

Westminster United Church

April 27th, 2025

✝ You are invited to stand as you are able

ANNOUNCEMENTS/LIFE AND WORK OF THE CHURCH

INTROIT (VU 186 VS 1) 'Now the Green Blade Rises'

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**

Psalm 29:1-2

Leader: Ascribe to the LORD, you heavenly beings,

People: ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

Leader: Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;

People: worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness.

✝ **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 173 'Thine Is the Glory' (Lyrics on powerpoint)**

✠OPENING PRAYER

Holy God,
You call us together
to reflect on your Word,
and our life in your world.
Be with us now
as we sing and pray together,
that we may hear your voice
and understand your way.
This we pray through
Jesus, the Christ. **AMEN.**

Prayer of Confession

Holy and gracious God,
gathered as your people responding to your call,
we confess
the self that is not aware of sinning;
the heart that is too hardened to repent;
the pride that dares not admit it is wrong;
the righteousness that knows no fault;
the callousness that has ceased to care;
the blindness that can see nothing but its own will.
God, in your healing love, forgive us;
through our Saviour, Jesus Christ. **AMEN.**

Words of Assurance

Prayers of the People

THE LORD'S PRAYER

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Acts 5:27-32

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised

²⁷ When they had brought them, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, ²⁸ saying, 'We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name,^[a] yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us.' ²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered, 'We must obey God rather than any human authority.'^[b] ³⁰ The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Saviour, so that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³² And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.'

One: This is the good news of Jesus Christ.

All: Praise to Christ, the living word.

Psalms 150

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised

Praise for God's Surpassing Greatness

¹ Praise the LORD!

Praise God in his sanctuary;

praise him in his mighty firmament!^[a]

² Praise him for his mighty deeds;

praise him according to his surpassing greatness!

³ Praise him with trumpet sound;

praise him with lute and harp!

⁴ Praise him with tambourine and dance;

praise him with strings and pipe!

⁵ Praise him with clanging cymbals;
praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
⁶ Let everything that breathes praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD!

One: These are the words of the ancient songwriters.

All: Thanks be to God for the word.

Revelation 1:4-8

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised

⁴ John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and freed^[a] us from our sins by his blood, ⁶ and made^[b] us to be a kingdom, priests serving^[c] his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

⁷ Look! He is coming with the clouds;
every eye will see him,
even those who pierced him;
and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail.

So it is to be. Amen.

⁸ 'I am the Alpha and the Omega', says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

One: This is the witness of the Church.

All: Thanks be to God for the Word.

John 20:19-31

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

Jesus and Thomas

²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin^[a]), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

²⁶ A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' ²⁸ Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' ²⁹ Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'

The Purpose of This Book

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹ But these are written so that you may come to believe^[b] that Jesus is the Messiah,^[c] the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

One: This is the good news of Jesus Christ.

All: Praise to Christ, the living word.

SERMON: “We Won’t, We Can’t Keep Silent”

✠HYMN: VU 412 ‘This Is the Day’ (lyrics on powerpoint)

MINUTES FOR MISSION

“Changing the Narrative: Young Voices for Climate Justice”

In 2024, Mission and Service partner the World Student Christian Federation Asia-Pacific collaborated with the Bangladesh Student Christian Movement on a workshop called “Youth Leading Change: Climate Justice through Cultural Movement.” Through discussions and activities, it aimed to raise awareness among young people about climate challenges and empower them to take local actions.

Over four days, 50 passionate students from various regions of Bangladesh came together to address the critical issue of climate change. They explored the severe impacts that climate change has on communities and livelihoods in Bangladesh, particularly the displacement caused by floods. Floods force families to migrate to Dhaka, now one of the world’s most densely populated cities.

The heart-wrenching stories of displaced families deeply resonated with the participants, igniting their determination to drive change.

Equipped with knowledge and tools, these young leaders are now poised to advocate for climate justice and inspire their communities.

Your generous support of [Mission and Service](#) helps make empowering work like this possible. Thank you.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

✠DOXOLOGY: VU 823 'Let Trumpets Sound' (lyrics on power point)

✠OFFERTORY PRAYER

✠A NEW CREED (VU 918)

✠CLOSING HYMN VU 189 'Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise' (Lyrics on powerpoint)

✠BENEDICTION/COMMISSIONING

✠CHORAL AMEN (VU 974)

✠SENDING FORTH HYMN VU 158 Vs. 1 'Christ Is Alive' (Lyrics on powerpoint)