

## **Westminster United Church**

February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

✝ You are invited to stand as you are able

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

#### **CELEBRATIONS**

#### **INTROIT (VU 258 VS 1) 'O World of God'**

#### **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**

Leader: Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,

**People: for his steadfast love endures forever.**

Leader: Give thanks to the God of gods,

**People: for his steadfast love endures forever.**

Leader: Give thanks to the Lord of lords,

**People: for his steadfast love endures forever.**

### ✝ **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 VU 315** 'Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty' (Lyrics on powerpoint)

✠ **OPENING PRAYER**

**Leader:** Lord God, We come before You with hearts overflowing with thanksgiving and praise. We are deeply grateful for Your countless blessings and unwavering love that sustain us each day. Psalm 136:1 declares, "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever."

**People:** May our worship today be a true reflection of our gratitude, honoring You with every word and deed. Let our expressions of thanks and praise rise like a sweet aroma to You, celebrating Your boundless goodness and faithfulness.

**Leader:** May we remain ever mindful of Your blessings and be inspired to live lives that continually give You glory. In Jesus' name, **Amen.**

**Prayer of Confession**

**Leader:** O Lord, you are our shepherd,

**People:** **And yet we want.**

**Leader:** We lie down when we could act,

**People:** **We stir the pot when we could offer peace,**

**Leader:** We wander tempting paths instead of following you.

**People:** **We see courage and comfort in earthly things rather than in you.**

**Leader:** We hate our enemies and refuse to break bread with them,

**People:** **We see scarcity even when you offer us abundance.**

**Leader:** We pray for forgiveness, for your goodness and mercy,

**People:** **So that we might dwell in You, in your grace, forever. Amen.**

(Beth Merrill Neel - Used with permission)

## **Words of Assurance**

### **Prayers of the People**

#### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

#### **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

#### **SCRIPTURE READINGS**

##### **Isaiah 6:1-8**

##### **New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised**

##### **A Vision of God in the Temple**

**6** In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. **2** Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. **3** And one called to another and said:

‘Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;  
the whole earth is full of his glory.’

**4** The pivots<sup>[a]</sup> on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. **5** And I said: ‘Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!’

**6** Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. **7** The seraph<sup>[b]</sup> touched my mouth with it and said: ‘Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.’ **8** Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I; send me!’

One: This is the Good News of Jesus Christ.

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

**Psalm 138 VU Page 860**

**Refrain: We worship in your holy place and praise you for your truth and grace.**

I praise you, O God, with all my heart;  
before the gods I will sing your praises.

I bow down toward your holy temple  
and praise your name for your love and faithfulness;  
for you have exalted your name  
and your word above everything.

On the day that I called, you answered me,  
and put new strength in my soul.

**Refrain: We worship in your holy place and praise you for your truth and grace.**

All earth's rulers shall praise you,  
when they hear the words of your mouth.

They shall sing of your ways, O God,  
sing that your glory is great.

For though you are high, you care for the lowly.

As for the proud, you humble them from afar.

**Refrain: We worship in your holy place and praise you for your truth and grace.**

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve me;  
you stretch out your hand against my enemies' rage;  
your powerful hand delivers me.

You will fulfil your purpose for me.

Your love, O God, is eternal.  
Do not leave unfinished the work of your hands.

**Refrain: We worship in your holy place and praise you for your truth and grace.**

One: These are the words of the ancient songwriters.

**All: Thanks be to God for the word.**

**ANTHEM:** Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)

**Luke 5:1-11**

**New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised  
Jesus Calls the First Disciples**

5 Once while Jesus<sup>[a]</sup> was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, <sup>2</sup> he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. <sup>3</sup> He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. <sup>4</sup> When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.' <sup>5</sup> Simon answered, 'Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.' <sup>6</sup> When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. <sup>7</sup> So they signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. <sup>8</sup> But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!' <sup>9</sup> For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; <sup>10</sup> and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then

Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.' <sup>11</sup> When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

One: This is the witness of the Church.

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

**SERMON:** Whom Shall I Send?

✠**HYMN: VU 563** 'Jesus, You Have Come to the Lakeshore' (lyrics on powerpoint)

### **MINUTES FOR MISSION "Farming Against The Odds"**

In the rugged hills of India's Badabasko village, Jaiprakash Paharia, a determined 60-year-old farmer, and his wife, Rami Paharin, have battled against nature's odds. Their land, stony and dependent on increasingly unpredictable rains, yielded meagre crops of maize, cowpea, pigeon pea, and sorghum each year. Their family had literally hit rock bottom.

Faced with declining harvests, they turned to goat rearing in search of a more sustainable livelihood. Left with no other choice, Jaiprakash invested all he had in what seemed to be a promising venture.

However, these efforts were marred by heartbreaking losses. Year after year, diseases claimed up to 20 of their precious goats, threatening their hope for a steady future once again. It was as if they were back at the foot of the hill; they were desperate.

As they were counting their losses, through Mission and Service partner Canadian Foodgrains Bank, member Tearfund Canada brought life-changing support to their village through The Evangelical Fellowship of India Commission on Relief (EFICOR). The project team provided thorough training on livestock management practices and taught about essential deworming and vaccinations to best sustain livestock.

Jaiprakash was skeptical at first about giving these treatments to his goats. However, as he learned how they could safeguard his livestock's health, he took on these practices graciously and achieved transformative results. For the first time since they had started keeping livestock, their goats remained healthy throughout the season, with zero losses! This newfound stability secured their livelihood and revitalized their hope for the future.

Jaiprakash and his family are endlessly thankful to Tearfund Canada and EFICOR for their radical support. Their training not only improved the health and well-being of their livestock but also equipped them with the tools and understanding to sustain themselves through future adversity.

Thank you for supporting our [Mission and Service partners](#) and people around the world, as they walk toward a more sustainable future.

## **INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

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

✝ **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

✝ **A NEW CREED (VU 918)**

✝ **Closing Hymn VU 894** 'Holy God, We Praise Thy Name' (Lyrics on powerpoint)

✝ **BENEDICTION/COMMISSIONING**

✝ **CHORAL AMEN (VU 974)**

✝ **SENDING FORTH HYMN: VU 424 vs 1** 'May the God of Hope Go with Us' (Lyrics on powerpoint)