

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Celebrate Creation Sunday
October 10, 2021

Today we join with congregations all over our synod to celebrate the gift of creation, lament the harm done to it, and pledge ourselves to its care.

PRELUDE

All Things Bright and Beautiful

John Rutter

WELCOME

Welcome to this Celebration of Creation. With our words, our songs, and our silence, we enter into worship of our Creator God in three movements: First we lift our spirits joining all creation in Wonder and Awe, Delight and Praise. We also pause here to give thanks to God for all animals, especially those with whom we share our lives. Next, we will lament the wounding of Creation, confessing our own complicity in diminishing Creation's abundance and diversity, its beauty and vitality. We will close our worship praying for our Earth Home, for those who are vigorous in defending creation and by giving renewed and hope-filled consideration to our own commitments.

We begin in silence, attending to our own breath, gift of God's own Spirit/breath. A gift we share with all living things...

Time of centering silence

***INVOCATION**

In the name of God, Creator, Restorer (+), Sustainer

***LITANY OF WONDER AND PRAISE**

Let heaven celebrate! Let the earth rejoice!

Let the sea and everything in it roar!

Let the countryside and everything in it celebrate!

Then all the trees of the forest too

will shout out joyfully...

All the earth worships you,

sings praises to you,

sings praises to your name!"

The Word was with God in the beginning.

Everything came into being through the Word,

and without the Word

nothing came into being.

What came into being through the Word was life..

Lord, you have done so many things!

You made them all so wisely!

The earth is full of your creations!

***GREETING**

The joy of our Lord Jesus Christ, the compassion of God, and the creative power of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.


***GATHERING HYMN**

ACS 1064

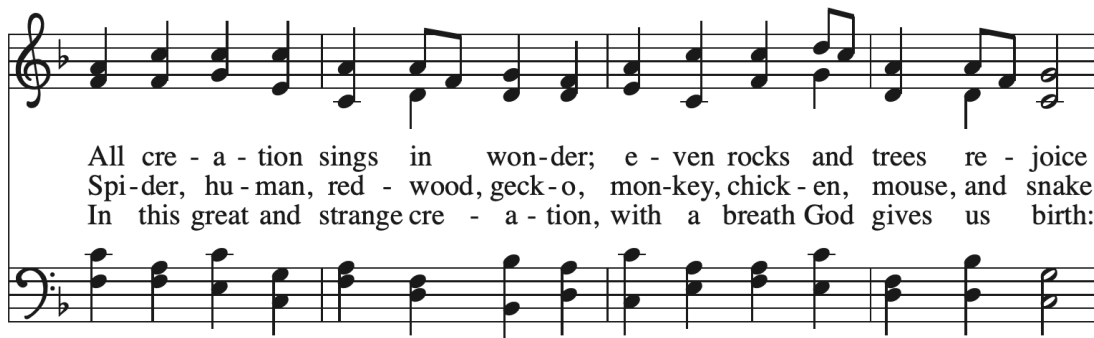
Earth Is Full of Wit and Wisdom



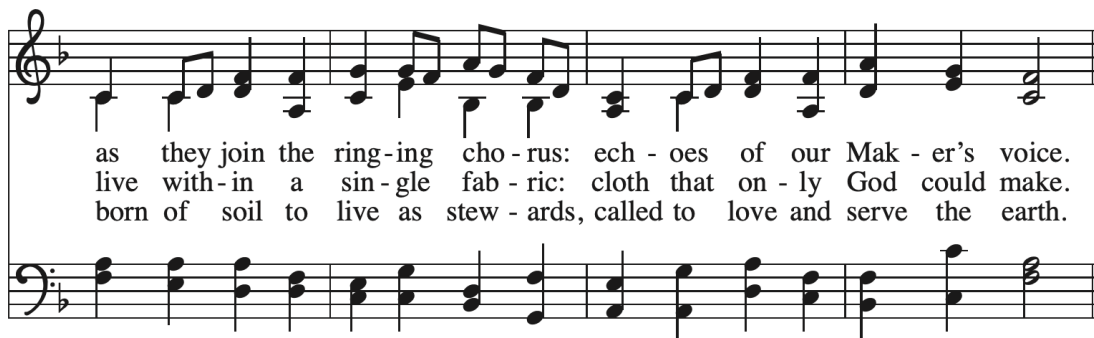
1 Earth is full of wit and wis - dom, sound - ing God's de - light - ed laugh,
2 Earth is full of wit and wis - dom, wo - ven in - to har - mo - ny.
3 Earth is full of wit and wis - dom: pen - guin, pla - ty - pus, and snail,



from the ti - ny ro - ly - po - ly to the tree - top - tall gi - raffe.
Ev - 'ry crea - ture has a pur - pose, ev - 'ry flow'r and bum - ble - bee.
cac - tus, sea slug, oak, and al - gae, from the mi - crobe to the whale.



