National Indigenous People’s Day Service

*This service has been prepared for use within within Indigenous Communities of Faith. It includes spiritual practices (such as smudging) that should not be appropriated by non-Indigenous Communities of Faith, but its prayers and teachings are for all.*

*This service was prepared by the Rev. Agnes Melinda Spence. Agnes is from Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (Where Three Rivers Meet), also known as Nelson House, Manitoba. She is an ordained minister with the United Church of Canada, and ministers with both Traditional Bundle and Bible together. Currently, she has a shared ministry with Nelson House United Church and Thompson Outreach, and provides ministry supervision and sacrament support for South Indian Lake.*

# Words of Welcome

I want to thank Creator God for allowing me to be here with you today.

I welcome you all and

I greet you all in the Name of the Father,

In the Name of the Son

And the Holy Spirit

Ke tatamiskati nawaw

Owitho weinihk We yohtawehk,

Mina Jesus Okosisihk,

Mina Kenatisit Ahchahk.

Mamawe Tawaw Kahkethow Ohchi.

We have gathered here today to celebrate this beautiful day.

Today is a special Sunday, the Xtra, double special Sunday in which we celebrate Indigenous day of prayer which will be June 21, 2025. So this Sunday we will celebrate the special day and also celebrating Trinity Sunday which is which falls in our church lectionary calendar.

# Affirmation of Faith

A New Creed

**We are not alone,**

**we live in God’s world.**

**We believe in God:**

**who has created and is creating,**

**who has come in Jesus,**

**the Word made flesh,**

**to reconcile and make new,**

**who works in us and others**

**by the Spirit.**

**We trust in God.**

**We are called to be the Church:**

**to celebrate God’s presence,**

**to live with respect in Creation,**

**to love and serve others,**

**to seek justice and resist evil,**

**to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,**

**our judge and our hope.**

**In life, in death, in life beyond death,**

**God is with us**

**We are not alone…Thanks be to God.**

# Medicine Prayers:

Smudge

*Congregation member will deliver smudge to all who want – during prayers. Note: No one is excluded from the prayer smudge ceremony*

(facing east) From the East, the direction of the rising sun, we receive peace, light, wisdom and knowledge. This is the place of new beginnings in our lives.

**We are grateful for these gifts, O God**.

(facing south) From the South comes warmth, guidance, and the fullness of life. This is the place of warm rains, purifying the waters to sustain all living things.

**We are grateful for these gifts, O God.**

(facing west) From the West comes the sunset, reminding us to find balance of work and rest. This is where we are reminded of our dreams and our visions.

**We are grateful for these gifts, O God.**

(facing north) From the North comes the cold and mighty wind, the white snows and the teachings from the elders, giving us strength and endurance.

**We are grateful for these gifts, O God.**

(facing upward) From the heavens we receive darkness and light, the air of our breath, and messages from your winged creatures.

**We are grateful for these gifts, O God.**

(facing center)From the center of all of life come your light and love O God. It is from You that we receive the very gift of breath. We acknowledge your love for us and your presence with us each and every day.

**We are grateful for these gifts, O God.**

(facing down) From Mother Earth we come, from Mother Earth we will return. We are grateful for your creation that is home to us. May we walk in good paths...Oh Loving Spirit...living on this earth as one family in harmony. Rejoicing in one another’s blessings, sympathizing in ones sorrows, and together with You, renewing the face of Mother Earth.

**A’ Hey**

# Opening Prayer:

O’ Creator God,

Help us listen carefully to Your teaching and help us all to live according to Your will.

Hear the prayers we offer, and send the Holy Spirit to guide and lead us in all that we do.

Help us to love one another as You love us.

This we pray in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

# Hymn: Doxology

#2. (Cree/English hymnbook) Doxology (With Hand Drum)

**Ma mih chi mihk,**

**We yoh ta wehk,**

**Mina Jesus O’ ko si sihk,**

**Mina Ke na ti sit**

**Ah’ chahk**

**Ma ma we yask**

**Ma mih chi mihk**

# Prayer of Approach

As on the first day You began the work of creating us;

as on the first day you raised your Son from the dead;

so on this first day, good Lord, freshen and remake us:

and as the week is new,

let our lives begin again because of Jesus who shows us your loving power.

Amen

# Prayer of Confession:

Father we have sinned in many ways.

We have not loved you with all our hearts.

We have not loved one another as we should.

Sometimes we have let pride rule us, sometimes anger; sometimes our sin has been carelessness; sometimes resentment, or impatience or greed.

Forgive us.

We need Your love ….

Amen.

# Words of Assurance:

The good news is:

Christ Jesus came that we might have life,

life in all its fullness:

to forgive us in our failure,

to accept us as we are.

To set us free from evil’s power,

To make us what we were meant to be.

# Prayer Before Scripture:

Creator God, Our Heavenly Father,

hear our voice, we wait for you, O’ Heavenly Father.

Our souls wait for you.

Give us now your word of hope we know your love is steadfast, always there when we need it.

Let us feel your presence now in our time of sorrow.

Help us to turn to You with thankful hearts, to look to tomorrow to find hope beyond grief,

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

# Scripture:

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

Psalm 8

John 3:1-17

# Children’s Time:

A little bit of God goes into everything that is created, just like when we create something, we put a little bit of ourselves in it: our imagination, our time, our experience, our talent.

