**Covenant**

***The United Church of Canada***

a safe place for all people to worship

Minister: Rev. Laura Hutchison

**COVENANT UNITED CHURCH**

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2025**

**CREATION 1**

**WELCOME BACK**

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*(Ring the chime once)*

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Welcome to Covenant United Church! You are welcome here where the ordinary is sanctified, where humanity is celebrated in all of its diversity, and compassion is expected. In this place together, we make it a holy place where love can dwell.

 Office hours are Wednesdays from 9:00 – 3:30.

**LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE --** *Anita Rowland*

This is the light of Christ, **a promise of Love.**

This light shines for us, **and for all of creation.**

For this we give thanks. **Hallelujah!**

*(ring the chime)*

**PRAYER OF APPROACH --** *Diane McKenty, Grey Street U.C., Winnipeg, Man.*

Welcome to worship here today. …, lifting up our souls to God, our Creator. Let us pray:

Creating God, we have set aside this day as a special day of thanks, a day to count our many blessings and to remember everything for which we are so very grateful.

**Help us, O God, to keep that gratitude alive in our hearts every day.**

Creative God, as we hold onto the small tokens of your creation that we received today, use them to remind us of the many gifts of creation that surround us everywhere.

**Help us, O God, to show our gratitude by doing our very best to care for your world.**

Inspiring God, as we celebrate this day of thanksgiving, let us pause now for a moment and lift to you any concerns and worries that live within us *(a time of silent reflection)*. You know our hearts better than we know them ourselves. And you know the burdens we carry with us every day. Listen to the song in our hearts and provide us with your healing and your comfort.

**Thank you, O God, for always listening to the words that we whisper in our hearts.**

Companion God, we are grateful that you are with us always, as we do our very best to care for all of your creation, for ourselves and our families, for our neighbours and friends, and for your people around the world.

**Thank you, O God, for making us all one family in Christ. Thank you for teaching us to love one another. Help us to do your will. Your instructions to us are simple—love one another. Help us all to follow that simple command with courage and with gratitude.**

In his time on earth, Jesus taught us many things. He taught us to love one another. And he taught us how to pray. He gave his disciples a simple formula for prayer. So now, using the spirit of the prayer that Jesus gave to us so very long ago, let us join together in this prayer to God,

**Our Father, who art in heaven,**

**Hallowed be thy Name.**

**Thy Kingdom come.**

**Thy will be done in 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.**

**And 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.**

**INTROIT – VU # 400 Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cls9MJkDbgo>

Lord, listen to your children praying,

Lord, send your Spirit in this place;

Lord, listen to your children praying,

send us love, send us power, send us grace!

**CALL TO WORSHIP --** *Éric Hébert-Daly, Executive Minister, Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council*

The roads we travelled today to this place helped us experience a small part of God’s beautiful creation. We glory in the foods that are produced in our midst:

**the awesome diversity of corn and zucchini, squash and tomatoes, pumpkins and green beans.**

God feeds us through the warmth of sunshine, the rain, and the rich soil. We are God’s creation partners who sow the seeds and keep threats to growth to a minimum.

**We do our part as co-creators in our small corners.**

And yet, God’s creation is so much bigger than we can even imagine. The universe is filled with things we have not even seen.

**We cannot understand the whole picture of creation, but we can move back from time to time to remember that we are not the only ones God has created.**

Let us worship our Creator God, with praise, with love, and with hope!

**STORY TIME**

**CHILDREN’S HYMN – VU # 585 Jesus Bids Us Shine**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S7rx6EIImJ8>

Jesus bids us shine with a pure, clear light,

like a little candle burning in the night.

In this world is darkness, so let us shine,

you in your small corner, and I in mine.

Jesus bids us shine first of all for him;

well he sees and knows it if our light grows dim:

Jesus walks beside us to help us shine,

you in your small corner, and I in mine.

Jesus bids us shine, then, for all around;

many kinds of darkness in the world are found:

sin, and want and sorrow; so we must shine,

you in your small corner, and I in mine.

**CENTERING – Welcome Back**

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**1 Timothy 1:12-17** – Good News Translation

**Luke 15:1-10** – Good News Translation

**RESPONSE:** **May God bless to our learning and understanding these words from the scriptures.**

**REFLECTION**

**HYMN – VU # 2588 Great Is Thy Faithfulness**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kFm7_r4hok8>

Great is thy faithfulness, God our Creator;

there is no shadow of turning with thee;

thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;

as thou hast been thou forever wilt be.

**Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!**

**Morning by morning new mercies I see;**

**all I have needed thy hand hath provided --**

**great is thy faithfulness, ever to me!**

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,

sun, moon, and stars in their courses above

join with all nature in manifold witness

to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. **(R)**

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,

thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,

strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow –

wondrous the portion thy blessings provide. **(R)**

**OFFERING INVITATION**

**OFFERING SONG – VU #538 For the Gift of Creation**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iIdQaBbIfEE>

For the gift of creation, the gift of your love,

and the gift of the Spirit by which we live,

we thank you and give you the fruit of our hands.

