

**Green Mountain Bishop's Day
Opening Worship: Land Acknowledgement
October 14, 2021 7 p.m.**

Welcome and Introduction

Grace and peace be with you. We give thanks for the Bishop and Prema Devadhar's presence with us this evening as we gather in-person and online.

For our worshipful work tonight, we endeavor to honor Indigenous People's Day on October 11, a National Day of Remembrance for U.S. Indian Boarding Schools in conjunction with the National Day of Trust and Reconciliation in Canada on September 30, and the important legislation of New England's United Methodist Committee on Native American Ministries that was adopted in June of this year. This legislation calls us among many things to wear red on October 11 and on May 5, the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women. Native American Ministries Sunday will be on May 1 in 2022, the Sunday just before May 5. Tonight, we will be doing a land acknowledgement for United Methodists around the district with the hopes that we will all covenant to do the same in our local churches, reaching out and including indigenous neighbors when we can honor them by doing so.

Part of this land acknowledgement was written by Breanne MacFarland, member of Burlington First UMC, chair of the Committee on Native American Ministries for our conference, and a student at Boston University School of Theology.

Part of the land acknowledgement is an adaptation of the one written by members of the Middlebury College community (<http://www.middlebury.edu/about/land-acknowledgement>).

The Litany from the Grief of the Nations that includes our scripture for tonight was created by Rev. Anita Phillips in response to the disaster on September 11, 2001. Twenty years ago last month Rev. Phillips was part of a disaster response ministry team at Ground Zero from the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference. (<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/litany-from-the-grief-of-the-nations>)

The adaptation of Four Directions: A Native American Litany is written by Ginny Doctor (*Women's Uncommon Prayers: Our Lives Revealed, Nurtured, Celebrated* p. 336 ©2000. Alt.)

I wrote the prayer entitled Ancestors out of respect for the many indigenous people who honor the ancestors in prayer, and for the thousands of missing and murdered North American indigenous women, many whose names have been lost or forgotten.

The hymns are from The Faith We Sing and are chosen to honor the first people of this land who greet the sun in the east on behalf of the whole continent.

From the Rising of the Sun

**From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same,
the name of the Lord shall be praised.
From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same,
the name of the Lord shall be praised.
So praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.
From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same,
the name of the Lord shall be praised.**

*From the Rising of the Sun,
FWS #2024, Anon.*

Litany from the Grief of the Nations

This reading was created by the Reverend Anita Phillips in response to the disaster on September 11, 2001. She was part of a disaster response ministry team sent from the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference who worked with Mohawk recovery workers and others at the Ground Zero site. This responsive reading combines the words of the psalmists with words of historic Native American leaders. The grief, desolation, and struggle to find comfort are shared across races, cultures, and time. The Scripture references and names of speakers are listed. These references are not intended to be read aloud. Rather, they provide information to deepen the worship experience. Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, Copyright 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Quotations: Native Time by Lee Francis (St. Martin's Press, 1998)

Leader: O Creator God, we bring our hearts and voices together in this time of great trial and suffering, sharing in the prayers and songs of our ancestors.

People: Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am in distress. (*Psalm 31:9, NRSV*)

Leader: To you, O Lord, I call; my rock, do not refuse to hear me. (*Psalm 28:1, NRSV*)

People: My heart is sick and sad. (*Chief Joseph -- Nez Perce*)

Leader: Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear to my cry; do not hold your peace at my tears. (*Psalm 39:12, NRSV*)

People: Weeping, I, the singer, weave my song of flowers of sadness. (*Aztec Prayer Song*)

Leader: My heart is stricken and withered like grass. (*Psalm 102:4*)

People: Hear me in my sorrow. (*Black Elk -- Oglala Lakota*)

Leader: Insults have broken my heart, so that I am in despair. (*Psalm 69:20, NRSV*)

People: Is there anyone who would weep for me? (*Ojibwa Battle Song*)

Leader: The snares of death encompassed me ... I suffered distress and anguish. (*Psalm 116:3, NRSV*)

People: Many have died of diseases we have no name for. (*Little Wolf -- Cheyenne*)

Leader: Will you, friend, explain to me that which I cannot understand? (*Lololoma -- Hopi*)

People: Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently for God; do not fret over those who prosper in their way, over those who carry out evil devices. (*Psalm 37:7, NRSV*)

Leader: In your steadfast love hear my voice; O Lord, in your justice preserve my life. (*Psalm 119:149, NRSV*)

