



**Olds-Sundre Pastoral Charge
of the United Church
Sunday April 25th, 2021
Minister: Rev. Tammy Allan
Musician: Vivian Choropita (Olds)**



As we worship we gratefully acknowledge that we are on the ancient and traditional lands of The Blackfoot Nation, the people of the Treaty 7, and of Metis Region 3.

*May we cherish and care for these lands and the people,
just as those who came before us did.*

*Today's worship service was created and graciously shared by a team of people from Gaetz United Church in Red Deer. *Some parts of the service come from Camping Sunday, 24, 2016. © 2016 The United Church of Canada/L'Église Unie du Canada. Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution Non-commercial No Derivatives (by-nc-nd) Licence. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.5/ca>. Any copy must include this notice.*

Prelude

Opening Words

This is the Easter Season, and it's Camp Sunday! A day when we celebrate one of the largest youth ministries in the United Church. Camps do everything from building campers' confidence to growing leaders in our church. At United Church camps, children, youth, and young adults come together to create relationships in community; relationships with one another, with creation, and with God. And so today we invite you to participate in our shared ministry of camp.

Lighting the Christ Candle

We light this candle to remind us that we are here as followers of Jesus, and that our faith is like this flame. It flickers and changes, and sometimes needs to be relit, but its brightness can fill a space. And in camp's lit space is safe place for campers of all religious and spiritual backgrounds to explore their values and life's big questions. And camp is for "Campers of all identities": as a safe place for campers of all abilities, ethnicities, gender identities, and sexual orientations. And so we remember God's unconditional love for all.

Opening Call

We are summoned here by God,
**who calls us each by name, and gathers us together in the unity of
Jesus Christ.**

From home and community, from camps and classrooms,
we are called into God's presence.

Young and old and middle-aged, individuals and families, soft-spoken and outspoken,

we hear our names being called to join in worship.

This worship is a place to pursue God's vision for all people:

unity and joy and faith expressed through different gifts. Let us worship together!

Music for meditation VU 577 I've Got Peace Like a River

Opening Prayer

Creator God, we hear your wilderness cry from the depth of our souls and we long to answer. We seek you out in the silence and beauty of nature, in the sound of the birds, the rustling trees, the lapping water, and the crunching of branches. Our eyes and ears are opened to your presence in the newness of day, the brisk air, and the colours of the sunrise. Be with us in this time of storytelling and memories, guiding us along the forest's edge into oneness with you. Amen.

Time with Children

Summer Camp IS...

Outdoors: adventures, earth and sky, activities in nature and so much space to run around!

Together: giggling cabin-mates, middle of the night flashlight lit trips to the toilet, trying new things, cooperating, hearing new sounds around us.

Campfires: storytelling, songs, laughter, aromas, memory making.

Vespers: quiet, sunsets, reflections, connecting, breathing... deeply.

Minds: thinking, creating, wandering, solving, sharing, learning . . .

Bodies: eating (mmmmm the eating), moving, trying, braving, exploring . . .

Spirits: wondering, experiencing, singing, laughing, free . . .

Camp is good company; with new-found friends and youth leaders.

Camp is away; from screens, from daily routine, from ordinary life.

Camp is cooks; who wear their capes backwards, fabulous food fabricators!

Camp is support; encouraged by young leaders to put Love into action.

Summer Camp is . . . so much more than *going camping!*

Camp Experiences Olds and Sundre memories

Music for meditation The Camp Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KAyya70r02M>

Scripture

Luke 8:22 Now on one of those days Jesus and His disciples got into a boat, and He said to them, "Let us go over to the other side of the lake". So they launched out.

John 6:21 So they were willing to receive Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.

Reflection

Will you join me for a paddle?

OK... stand as you are able and turn so your pew is the boat. I'm inviting you to act out this virtual paddle.

Got your paddle. Life jacket snugged up?

First time? Been a while? You're a pro?

Do you want the bow or the stern? Can you steer? Do you know the J-stroke?

OK then...

Step in... careful, it's tippy. Stay low. Place your paddle over the gunnels and move one step at a time with your feet placed over the center line of the canoe.

Find your seating... settle in, stretch, breathe deep.

Ready to push off? And.. We're afloat! Feels good!

Woops a little wobble. Shift your knees. Look up! Look around! Breathe again!

Paddle gripped? Both hands? And we're off!

So quiet. (stroke)

The water. (stroke)

Balance our effort... not a rush but also needs enough oomph (no lily dipping). A balance push with your top hand and pull with your bottom. Feel your power into the paddle.

The trees. (stroke)

The birds. (stroke)

We're dancing on the water! Can you feel it?

Breathe it in once more, and then I invite you to have a seat. Ahh...

Canoes and camp.

