

~ St. James United Church ~

~ All are Welcome here ~

Pastoral Laura Sundberg, Diane Robinson
Administrator Margaret Cooper
Musical **Pianist:** Kristine Beer **Organist:** Richard Hazel
Choir Director: Don Monk
Janitorial Darwin Dopson

“Wisdom is not just special knowledge about something. Wisdom is a way of being, a way of inhabiting the world.

The beauty of wisdom is harmony, belonging and illumination of thought, action, heart and mind.” (*John O’Donohue*)

Prelude

Acknowledgement of Land

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional lands of the Cree, Ojibwe, Saulteaux, Dakota, Nakota, and Lakota nations referred to as Treaty 4 territory. This land is also the homeland of the Metis nation.

We respect and honour these traditional lands. As we acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, we pray that we will faithfully move forward in partnership as Indigenous and non-Indigenous siblings in the spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

We all have different language for experiencing the holy. Feel free to change the words in hymns and prayers to suit your faith expression.

Welcome

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Opening Words

It is a sacred time, this:

A time for listening more powerful than speaking,

A time for speaking when others wish you silenced,

A time for vulnerability more powerful than strength;

and a time for peace that can pass all understanding.

It is a sacred time, this.

Let us gather in the Spirit this day.

Hymn: VU 264 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise verses 1, 3

Immortal, invisible, God only wise

In light, in accessible, hid from our eyes

Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days

Almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.

To all life thou givest, to both great and small

In all life thou livest, the true life of all

We blossom and flourish like leaves on the tree

Then wither and perish, but naught changeth thee.

Prayer of Renewal

We begin by making space for the Spirit with a breath prayer.

Breathe out any fear that you may be carrying and breathe in peace. Continue,
Breathe out fear and breathe in Love, for you are beloved of God.

silence

The gospels tell us stories of people trying to trap Jesus with questions about how to live faithful lives. He often responded with teachings that revealed a different way of thinking and living.

We are in a time when we need to make hard choices about how to live faithfully. We can feel trapped in the midst of many choices and not know what the faithful one is,

Eternal Wisdom, rise within us, as we seek to find our way through the choices and challenges of our time.

Friend Jesus, help us to make faithful choices as we follow in your way.

Amen

Time with the Children

Song: The Spirit in Me Greets the Spirit in You

Scripture Readings:

Exodus 33: 12 – 23

¹²Moses said to the Lord, "See, you have said to me, 'Bring up this people'; but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.' ¹³Now if I have found favor in your sight, show me your ways, so that I may know you and find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people." ¹⁴He said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."

¹⁵And he said to him, "If your presence will not go, do not carry us up from here. ¹⁶For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people, unless you go with us? In this way, we shall be distinct, I and your people, from every people on the face of the earth."

¹⁷The Lord said to Moses, "I will do the very thing that you have asked; for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name." ¹⁸Moses said, "Show me your glory, I pray." ¹⁹And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, 'The Lord'; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. ²⁰But," he said, "you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live." ²¹And the Lord continued, "See, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock; ²²and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; ²³then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen."

Matthew 22: 15 - 22

¹⁵ Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. ¹⁶ So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷ Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?"

¹⁸ But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius.

²⁰ Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" ²¹ They answered, "The emperor's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." ²² When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

Message: Heads or Tails?

Time of Gratitude

Gratitude Hymn: MV 147 God Help us to Treasure verse 1

Prayers of the People

Reflective Music

Lord's Prayer Sung VU p 959

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

Your kingdom come, your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven

Give us today our daily bread

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,

now and forever.

Announcements

Hymn: MV 213 Take Up His Song

Sending Forth

We leave this time knowing that challenges await us.

We leave this time, knowing that our faith invites us to take risks.

In our leaving, may we know that the Presence is always with us,

Divine surprises await,

And that loves power is strong,

Blessing: VU 964 Go Now in Peace

Postlude

Resources

Opening Words – Rex AE Hunt (*Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin*)

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