

## **Westminster United Church**

February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025

✝ You are invited to stand as you are able

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS/LIFE AND WORK OF THE CHURCH**

#### **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

One: Greetings to our siblings in the faith

**All: We come to celebrate God's presence,**

One: and God's love expressed through Jesus Christ.

**All: we come remembering Christ's life and ministry,**

One: And the life we are called to live.

**All: we come as a pilgrim people searching for ways to live out our faith.**

One: We come seeking the strength to carry on our journey.

**All: let us rejoice in God's gift to us!**

## ✝ 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 MV 12** ‘Come Touch Our Hearts’ (Lyrics on powerpoint)

## **✝️ OPENING PRAYER**

God who has created and is creating all things, we come this day before you with all our thoughts, and worries, fears, regrets, and joys. Our minds are filled with the busyness of our lives, distracting us away from your call to live generous, abundant, radical lives.

Help clear our minds and hearts of the tumult around us, so that we may focus on the call to follow in the way of Jesus and his call to serve your people no matter how different they may be from ourselves.

Help us to remember that we are called not to live lives separate from each other but rather to lives of radical care, and hospitality for our community.

Hear our prayers this day as we share together the words that Jesus taught the early disciples...

## **Prayers of the People**

### **THE LORD’S PRAYER**

**HYMN MV 4** ‘All Who Are Thirsty’ (Lyrics on powerpoint)

**SUNG RESPONSE MV 104** ‘Know That God is Good’

## **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

O, God, open our hearts, minds, and souls to these ancient words of wisdom from the early church. **AMEN.**

## **SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Acts 4:31-33**

**New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised**

<sup>31</sup> When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness.

### **The Believers Share Their Possessions**

<sup>32</sup> Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. <sup>33</sup> With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

One: Here what the Spirit is saying to the church.

**All: Thanks be to God!**

**ANTHEM:** Be Still My Soul

**SERMON:** God's Call to Serve

✠ **HYMN: VU 603** 'In Loving Partnership We Come' (lyrics on powerpoint)

## **INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

✠ **DOXOLOGY: VU 537 Vs 2** 'Your Work, O God, Needs Many Hands' (lyrics on power point)

**✠OFFERTORY PRAYER**

**✠Closing Hymn VU 569 'You Call Us Out' (Lyrics on powerpoint)**

**✠BENEDICTION/COMMISSIONING**

**✠CHORAL AMEN (VU 974)**