

**Immanuel United Church**  
**January 21, 2024**  
**Stewardship Season**

**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 Red River Metis People, 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 nonindigenous 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,*

*The rainbow candle is lit*

*To symbolize and remind us*

*Of the commitment that we have made To be an inclusive and affirming community and that all God's people belong here. And the Christ candle is present pointing to the presence of God's spirit guiding our lives always.*

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**OPENING STATEMENT AND PRAYER**

This week our community is grieving. We have said farewell to Kerry LaRocque, and Neil Barbour, and many of us have experienced other losses among our friends and family. During this stewardship season, and when we hear stories of Jesus gathering disciples and creating a community, we are reminded that human beings are the greatest resource we have. Though we can never replace the ones we have loved and who have died, it is good for us to create space for new partnerships, and to make room for new people in our community.

Let us pray:

**Creator, may we learn from one another the power of friendship and caring. May we learn the importance of partnership and the value of each person's gifts. May we live what we profess,**

**that we are not alone but part of a web of life and love. Guide us as we become disciples and make a difference in the world. In Jesus name we pray.**

**AMEN**

**Hymn : VU# 603 In Loving Partnership**

**MOMENT TO PONDER:**

“Telling Our Faith Stories”

Ancient Hebrew herders would gather at night around a fire and tell stories. Often they were stories about their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Stories about how Abraham was promised a land by God, and the improbable, perhaps miraculous way that that promise was fulfilled when the Hebrew people took possession of the land of Israel.

Hundreds of years later small gatherings of people, out of sight of the Roman occupiers, met on the first day of the week and told stories about John the Baptist, and Jesus and his disciples, and the way his teaching had changed their understanding of the way the world worked.

Thousands of kilometers away, the hunters and warriors of the Plains Cree would gather around a fire and tell stories. They were stories passed on from their ancestors about how human community was rooted in the land and connected with its other inhabitants. Stories, too about the changing of the seasons, and the ceremonies that marked the movements of the sun and moon.

Weeks like these when we remember friends who have died, give us an opportunity to relive our own stories, reaffirm what is important to us, and raise again the values and dreams that have shaped our past, and will be part of our future.

**HYMN: MV# 135 Called By Earth and Sky**

**SCRIPTURE:**

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Mark 1:14-20

**CHOIR ANTHEM: “Come Follow Me”**

**REFLECTION:**

**HYMN: VU # 563 Jesus You Have Come to the Lakeshore**

**OFFERING INVITATION AND PRAYER**

There is a Spirit that moves in our midst inviting us to share who we are and what we have. Let us take a moment to indulge that spirit and open ourselves to offer what we are able.

Doxology **MV# 182 Grateful (chorus)**

**Let us Pray:**

**Holy One, bless the gifts we share and the hope we hold so our community and world might be transformed by your Grace.**

**AMEN**

**COMMUNITY PRAYERS**

**LORD'S PRAYER (sung)**

**VU# 959**

**HYMN: VU# 595 We Are Pilgrims**

**BLESSING**

**CHORAL AMEN**

A-a-men, A-a-men, Hallelujah A-a-men!

**POSTLUDE**