

ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH

June 18, 2023

Pentecost 3, National Indigenous Day of Prayer Sunday

Welcome to Worship

Join us Sunday evening for a Zoom Virtual Coffee Time at 7:00 p.m.

Email smiletoday9@proton.me to get the Zoom link.

Prelude

Opening Hymn: MV 135 *Called by Earth & Sky*

Called by earth and sky, promise of hope held high.

**This is our sacred living trust, treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.**

**1. Precious these waters, endless seas, deep ocean's dream,
waters of healing, rivers of rain, the wash of love again.**

Called by earth and sky, promise of hope held high.

**This is our sacred living trust, treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.**

**2. Precious this gift, the air we breathe; wind born and free.
Breath of the Spirit, blow through this place,
our gathering and our grace.**

Called by earth and sky, promise of hope held high.

**This is our sacred living trust, treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.**

**3. Precious these mountains, ancient sands; vast fragile land.
Seeds of our waking, rooted and strong, Creation's faithful song.**

Called by earth and sky, promise of hope held high.

**This is our sacred living trust, treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.**

**4. Precious the fire that lights our way, bright dawning day.
Fire of passion, sorrows undone, our faith and justice one.**

Called by earth and sky, promise of hope held high.

**This is our sacred living trust, treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.**

Welcome and Announcements

Welcome to St. Andrew's on this Sunday when we Celebrate the Opportunity given us by the Indigenous Church, an invitation to give thanks for the spirituality and reverence for Creation taught to the Church that has been practiced on this land for millennia.

Soon after this service there will be a special showing of a documentary sponsored by our neighbours at St. Peter's United Church. It is called "1946: The Mistranslation that Shifted Culture." It will be shown at the Sudbury Indie Cinema (162 Mackenzie Street) at 1:00 this afternoon. This film is a feature documentary that follows the story of tireless researchers who trace the origins of the anti-gay movement among Christians to a grave mistranslation of the Bible in 1946. Biblical Literalism says, "While other documentaries have been successful in their attempts to treat the symptom of homophobia in the church, "1946" is working to diagnose and treat the disease."

Social Hour on Zoom every Sunday night at 7pm. To get your Zoom link, email Diane. Her email is in the credits at the end of this worship service, and on the YouTube page you are looking at if you are worshipping from home. The link was also sent with NEWS on Thursday.

Inviting Holy Light

We light this candle in recognition of this world, particularly this area of earth called Turtle Island, which was created by God before human time began.

In every moment, Christ's light shines over this land where we are thankful to live. Amen.

[light candle]

Sung Response: MV 137 *Welcome, Jesus, You Are Welcome*, vs. 4

4. Welcome, Jesus, you are welcome; let your loving light appear.

In our seeing, in our being, Jesus, you are welcome here.

Nurturing Safe Space

Every one of us is welcome in this space. We are blessed as a community, to be created in our diversity of ages, skin colours, sexual identity, gender, all the diverse ways in which our minds understand our world, all of us are beloved children of God, and we are welcome.

Acknowledging Traditional Territory

Regardless of where we come from, we are all interconnected through the land that we live on, water that we use, and air that we breathe. Generous Creator God, let us celebrate the abundance of this land bursting with new life. Let us feel the cold waters gushing with promises. Let us experience the expanse of sky enfolding us in your love. Abundant Creator God we remember the ones who have cared for this land for millennia, where St. Andrew's worships, those of the Wahnapitaeping, the Wahnapitae First Nation and the Atikameksheng Anishinawbek. They have lived lightly and with respect upon this land, a territory upon which we now live and worship together. Generous God, help us on the journey to reconciliation with the land, the water, and the air, and among the people. Amen.

Call to Worship

We open ourselves to the One who gave us life. We bring ourselves before God our Creator:

Settlers, newer immigrants, and First Peoples: pilgrims all.

We come to pray, to sing, to dance with God's Spirit.

Learners of the sacred dance, we come seeking your sacred rhythm.

Come, followers of Jesus, people of God.

We come in humility and with sincere hearts.

Let us worship God, who is the centre of our circle, the source of reconciling love.