I would like to reflect on all that it takes to keep boats afloat at camp. Leaders to teach and supervise the learning of how to maneuver a boat. A lifeguard to offer expert rescue if needed. Food to energize and nourish the paddlers. Beds and cabins that offer restful sleep. Space to stretch and strengthen muscles for the

activity. Time to teach and practice and grow in confidence. Activities that boost wellness of mind, body and spirit for the adventure. Boats that don't leak and offer a positive experience. Paddles. Life jackets. Whistles. Trust of paddle partners, and activities that help build trusting relationships. Willingness and cooperation for trying new things. ACA Accreditation and camping standards. Staff trained, watchful, caring and capable of offering appropriate supervision for safety and encouragement for trying new! All of these things are needed to float boats at camp!

Since 1926, this has been the shared mission of the United Churches in Central Alberta in support of Kasota East Camp. And it remains so 95 years later. The boats still float! Hallelujah!

Now shall we consider today's scripture readings. "they launched out" . . . "they landed"... Floating boats are a great way to get around. They move goods. They move people. They moved Jesus. They are for a journey, a form of transportation, that requires many things, but especially a keen eye on the destination and ability to steer the boat where it needs to go.

Have you ever been in a boat where nobody actually knew how to steer it?

We all learn, at an early age: when we learn to ride a bicycle, when we learn to drive, riding horses, skiing or snowboarding, ...and when we paddle canoes... the importance of LOOK WHERE YOU WANT TO GO. There are many activities in life that remind us that we go where we look. You look down, you fall down. Looking ahead, keeping an eye on the destination, and putting navigation skills, confidence, trust and right energy into balanced effort, we will reach our destination.

By the scripture readings today, it suggests that the leadership provided by Jesus stewarded an effective team that navigated waters and arrived to intended destinations! Simple scripture readings with empowering images of success. Arrival! There is much both simple and complex to the leadership that enables and guides this ... and to faithful followers who engage and help paddle to the destination.

The messages of our Easter Season have been about being courageous and brave to dance, to paddle, to do new things as we have faced so much new and different and uncertain. We don't know yet how summer 2021 will emerge and what will be safe to offer at camp. There are still many unknowns about whether KEC can operate camps, but the board and staff plan to make the most of this summer. They are excited to have begun Project Pavilion, KEC's largest site improvement in decades! We have faith in our community and supporters who believe in the power of camp, that this project will engage us all in expanding programming space for future years of creativity, relationships and leadership

that grows at camp. Future years of summer camp experiences that are life-giving and offer transformative impact. For campers. For young adults we employ. For volunteers. For parents. For whole families. Multi-generations. For congregations and for our wider Church community --

Faithfully together guiding and propelling camp into the future, with deep appreciation for all it takes to “float our boats”.

Music for meditation VU 289 It Only Takes a Spark

This Week’s Minute for Mission <https://youtu.be/J64MyxwkeE8>

Offertory Music VU 541 Praise God From Whom All Blessings
Flow

Offertory Prayer

O God, we give thanks for all that we have and all that we are. We offer a portion from our abundance – our time, our energy, our resources. May our offerings today reach out globally, through Mission and Service, locally, through local givings, and may we be inspired to be stewards, through prayer and action, of meaningful summer camp ministries. Amen.

Prayers for This Day

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| <p>1. Joyful, joyful, we adore you,
God of glory, Life, and love;
Hearts unfold like flow’rs before you,
Op’ning to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
Drive the gloom of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day!</p> <p>2. All your works with joy surround you,
Earth and heav’n reflect your rays,
Stars and angels sing around you,
Center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
Flow’ry meadow, flashing sea,
chanting bird and flowing fountain
Sound their praise eternally.</p> <p>3. You are giving and forgiving,
Ever blessing, ever blest,</p> | <p>Wellspring of the joy of living,
Ocean depth of happy rest!
Source of grace and fount of
blessing,
Let your light upon us shine;
Teach us how to love each other,
Lift us to the joy divine.</p> <p>4. Mortals, join the mighty chorus,
Which the morning stars began;
God’s own love is reigning o’er us,
Joining people hand in hand.
Ever singing, march we onward,
Victors in the midst of strife,
Joyful music leads us sunward
In the triumph song of life.
AMEN.</p> |
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Joyful, Joyful (Hymn to Joy) – Voices United Hymnal 232; Henry van Dyke, 1907

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy 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.

Music for Meditation VU 675 Will Your Anchor Hold

A Blessing for Today

And so this week, dance bravely! Rooted in the founding traditions of summer camp, may we grow in our shared responsibility for camp ministries.

May we float boats and bravely paddle!

Let us go now in peace and love.

Amen.

Thank you for taking time to be part of the Olds-Sundre Pastoral Charge worship experience. We are having in-person worship with careful COVID precautions: Olds – 9:30am and Sundre - 1:30pm.

The bulletin and sermon will continue to be posted to the websites, for those who are unable to join us. Messages will also be posted to the Facebook Page, Olds and Sundre United Churches.

Questions? Wish to financially support our ministries?

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Interested in supporting Kasota East Camp?

You can learn more about how to do that here: www.kasotaeastcamp.org