



Season of Creation

Earth Sunday

Sunday, July 18, 2021

*An asterisk * invites you to stand in body or in Spirit.*

Gathering in God's Presence

Prelude — “We Are Family”

Song by Jay Beech
Jeremiah Band

Welcome

***Call to Worship**

In the name of God, who creates planets,
the name of Christ, born on planet Earth,
and the name of the Spirit, who envelopes our planet. Amen.
Holy! Holy! Holy! Earth is filled with God's presence.

Christ, we gather in your name
to worship in this sanctuary called Earth,
a planet filled with your presence,
quivering in the forests,
vibrating in the land,
pulsating in the wilderness,
shimmering in the rivers.

God, reveal yourself to us in this place
and show us your face in all creation.
Holy! Holy! Holy! Earth is filled with your presence.
We celebrate the song of the planet!
Sing, planet Earth, sing!

*Song of Praise — no. 556 (sung as written and then repeat st. 1)

“Morning Has Broken”



1 Morn - ing has bro - ken like the first morn - ing;
2 Sweet the rain's new fall, sun - lit from heav - en,
3 Mine is the sun - light! Mine is the morn - ing,



black-bird has spo - ken like the first bird.
like the first dew - fall on the first grass.
born of the one light E - den saw play!



Praise for the sing - ing! Praise for the morn - ing!
Praise for the sweet - ness of the wet gar - den,
Praise with e - la - tion, praise ev - 'ry morn - ing,



Praise for them, spring - ing fresh from the Word!
sprung in com - plete - ness where God's feet pass.
God's re - cre - a - tion of the new day!

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881–1965
Music: BUNESSAN, Gaelic tune
Text © Miss E. Farjeon Will Trust, admin. David Higham Associates

Confession

Sisters and brothers, we come to the God of mercy mindful that the world upon which we all depend is suffering. The sacred creation given to us, the immense beauty surrounding us, the complex web of life supporting us has been broken, not only by others, but by our own hand. Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and one another. (*silence*)

Loving God, you have placed us as stewards within your creation. Instead, we have abused your gifts. The beauty and abundance of the earth is falling apart under us. God of all life,
We confess our part in a broken world.

You have multiplied your people beyond counting and have provided enough for all. But we have poisoned the waters, exhausted the soils and polluted the air. By our own hand we have spoiled the life-giving resources upon which we all depend. God of all life,
We confess our part in a broken world.

As Jesus' disciples, we are called to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and tend to the sick. Instead, we have taken the wealth of the world into our own houses and left your children in hunger and need. God of all life, **We confess our part in a broken world.**

Word of Assurance

As surely as the rain comes forth to water the earth, God's mercy comes to us as a gift, abundant and freely given. The same God who created the cosmos and raised Jesus from death to life brings healing and forgiveness to the world today. You are loved, you are restored. In Christ, you are made new.

Thanks be to God.

Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray.

God, our Creator, as we reflect on the mystery of our fragile planet, we celebrate the wonders of Earth as our home. Help us to discern how we have polluted our planet and to empathize with the groaning of creation beneath us. Teach us to sense the presence of God pulsing through Earth as a living green-blue sanctuary. Teach us to love Earth as our home. In the name of Christ, the Son of God, who is the creative impulse in all creation. **Amen.**

Hearing & Responding to Scripture

A Reading from Hebrew Scriptures — Genesis 1:1-25 (Inclusive Bible Translation)

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

2 But the earth became chaos and emptiness, and darkness came over the face of the Deep - yet the Spirit of God was brooding over the surface of the waters.

3 Then God said, "Light: Be!" and light was. 4 God saw that light was good, and God separated light from darkness. 5 God called the light "Day" and the darkness "Night." Evening came, and morning followed - the first day.

6 Then God said, "Now, make an expanse between the waters! Separate water from water!" So it was: 7 God made the expanse and separated the water above the expanse from the water below it. 8 God called the expanse "Sky." Evening came, and morning followed - the second day.

9 Then God said, "Waters under the sky: be gathered into one place! Dry ground: appear!" So it was. 10 God called the dry ground "Earth" and the gathering of the waters "Sea." And God saw that this was good. 11 Then God said, "Earth: produce vegetation - plants that scatter their own seeds, and every kind of fruit tree that bears fruit with its own seed in it!" So it was: 12 the earth brought forth every kind of plant that bears seed, and every kind of fruit tree on earth that bears fruit with its seed in it. And God saw that this was good. 13 Evening came, and morning followed - the third day.