This is how we know that God is always with all his creation: in us, in nature, in each other, and in ourselves.

# Message:

We join creation in praising the wonder and mystery of God.

In God’s Creation (nature, environment, & whole universe) there are images, symbols, or creations of our own that reminds us of how we experience God in the world.

The Creator of the universe still cares about mere human beings, even though we are doing so much to harm His creation. We must do our part in keeping God’s creation in the same supreme spectacular condition as was created. In doing so we can experience God in the world as our ancestors did and how the children of the future will also experience that beauty.

In our gospel story today we hear that Nicodemus is born again.

The scripture points to starting over in life, grounded in faith and grace (the great gift of God).

Every day is a challenge to be born again; a spiritual beginning to work with the spirit and adjust and readjust our spiritual lives.

We can do this in may ways, by personal prayer, by going to church, singing, etc.

There are countless other ways of being born again, such as journeying in nature, going up the mountain, spiritual water cleansing ceremonies in lakes; holy water, anointing oil blessings. Cleansing, healing, a sense of being born again.

The way the Indigenous people have a celebration of being born again, by entering a prayer lodge, (which is often called a sweat lodge).

The sweat lodge is a low profile hut, typically dome-shaped or oblong, and made with natural materials.

The structure is the lodge, and the ceremony done within the structure may be called a prayer lodge, purification ceremony or simply a sweat.

Traditionally the structure was constructed of saplings covered with animal skins nowadays more modernly use blankets and tarps as coverings.

Since time immemorial, the prayer lodge (sweat lodge) is considered a prayer ceremony - it is for prayer, healing, blessing, teaching and thanksgiving, always praising and honoring God. The ceremony is only led by elders who know the language, songs, traditions and safety protocols.

After a ceremony, with much prayer and healing, when one comes out of the sweat lodge (prayer lodge), there is an overwhelming feeling of being physically and spiritually, emotionally and mentally renewed.

In the story from John’s gospel, we are told about how the Spirit is expressed in one specific relationship.

Two men who love God and scriptures, discuss and explore how the Spirit is ever renewing our lives, our faith traditions, and our communities of faith (so we are born again).

In our community of faith, we have questions and challenges in our ever-changing faith journey.

One-on-one conversations that our congregational people have with one another and with church elders that nourish them when wrestling with new concepts, just as Jesus ministers to Nicodemus’s wrestling.

Let’s celebrate the spirit and the love of God by sharing the gospel of the lord at anytime, anywhere and at all times in our lives….

Praise be to God.

# Prayer after scripture:

May Creator God, add His Blessing to these reading and teaching and to lead us and guide us to understanding.

# Elders prayer:

*An elder from the congregation comes up to share wisdom and prayer*

# Closing prayer:

*Prayers of the People (Prayer for All)*

Heavenly Father,

Creator of All, in Jesus, you share the joy and sorrow of this life, and so we pray today for:

- All others who know suffering and pain

- All who are sick in their homes, people who are in hospitals, care homes;

in the jails and in other shut ins.

- People who are homeless and feel as if they have no one.

- All who are held hostage in addictions of drugs and alcohol.

- Children and adults who live with complex disabilities.

- Families who are in need of your love and guidance

Citizens of our communities far and near, throughout the world,

we pray for your love and justice.

Grant us all a vision of your purpose in our life and work together,

that we may bear witness to the hope which is in Jesus Christ,

in life,

in death,

and life beyond death.

This we pray through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

# Lord’s prayer:

Cree & English

Nohtawenan

Kehche kesekohk Kaayayen

Kitawe kistethihtakwan kewehthowin

Ketotenawewin keta we ochechepathiw

Etethihtaman keta we

Ihkin ota askihk

Kaese ayayen Kehchekesikohk

Methenan anohch ka kesikak

Ke ohche pimateseyahk

Mina ponethihtamawenan

Ne wanitotamoweninana

Ka ese ponethihtamahk

Ka isi wanitotakaweahk

Maka kawetha itohtahenan Kotethimikowinihk

Metakwenamawenan

kamathatahk

Ketha ketotenawewin

Mena kesohkatisewen

Mena Kekehchayewewin

Kakeke mena KaKeKe… Amen

Onesohkamakewen

Katepethehcheket Jesus Christ

O sakehewewin Kesemanitow

O weche’hewewen

Kakanatesit ahchahk

Ke ka we’

Wechewekonow

Anohch mena Kakeke

Amen

Our Father

Who Art in Heaven

Hallowed be thy Name

Thy kingdom come

They will be done on earth

As it is in heaven

Give us this day our daily bread

And forgive us our trespasses

As we forgive those

Who trespass against us

Lead us not into temptation

But deliver us from evil

For thine is the kingdom

The Power and the Glory

For ever and ever.

………Amen

# Closing hymn:

***VU 226 For the Beauty of the Earth*** *(Hand drum 1/4 beat)*

# Benediction:

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ

The Love of God

and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit

With us now and forever

Amen

Onesohkamakewen

Katepethehcheket Jesus Christ

O sakehewewin Kesemanitow

O weche’hewewen

Kakanatesit ahchahk

Ke ka we’

Wechewekonow

Anohch mena Kakeke

Amen