

ST. DAVID'S UNITED CHURCH

SUNDAY OCTOBER 10 2021

Growing and Deepening our Spiritual Lives in an Affirming and Inclusive Community

Sacred Earth: Sacred Work
'Thanksgiving Sunday'

Lighting the Affirming and the Treaty 7/Metis Region 3 Candles
Introduction to Worship

Path I: Recognizing Inherent Goodness

The first path invites us to celebrate! The pulse of creation is singing the goodness of God and God's gift of goodness in all things. We become more aware of the beauty of all that is and tap into gratitude as our first task in creating more goodness in the world.

Gathering and Welcoming

God is good!
All the time!
And all the time!
God is good!

Indeed, on we gather to celebrate the presence of God within all created and evolving life.
I invite you.....

Hymn

- Now Thank We All Our God VU #236
- 1 Now thank we all our God, with heart, and hands, and voices,
who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices;
who from our mother's arms has blessed us on our way,
with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.
 - 2 O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,
and keep us strong in grace, and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ill in this world and the next.

Expanding Our Attention 360° (Call to Worship)

Gathering chant

(adapted from a Chant written by Phil Porter)

Gathered now in the mystery of this hour
Gathered now as one strong body
Gathered now in the struggle and the power

Spirit draw near
Expanding Our Attention 360°
(Call to Worship)

Directions Ritual (Leaders: Mike and Dianne Trew)

Let us face the east with arms outstretched and palms open to receive the blessings of the Spirit.

Oh Great Spirit of the East,.....Spirit of the East, may we give thanks for the light of each fresh rising and offer our praise to you.

We give thanks for new beginnings made possible by our Creator.

Let us face the south with arms outstretched and palms open to receive the blessings of the spirit.

Oh, Great Spirit of the South,Spirit of the South, may we always be open to the gift and the growth of your blessings.

We give thanks for the gifts God has given to us.
May we share them with energy and passion.

Let us face the West with arms outstretched and palms open to receive.

Oh Great Spirit of the West, Spirit of the West, we give thanks for the blessings of this season that we never forget, despite life's many challenges, that life is good, that You are present, and that strength and resilience empowers.

We give thanks for patterns letting go.

Let us face the north with arms outstretched and palms opened to receive the blessings of the Spirit.

Oh, Great Spirit of the North, we come to you Do not let the winter blow us away.

Oh, Spirit of Life, and Spirit of the North, we ask you for strength and for warmth.

Let us look up and raise our arms toward the heavens.

Oh Great Spirit of all that is Above.....Spirit of All that is Above, put us on the wings of spirit travel so that we may know this world.

Let us place our arms at our sides and look down at the earth.

Oh, Great Spirit of All that is Below, of all that pulls Spirit of All that is Below, purify us.

Lighting the Christ Candle

Our honoring of the directions this morning enables us to celebrate and deepen our bond with God as Spirit.

We are inspired by the waves of encouragement and whispers of possibilities the Spirit has given throughout time. It stirs our souls and moves us towards deeper connection to life. We have come to be moved once again.

Our honoring of the directions enabled us to celebrate and deepen our bond with God as Christ.

(Light the Christ Candle)

As we light the Christ Candle, we express our gratitude for the healing essence of Christ throughout creation. It has restored us from brokenness. It has brought reconciliation where we thought none was possible. It has restored relationship where we thought all was lost. We have come to be transformed.

As we worship together, we share the sacred love that surrounds us, the love that created us; the love that holds us together as one sacred family through the vast and eternal love of the Universal Christ.

Gathering chant

**Gathered now in the mystery of this hour
Gathered now as one strong body
Gathered now in the struggle and the power
Spirit draw near**

And all God's people said, "**Amen!**"

Praising

Made in the image of the Creator,capacity to benefit earth and all its creatures.

Hymn

For the Fruit of All Creation VU #227

- 1 For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God.
For the gifts to every nation, thanks be to God.
For the ploughing, sowing, reaping,
silent growth while we are sleeping,
future needs in earth's safekeeping, thanks be to God.
- 2 In the just reward of labour, God's will is done.
In the help we give our neighbour, God's will is done.
In our worldwide task of caring
for the hungry and despairing,
in the harvests we are sharing, God's will is done.
- 3 For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God.
For the good we all inherit, thanks be to God.
For the wonders that astound us,
for the truths that still confound us,
most of all that love has found us, thanks be to God.

Praying (Adapted)

(By Katrina Crosby from *Acorns and Archangels*)
God of Autumn,

Help us to be more like nature,
accepting the changing seasons;
Like the changing of the trees:
Not a dying as life sometimes feels,
But a stripping bare in preparation for inner growth,
Knowing that to shed the outer layers
Will reveal the strength that is hidden underneath.
**You are our strength,
You see our inner beauty.
You see beyond the human dressings
And cloth us in love.
We give thanks this day for our Creating Spirit
the surrounds and embraces and dwells amongst us
at all times, in all places, and in all hearts. Amen.**

Anthem

All People that on Earth do Dwell Tallis

Path II: Befriending the Dark Places

This second path recognizes with open hearts the pain that coexists with goodness and gratitude. We listen to the groans of the world and the Spirit helps us to grieve and to intercede on behalf of all those who suffer, letting go of our fear that can make things worse at times.