People: We must be united; we must smoke the same pipe; we must fight each others' battles; and more than all, we must love the Great Spirit ... (*Tecumseh -- Shawnee/Muscogee*)

Leader: When the Lord brought back the captives to Zion, we were like those who dream. (*Psalm 126:1, NRSV*)

People: And we sang our prayer song: You cannot harm me. You cannot harm one who has dreamed a dream like mine. (*Dakota Prayer Song*)

Leader: Forget not ... that we are bound together in peace. (*Pusmataha -- Choctaw*)

People: The Great Spirit and giver of light, who has made the earth and everything therein, has brought us all together this day for our mutual good to promote the good works of peace. (*Pontiac -- Ottawa*)

Leader: The contrary winds may blow strong in my face, yet I will go forward and never turn back. (*Teedyuscung -- Delaware*)

People: The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? (*Psalm 27:1, NRSV*)

Leader: The Great Spirit has placed us all on this earth. (*Kaqnakuk -- Kickapoo*)

People: Listen, that the peace may continue unto the future days! Always listen to the words of the Great Creator ... (*The Peacemaker -- Lenape*)

All: Amen.

Land Acknowledgment

Beloved, our Bishop's Day is convened in St. Albans, which occupies land within the boundaries of what has been known for the past 230 years (since 1791) as the State of Vermont. We who are gathered here today are connecting from many other parts of this country and the world, each with its own history and with its own succession of peoples who have stewarded these spaces – living, loving, dying, and returning to the land of these places we each call home. The land within the territory of Vermont is comprised primarily of the original homelands of the Abenaki who are part of the Wabanaki Confederacy which means the People of the Dawnland.

The Western Abenaki are the traditional caretakers of these Vermont lands and waters, which they call *Ndakinna* [*in-DAH-kee-NAH*], or “homeland.” We remember their connection to this region and the hardships they continue to endure.

We who are gathered here today in the name of God, acknowledge the painful history of genocide and forced removal from these territories, and we honor and respect the many diverse Indigenous peoples who are very much still alive and still connected to this land on which we gather. We as members of the body of Christ and as representatives of the United Methodist Church repent for our collective sins—both of commission and omission—and we pledge to do better by building right relationships with these communities who are our neighbors and equally created in the image of God.

Let us take a moment of silence to pay respect to the Abenaki Elders, the People of the Dawn, and to the indigenous inhabitants of Turtle Island, past and present...

Moment of Silence

Four Directions: A Native American Litany

*Ginny Doctor, from Women's Uncommon Prayers: Our Lives Revealed, Nurtured, Celebrated
p. 336 ©2000. Alt.*

Joy Comes with the Dawn
Joy comes with the dawn,
joy comes with the morning sun;
joy springs from the tomb
and scatters the night with her song,
joy comes with the dawn.

*Joy Comes with the Dawn,
FWS #2210, Gordon Light*

We look to the east, the land of the Koasek (COwasuck), Suncook, and Amoskeag (AMoskeg),
White River Junction, Union Village, Thetford, Bradford, South Royalton, Bethel, Randolph,
Chelsea, Williamstown, West Topsham, Groton, Waits River, South Tunbridge, Gilman, East
Concord, Lunenburg

We give honor and thanks to the Creator for all gifts given
Place of rising sun comes red color
our time of infancy, time of emotional growth
receive love for all that is to come
We give honor and thanks to the Creator

Joy comes with the dawn,
joy comes with the morning sun;
joy springs from the tomb
and scatters the night with her song,

joy comes with the dawn.

**Weeping may come; weeping may come in the night,
when dark shadows cloud our sight.**

**Joy comes with the dawn,
joy comes with the morning sun;
joy springs from the tomb
and scatters the night with her song,
joy comes with the dawn.**

We look to the south, the land of the Pennacook, Sokoki (SoKOKi), Elnu, and Mahican,
Brattleboro, Pownal, East Arlington, Shaftsbury, Wardsboro, Weston, Sandgate, Rupert,
Springfield, South Reading, Proctorsville, Windsor, Brownsville, Ludlow, Wells, Tinmouth, Fair
Haven, Poultney

We give honor and thanks to the Creator for all gifts given
Place of warmth comes golden color
Our time of childhood, time of physical growth
Receive strength for our visit upon Mother Earth
We give honor and thanks to the Creator

**Joy comes with the dawn,
joy comes with the morning sun;
joy springs from the tomb
and scatters the night with her song,
joy comes with the dawn.**

