love us as only you can love, in Jesus' name. Amen.

✝ Procession of Christ Candle

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." Not quite so long but still very long ago, One was born who embodied the light of the Creator. We present this candle to remind ourselves and to celebrate Christ's constant presence. May we always seek His guiding light in our lives, as we are called to carry that light into the world.

Lighting of the Rainbow Candle

Jesus taught us to love one another in a way that sparked a movement and a new understanding of 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.”

Land Acknowledgement

Today as we gather to worship let us remember that we worship God on the historic and unceded lands of Treaty 7 and neighbouring treaty 4. Traditional lands of the Metis, Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, Stoney Nakoda and the T'suut'ina as well as the Cree and Ojibwa people. As Christ's people, let us be people of love, 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.”

✠ **Call to Worship (Hebrews 4, Mark 10)**

**The kingdom of God is at hand.
We want to enter this kingdom.
The mercy of God is made known.
We want to receive this mercy.
The grace of God is abundant for all.
We praise you, O God, for your compassion
and your love. Accept our grateful praise
as we come to worship you today.**

✠ **Opening Hymn: “For the Fruit of All Creation’ (VU 227)**

Prayer of Confession (Psalm 22, Job 23, Mark 10)

Lord, we look for you in the wrong places; in material things. We worry about things we cannot change.

We wonder at times if you are even there at all. For all the times we have doubted you, Lord, forgive us. For all the ways we have neglected your word and ignored your people, forgive us. Do not be far from us, Lord. There is no one else we can turn to for help. Renew our fickle hearts and help us put our trust in you.

Assurance of Pardon (Psalm 22, Hebrews 4)

There is no wrong that God cannot make right. There is no chasm that can separate us from God’s love. The Lord is patient and kind, generous and good.

God will not forsake you or leave you. Turn to the Lord with confidence and put your faith in God’s great mercy. By the power of Jesus Christ, we are made whole. Amen.

Prayers of the People

THE LORD'S PRAYER

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (Job 23 Hebrews 4)

Mighty Lord, help us look for you in the north and in the south, in our homes and in our workplaces, in our families and in our relationships. May we never stop pursuing your truth. Assure us with your word that you are with us wherever we go, in Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS (Read by Chris White)

Job 23:1-9, 16-17

Job Replies: My Complaint Is Bitter

23 Then Job answered:

² 'Today also my complaint is bitter;^[a]
his^[b] hand is heavy despite my groaning.

³ O that I knew where I might find him,
that I might come even to his dwelling!

⁴ I would lay my case before him,
and fill my mouth with arguments.

⁵ I would learn what he would answer me,
and understand what he would say to me.

⁶ Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power?
No; but he would give heed to me.

⁷ There an upright person could reason with him,
and I should be acquitted for ever by my judge.

⁸ 'If I go forward, he is not there;
or backward, I cannot perceive him;

⁹ on the left he hides, and I cannot behold him;
I turn^[c] to the right, but I cannot see him.

¹⁶ God has made my heart faint;
the Almighty^[a] has terrified me;

¹⁷ If only I could vanish in darkness,
and thick darkness would cover my face!^[b]

One: This is the witness of Israel.

All: Thanks be to God for the Word.

Psalm 22:1-15 part three VU p746

In the Presence of your people, I will praise your name

Give praise, all you who fear God!

Proclaim God's greatness, all you children of Jacob;

stand in awe, all you children of Israel!

For God has neither despised
nor scorned the poor in their distress.

You, O God, have not hidden your face from them.

You heard them when they called to you. R

In the Presence of your people, I will praise your name

You are the theme of my praise in the great assembly.

**I will keep my promise in the presence
of those who fear you.**

Let the poor eat to satisfaction;
let those who seek you praise you.

May they be in good heart forever!

Let all the ends of the earth remember and turn to you, O God.

Let all the families of the nations bow down before you.

**For yours is the dominion, O God,
you rule over the nations. R**

In the Presence of your people, I will praise your name

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

Anthem: “Declare Your Maker’s Love” (with soloist Colin Ward)

Mark 10:17-31

The Rich Man

¹⁷ As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, ‘Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ ¹⁸ Jesus said to him, ‘Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. ¹⁹ You know the commandments: “You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honour your father and mother.”’ ²⁰ He said to him, ‘Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth.’ ²¹ Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, ‘You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money^[a] to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.’ ²² When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

²³ Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, ‘How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!’ ²⁴ And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again, ‘Children, how hard it is^[b] to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ It is easier for a camel to go

through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.’²⁶ They were greatly astounded and said to one another, [d] ‘Then who can be saved?’²⁷ Jesus looked at them and said, ‘For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.’

²⁸ Peter began to say to him, ‘Look, we have left everything and followed you.’²⁹ Jesus said, ‘Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, [d] ³⁰ who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields, with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life.’³¹ But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.’

One: This is the Good News of Jesus Christ.

All: Praise to Christ, the Living Christ.

Sermon:

✠HYMN: “Jesu, Jesu, Fill us With Your Love” (VU 593)

Minutes for Mission “What’s for Thanksgiving Dinner?” (Read by Chris White)

Thanksgiving is a time when many of us come together with loved ones, enjoying the abundance of food that graces our tables. It’s a time that reminds us of the blessings we have received. Yet, as we give thanks for our own blessings, it’s important to remember that many others, both here in Canada and around the world, are struggling with food insecurity. Your generous support through Mission and Service is making a difference by helping feed thousands of people in need.

One of the programs your Mission and Service gifts support is Food for the North, which serves Canada’s most remote northern communities. Food is not just scarce there but also incredibly costly. According to the federal government, back in 2019, the average Canadian family of four spent an average of \$1,000/month on groceries. But in Nunavut, that same family would have to spend \$1,600/month to get the same amount of food.

And that was five years ago—imagine how much worse things are now! Your contributions ensure that these families have access to affordable and nutritious food, changing lives and offering hope in a time of growing need.

This Thanksgiving, as you gather with your family, please know how deeply grateful we are for your support. Your [gifts through Mission and Service \(opens in a new tab\)](#) extend far beyond your own table, reaching into the homes of those who would otherwise go without. Together, we are not just providing meals—we are sharing the love and compassion of our faith with those who need it most. Thank you for making such a profound impact. Have a blessed Thanksgiving.

Invitation to the Offering

Gracious and giving God you have given us so much and we are grateful. As your family we want to help others by returning a share of what we have received.

✠Doxology: (VU 538) “For the Gift of Creation”

✠Offertory Prayer (Mark 10)

With open hands and thankful hearts, we offer to you all that is already yours, O Lord. Everything we possess is a gift from you. You so freely give us what we need, and you promise even greater treasures that await us in heaven. Take what we offer and use it for the goodness of your kingdom. We are blessed to share generously with others all that you so graciously have given to us. Amen.

✠A NEW CREED (VU 918)

✠Closing Hymn: “Come Thou Font of Every Blessing”

✠BENEDICTION/COMMISSIONING (Mark 10 Hebrew 4)

With God all things are possible. May you carry that confidence into your daily life and work, as you walk in Christ's footsteps, guided by God's hand. Go now and live God's desire for us. Live a life of goodness

✠CHORAL AMEN (VU 971)

✠SENDING FORTH HYMN: (VU 224 vs 1) "Sing a Happy Hallelujah"

POSTLUDE:

Prayers for today are found in Ministry Matters (adapted)