14 Then God said, "Now, let there be lights in the expanse of the sky! Separate day from night! Let them mark the signs and seasons, days and years, 15 and serve as luminaries in the sky, shedding light on the earth." So it was: 16 God made the two great lights, the greater one to illumine the day, and a lesser to illumine the night. Then God made the stars as well, 17 placing them in the expanse of the sky, to shed light on the earth, 18 to govern both day and night, and separate light from darkness. And God saw that this was good. 19 Evening came, and morning followed - the fourth day.

20 God then said, "Waters: swarm with an abundance of living beings! Birds: fly above the earth in the open expanse of the sky!" And so it was: 21 God created great sea monsters and all sorts of swimming creatures with which the waters are filled, and all kinds of birds. God saw that this was good 22 and blessed them, saying, "Bear fruit, increase your numbers, and fill the waters of the seas! Birds: abound on the earth!" 23 Evening came, and morning followed - the fifth day.

24 Then God said, "Earth: bring forth all kinds of living soul - cattle, things that crawl, and wild animals of all kinds!" So it was: 25 God made all kinds of wild animals, and cattle, and everything that crawls on the ground, and God saw that this was good.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 33:1-9

1Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous.
Praise befits the upright.

2Praise the LORD with the lyre;
make melody to him with the harp of ten
strings.

3Sing to him a new song;
play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

4For the word of the LORD is upright,
and all his work is done in faithfulness.

5He loves righteousness and justice;
the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD.

6By the word of the LORD the heavens were
made,

and all their host by the breath of his mouth.

7He gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle;
he put the deeps in storehouses.

8Let all the earth fear the LORD;
let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe
of him.

9For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and
it stood firm.

A Reading from the Epistles — Romans 1:18-23

18For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of those who by their wickedness suppress the truth. 19For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made. So they are without excuse; 21for though they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their senseless minds were darkened. 22Claiming to be wise, they became fools; 23and they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling a mortal human being or birds or four-footed animals or reptiles.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people. **Thanks be to God.**

*Gospel Acclamation — no. 512

“Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil”

Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.

Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.

When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,

warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.

Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

***Gospel — John 1:1-14**

The Gospel of John, the 1st chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

1In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2He was in the beginning with God. 3All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being 4in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. 5The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

6There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. 8He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. 9The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

10He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. 11He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. 12But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, 13who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

14And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon — “Caring for Our Earth”

Interim Pastor Bill Nelsen

***Song —**

“God of the Sparrow”



1 God of the spar - row God of the whale God of the swirl - ing
2 God of the earth - quake God of the storm God of the trum - pet
3 God of the rain - bow God of the cross God of the emp - ty
4 God of the hun - gry God of the sick God of the prod - i -



stars How does the crea - ture say Awe
blast How does the crea - ture cry Woe
grave How does the crea - ture say Grace
gal How does the crea - ture say Care



How does the crea - ture say Praise
How does the crea - ture cry Save
How does the crea - ture say Thanks
How does the crea - ture say Life

5 God of the neighbor
God of the foe
God of the pruning hook
How does the creature say Love
How does the creature say Peace

6 God of the ages
God near at hand
God of the loving heart
How do your children say Joy
How do your children say Home

*Affirmation of Faith

We believe that God creates all things, renews all things and celebrates all things.

We believe Earth is a sanctuary, a sacred planet filled with God's presence, a home for us to share with our kin.

We believe that God became flesh and blood, became a piece of Earth, a human being called Jesus Christ, who lived and breathed and spoke among us, suffered and died on a cross, for all human beings and for all creation.

We believe that the risen Jesus is the Christ at the core of creation reconciling all things to God, renewing all creation and filling the cosmos.

We believe the Holy Spirit renews life in creation, groans in empathy with a suffering creation, and waits with us for the rebirth of creation.

We believe that with Christ we will rise and with Christ we will celebrate a new creation.