We are called: to worship, to give thanks and praise,

And to ever widen that circle to welcome and pray for all Creation.

Opening Prayer

Creator, we give thanks for the knowledge you give to us through all the traditions of the world.

Help us to honour the gifts that each tradition offers. Miigwech.

We seek to take the path of love.

We give thanks for the east, for the sun that rises to begin each new day. We give thanks for new life, for youth. We give thanks for new learning and new experiences. Miigwech.

We seek to take the path of love.

We give thanks for the south, for the growth of the summertime in our lives, for the teachings to be kind to ourselves and others. Help us, who are elders, love and respect children and youth. Help us to care for the elderly and those who cannot care for themselves. Miigwech.

We seek to take the path of love.

We give thanks for the west, for the understanding of how to care for the earth. Creator, help us to use this understanding to bring joy and new life to the world. Miigwech.

We seek to take the path of love.

We give thanks for the north. Help us to receive gifts of wisdom and new perspectives from all peoples. Help us to grow our roots of compassion deeper as we journey.

Together we will take the path of love for ourselves and for each other. Amen.

We pray this, along with the more recent version of the Prayer that Jesus taught:

The Prayer that Jesus Taught

Heavenly Father, heavenly Mother, Holy and blessed is your true name. We pray for your reign of peace to come, we pray that your good will be done, let heaven and earth become one. Give us this day the bread we need, give it to those who have none. Let forgiveness flow like a river between us, from each one to each one. Lead us to holy innocence beyond the evil of our days — Come swiftly Mother, Father, come. For yours is the power and the glory and the mercy: Forever your name is All in One. Amen.

Hymn: VU 307 *Touch the Earth Lightly*, vs. 1

**1. Touch the earth lightly, use the earth gently,
nourish the life of the world in our care:
gift of great wonder, ours to surrender,
trust for the children tomorrow will bear.**

Time Up Front: Pow Wows

Pow Wows are a celebration of First Nations heritage and culture. They sing, they dance. It starts with the drum – the beat and the singing. Different types of dancers wear different regalia. There is so much to learn about Indigenous culture. Has anyone been to a Pow Wow? What was it like?

If we don't know much about First Nations culture and music and dance, then there are a lot of things we can do to learn. If we already know some things about Indigenous culture, we STILL can do some fun things this summer...

What Can We Do to Celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day?

1. Subscribe to the Canadian Shield Regional Council weekly email newsletter "Indigenous History Month" by summer intern Hannah McCallum
 - *Contact Alison in our office to find out how*
2. June 21 - National Indigenous Peoples Day at Science North
 - Family-friendly events happening all day
 - Indigenous vendors set up in the lobby
 - Knowledge sharing activities
 - Special movie in the afternoon in the Planetarium
 - At 6pm, Ojibwe storyteller takes us on a guided walk of the Giizhigoong Etegin Miikaanah (Solar System Path)
 - Special food, too! Fish & Chips and Three Sisters Soup
3. Find a Pow Wow near you:
 - June 21, 1:00 pm: Mini Pow Wow hosted by N'Swakamok Native Friendship Centre, at Bell Park. Grand Entrance at 1 p.m. This one won't have craft booths or food vendors.
 - August 5-7: Wiikwemkoong Annual Cultural Festival Pow Wow, Manitoulin Island. Admission fee, but there is free admission for children under 6 and elders over 65.
 - August 6-7: Serpent River First Nation Pow Wow returns after 2 years. Grand Entry Noon both days.
 - August 19-20: Whitefish River First Nation Annual Pow Wow. It is a beautiful drive there on Highway 6, just north of Little Current.
 - August 19-20: Annual Traditional Pow Wow at Wahnapiitae First Nation.

This is a repeat after me prayer:

Creator God, thank you for the trees... Thank you for the earth... and the plants...and the creepy crawly creatures... Thank you for the animals big and small... Thank you for flowers and sunshine and air... Help us to take care of this earth...because we are creatures too... Thank you for all that

we can learn...about First Nations culture... Wow, this is a diverse world... Miigwech. That means, "thank you" in Ojibwe... Miigwech, God. Amen.