All cre - a - tion sings in won - der; e - ven rocks and trees re - jice
Spi - der, hu - man, red - wood, geck - o, mon - key, chick - en, mouse, and snake
In this great and strange cre - a - tion, with a breath God gives us birth:



as they join the ring - ing cho - rus: ech - oes of our Mak - er's voice.
live with - in a sin - gle fab - ric: cloth that on - ly God could make.
born of soil to live as stew - ards, called to love and serve the earth.

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

A Reading from Job:

But ask Behemoth, and he will teach you,
the birds in the sky, and they will tell you;
or talk to earth, and it will teach you;
the fish of the sea will recount it for you.

Among all these, who hasn't known
that the Lord's hand did this?

In whose grasp is the life of every thing,
the breath of every person?

Let us pray.

Creator God, you formed the whole world into being and called all creation good. Waters that refresh, the sun that warms, stars and seas and skies. On this day we thank you especially for the animals that you created. Birds that fly, fish that swim, and all the things that walk and slither and crawl. For all animals, wild and tame we give thanks, but especially for those who share our lives with us. Thank you that you have created these companions. Help us created in your image to care for them and all your creation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

SILENT MEDITATION

In praise and gratitude, we will now take some time to ponder some of the works of God that captivate, nourish and delight our spirits.

Consider a place of beauty and awe that your heart yearns towards...

Time of silence for reflection

Think of one or two living things that delight you with their beauty, majesty and/or intricacy...

Time of silence for reflection

Bring to mind a work of art on which your eyes or ears could feast...

Time of silence for reflection

LAMENT FOR A WOUNDED CREATION

We now turn from the joyful joining all creation in worship and blessing to lament our wounding of God's good creation.

We grieve at the devastation of floods and wildfires...

Our hearts break as we move more deeply into the Sixth Extinction...

We consider with concern the dwindling of vibrant habitats in which life can thrive in its awesome diversity...

We look with compassion at the increasing number of climate refugees.

How badly we want to turn our imaginations away from the wounded creation our children and grandchildren will inherit and the impact climate change will have on their lives.

And yet faithfulness requires that we listen to the cries of creation....

Time of silence for prayer and contemplation

Adding to the painful work of lamenting is the necessity of recognizing and confessing our own personal complicity in wounding creation.

We have participated in a culture that takes more than its share of earth's resources, is both prolific and wasteful in its consumption of food and energy, foolishly ignores the consequences of extracting and burning fossil fuels and assumes that we are entitled to a more lavish lifestyle than most of our fellow humans.

In addition, we have often retreated beyond facades of ignorance, apathy and helplessness to excuse inaction and to escape the consequences of true repentance.

Forgive us, Creator God for the many ways we have wasted and abused the blessings you have poured over our lives.

Beloved of God, the one who was buried into the heart of the earth and then raised up to new life forgives you all your sin. Freed from your burdens, be led by the Spirit to do God's healing work in the world.

Amen

FIRST READING – Ephesians 1:18-23

A reading from Ephesians:

¹⁸I pray that the eyes of your heart will have enough light to see what is the hope of God's call, what is the richness of God's glorious inheritance among believers, ¹⁹and what is the overwhelming greatness of God's power that is working among us believers. This power is conferred by the energy of God's powerful strength. ²⁰God's power was at work in Christ when God raised him from the dead and sat him at God's right side in the heavens, ²¹far above every ruler and authority and power and angelic power, any power that might be named not only now

but in the future. ²²God put everything under Christ's feet and made him head of everything in the church, ²³which is his body. His body, the church, is the fullness of Christ, who fills everything in every way.

A Word for God's People.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM – Psalm 36:5-6

But your loyal love, Lord, extends to the skies;
your faithfulness reaches the clouds.

**Your righteousness is like the strongest mountains;
your justice is like the deepest sea.**

Lord, you save both humans and animals.

SECOND READING – Habakkuk 3:17-18

A Reading from Habakkuk

Though the fig tree doesn't bloom,
and there's no produce on the vine;
though the olive crop withers,
and the fields don't provide food;
though the sheep are cut off from the pen,
and there are no cattle in the stalls;

I will rejoice in the Lord.

I will rejoice in the God of my deliverance.



1 The Word who sang the light in - to cre - a - tion,



who spoke to all through proph - et voic - es bold



the warn - ing cry, the prom - ise of sal - va - tion,



shines ev - er as of old.



2 The Word is like the bush for - ev - er burn - ing;



the Word pours down like show - ers on the land;



the Word is like the sun, our fac - es warm - ing:



God's pow - er till the end.

***GOSPEL – John 1:3-5**

The Holy Gospel according to John.
Glory to you, O Lord.

³Everything came into being through the Word,
and without the Word
nothing came into being.