May your grace be proclaimed by the gifts that we give.

**PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION**

**A COMMUNION LITURGY FOR THE WHOLE PEOPLE OF GOD** – *by Alydia Smith*

God is with us!

**We are not alone!**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to God.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**COMMUNION HYMN – VU #460 All Who Hunger**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TjpQscEueB4>

All who hunger, gather gladly;

holy manna is our bread.

Come from wilderness and wandering.

Here, in truth, we will be fed.

You that yearn for days of fullness,

all around us is our food.

Taste and see the grace eternal.

Taste and see that God is good.

All who hunger, never strangers;

seeker, be a welcome guest.

Come from restlessness and roaming.

Here, in joy, we keep the feast.

We that once were lost and scattered

in communion’s love have stood.

Taste and see the grace eternal.

Taste and see that God is good.

All who hunger, sing together;

Jesus Christ is living bread.

Come from loneliness and longing.

Here, in peace, we have been led.

Blest are those who from this table

live their lives in gratitude.

Taste and see the grace eternal.

Taste and see that God is good.

Holy Mystery that is Wholly Love,

you are beyond complete knowledge,

above perfect description.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;

Source of Life, Living Word, and Bond of Love,

you are creative and self-giving,

generously moving.

In all the near and distant corners of the universe.

nothing exists that does not find its source in you.

(based on A Song of Faith)

Even when we turn away from you, you are with us;

your presence never fails us,

your gifts of hope and new life transform us.

We praise you for Jesus Christ,

eternal as your love, our bond to one another.

We rejoice with all your people of every time and place,

and with angels and archangels,

to proclaim the glory of your name:

*Sanctus and Benedictus* (*More Voices* 203)

**O holy, holy, holy God**

**O God of time and space**

**All earth and sea and sky above**

**Bear witness to your grace.**

**Hosanna in the highest heaven**

**Creation sings your praise.**

**And blessed is the one who comes**

**and bears your name always.**

It is Jesus, God incarnate, the Risen Christ,

who joins us together as a community of broken but hopeful believers:

loving what he loved

living what he taught, and

striving to be his faithful servants

in our time and place.

In this meal we remember Jesus, his promises,

and the price he paid for who he was, what he said, and what he did.

On the night before Jesus died,

he took a loaf of bread,

gave thanks, broke it, and said,

“Take and eat; whenever you do this, remember me.”

After supper, Jesus took the cup, and poured, saying,

“This is the new covenant, remember me.”

We do remember.

We remember his life of love, his friendship, his teaching, his dying, and his rising to life again.

In sharing this meal, we live out the mystery of our faith:

*Memorial Acclamation*(sung to *More Voices* 204)

**Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen**

**Christ will come again** (repeat)

Holy Mystery, God the Spirit,

we call on you to transform these familiar things,

as you continually transform the world around us.

Bless this bread and this cup,

 the wheat and the grape,

 the farmer and the harvest,

 the seed and the sower.

So that in the sharing of these simple elements in community,

we may taste and see your goodness,

so that we might catch a glimpse of what it is to be in communion with you and with one another.

Through Christ, in Christ, and with Christ,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

all glory is yours, God most holy,

now and forever.

*Great Amen*(sung to *More Voices* 225)

**Amen, amen, O Holy One,**

**Hosanna and Amen.** (repeat)

**BREAKING THE BREAD AND POURING THE CUP**

The body of Christ,

**the bread of life.**

The lifeblood of Christ,

**the cup of blessing.**

The gifts of God for the people of God.

**Thanks be to God!**

**SHARING THE MEAL**

**ANTHEM** (choir) For Everyone Born, A Place at the Table

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

**Thank you, O Christ, for this feast of life.**

**We are fed by your love;**

**we are strengthened by your life.**

**We are sent forth into this world to live into the visions God has laid on our hearts.**

**We are now commissioned to:**

**feed as we have been fed,**

**forgive as we have been forgiven,**

**love as we have been loved.**

**Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**HYMN – People’s Choice**

**COMMISSIONING AND BLESSING --** *Gary Simpson, McDougall U.C., Edmonton, Alta. (inspired by Numbers 6:24–26)*

May God bless you, keep you, and smile upon you,

giving you many gifts along the way.

May God smile at you every time you turn in God’s direction.

May God give you peace and give you many reasons

 to feel God’s gratitude for you.

**EXTINGUISH THE CHRIST CANDLE**

**SENDING SONG – VU # 260 God Who Gives to Life Its Goodness** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fnc5rHKJmXA>

God who gives to life its goodness,

God creator of all joy,

God who gives to us our freedom,

God who blesses tool and toy;

teach us now to laugh and praise you,

deep within your praises sing,

till the whole creation dances

for the goodness of its King.

God who fills the earth with beauty,

God who binds each friend to friend,

God who names us co-creators

God who wills that chaos end;

grant us now creative spirits,

minds responsive to your mind,

hearts and wills your rule extending

all our acts by Love refined.