



Camrose United Church
& Pioneer Pastoral Charge
Sunday June 20, 2021
Indigenous Day of Prayer

Candle Lighting

We light the Christ Candle, aware of God around, among, & within us. In a moment of silence, we prepare ourselves to celebrate God's presence in our community.

We gather as community acknowledging Our Kinship
Creator, we come together today as diverse, united peoples
to give thanks to you, Maker of Heaven and Earth.

**We come to listen, to learn, to sing and pray,
to consider our place in the order of things you
have created and are creating.**

It is right and good to give thanks for the land on which we
stand,

for this is wisdom we learn
from Indigenous peoples of this land—
that we are one with the earth,
its waters, air, animals, and plants.

**Such wisdom, our interdependence with all life,
is something too easy to forget in our busy lives!
It is a gift and a challenge to us to remember.**

And so we take time to remember the lands
on which we now live.

**Many of us have come from other places,
arriving from distant shores,
our families arriving years ago
or some of us more recently.
When settlers came, they were met by
others who were already here, already knew these
lands, already lived rich and full lives
based on ancient and proud cultures.**

This is the land we share

“Camrose United Church is located on land encompassed by Treaty 6, that was a traditional meeting grounds, gathering place, and travelling route to the Cree, Assiniboine, Ojibwa/Saulteaux (So-toe)/Anishinaabe, Inuit, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene (De-nay) and Nakota Sioux (Sue).

We acknowledge all the many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit whose footsteps have marked these lands for centuries and, as Treaty people, we affirm our commitment to the principles and actions of reconciliation.”

**For we are all kin in Christ, “All My Relations,”
with each other and this earth,
its waters, air, animals, and plants.**

♪ *Gathering Hymn* “Called by Earth and Sky” (MV 135)

Scripture (adapted from Psalm 62)

Be still my soul and wait for God:
from God comes my salvation.

God alone is my rock; I shall never be shaken.

On God rests our deliverance and our honour.

My mighty rock, my refuge, my strength is in God.

Trust in God at all times, O people.

In love, we pour out our hearts before the Lord our God.

Prayer of Approach

Holy One, you are our rock,

a foundation upon which we stand.

Fill our hearts now with joy at your deep, abiding presence.

Encourage us by the teachings of Christ to live with care and compassion for self, friend, and neighbour.

Bless us now as we reflect on our relations with Indigenous peoples—our kin—as diverse yet united peoples. Amen.

♪ **Hymn of Praise** “Like a Rock” (*More Voices* 92)

We Encounter Sacred Story

Scripture

Genesis 1:26–27 – Humans shall have “dominion”

King James Version

26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

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Common English Bible

26 Then God said, “Let us make humanity in our image to resemble us so that they may take charge of the fish of the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the earth, and all the crawling things on earth.”

27 God created humanity in God’s own image,
in the divine image God created them,
male and female God created them.

Inclusive Bible

Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, to be like us. Let them be stewards of the fish in the sea, the birds of the air, the cattle, the wild animals, and everything that crawls on the ground”

Humankind was created as God’s reflection; in the divine image God created them; female and male, God made them.

Matthew 22:34–40 – You shall love your neighbour as yourself

Common English Bible. Great commandment

34 When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had left the Sadducees speechless, they met together. 35 One of them, a legal expert, tested him. 36 “Teacher, what is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

37 He replied, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, and with all your mind. 38 This is the first and greatest commandment.

39 And the second is like it: You must love your neighbor as you love yourself.

40 All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands.”

Scripture is our song for the journey, the living word passed on from generation to generation to guide and inspire.

**God calls us to be doers of the word
and not hearers only.**

Meditation: “Finding Neighbours Everywhere”

Today's worship is inspired by a service that was provided to us by the United Church of Canada to honour and acknowledge a national Indigenous Day of Prayer.

It was probably written quite a while ago, before the revelation of the unmarked graves of 215 children at the Former Residential School in Kamloops, B.C., before we began a journey of uncovering that, in the three weeks since then, has found other gravesites at other former Residential Schools: 104 at Brandon, Manitoba; 35 in Muscowequan and Touchwood, Saskatchewan; 35 in Regina, Saskatchewan.

