

# Dedication Of The Wee Souls Memorial Garden

St. James Anglican Church 525 Tylehurst Street

October 7, 2020



***(Gather at entrance doors of St James the Assiniboine Anglican Church)***

## **Land Acknowledgement Smudge:**

*We acknowledge that we are gathering on Treaty 1 Land, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, Cree, and Dakota Nations, and the homeland of the Métis Nation. We are grateful for their stewardship of this land and their hospitality, which allows us to live, work and serve God the Creator here.*

***Members of the congregation are invited to join in the portions of the service indicated by bold text.***

## **Procession To Site**

### **Hymn: Jesus Loves Me**

**Jesus loves me, this I know,  
For the Bible tells me so;  
Little ones to Him belong,  
They are weak but He is strong**

***Refrain:***

***Yes, Jesus loves me  
Yes, Jesus loves me  
Yes, Jesus loves me,  
the Bible tells me so***

**Jesus loves me, he who died  
Heaven's gate to open wide;  
He Will wash away my sin,  
Let His little child come in**

***Refrain***

**Gentle Jesus, with me stay,  
Close beside me all the way;  
When at last I come to die  
Take me home with thee on high**

***Refrain***

### **Opening Sentence:**

“As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you,” says your God.  
(Isaiah 66:13)

### **Gathering**

We are gathered in the name of Jesus the Saviour, Who died and was raised to new life by the grace of God. We come to seek the comfort of God and we mourn and celebrate the wee souls now in the arms of our loving Saviour. We commend this space and these wee souls in this graveyard and wherever they may be to our merciful redeemer, even as we console one another in our grief.

**Cast your burden upon the Lord,  
And he will sustain you.  
Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
And renew a right spirit within me.  
Cast me not away from your presence  
And take not your Holy Spirit from me.  
Give me the joy of your saving help again  
And sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.  
Blessed be the Lord, day by day,  
The God of our salvation, who bears our burdens.**

### **Opening Ritual Prayer Song**

Ray Co-Co Stevenson

### **Proclamation Of The Word**

*Matthew 18:10-14*

Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven. What do you think? If a shepherd has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. So it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost.

### **Honour Song or Dance**

Gayle Pruden

## Reflection

### Forget Me Not

Sherokee Ilse 1993

Our little ones whisper,  
“Forget me not,”  
As their specialness wraps  
Around our aching hearts.

Their short little lives  
Hold meaning and love.  
Their spirits have touched us—  
Each and everyone.

They have left their gifts  
For us to uncover,  
If we open our eyes,  
Our hearts, and our minds.

The road to discovery  
Is hilly, deep, and dark.  
Will we long harbor only the pain  
Or set our wings for the light?

Our lives have been changed,  
Our paths filled with sorrow.  
Yet, their memories embrace us,  
And our love lasts forever.

If we open our hearts,  
Their gifts shall unfold,  
As we  
Forget them not!

### Blessing Of The Prayer Garden

*Leader:* Gracious Creator, we gather on your sacred land to remember and give thanks for the community you called to be the Church... St James the Assiniboine. We give thanks that through the centuries you have called many to respond in love and bring them into knowledge of you. We give thanks for the many who are now in your nearer

presence, especially the children who are buried here. We give thanks for all wee souls that are in your tender care.

This prayer garden was constructed in love to serve as a place of remembrance and prayer. We give thanks for the Memorial and bench that was graciously donated and that will assist all who visit this space. I now bless and dedicate this monument and this bench and our entire prayer garden in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. May all who visit here find peace, love, hope and joy. **Amen.**

### **Intercessions**

Out of the depths we cry to you, O loving God. Come near to those whose hearts are torn with grief and sorrow, for you know and share our tears. Help us to trust your care, so that even in the pain of loss of a wee soul, we may be assured that we do not walk alone in the valley of the shadow of death; through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**

Merciful God, your Spirit intercedes for us even when we do not know how to pray. Be present among us now, that we might commend all the wee souls into your loving care and, by your presence, find comfort, through Jesus Christ, your Son our Saviour. **Amen.**

### **Prayers for the Wee Souls**

**We give thanks for all the Wee Souls now in the arms of Jesus who said, "Let the little children come unto me." May their souls and those who remember them, find peace in the knowledge of your love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

O God, who gathered Rachel's tears over her lost children, hear now the sorrow and distress of those who have lost an expected child. In the darkness of loss, stretch out to them the strength of your arm and renewed assurance of your love; through your own suffering and risen Son, Jesus our Saviour. **Amen**

Heavenly Father, your love for all your children is strong and enduring. It was not possible to know these children as we had hoped. Yet, you knew them growing in their mothers' wombs, and they are not lost to you. In the midst of our sadness, we thank you that these children are with you now, and with you forever. **Amen.**

Merciful God, you grant to children an abundant entrance into your kingdom. In your compassion, comfort those who mourn for their children,

and all who mourn these losses. Be gentle with them in their grief, and reveal to them the wideness of your mercy. Deliver them from all despair and guilt. Grant us grace so that one day, united with their children, they may stand in your presence in the fullness of joy; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

*Officiant:* As our Saviour taught us, we are bold to say:

**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. And 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.**

### **Commendation**

*Officiant:* We entrust these wee souls into the arms of God's mercy.

Almighty God, who formed us all out of the dust of the earth, Receive you in peace.

Christ the Good Shepherd, Enfold you in his tender care.

God the Holy Spirit, our Comforter, bear you to life in God's new creation.

May you dwell forever in the paradise of God. **Amen.**

### **Dismissal**

*The leader concludes with a blessing:*

Almighty God, bless us,  
Defend us from all evil,  
And bring us to everlasting life.  
**Amen.**

### **Closing Hymn: I Am Jesus' Little Lamb**

**I am Jesus' little lamb,  
Ever glad at heart I am;  
For my shepherd gently guides me,  
Knows my need, and well provides me,  
Loves me every day the same,  
Even calls me by my name.**

**Day by day, at home, away,  
Jesus is my Staff and Stay.  
When I hunger Jesus feeds me,**

**Into pleasant pastures leads me;  
When I thirst, He bids me go  
Where the quiet waters flow.**

**Who so happy as I am,  
Even now the Shepherd's lamb?  
And when my short life is ended,  
By His angel host attended,  
He shall fold me to his breast.  
There within his arms to rest.**

Thank you to Ray Co-Co Stevenson and Gayle Pruden for helping us dedicate this space, by sharing their gifts of dance and song.

Thank you to all of the donors who aided the development of this Memorial Garden and quiet space.

Credits:

This service of dedication of the Wee Souls Memorial Garden is based on our Prayer for Wee Souls and adapted from the *Book of Alternative Services*, General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, ©1985 and the Evangelical Lutheran Worship Occasional Services for the Assembly, Augsburg Fortress ©2009.

“Forget Me Not”: © Sherokee Ilse, 1993

“Jesus Loves Me”: text by Anna B. Warner, 1859, music by William B. Bradbury, 1862

“I Am Jesus' Little Lamb”: text by Henriette L. von Hayn, 1778; tune “Weil ich Jesu Schaefflein bin”