

Immanuel United Church
Fourth Sunday of Lent
March 19th, 2023

PRELUDE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE LAND AND TREATIES

Today, we acknowledge the land that we are gathered on is Treaty 1 territory..... the traditional lands of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, and Dakota Peoples, as well as the homeland and the heart of the Metis Nation, who for thousands of years, walked gently on this land with deeply rooted gifts of spirituality, culture and ways of knowing.

We respect the Treaties that were made on these territories, acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and give thanks for the connection we share with this land – in times past and also in the present day.

Today we are called to seek a new relationship as Indigenous and non-indigenous people, creating one based on friendship, built on respect, and one that produces peace, remembering that we are all treaty people.

***As we enter this time of worship,
we acknowledge the Christ candle, marking the presence of light in our midst,
and the Rainbow Candle, symbolizing that we are an inclusive and affirming
community, and all belong here.***

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LESSON FROM THE WILDERNESS

This is the fourth week of our Lenten words lessons on the theme of Lessons from the Wilderness. Each week, we have a word that is inspired by the story and we will try to see how with the help of Jesus' teaching, we can change the word into something more positive and beneficial for ourselves and our world.

Our first word this week is Isolation. After the last 3 years of the pandemic, all of us know a little something about isolation. Do you remember the feeling of being trapped in your home, unable to see your family and friends for weeks or months at a time? Do you remember that feeling of uncertainty – of never knowing when or if your isolation would end? It wasn't a fun time was it?

Connection was what everybody missed during that time. Even though we could see and talk to people through technology such as Zoom, it was just not the same as seeing someone face to face. It was not the same as being able to have a conversation with 2 or 3 other people. We crave connection to other people but we also crave connection to God. Through his ministry, Jesus offered us a way to further this connection. Being together as a community of faith can strengthen our connections to each other and to God.

Let us pray:

Holy One

During this time of Lent, open our eyes and hearts to your beautiful world that surrounds us. Help us to trust that following your way is the path that best serves us and others. Lead us as we venture into the unknown. Help us to continue in the spirit of inclusivity that you modeled for us. Strengthen our connection to you and to others.

Amen

HYMN: VU# 642 Be Thou My Vision

MOMENT TO PONDER:

HYMN: VU# 748 God Is My Shepherd

SCRIPTURE:

John 4:1-41

THE CHOIR ANTHEM: "You Know I Am Always With You"

REFLECTION:

HYMN: VU# 121 Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery (vss. 1,3,4,5, 4th Sunday)

OFFERING INVITATION AND PRAYER

Is our offering an investment in hope for a future we don't yet see?

Is our generosity a tithe of blessings already received?

Is our sharing just that, a just distribution of the abundance that has found us?

Whatever our motivation, let us give gratefully and share God's Love generously!

Amen

DOXOLOGY VU#541 Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow

Let us Pray:

Creator, God, bless what we offer,

Gifts shared, Lives given in service, hands and feet dedicated,

Community of Faith inspired, to make the world a place of Hope and Joy.

AMEN

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN: VU#87 I Am the Light of the World

Blessing

Choral Amen

Postlude