

Westminster United Church

January 19th, 2025

✝ You are invited to stand as you are able

ANNOUNCEMENTS/LIFE AND WORK OF THE CHURCH

INTROIT (VU 87 vs 1) "I Am the Light of 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."

† PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

† CALL TO WORSHIP VU 930C

**God of the heavens and the earth,
with joy we praise you,
we thank you, we honour you.**

**Because you have made us like yourself,
made us to be creative in your world,
we praise you.**

**Because you have freed us through Jesus
freed us to be people of light and love,
we thank you.**

**Because your Spirit is present with us,
present to guide and renew,
we honour you.**

**God of the heavens and the earth,
with joy we praise you,
we thank you, we honour you for ever. 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.”

✠ **OPENING HYMN** ‘Gather Us In’ (Lyrics on powerpoint)

✠ **OPENING PRAYER VU 908A**

Thanksgivings

Generous and loving God,
we thank you for your blessings without number.

We bless you for the beauty of creation;
for day and night, for summer and winter;
for sun and rain, for seed-time and harvest;
for your bounty supplying all our needs.

We bless you for protecting us in our weakness,
and renewing our strength of spirit;
for guiding us as we resist evil,
and calling us to your truth, and to your service.

We praise you for sending Jesus to be among us:
for his life on earth, his sufferings and death,
for his resurrection to new life, and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Grant, O God, that our hearts may grow in thankfulness

for these and all your gifts of grace,
so that as the people of new life, we may proclaim your praise;
in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Prayer of Confession VU 928B

Gracious God,
as people called to be your presence in the world,
we search our hearts, and ask your forgiveness:

for opportunities not taken,

for care not given,

forgive us, we pray.

For sorrow not shared,

for joy not celebrated,

forgive us, we pray.

For love not offered,

forgiveness not extended,

forgive us, we pray.

For those failings we cannot speak aloud,

forgive us, we pray.

Gracious God,
we seek your healing grace,
and ask forgiveness in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

Words of Assurance

Prayers of the People

THE LORD'S PRAYER

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 62:1-5

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised

The Vindication and Salvation of Zion

62 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.

2 The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the Lord will give.

3 You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

4 You shall no more be termed Forsaken,[a]
and your land shall no more be termed Desolate;[b]
but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her,[c]
and your land Married;[d]
for the Lord delights in you,
and your land shall be married.

5 For as a young man marries a young woman,
so shall your builder[e] marry you,
and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
so shall your God rejoice over you.

One: This is the witness of the Church.

All: Thanks be to God for the Word.

ANTHEM: We Are One

Psalm 36:5-10

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised

5 Your steadfast love, O Lord, extends to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the clouds.

6 Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains,
your judgements are like the great deep;
you save humans and animals alike, O Lord.

7 How precious is your steadfast love, O God!
All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

8 They feast on the abundance of your house,
and you give them drink from the river of your delights.

9 For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light we see light.

10 O continue your steadfast love to those who know you,
and your salvation to the upright of heart!

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised Spiritual Gifts

12 Now concerning spiritual gifts,[a] brothers and sisters,[b] I do not want you to be uninformed. 2 You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak. 3 Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says 'Let Jesus be cursed!' and no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit.

4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; 5 and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; 6 and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. 7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to

another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

One: This is the witness of the Church.

All: Thanks be to God for the Word.

John 2:1-11

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised

The Wedding at Cana

2 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. 2 Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. 3 When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' 4 And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' 5 His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' 6 Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. 7 Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. 8 He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. 9 When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom 10 and said to him, 'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.' 11 Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

One: This is the Good News of Jesus Christ.

All: Praise to Christ, the Living Word.

SERMON: He Gives Gifts Because He Loves Us

✝ **HYMN: VU 371** 'Open My Eyes, That I May See' (lyrics on powerpoint)

MINUTES FOR MISSION "Empowering Bold Leadership"

"I want The United Church of Canada to continue the policies, as well as the vision and the actions that make our slogan 'Bold Discipleship, Daring Justice, and Deep Spirituality' truly mean something."

These are words from Matthew Tyhurst, one of The United Church of Canada's Youth Forum Leadership Animators. More of Matthew's thoughts on the United Church's Centennial can be found on [YouTube](#). In July 2024, Matthew was one of eight passionate youth from across Canada who gathered in Calgary. Together, they worked to lay the foundation for 100 young people under the age of 30 to attend The United Church of Canada's General Council 45 in 2025, coinciding with the church's Centennial commemorations.

The group of talented and diverse youth are committed to developing leadership among their peers. After their time in Calgary, they returned to their local communities and regions to work on learning goals and projects for four weeks, but remain engaged throughout the year.

The group focused on building leadership and guiding their peers as they explore their roles in the church. Their placements in local and regional communities are designed to help them grow and prepare for the future.

Your gifts to [Mission and Service](#) support youth as they inspire communities and engage in leadership. Thank you.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

✝ **DOXOLOGY: VU 540** 'Grant Us, God, the Grace' (lyrics on power point)

† OFFERTORY PRAYER

† A NEW CREED (VU 918)

† Closing Hymn 'Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken' (Lyrics on powerpoint)

† BENEDICTION/COMMISSIONING

† CHORAL AMEN (VU 974)

† SENDING FORTH HYMN: VU 43 vs 1 'Go, Tell It on the Mountain'