Prayers of Intercession

Rooted in Christ and sustained by the Spirit, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

Tend your church, O God. Encourage bishops, pastors, and deacons in their proclamation of the gospel. Raise up new leaders and encourage those pursuing a call to ministry. Embolden all the baptized to embody your love and justice. Healer of creation, **hear our prayer.**

Restore your creation, O God. Sustain croplands and pastures and safeguard all farm animals and livestock. Preserve lakes, rivers, and streams that offer refreshment. Revive lands recovering from natural disasters and protect coastlands threatened by rising oceans. Healer of creation, **hear our prayer.**

Reconcile the nations, O God. Break down the dividing walls that make us strangers to one another and unite us as one human family. Equip leaders to deal wisely with conflict and guide diplomats who seek peaceful solutions. Healer of creation, **hear our prayer.**

Heal your people, O God. Look with compassion on immigrants, exiles, and all who are afraid or feel lost. Give rest to those who are weary, comfort to those who are grieving, and recovery to those who are ill. Healer of creation, **hear our prayer.**

Nourish this congregation, O God. Prepare a table where we receive food for our hungering spirits. Renew our commitment to provide for one another and revitalize our ministries of feeding and nurturing hungry neighbors. Healer of creation, **hear our prayer.**

You lead us home, O God. We give thanks for all who have died, now citizens with the saints. As you have received them into your heavenly home, so welcome all of us to dwell in your house forever. Healer of creation, **hear our prayer.**

O nurturing God of love, we pray together this prayer of creation:
Jesus Christ, teach us to empathise with Earth.
Make our spirits sensitive to the cries of creation,
cries for justice from the land, the seas and the skies.
Jesus Christ, make our faith sensitive to the groans of the Spirit in
creation, groans of longing for a new creation.
Jesus Christ, make our hearts sensitive to the songs of our kin,
songs of celebration from the sea, the forest and the air.
Christ, teach us to care. Amen

Offering

Please remember to support our ministry. You can mail a check to the office or give online at <https://tithe.ly/give?c=283920>.

Sharing the Meal

***The Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

***Words of Institution**

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

***The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Distribution of Communion

Departing to Serve God's World

Announcements from Pastor Bill; Update on Call Committee Activities by Garrett Paul



1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the beau - ty of the skies,
 2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,
 3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de - light,
 4 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,
 5 For each per - fect gift of thine, peace on earth and joy in heav'n;



for the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies:
 hill and vale and tree and flow'r, sun and moon and stars of light:
 for the mys - tic har - mo - ny link - ing sense to sound and sight:
 friends on earth and friends a - bove; for all gen - tle thoughts and mild:
 for thy - self, best gift di - vine, to our world so free - ly giv'n:



Christ, our God, to thee we raise this our sac - ri - fice of praise.

Call to Care for God's Earth, Our Earth.

Christ calls you to be his disciples,
 to serve him with love and compassion,
 to serve Earth by caring for creation,
 honoring the planet God has created to be our home.

We will remember our planet home!

We will groan with all creation!

We will celebrate with Earth!

Will you care for creation?

We will care for creation!

We will nurture our planet!

We will celebrate life!

***Blessing**

May the Spirit of God, who is above all and in all and through all,
 fill you with the knowledge of God's presence in Earth
 and with the pulsing of Christ in creation,
 through whom all things are reconciled and renewed. Amen.

***Dismissal**

Go in peace. Care for God's Earth, Our Earth! Serve the Lord.
We go in peace, serving Christ and loving Earth! Thanks be to God!

Acknowledgements

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In Person Assistants

Pastor/Presider: Pastor Bill Nelsen

Director of Music: Cantor Emily Bruflat

Musicians: Jeremiah Band (Steve Kidder, Raina and Rebekah Roemhildt)

Greeter/Reader: Mary Spear

Mark Your Calendars

- Upcoming Red Cross Blood Drive July 29th sign up available on the church homepage.
- First Lutheran will provide volunteers to distribute fresh food to members of our community Friday, September 17.

Looking at the Week Ahead

- Bible Study Mondays at 9:30am
- Monday Evening Worship 7pm

Prayers

- We pray for the family of Ruth Kautt (Bill Kautt’s mother) who died recently.
- We pray for Del Brouwers (family-in-law of John and Sharon Malm) who is continuing a long battle with cancer.
- We pray for those who have recently undergone or will undergo surgery: Erika Schuldt, Glen Stryker, Aileen Bipes.
- We lift up prayers for those on our long-term list: Tom and Deb Johnson, Tom Michels, Dick Muesing, Abigail Christenson, Betty Gustafson, Elgene Lund, Tom Stenson, Chuck Petry, Paul Aasen, Bob Cady, Marion Peterson, Joan Williams, Myrene Bunge, and Urusla McRostie, and for all those families continuing to adjust to the loss of loved ones.