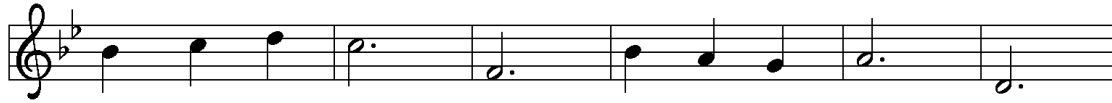
What came into being
⁴through the Word was life,
and the life was the light for all people.

⁵The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

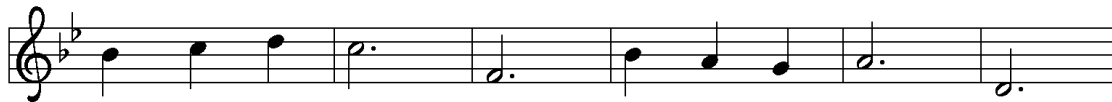
Touch the Earth Lightly



1 Touch the earth light - ly, use the earth gent - ly,
 2 We who en - dan - ger, who cre - ate hun - ger,
 3 Let there be green - ing, birth from the burn - ing,
 4 God of all liv - ing, God of all lov - ing,



nour - ish the life of the world in our care:
 a - gents of death for all crea - tures that live,
 wa - ter that bless - es, and air that is sweet,
 God of the seed - ling, the snow, and the sun,



gift of great won - der, ours to sur - rend - er,
 we who would fos - ter clouds of dis - as - ter—
 health in God's gar - den, hope in God's chil - dren,
 teach us, de - flect us, Christ re - con - nect us,



trust for the chil - dren to - mor - row will bear.
 God of our plan - et, fore - stall and for - give!
 re - gen - er - a - tion that peace will com - plete.
 us - ing us gent - ly, and mak - ing us one.

Text and music © 1992 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Reprinted under ONE LICENSE #A-703197.

*APOSTLES CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
 born of the virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried;
 he descended to the dead.
 On the third day he rose again;**

he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYER REFRAIN

Refrain, v. 1, Refrain

ACS 945

Refrain – All

When you send forth your Spir - it, we are re -

newed, we are re-newed. When you send forth your

Spir - it, we are re - newed, we are re-newed.

Leader or All

1 Man - i - fold your works, O God of might:

Mak - er of the earth, the air, the light.

Wa - ters great and wide and all there - in,

crea - tures that a - bide, let life be - gin.

Refrain

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*Today as we pray for God's care over all of God's creation, we close our prayers with the response: Lord, in your mercy... **Receive our prayer.***

Creator God, we lift to you our praise and delight at the goodness and beauty, the vitality and abundance of all that you have made and still sustain. Lord, in your mercy...

Receive our prayer.

Creator God, we lament the wounding of creation, confessing our own complicity, grant us forgiveness and free us from the temptations of apathy and helplessness. Lord, in your mercy...

Receive our prayer.

Creator God, we thank you for those prophets and visionaries who have raised their voices and dedicated their lives to the care of your creation: John Muir, Rachel Carson, Wendell Berry, Bill McKibben, Greta Thunberg, Pope Francis, and those we now name before you...

May we be inspired and nourished by their courage and wisdom. Lord, in your mercy...

Receive our prayer.

Creator God, we ask your blessing upon those movements and organizations that are leading the struggle to both limit and adapt to the climate emergency that is upon us: Michigan Interfaith Power and Light, Sierra Club, Nature Conservancy and those we name before you... Lead us to partner with those that we might best bless with our support. Lord, in your mercy...

Receive our prayer.

Creator God, as we pray for you to restore health to the earth, we pray that you might restore in us care for all that you have made; hope that our work will not be in vain and assurance that in Jesus all things in heaven and earth will be fulfilled. Lord, in your mercy...

Receive our prayer.

PASTORAL PRAYER

Now to you who can do far more than we can ask or even imagine be all honor and glory, in Jesus Christ both now and forever.

Amen.

Refrain – All

When you send forth your Spir - it, we are re -
 newed, we are re-newed. When you send forth your
 Spir - it, we are re - newed, we are re-newed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

God of abundance,

**you cause streams to break forth in the desert
 and manna to rain from the heavens.**

Accept the gifts you have first given us.

**Unite them with the offering of our lives
 to nourish the world you love so dearly;
 through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

Amen.

***WORDS TO LOVE BY**

Where Jesus is...there is joy, there is peace, there is love.

And that is why he made himself the Bread of Life

To be our life of love and joy.

No one else can give what he gives,
 and he is there all the time.

We have only to realize that.

Dear Jesus,

Help us to spread your fragrance everywhere we go,

Flood our souls with your spirit and life.

Penetrate and possess our whole being so utterly

that our lives may only be a radiance of yours.

Shine through us

And be so in us

That every soul we come in contact with

may feel your presence in our soul.

