



Season of Creation

July 23, 2023 + Care for Creation Sunday

An asterisk * invites you to stand in body or in spirit, and you are invited to read aloud responses found in **bold**.

We welcome you to First Lutheran Church!

we GATHER here on Earth

A Land Acknowledgment is “a ritual intended solely to show gratitude to the land and acknowledge the original and Indigenous peoples from whom the land was stolen.” For some, this might be an uncomfortable practice at first, but during our Season of Creation, you are invited into this ritual with an open heart.

We sing this joyful hymn of praise to our earth and skies, beginning our Creation focus today!

Prelude — “Healer”

Song by Larry Olson

***Words of Welcome and Land Acknowledgment**

In the name of the Creator, the fountain of life, the name of Christ, the pulse of life, and the name of the Spirit, the breath of life. Amen.

We, the people of First Lutheran Church, acknowledge and honor the Dakota peoples, upon whose ancestral homelands we gather for worship this morning, as well as all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to care for this place - this land - and call it their home.

***Gathering Hymn — no. 879**

“For the Beauty of the Earth”



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.

***Confession & Forgiveness — See Green Supplement**

***Canticle of Praise — See Green Supplement**

“Praise to You, O Great Creator”

***Prayer of the Day**

May God be with you. **And also with you.** Let us pray.

God, our Creator, **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 and care for Earth as our home. In the name of Christ, Amen.**

we LISTEN and RESPOND

A Reading from Genesis — Genesis 1:24-31

Word of life. Word of growth. **Thanks be to our Creator God.**

Children's Time — Paraphrase of Psalm 65

"The Earth Is Amazed"

from *Psalm Book: Prayers and Poems for Kids*; Brenda McHugh & Pastor Chris

A Reading from James — James 3:13-18

Word of life. Word of growth. **Thanks be to our Creator God.**

***Gospel Acclamation — See Green Supplement "Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil"**

***Gospel — Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43**

Before the lesson: The Gospel of Matthew, the 13th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

After the lesson: The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Pastor Chris Culuris

***Hymn —**

"O God, Creator of All Things"

sung to the tune ELLACOMBE

There are lots of ideas "to keep creation green" found in this hymn text by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. What seeds of change can you sow in your own life?

1. O God, Creator of all things,
the earth belongs to you!
In love, you place it in our hands
and give us work to do.
"Take care of what is mine!" you say.
"Build up and don't destroy."
When we find courage to obey,
your earth is filled with joy.

2. You move, O Lord, in mighty wind;
your rivers ever run.
The earth contains great heat within;
there's power in the sun.
Creation holds great energy
that's plentiful and clean.
May we find in your gifts the key
to keep creation green.

3. We thank you, Lord, for neighbors'
lands that grow organic food,
For co-op stores and produce stands
that seek the common good,
For biking trails that clear the air,
and trees that clean it, too,
For gardens plots that neighbors share,
for all who work for you.

4. You give us minds to use for you
and hands to lift in prayer;
You make us strong, creative, too,
for your creation's care.
As we recycle and conserve
and advocate and pray,
May all we do show thanks and love
for what you give this day.

Affirmation of Faith

Let us confess our faith using the words of this affirmation:

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, 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

We begin our time of prayer by singing this refrain and will sing it after each petition after the phrase "Hear us, O Creator."

Hope of all cre - a - tion, Heal - er of re -
la - tions, We lift our prayer to you. We
lift our prayer to you.

Confident that God receives our joys and concerns, let us offer our prayers for the church, those in need, and all of creation.

O God, you call your church to announce the gospel of reconciliation and truth both near and far. Guide your church as it seeks your wisdom and shares it, trusting your Spirit bearing witness among us. You brought forth all creation and called it good. Direct policymakers to protect lands and seas. Bring rain to sun-parched fields and protect areas impacted by natural disasters. Hear us, O Creator.

You desire peace among nations and peoples. Guard our neighborhoods from hatred, watch over police officers and firefighters, and teach us to advocate for those who live in fear. Guide our hospitality ministry to welcome all, our education ministry to equip us for faithful living, and our social ministry to enact the gospel in our community. Hear us, O Creator.

You are gracious and merciful, comforting those who suffer any affliction. Sustain your people living with HIV/ AIDS, provide shelter for all who are unhoused, and release any who are unjustly imprisoned. You send faithful people to proclaim freedom from bondage and to renew your church. Encourage us by the witness of the faithful departed, so that we live into that same hope. Hear us, O Creator.

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, in the name of the one who reconciled all creation to himself, Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

*We will sing this
Canticle on some
of the Sundays in
our Season of
Creation and
reflect on ways to
“sort out our
wants and needs”
regarding our
relationship with
Earth and how we
are to care for it
and each other.*

Offering

Music During Offering

Offering Canticle — *See Green Supplement* “God of Stars and Distant Planets”

***Offering Prayer**

God of field and forest, sea and sky, you are the giver of all good things. Sustain us with these gifts of your creation, and multiply your graciousness in us, that the world may be fed with your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

we SHARE 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.**

***An Earth Eucharistic Prayer**

O God triune, how majestic is your name in all the earth.