Hymn: VU 307 *Touch the Earth Lightly, vs. 4*

**4. God of all living, God of all loving,
God of the seedling, the snow and the sun,
teach us, deflect us, Christ reconnect us,
using us gently and making us one.**

Scripture Reading (Debby Laporte)

Let us pray: Amid the distractions of our times, give us undivided hearts and attentive minds, O God. Help us discern your wisdom in the scriptures, so that we may follow Christ, your living Word.

Matthew 19:16–22

In this story from Matthew, Jesus encounters a privileged young man. Is there any way in which we can relate to the struggle he faces?

...a man stopped Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?"

Jesus said, "Why do you question me about what's good? God is the One who is good. If you want to enter the life of God, just do what he tells you."

The man asked, "What in particular?"

Jesus said, "Don't murder, don't commit adultery, don't steal, don't lie, honor your father and mother, and love your neighbor as you do yourself."

The young man said, "I've done all that. What's left?"

"If you want to give it all you've got," Jesus replied, "go sell your possessions; give everything to the poor. All your wealth will then be in heaven. Then come follow me."

That was the last thing the young man expected to hear. And so, crestfallen, he walked away. He was holding on tight to a lot of things, and he couldn't bear to let go.

Contemporary Wisdom, from Richard Wagamese

The small meditations in this book come from my early mornings at that living room table. Later, at the desk in my writing space, I write the meditations as they come to me, before turning to the writing that is my life and passion and career. A meditation doesn't come every morning. Sometimes one doesn't arrive for days. But when my connection to those things on the table has been strongest, when I have been joined to those things completely, the meditations rise unbidden and form themselves on the page almost as if I were taking dictation. I believe they have been conjured in me. Everything I have come to know and rely upon as centring, spiritual, real and valid has its place on that table in my living room. The table is like my life: dented, scarred, battered and worn, but rich and full nonetheless, and singing its histories. In that way, mornings themselves have become my table. Enveloped in Ojibway ceremony, protocol and ritual, ringed by strong words on faith, love, resilience, mindfulness and calm, I reclaim myself each morning. I walk out into the world in a position of balance, ready to do what Creator asks of me that day.

Will you pray with me? God of compassion and mercy, strengthen our resolve to say yes to your call to love as you have loved us. Send us from relationships of care and compassion to all who live in need, following the example of Jesus. Amen.

Message: "The Possibility of New Beginnings"

I imagine that most of us have experienced new beginnings in our lives, whether it is a new job, a new relationship, a new home, a new neighbour. These new beginnings can be filled with joy and excitement. However, they are frequently accompanied by feelings of uncertainty and anxiety.

And so it is with the readings this morning... Wisdom, discernment, and unsettling are all themes that these readings explore. What insights might they offer us at this time?

Our gospel reading from Matthew is about a young man who comes to Jesus seeking the answer to how he might have “a perfect” and “eternal” life. Jesus’ instructions are pretty explicit to him: “Go and sell your possessions, give your money to those who are poor, and then come follow me.” In other words, to build a new life, this young man must give up what is familiar and comforting to him. I suspect that Jesus’s answer “unsettles” him. This new path means letting go of the young man’s current identity and wealth. The reading tells us that he walked away from Jesus grieving, for he had many possessions. It appeared that for him the lure of a new life was not enough compensation for the sacrifices he would have to make.

Perhaps the young man might serve as a metaphor for us given this time in our own history and story as The United Church of Canada. We are indeed in some “unsettling” and “interesting” times that involve letting go and opening up to new possibilities.

In 2022, the 44th General Council of the United Church gathered. At that gathering, the National Indigenous Council proposed that the church identify and remove any structural barriers that would prevent developing and sustaining an autonomous National Indigenous Organization within The United Church of Canada.

When there is a requested change in church structure that alters the Basis of Union of The Manual, a remit is required. The 44th General Council authorized the remit to test the will of the church on this requested change. The remit requires a vote by every regional council and each pastoral charge’s governing body.