**Sorrow will turn, sorrow will turn into song,
And God's laughter make us strong.**

**Joy comes with the dawn,
joy comes with the morning sun;
joy springs from the tomb
and scatters the night with her song,
joy comes with the dawn.**

We look to the west, the land of the Haudenosaunee (Ho-de-no-SHAW-nee) and Winoski (WEnooski),
Castleton, Rutland, Chittenden, Mendon, Brandon, Rochester, Ripton, East Middlebury,
Middlebury, West Addison, Vergennes, Bristol, Lincoln, Pittsfield, Monkton, Ferrisburgh Center,
North Ferrisburgh, Hinesburg, Shelburne, Williston, South Burlington, Burlington, Winooski,
Essex Center, Essex Junction, Jericho, Underhill, Grand Isle, North Hero, Isle LaMotte

We give honor and thanks to the Creator for all gifts given
Place of setting sun comes black color
our time of adulthood, time to seek knowledge
bear fruit for the generations to come
We give honor and thanks to the Creator

**Joy comes with the dawn,
joy comes with the morning sun;
joy springs from the tomb
and scatters the night with her song,
joy comes with the dawn.**

**We will rejoice, we will rejoice, and give praise,
to the One who brings us grace.**

**Joy comes with the dawn,
joy comes with the morning sun;
joy springs from the tomb
and scatters the night with her song,
joy comes with the dawn.**

We look to the north, the land of the Arosaguntacook (ArosagoonTAcook), Nulhegan, and Missisquoi, West Swanton, Swanton, St. Albans, St. Albans Bay, Georgia, Milton, Binghamville, Highgate, Rice Hill, Sheldon, Enosburg Falls, West Enosburgh, Franklin, East Franklin, Richford, Montgomery, East Fairfield, Barton, Bakersfield, Waterville, Albany, Fairfax, Greensboro Bend, Newport, Newport Center, Orleans, West Burke, Lyndonville, St. Johnsbury, Danville, Walden, West Danville, Cabot, Marshfield, Woodbury, Hardwick, Wolcott, Elmore, Morrisville, Waterbury Center, Waterbury, Moretown, Middlesex, Worcester, Calais, Adamant, Montpelier, Barre, Northfield, Plainfield

We give honor and thanks to the Creator for all gifts given
Place of the Ancient Ones comes color white
our time of being an Elder, time of Wisdom
spirituality lives to go forth
We give honor and thanks to the Creator

**Joy comes with the dawn,
joy comes with the morning sun;
joy springs from the tomb
and scatters the night with her song,
joy comes with the dawn.**

Ancestors

Inspired by Acts 3.12-19; I John 3.1-7; Luke 24.36b-48

*In observance of Native American Ministries Sunday,
I write out of respect for the many indigenous people who honor the ancestors in prayer,
and for the thousands of missing and murdered North American indigenous women,
some whose names have been lost or forgotten.*

-Rev. Jill Colley Robinson, DS

God of our ancestors,
God of all who have gone before us,

God of Sarah and Hagar,
God of Rebekah,
God of Leah and Rachel, Bilhah and Zilpah,
God of Dinah,
God of those whose names are lost or forgotten but whom you remember,
we have faith in your name,
and this faith makes us strong.

Holy and Righteous One,
Author of life,
Messiah,
we have faith in your name,
and this faith makes us strong.

Spirit,
Breath of peace,
we have faith in your name,
and this faith makes us strong.

You open our minds to understand your story—
Miriam’s liberation song,
and Zipporah’s enduring devotion,
Ruth’s loyal loving-kindness,
and Deborah’s courageous power,
Hannah’s silent prayer,
and Huldah’s honest prophecy,
Abigail’s faithful foresight,
and Esther’s saving authority.

You open our minds to understand your story,
and we remember—
we are your children,
your beloved children.
This is your name for us now.

God of (*insert your own name and the names of faithful people you know*),
we are part of the fulfillment of your story.

We are the witnesses.
We remember.
We are strong.

Let it be so. Amen.

**From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same,
the name of the Lord shall be praised.
From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same,
the name of the Lord shall be praised.
So praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.
From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same,
the name of the Lord shall be praised.**

*From the Rising of the Sun
FWS #2024, Anon.*

.....Discussion with the Bishop.....

Going Forth

We look to the center of our being and give
honor and thanks to the Creator for all gifts given
In the center of sacredness
we honor all we have become
to live with the Good Mind

**It is done now, we are complete with the Creator
and now we can go forth to see what we must make
to take us where we need to be
that place where love and peace surround
We go with the Creator with us.**