

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PRACTICE

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- If you are sitting on a chair or couch, I'm going to ask you to stretch out of your comfort zone for a moment. Move out of your seat and take a seat on the ground instead. Allow yourself to come into a posture and a spirit of humility, as you do.
- You are intentionally moving yourself closer to the earth on which your life takes place.
- As you breathe in and out, think about the trees that produce the oxygen you breathe; the nutrients in the soil that grow those trees strong and healthy; the sunshine and rain that feed them continually; the Creator who fuels the whole system.
- Place your hand on the ground beside you.
- If you're outdoors, your hand might be on or very close to the actual ground. If you are indoors, I want you to close your eyes and picture in your mind the land beneath the constructed space you're in.
- Can you see it? Feel it, breathing and holding you up?
- Beyond treaties & land deeds & rental agreements & mortgages, the earth is ultimately and always and only a gift from the Creator. Right now we pause to acknowledge and receive it as such.
- As you press your hand into the floor or ground beside you, speak a quiet 'Thank you' – first to the creator – "Thank you"
- And now to all of the people who have cared for this land before you came to your current moment upon it. Let it come genuinely from your heart – "Thank you"
- Amen

The next time you're outside I encourage you to re-visit this practice with your hand placed on the real ground.

And maybe every time you're outside, make a habit of acknowledging the land. Give thanks when you watch the sun rise and set over Niagara Falls. Think of the Creator when you hear the wind rustle through the tree leaves at Short Hills Park.

As we worship together now, remember that this land and its people are a gift – meant to be loved and cherished. In return, you'll find they will give back to you, out of love. Just as our Creator designed them to.