The truth and Reconciliation Commission's Missing Children project has identified 4,100 children, minimum, who died at Residential Schools. There are so many more to find.

Through the finding of these lost children many of us are becoming more aware of the atrocities that were perpetrated against Indigenous peoples and we need to recognize that the families of these children --- Siblings, Parents, Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, Cousins have been mourning them and searching for them for years.

This ongoing story is unfolding in ways that challenges all of us to examine how we are benefitting from the systems that took the lives of these children. We are being challenged to truly hear what we have been told before, to look for inequities in our systems and to raise our voices in solidarity with those who need us to recognize their pain and to help them stand up, valued, in society.

For this service, we were given a scripture reading from Genesis. This is a scripture that has caused much heartache over many generations because it has been used to excuse the use of power over people, creatures and places. I don't think it should ever have been used that way, but it was. We need to go back hear this story that we have heard before and consider what we are truly called to do.

We heard different translations of the same scripture. In the King James Version "man" was given "dominion" over the earth. Given Dominion over. That word is heavy with Colonial weight. I looked up it's definition in a few dictionaries. It implies control, it implies the ultimate authority, it implies ownership. All of those words encourage the thought that one group is more powerful than another, more important.

Is that, written in a patriarchal society, where we got the idea that there would always be 'winners' and 'losers' in God's world?

In The Common English Bible, written so that more people could understand the Bible and hear what God was asking of them, the word “man” was now “Humanity” and “Dominion” became “Take Charge of”. Now we have a recognition that people are more than a few... but still that ‘take charge’ is an invitation to have power over someone else. And, still, humanity isn’t always good at sharing, at recognizing that all the people and creatures are equal.

Then we heard from the “Inclusive Bible” of ‘Humankind’ of “Stewardship.” This language seems to imply togetherness and that the task is ‘caring for’. It reminds us that we are in this together and that humankind (which encompasses many generations) has the skills and the knowledge to care for all other creatures and creations that God has made.

As we grow as God’s people, we learn new things. We hear new stories, we experience the choices of good and bad. We recognize that what was once acceptable behaviour may not be anymore. We know that abusing people, creatures and the earth for the good of one group is detrimental to all of us. And just plain wrong. We know that we must move forward into creating a world that values all of its pieces, and works together to be the best we all can be.

The other scripture we were given for today is that one that is what everything is built on. The Great Commandments. In these wisdom words of Jesus, we are told to love God first -- because God, Creator, will guide us to make the right choices if we will listen. The second Great Commandment to “love your neighbour as yourself” is the one that tells us to do better, to be better. We’ve heard this a couple of times lately. We may need to hear it a few more.

Jesus follows this with a definition of neighbour in the story of the Good Samaritan which says even those we may consider our enemy, or different from us, that we judge as less than, are our neighbours and deserve to be cared for.

How do we want to be treated? Do we want our stories and experiences heard? Do we want others to change their behaviour so that we can all be safe and valued together?

As we saw in the scripture readings, our language changes to show that we can learn. In the changing words of our scriptures, we see a society that can recognize imbalances and, hopefully, will continue to work to correct them.

Right now, there are many neighbours who are hurting. Today, our Indigenous Neighbours are asking for our compassion and our voice to help them through their pain. They are asking us to live the words that speak of togetherness and caring.

Treating our Neighbours as we would want to be treated.
Caring for God's good earth
and everything that lives in it and on it.
This is our task.
We need to do this. We can do this. Together.

♪Hymn "As a Fire Is Meant for Burning" (VU 578)

The Offering:

Every week, we remind each other that we are in God's world together. We remind each other that naming that we are faithful people is a good start but it's not enough. We have to BE faithful. To do that means to look at our neighbours and to offer what we can to support them.

We may do that with prayers,
with words that say "I see you, I hear you",

we may do that with donations of time or funds to the church which help us be a *doing* presence in our community, we may do that be giving directly to those we know are hurting and healing such as: through a Donation to the

United Church's Healing Fund which focuses on supporting our Indigenous siblings connected to the Residential School tragedies.

Come and be neighbourly with me.

Let's offer our love to the world together.

M&S Video: The Healing Fund

Prayer of Dedication

From our Indigenous Siblings,

we learn that to receive a gift is to give a gift.

