

Immanuel United Church
Third Sunday of Lent
March 12, 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

GREETING

There is an important story in today's Gospel:
A meeting between Jesus and a woman of Samaria.
Each offers something to the other -
and a barrier of exclusion comes down.

Let us prepare ourselves to break down barriers that exist in our time, in our world.

HYMN: VU#222 Come, Let Us Sing

OPENING PRAYER

Sometimes there are barriers in our lives. We are thirsty, but we cannot reach the well.

Exclusion is all around, and we don't know how to include.

*In this time of worship, may we be filled
with waters of love:
that hurts may be healed,
that justice may flow like living streams,
that peace may fill all hearts,
that all may have life. Amen.*

LESSONS FROM THE WILDERNESS

This is the third 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 Exclusion. Sometimes, through our actions or words, we exclude people. It is tempting to stick with the familiar and who and what we know rather than opening ourselves to someone or something new. Sometimes we assume that others know how things are done or what something means but because they have a different background or different story, they don't. Then others feel excluded and unwanted. Exclusion leads to a feeling of being alone and isolated.

Jesus didn't exclude people. He was known for including outcasts and those marginalized by society: the afflicted, the poor, the "others" like the Samaritans. The gospels tell us that Jesus had dealings with all kinds of people and sought to include everyone in his ministry. Being inclusive leads to growth and the feeling of belonging. As part of our ministry we are striving to be inclusive and open and by looking towards Jesus, we have a model to follow.

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. Amen

HYMN: MV# 173 Put Peace Into Each Other's Hands

SCRIPTURE:

John 4:5-42

CHOIR ANTHEM: Shine, Jesus, Shine

SERMON:

HYMN: MV#169 When Hands Reach Out Beyond Divides

OFFERING: MV#182 Grateful (Chorus)

OFFERING PRAYER

May the gifts of our hearts, the offerings of our actions, the donations of our money and all that we give, be used to bring healing and hope to our world. May they contribute to the taking down of harmful barriers that separate people and nations. May they truly be gifts of love and joy. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE COMMUNITY

PRAYER OF JESUS

HYMN: MV#145 Draw the Circle Wide

BLESSING

CHORAL AMEN

POSTLUDE