Listening

You are invited to settle yourselves for the depths of stillness and prayer with the sound of the singing bowl.

Letting Go and Holding with Love

(Prayers of the People interspersed with the Chant "Breathe in the Pain")

**Breathe in the pain
Breathe on out the love
May my heart be the place
Where this world is changed forever.**

God of all blessing, source of all life, giver of all grace...for the food and water
Of this earth, the love of family and friends.

WE GIVE THANKS

May we greet every gift of this day the clock and its deadlines, freed to experience each moment as precious, whatever fills that moment.

WE GIVE THANKS

In gratitude for all our blessings we reflect once again on our place in our communities and in this world... for companions, who share our burdens and daily tasks, for the many opportunities there are to be generous.

WE GIVE THANKS

Even during discouragement and pain..... create oppression and domination in all personal and global realities.

WE GIVE THANKS

As community, we remember
those we love; those we miss; those ill; those receiving chemotherapy and radiation; those
struggling with mental illness; those grieving; those angry and empty...

We lament

that we continue to grapple with the COVID pandemicof others as peacemakers and doers
of justice.
(*Silence*)

May our gratitude find expression in the care of others, both near and far; May we find ways to
live and grow on the margins; for your grace and one more experience of your presence.

Breathe in the pain

Breathe on out the love

May my heart be the place

Where this world is changed forever. *[repeat]*

Each week we say a different version of the prayer Jesus taught. This week we encounter a
version by Mark Berry, a young pastor of a church in the United Kingdom called, 'safespace.'

Let us pray together

O Breathing Life,

your Name shines everywhere!

Release a space to plant your Presence here.

Imagine your possibilities now.

Embody your desire in every light and form.

Grow through us this moment's bread and wisdom.

Untie the knots of failure binding us,

as we release the strands we hold of others' faults.

Help us not forget our Source,

Yet free us from not being in the Present.

From you arises every Vision, Power and Song

from gathering to gathering.

Amen written by Edmunds

Path III: Exclaiming the Divine Creative

*This third path creates space to explore how God is working in and through us and all of the
universe to renew each day every direction. Each moment offers opportunity to express our
God-gifted creativity. We hear messages—ancient and new—that express and affirm the Divine at
work and encourage us in our creative collaboration with the Divine.*

Bringing words of life

1 Timothy 4:4-5; Colossians 3:15-17;

Quote by Rabbi Harold Kushner

Quote by Thomas S. Monson, *An Attitude of Gratitude*

This is a Word of God.

Thanks be to God.

All creation is a word of God.

All creation speaks volumes of God.

Reflection” Expressions of Gratitude

Anthem

Praise the Lord, Ye Servants John Blow

Expressions of Gratitude

Hymn

God, Your Blessings Overflow! (Tune VU #81)
(Adapted from text by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette)

God, your blessings overflow!
What can we begin to say?
How can we begin to show
All our gratitude this day?
From the heart our thanks we sing
For the love we freely bring.

Thank you for the life we live
For our friends and family
For the land our earth does give
For your grace that sets us free.
Thank you, God, for daily bread,
And for feasts of joy we spread.

So with praise we gladly share
Acts of thanks to shape the day
Loving, serving, giving care,
Living well the Jesus way,
Spirit, may our lives express
All our daily thankfulness.

Path IV: Embodying Compassion and Power

The fourth path will lead us out. We pray for movement within our own hearts to embody peace and passion—compassion and power—on behalf of spreading goodness throughout the week. We are not at the mercy of “the way it is,” we can claim our agency to be fully present and fully active in the world into which we now go.

Offering

I have asked people to include in their worship space a special collection or offering dish. Each Sunday during the series I invite people to put something in that offering dish and at the end of the series to send your dedications offerings to St. David's. Thanks for your generosity.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

(adapted from Fyoder Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*)

God, may we love all creation,
all the earth
and every grain of sand in it.
**May we love every leaf,
every ray of your light.**

Love the animals, love the plants,
love each separate thing.

**If we love each thing
we will perceive your mystery in all;
And when once we perceive this,
we will henceforth grow everyday
to a fuller understanding of it:
until we come at last
to love the world
with a love that will then be
all-embracing and universal.**

This offering is an outward expression of our thanks. Amen.

Holding On and Go for it! (Spiritual Practice)

Benediction

Benediction Song VU #884

"You Shall Go Out with Joy"

**You shall go out with joy
And be led forth with peace.
The mountains and the hills will break forth before you.
There'll be shouts of joy
And the trees of the fields
will clap, will clap their hands.**

**And the trees of the fields will clap their hands,
the trees of the fields will clap their hands,
the trees of the fields will clap their hands,
While you go out with joy.**