Their appreciation for the gifts of the land is show when they offer thanks for all they are given, as they receive them and as often as they receive them.

Holy God, Great Creator,

**We give you thanks for the gifts of the earth we share,
the neighbours who join us in the sharing
and the love you sustain all of us with.**

Bless the gifts we offer to you today.

**May they be used to support and share
with all of your children.**

Amen

♪ **Song of Praise** "Many and Great, O God, Are Your Works" (VU 308)

Prayers of the People

Creator God, Holy One,
the One who guides us and loves us,
we offer you gratitude for the many ways
that you teach us to care for each other.
We offer you gratitude for
the patience you share with us
in the teaching and teaching and teaching.

**Today we offer you prayers for this family of humanity
that continues to need
help to learn, listen and grow.**

We pray that our world and community leaders
will share honesty and compassion
with those who rely on them,
that they will take seriously
a commitment to take care of others, not themselves.

We pray for those who lead by example
giving their best so that others may live better, may live well

We offer our prayers for First Responders,
Health Care workers, Farmers, Cooks and Cleaners.

We pray for those who follow
that they will take seriously
the responsibility of discernment,
so that they will lift up those choices and decisions
that support, heal and love the world.

We pray for those who need healing.
Those whose collective memories bring pain
instead of solace.
Those who live with violence, or poverty, hunger or sickness.
Those who mourn the death of loved ones
where this is a new sorrow or a long-worn pain of the heart.

**May they feel your tears wash away their pain,
may they feel your compassion and love
surround them and hold them up.**

We pray for your earth.

This place of so many gifts and treasures
shared with us and so many more.

May our choices hold up your earth.

May we never forget that we are part of the balance
that is needed to hold the earth gently
so that it, and all it holds, may flourish and grow

We pray for ourselves.

**That we will be open to hear, and listen to,
the stories and voices of
the past, the present and the future.**

**That we will learn from both the good and the bad
so that we will live with our neighbours
in ways that bring us together, in love, with you.
Amen.**

Hymn “Though Ancient Walls” (VU 691)

Commissioning and Benediction

As God’s united yet diverse peoples,
we go to become neighbours to each other
and to the earth.

For in Christ we are all kin.

**We are called to be neighbours,
to share generously with each other.**

As we learn more, respect more, love more,
we all can gain, not lose!

God as Creator will be our rock.

Christ and Spirit be our guides.

Changing the Christ Candle:

The light of Christ, shining into all the corners of the earth, showing us where we are and where we are meant to be.

The Spirit of God. Breathe it in...and know that God is with us wherever we go.

Choral Benediction

“Praise with Joy the World’s Creator” (VU 312)

Acknowledgements

This service was inspired and created from the 2021 Indigenous Worship service provided by the United Church of Canada and written by Read Sherman, minister of Trinity United Church in Montreal who participates in right relations work in Conseil régional Nakonha:ka Regional Council.

Announcements

Camrose United Church

Top Sacred News:

The June volume is now available at the church or by email.

Summer worship

10 a.m. on July 18, 25 & August 15, 22, 29

Bring your own chair and coffee with you
to our outside Worship.

Rain will cancel the services.

How can you share your skills with the church?

Please contact the office if
you would like to offer your skills
for Council, as Rental Coordinator
or for any of our committees.

camroseunited@yahoo.ca

780-672-2176



Timothy Foster is the artist of the design we are using (with permission) as part of our acknowledge of National Indigenous Month And in remembering the children of Residential Schools and their families.

My name is Timothy Foster and I am Gitxsan from the house of Niisto in the Lax Seel clan.
I am honoured to have my design chosen for the 2020 Orange Shirt contest

This chosen design was actually a memorial piece I created not long ago in remembrance of my late wife and son whom I lost in a span of 6 years.

I thought it would be fitting to enter the design into the contest as my late wife and I both understood the importance of the orange shirt day and what it meant and how hard and difficult it is to change and rid our future generation of the vicious cycles residential schools created in our families.

She also always had a dream of opening a food bank in our community to help others in hardship and having this design represent such an important cause. I believe is very fitting as it will help bring awareness to Every Child Matters, which she had a deep and loving passion for, not only our children but for all families and their children as well.

Thank you and please stay safe.