

## **Living Skies Region Camp Sunday**

*Service prepared by Rev. Shelly Manley-Tannis*



*If possible, have a simulated campfire at the front of the church – or surround your regular candle with firewood! (Use your imagination). This can be “lit” instead of the Christ candle while welcoming the congregation.*

### **Welcome & Acknowledgment of Territory**

*(acknowledgment of Treaty and the first peoples and Metis Nation – based on where you are located. Get creative and remember that our camps are also on sacred lands that have been stewarded by Indigenous peoples and our own ancestors.)*

### **Lighting the Christ Candle/Camp Fire**

*We light this fire to remind us of the fire in our hearts, the mystery of what happens at a sacred fire, and the lives that have been changed by meeting Jesus, the light of world.*

### **Lighting the Rainbow Candle**

*(for those who light a rainbow candle – here are the words that our congregation uses)*  
We light this candle as a reminder of our commitment to be a community of hospitality where persons of all sexualities, genders, ages, races and abilities experience a place of welcome and belonging.

### **Opening Song/Introit** (<https://campsongs.wordpress.com/2012/05/04/fires-burning>)

*Fire’s burning, fire’s burning*

*Draw nearer, draw nearer*

*In the gloaming, in the gloaming*

*Come sing and be merry*

*(Round – Tune: Traditional; Words – Girl Guides of Canada, 1971)*

### **Call to Worship** *(in a repeat-after-me song style!)*

Going on a journey

**Going on a journey**

Walking with our God

**Walking with our God**

Might see some bears

**Might see some bears**

Or we might see some stars

**Might see some stars.**

We come from the North and South and East and West

**North and South and East and West**

Prairie, parkland, valleys, trees and hills

**Prairie, parkland, valleys, trees and hills**

Sacred land, good friends, and a place to rest & chill.

**Sacred land, good friends and a place to rest & chill.**

Creator joins us here and we are BLESSED!

**Creator joins us here and we are BLESSED!**

**Prayer of Approach**

**O God our Creator**

**We say ‘thank you’ for the beauty that surrounds us.**

**We say ‘thank you’ for the friends we have met on our journeys.**

**And we say ‘thank you’ for the celebration of camping ministries today.**

**So many who came before us knew the gifts of camp – more space, more quiet, more camp-fires and smokey food, more friends and songs and laughter.**

**Be with us as we celebrate your love through Jesus of Nazareth, through nature and experiences of time set apart that only camp can offer – help us to remember our own times, listen to the stories of others and encourage all ages to give it a try!**

**Amen.**

**Hymn: “It Only Takes a Spark (Pass It On),” VU 289**

**Life and Work of the Church:**

**Celebrations and Concerns:**

**Passing of the Peace:**

Just as the immense skies of Saskatchewan offer peace from our Creator, just as there is peace when we understand that all our siblings and all of creation are our kin, and just as Jesus the Christ knew himself to be ONE with ALL, let us share the Shalom, the Peace, the wholeness of the Christ with one another.

Peace be with you.

**Hymn: ‘This Little Light Of Mine’ (Source: African American, public domain)**

*This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine!*

*This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine!*

*This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine!*

*Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!*

Other verses:

*Ev’rywhere I go, I’m gonna let it shine!*

*Jesus gave it to me...*

*I won’t let anyone blow it out (no!)...*

**Scripture** Psalm 29 (*I used the Inclusive Bible Translation – attached below*)

Ephesians 4:25 – 5:2

(I used The Message paraphrase, with some adapted language for inclusivity – attached below)

## Story Time

*Suggestion here might be some short stories you collect of those who have been touched by camp or attended camp or have met someone who touched them. Have recent camp kids involved if they are willing, or share words they offer in writing, etc. If you don't know anyone who has connection with a Saskatchewan Camp – find one! Or even better make the connection yourself or with your congregation.*

*The Psalm celebrates Creator who is present within every moment and every aspect of creation. One of the gifts of camp is being more aware of our interdependence with creation. Many campers have also had the less favourable experiences of nature with mosquitoes, storms or allergies to some beautiful green leaves!*

*The Ephesians passage comes from teachings about living in community – they are also clearly helpful for living camp life and learning once again about our interdependence with all other people and all of creation.*

Here is a brief story that comes from my own experience:

*As a REGULAR camp attender who has continued to be involved in camping ministries through chaplaincy, visits and support in my congregations, I was in a ministry in NE Saskatchewan where we planned to have a 'camp Tapawingo Sunday' one spring. I knew that many of the congregation members had connections with the camp through their youth attending, helping with projects and finances, and previous work. One of the congregation members, Lucy, had been Cook at the camp for a numbers of years in its early days. The guests coming from Tapawingo knew about her ahead of time and in the service, invited her up to the front, celebrated her long support for the camp, and presented her with a lovely dark green Camp Tapawingo t-shirt. There was cheering and laughter and even tears, as she instantly put the t-shirt on over top of her Sunday dress. Lucy McRitchie was 102 at the time. She showed us all there is no age limit or age requirement for the experience of loving the people and the God who love camp.*



**Hymn: 'Give Me Oil in My Lamp' (Source: Traditional, Public Domain)**

*1 Give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning.*

*Give me oil in my lamp, I pray.*

*Give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning.*

*Keep me burning till the break of day.*

Refrain:

*Sing hosanna, sing hosanna,*

*sing hosanna to the King of kings!*

*Sing hosanna, sing hosanna,*

*sing hosanna to the King!*

*2 Give me love in my heart, keep me sharing.*

*Give me love in my heart, I pray.*

*Give me love in my heart, keep me sharing.*

*Keep me sharing till the break of day. (Refrain)*

*3 Give me joy in my heart, keep me singing.*

*Give me joy in my heart, I pray.*

*Give me joy in my heart, keep me singing.*

*Keep me singing till the break of day. (Refrain)*

*4 Give me faith in my heart, keep me praying.*

*Give me faith in my heart, I pray.*

*Give me faith in my heart, keep me praying.*

*Keep me praying till the break of day. (Refrain)*

**Prayers of our Hearts & Prayer of Jesus**

God, our Creator, we give thanks for all the gifts you have given. Help us to pay attention to the Good News all around us and the abundance with which you give of your self. We thank you for those who offer their gifts, through camping leadership, cooking, life-guarding, ministering, creativity, administration, maintenance, nursing and praying.

We give thanks for the life-changing experiences that many United Church camps have offered to so many people. For the learnings and memories, relationships and faith that are grown around camp-fires and in talking circles or evening vespers, we are grateful.

We pray for all those who will be going to camps, working at camps, dropping young people off at camps or supporting camping ministries financially this summer. And we ask that all would know their value; that they are beloved children of God, with all their diversity celebrated.

Loving One, we ask for your strength and love for those who have been hurt in a camp setting, who get homesick this year or injured or who are facing hard decisions. May we as Faith communities find ways to reach out, to offer support and to offer the care that Jesus offered to all he encountered.

*(include Intercessions/prayers of the people from the community)*

We gather our hearts and minds in shared words now, words that The Human One, Jesus taught his beloved friends,  
O Creator, Loving Parent, Mother and  
Our Father....

### **Remembering Our Gifts**

We take time in our service to be aware of the gifts we have received from our Creator. We take time to be intentional about the Gratitude and Generosity we are called into. God asks us to respond and so we do!

(offering)

**Creator God, accept these financial gifts and the time and talents we offer to you today. Help us to support our local ministries and the work of our camps. May these gifts help bring about your Reign, your community over all the earth. Amen.**

Hymn VU #356 'Seek Ye First'

### **Commissioning and Blessing**

**Let us go and be the people God has called us to be.**

**Let us recognize the real gifts we have been given through all our camps, and all of creation!**

**Let us share our love with the world and practice the inclusive justice that Jesus has shown us.**

**Amen.**

**Sung Blessing 'I've Got Peace like a River' VU #577**

### **Postlude**

Sources: Written by Rev. Shelly Manley-Tannis, Saskatoon, SK

*(Long time camper at Ryerson Beach United Church Camp, ON; and friend of Rock Lake United Church Camp, MB; Camp Tapawingo and Camp Christopher, SK)*

## Scripture

### Psalm 29 (*The Inclusive Bible*)

Give glory to YHWH, you heavenly court, give YHWH glory and strength! <sup>2</sup> Give forth the glory that God's Name deserves, and worship YHWH in the splendor of holiness! <sup>3</sup> The voice of YHWH resounds over the waters; the God of glory thunders over the raging seas. <sup>4</sup> God's voice is powerful, God's voice is full of majesty. <sup>5</sup> The voice of YHWH snaps the cedars, shatters the cedars of Lebanon. <sup>6</sup> It makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox. <sup>7</sup> The voice of YHWH strikes with bolts of lightning; <sup>8</sup> the voice of YHWH shakes the wilderness, the wilderness of Kadesh.

<sup>9</sup> The voice of God twists the oaks, and strips the forests bare; and in God's Temple all cry, "Glory!" <sup>10</sup> YHWH sits in judgment over the flood; YHWH is its Ruler forever. <sup>11</sup> Give strength to your people, YHWH! Bless your people with peace!

Priests for Equality. *The Inclusive Bible* (pp. 1193-1194). Sheed & Ward. Kindle Edition.

### Ephesians 4:25 – 5:2 (*The Message, adpt.*)

Tell your neighbor the truth. In Christ's body we're all connected to each other, after all. When you lie to others, you end up lying to yourself.

<sup>26-27</sup> Go ahead and be angry. You do well to be angry—but don't use your anger as fuel for revenge. And don't stay angry. Don't go to bed angry. Don't give the Devil that kind of foothold in your life.

<sup>28</sup> Did you use to make ends meet by stealing? Well, no more! Get an honest job so that you can help others who can't work.

<sup>29</sup> Watch the way you talk. Let nothing foul or dirty come out of your mouth. Say only what helps, each word a gift.

<sup>30</sup> Don't grieve God. Don't break God's heart. The Holy Spirit, moving and breathing in you, is the most intimate part of your life, making you fit for God's self. Don't take such a gift for granted.

<sup>31-32</sup> Make a clean break with all cutting, backbiting, profane talk. Be gentle with one another, sensitive. Forgive one another as quickly and thoroughly as God in Christ forgave you.

<sup>1-2</sup> Watch what God does, and then you do it, like children who learn proper behavior from their parents. Mostly what God does is love you. Keep company with God and learn a life of love. Observe how Christ loved us. His love was not cautious but extravagant. He didn't love in order to get something from us but to give everything of himself to us. Love like that.