Over the eons your merciful might evolved our home, a fragile tree of life.

Here by your wisdom are both life and death, growth and decay,

the nest and the hunt, sunshine and storm.

Sustained by these wonders, we creatures of dust join in the ancient song:

The earth is full of your glory: **The earth is full of your glory.**

We praise you for the heart of Jesus, so filled with your love for this earth.

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.

Gathered around this table, we your children unite in this song:

The earth is full of your glory: **The earth is full of your glory. Amen and amen!**

***The Lord's Prayer**

We pray as Christ - our example of love for all of creation - taught us:

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.

***Invitation to Communion**

Come, for all things are now ready. Come to the table with all your kin and share with all in need: the gift of healing for those in pain, the gift of forgiveness for those in sin, the gift of assurance for those in fear, and the gift of hope for those in tears.

May we, who share these gifts, share Christ with one another and all our kin.

All are welcome to this meal - there are no prerequisites or exceptions! We will observe continuous communion this morning - the ushers will guide you.

Distribution of Holy Communion

***Prayer After Communion**

Now may the power of Christ's body and blood reach deep into our hearts, our minds, and our bodies to heal our wounds, to calm our fears, and through us to bring healing to Earth. In Jesus' name. Amen

we DEPART to serve Creation

Announcements

***Sending Hymn — no. 835**

"All Creatures, Worship God Most High"
sung to the tune LASST UNS ERFREUEN

We joyfully praise our Creator and sing this wonderful imagery, augmented with bold Alleluias! May our praise be reflected in our actions toward all of Creation!

1. All creatures, worship God most high!
Sound ev'ry voice in earth and sky:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Sing, brother sun, in splendor bright;
sing, sister moon and stars of night:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

2. Sing, brother wind; with clouds and rain
you grow the gifts of fruit and grain:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Dear sister water, useful, clear,
make music for your Lord to hear:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

3. Sing, brother fire, so mirthful, strong,
drive far the shadows, join the throng:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Dear mother earth, so rich in care,
praise God in colors bright and rare:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

4. O sisters, brothers, take your part,
and worship God with humble heart:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
All creatures, bless Creator, Son,
and Holy Spirit, Three in One:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

***Sending Litany**

Christ calls you to be his disciples, to serve him with love and compassion,
to serve Earth by caring for creation.

**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 and Dismissal

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 the pulsing of Christ within you.

Go in peace! Serving Christ and loving Earth!
We go in peace, serving Christ and loving Earth!

*Postlude — "Earth and All Stars"

Hymnal Arrangement
Jeremiah Band

Acknowledgements

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Land Acknowledgement information and reading from ELCA's American Indian and Alaska Native Ministry by Lance Blackfox (Cherokee), https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Land_Acknowledgement_Guide.pdf?_ga=2.34565537.1246293028.1682013490-89736826.163847015

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Worship Assistants

Pastor: Chris Culuris

Director of Music: Emily Bruflat

Musicians: Jeremiah Band

Greeter: Mary Spear

Reader: Mike Stewart

Ushers: Tom Thorkelson, Patric Pehrson

Communion Servers: Mary Spear, Shanon Nowell

Announcements

- Have you signed up your children or grandchildren for VBS yet? It's going to be held at Trinity, Aug. 6-10 from 4:30 - 7:30pm, and it will be fun for our youth. FLC is paying for our members to attend free of charge! The deadline to register is TODAY.
- Stop in the office to buy Moondog tickets for July 30. \$10 includes admission and a meal ticket!
- Our next Monday Funday will be held TOMORROW!. We will gather at 6:30pm in the Dining Hall to watch the movie "The Star." We will sing Christmas carols and share treats. Please be sure to join us!
- FLC is working on a new directory and we have set up photo opportunities for our members. Appointments are available September 26-29 at 2:00-8:30 p.m. and September 30 at 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. You can sign up for an appointment online at <https://ucdir.com/schedule/login.php> (log in using Church Code: mn348 Password: photos). Committee members will be available in the gathering space after service on Sundays starting on July 30 to assist scheduling.
- Save the date for August 6, when we will be hosting a Swedish Fiddle Choir during worship, fellowship time, and for an afternoon concert! We are providing GAC lunch bags for our 15 guests. These cost about \$10 per lunch. If you can donate toward one meal for a choir member, please talk with Karen or designate a donation to "Fiddle Choir Lunch" in an envelope. Let's show them our wonderful hospitality!

Prayers

We lift up prayers for those on our long-term list: Elgene Lund, Chuck Petry, Bob Cady, Joan Williams, Betty Gustafson, Erika Schuldt, Ursula McRostie, Karen Wendroth, Allen Storkson, Gene Roemhildt, Karen Smithers, Paul Aasen, Shirley Storkson, Claire Cardwell, Alana Gage, Ella Twaddle, Tim Schwartz, and Sarah Smith.