If the remit is passed it will:

- enable the Indigenous Church to determine its place and structure within the United Church, and
- enable the creation of an autonomous National Indigenous Organization within The United Church of Canada

Indigenous Peoples’ rights to their own spiritual identities and to self-determination would be acknowledged by the passing of the remit and would be consistent with the Calls to the Church and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Like the young man in the story from Matthew, all sorts of new possibilities and opportunities are in front of us, accompanied as well by uncertainty and questions.

Some questions we might ask:

- Are we willing to sacrifice what is familiar to us for the possibility of a new story?
- Are we prepared to create space and time for the Indigenous Church to discern their own story?
- Are we willing to dismantle the structure of the church as we know it and await the birthing of something new?
- What will that new structure look like?

Unlike the rich young man, we don’t have Jesus telling us what our options are. The path to our new beginning is less obvious and a little less certain. Will we accept this invitation to a new life, or will we be like the young man and walk away?

We need to seek wisdom and understanding. Maybe this is a *kairos* moment for us—a time for us to contemplate and invite renewal not only for the Indigenous Church but for us as well. Maybe this is the time for us to trust that there will be uncertainty, but collectively we believe we can forge a new future. We proclaim to be a church with a commitment to seek justice. Perhaps this is one more invitation to live into that commitment.

So, today on this Indigenous Day of Prayer, may we be unlike that wealthy young man. May we respond more like Solomon. May we be wise and understanding people of faith with hearts open to

the uncertainty of change. Whatever unfolds in the future, we welcome the promise of new possibilities and trust that we will find our way. Amen.

Choir Anthem: MV 39 *Mother Earth, Our Mother Birthing*

Mother Earth, our Mother birthing
ev'ry creature from the ground.
Jesus too was flesh and breathing,
kin to all that's green and brown.

Celebrate with all creation:
God has formed the web of life;
Celebrate with all creation:
God has formed the web of life.

2. Sister Air, our Sister lifting
ev'ry creature born with wings;
Jesus shared the breath of forests,
breath that makes our spirit sing.

Celebrate with all creation:
God has formed the web of life;
Celebrate with all creation:
God has formed the web of life.

3. Brother Water, Brother pulsing
deep through ev'ry vein and sea,
Jesus drank the very raindrops
for our wine and in our tea.

Celebrate with all creation:
God has formed the web of life;
Celebrate with all creation:
God has formed the web of life.

4. Father Fire, our Father burning
with the sacred urge to live.
Jesus' death completes the circle,
brining life beyond the grave.

Celebrate with all creation:
God has formed the web of life;
Celebrate with all creation:
God has formed the web of life.

Mission for Right Relations

Moderator's Message for National Indigenous Peoples Day 2023

Greetings. I am the Right Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne, Moderator of The United Church of Canada.

June 21 is National Indigenous Peoples' Day, a day to recognize the unique heritage and diverse cultures of Indigenous Peoples across the country, from coast to coast to coast.

While on Truth and Reconciliation Day in September we recognize and commemorate the challenges and realities of our colonized and colonizing history in Canada, National Indigenous Peoples Day is a time of celebration to recognize and lift up the resilience of Indigenous people and communities, and to celebrate what we have to share with the rest of the country.

This year, I was invited to attend the National "Indspire" Awards, where I learned about so many inspiring Indigenous leaders who work and lead in many different sectors across the country.

There are a number of things you can do to celebrate or recognize this day:

- Attend a local celebration or cultural event; plan to attend with family, friends, or colleagues.
- Spend the day exploring the Indigenous heritage of the place where you work or live.
- Learn to introduce yourself in the Indigenous language or languages from where you live or work.
- Add to the Indigenous economy—support Indigenous businesses by shopping or dining in Indigenous-owned stores and restaurants (actually, this one you should do year-round).
- Support Indigenous programs through our Gifts with Vision partnerships. You can learn more at giftswithvision.ca.
- Listen to Indigenous music.
- Visit an art gallery or museum with a show curated by Indigenous Peoples.
- Read a book—fiction, nonfiction, or poetry—by an Indigenous author.
- Watch a movie or TV show featuring Indigenous direction, screenwriting, and acting.

