

**BETHESDA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**10:30 a.m. Sunday 18 April 2021**

**Third Sunday of Easter /Native American Ministries Sunday**

**ENTRANCE**

Prelude and Lighting of Candles

Announcements

"An Act of Congregational Centering"\*\*:

*Before the prayer, determine the four points  
of the compass: North, East, South,  
and West. Then all persons present form a circle,  
facing the center.*

*After a period of silence, the prayer begins:*

Paul reminds us that Christ is the center of creation,  
of our lives, and of the world.

We seek the wisdom of directions.

From each direction we return to the center  
reminded that Christ brings healing and salvation  
and by God's Spirit renews the face of the earth.

Let us be silent as we face our center point.

Let us face East. *All persons face East.*

From the East, the direction of the rising sun,  
we glean wisdom and knowledge  
through desert silences and humble service.

**Enable us, O God, to be wise in our actions  
and in our use of the resources of the earth,  
sharing them in justice,  
partaking of them in gratitude.**

*All persons return facing center.*

Let us face South. *All persons face South.*

From the South come guidance  
and the beginning and end of life.

**May we walk good paths, O God,**

(2)

**living on the earth as sisters and brothers should,**

**rejoicing in one another's blessing,  
sympathizing in one another's sorrows,  
and together look to you, seeking  
the new heaven and earth.**

*All persons return facing center*

Let us face West. *All persons face West.*

From the West come purifying waters.

**We pray that water might be pure and available to all,  
and that we, too, may be purified  
so that life may be sustained and nurtured  
over the entire face of the earth.**

*All persons return facing center.*

Let us face north. *All persons face North.*

From the North come strong winds and gentle breezes.

**May the air we breathe be purified  
and may our lives feel that breath of the Spirit,  
strengthening and encouraging.**

*All persons return facing center.*

If we walked a path in each direction,  
the sacred paths would form a cross.

**Returning to the center, we discover Christ,  
who calls us and challenges us.**

*(Traditional Lakota Tribe Prayer, Alt.)*

Opening Prayer\*\*: May the warm winds of heaven  
blow softly on our house.

**May the Great Spirit  
bless all who enter here.**

*(Traditional Cherokee Nation Prayer)*

Opening Hymn: 310 "He Lives"

**(3)**

**PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE**

Prayer for Illumination: Page 6

First Lesson: Acts 3:12-19

Psalter: 741 Psalm 4

Second Lesson: 1 John 3:1-7

Hymn of Preparation: 474 "Precious Lord, Take My Hand"

Gospel: Luke 24:36b-48

Sermon: "Centering"

Affirmation of Faith: 881 "The Apostles' Creed,  
Traditional Version"

Joys, Concerns, Prayers

Prayer: 329 "Prayer to the Holy Spirit"

The Peace: Let us offer one another signs  
of reconciliation and love.  
The peace of Christ be with you.  
**And also with you.**

**THANKSGIVING**

Invitation: As forgiven and reconciled people, let us offer  
ourselves and our gifts to God.

Offering/Offertory

**(4)**

Doxology: 95 "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"

Prayer of Thanksgiving: 587 (*Tune 463*) "Bless Thou the Gifts"

The Lord's Prayer: 895

**SENDING FORTH**

Closing Hymn: 374 "Standing on the Promises"

Blessing\*\*: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace  
in believing,  
so that you may abound in hope  
by the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**  
*(Romans 15:13)*

Extinguishing of Candles and Postlude

Going Forth

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