Take time to share with others what National Indigenous Peoples Day is and how they can join you in the celebration. I know that many communities of faith have Reconciliation Matters committees, which is a great place to build community and discuss the ways in which you engaged with Indigenous culture this National Indigenous Peoples Day. Walis Gayasixa.

Offering Moment

God's Spirit equips Jesus' followers to bring healing and hope to the world God loves. The gifts we offer God are tangible signs of that healing and hope at work in us and through us, in the Spirit of Jesus.

Dedication Hymn: VU 542 *We Give You But Our Own*

**We give you but your own, whate'er the gift may be;
all that we have is yours alone, we give it gratefully.**

Dedication Prayer

God of grace and goodness, your world is full of gifts that sustain our lives. We offer our gifts in gratitude. Bless them and make them signs of your presence at work in the world, touching lives in need with your love and strength in Jesus' name. Amen.

Prayers of Community

Creator... Quiet our hearts. Still our busy minds that we may know your voice.

This morning we give thanks for the beginning of summer—warmer weather, time for a break from our regular routines, the sounds of children playing outside, the abundance of nature and all that it offers to refresh our spirits.

We give thanks for the presence of the members of the Indigenous Church. We are grateful to them for the courage they have modelled in asking for what they need to continue their journeys of healing and rediscovery.

We remember as well, those individuals and families here at St. Andrew's and outside this community who are in need of healing and support. May their spirits be lifted. We acknowledge all the people, near and far in need of your comfort, love and healing. *[silence]*

Now, we bring before you the names and situations of joy and celebration, giving thanks to you for all the blessings. In quiet we offer those grateful thoughts. *[silence]*

We offer now, O God, the deep yearnings of our hearts...those places and situations where we need your guidance and your presence in our own lives and in the lives of the larger community...

Spirit of our yesterdays, our todays, and our tomorrows, you make all things new. Transform us during this time of transition—may each of us be wise as we consider the ask of the Indigenous Church, an ask that seeks to build a new relationship—a relationship based on mutual respect, shared hope, and better understanding. Amen.

Closing Hymn: MV 144 *Like a Healing Stream*

**1. Like a healing stream in a barren desert,
Spirit water bringing life to dusty earth,
God is trickling through our lives as in a dream unfolding,
promising revival and rebirth...
like a healing stream.**

**2. Like a gentle rain on a thirsty garden,
Spirit water come to nourish tiny seed,
God is bubbling through the soil to coax a new creation,
yearning for an end to want and need...
like a gentle rain.**

**3. Like a river strong with a restless current,
Spirit water rushing on to distant shore,
God is carving out a channel in a new direction,
calling for an end to hate and war...
like a river strong.**

**4. Like a mighty sea reaching far horizons,
Spirit water with a love both deep and wide,
God is working in our hearts to shape a new tomorrow:
God will always challenge and provide!
Like a mighty sea, like a river strong,
like a gentle rain, like a healing stream.**

Blessing

Wherever you and I journey this week: let us be a message of justice and love; let us listen to the voices of others – especially those who are new to our table and spaces; let us encourage others with patience; and let us live our lives joyfully.

As we leave this time and place, let us remember; we were created to live out justice, compassion and love. In all that we do, we are not alone. God is with us. Amen.

Blessing Hymn: VU 424 *May the God of Hope Go with You*

**1. May the God of hope go with us every day,
filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.
May the God of justice speed us on our way,
bringing light and hope to every land and race.**

**Praying, let us work for peace,
singing, share our joy with all,
working for a world that's new,
faithful when we hear Christ's call.**

**2. May the God of healing free the earth from fear,
freeing us for peace, both treasured and pursued.
May the God of love keep our commitment clear
to a world restored, to human life renewed.**

**Praying, let us work for peace,
singing, share our joy with all,
working for a world that's new,
faithful when we hear Christ's call.**

Postlude

The **Scriptures** and **Message** of today's liturgy were inspired by Debbie Hubbard, *The Possibility of New Beginnings Worship Service for Indigenous Day of Prayer 2023*. © 2023 The United Church of Canada/L'Église Unie du Canada. Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution Non-commercial Share Alike Licence. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.5/ca>.

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