Let them look up and see no longer us

but only Jesus.

Stay with us

And then we shall begin to shine as you shine,

so shine as to be light to others.

The light, O Jesus will be all from you.

None of it will be ours.

It will be you shining on others through us.

Let us thus praise you in the way you love best

By shining on those around us.

Let us preach you without preaching

not by words but by our examples

by the catching force

the sympathetic influence of what we do

the evident fullness of the love our hearts bear to

you. Amen

***LORD'S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray...

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.

COMMITMENT AND NEXT STEPS

It seems clear that the climate emergency is God's call both to the Church and to individual believers to a renewed emphasis on our ancient task of caring for creation. We ask that you begin in this moment and continue in the coming days to prayerfully consider what efforts authentic repentance and the leading of the Spirit might require of you. The handout attached to the back of the bulletin is intended to help you in this discernment.

For Such a Time as This

Could it be that we are called for such a time as this?

Could it be that we are called for such a time as this?

Text and music © 2015 Jonathan Rundman and Salt Lady Music (ASCAP), admin. Augsburg Fortress.
Reprinted under ONE LICENSE #A-703197.

***BLESSING**

May today there be peace among us.
 May we trust that we are
 exactly where we are meant to be.
 May we not forget the infinite possibilities
 that are born of faith.
 May we use those gifts that we have received,
 and pass on the love that has been given to us.
 May we be content knowing that
 we are children of God.
 Let His presence settle into our bones,
 and allow our spirits the freedom to sing and dance.
 It is there for each and every one of us.
 - St. Theresa's Prayer (adapted)

Let All Things Now Living



1 Let all things now liv - ing a song of thanks - giv - ing to
2 God rules all the forc - es: the stars in their cours-es and



God the cre - a - tor tri - um - phant - ly raise,
sun in its or - bit o - be - dient - ly shine;



who fash - ioned and made us, pro - tect - ed and stayed us, who
the hills and the moun - tains, the riv - ers and foun - tains, the



still guides us on to the end of our days.
deeps of the o - cean pro - claim God di - vine.



God's ban - ners are o'er us, God's light goes be -
We too should be voic - ing our love and re -



fore us, a pil - lar of fire shin - ing forth in the night,
joic - ing; with glad ad - o - ra - tion a song let us raise



till shad - ows have van - ished and dark - ness is ban - ished, as
till all things now liv - ing u - nite in thanks - giv - ing: "To



for - ward we trav - el from light in - to light.
God in the high - est, ho - san - na and praise!"

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

All Creatures, Worship God Most High!

Melody from 1623;

arr. by John Carter

Copyright © 2021 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS026027.

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

2055 E. Columbia Avenue

Battle Creek, MI 49014

269-963-5356

Welcome! We believe God created all of humanity in God's image. Since every person is made in the image of God, every person is part of God's family. Whatever your gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, race, income, mental or physical ability, age, religious background, nationality, or political ideology, you are welcome here. Diversity of skills, gifts, talents, opinions, and experiences are what strengthen the body of Christ. "For all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28b).

Our thanks to all those who give of their time, talent, and prayers for our church and God's work in the world. Assisting with worship today:

Preacher

Laurie Swanson

Assisting Minister

Doug Martens

Director of Music

David Lipps

Singers

Jeff & Diane Andert, Doug & Eileen Martens

Sound Board

Ellis Cutler

Contact info:

Kjersten Sullivan, Pastor

Church Office

Cell: 805-458-6074

Office: 269-963-5356

Email: pastor@tlcbattlecreek.org

Sermon transcripts can be found at: www.tlcbattlecreek.org/sermons

What's next for me in caring for the Earth?

You are encouraged to take something you learned today about caring for Creation and put it into action. Small, simple steps by many people will result in bigger changes than we can imagine. Here are some ideas to get you moving.

- ☯ Pray for Creation and those people in power who can affect change.
- ☯ Identify your God-given resources and opportunities that have equipped you for this work.
- ☯ Begin where you are and make small changes in your world.
- ☯ Write a brief statement as to why, as a Christian, this work is important.
- ☯ Commit to prayers of gratitude and of finding joy in the wonder, beauty, and abundance of Creation.
- ☯ Learn about climate change, its causes and impact--what is being done and what needs to be done to reduce the pace of global warming to adapt to what is already happening.
- ☯ Consider things that often link to climate change: racism, disinformation, inequity, refugees, voter suppression, campaign financing, etc.
- ☯ Listen and talk to others about climate change to learn what you have in common.
- ☯ Join and volunteer with organizations that affect environmental stewardship.
- ☯ Donate in support of those organizations or political campaigns whose message and work in creation care you find worthy.
- ☯ Advocate in your congregation, with public servants from local to national levels, businesses, and civic groups. Your voice may be the “tipping point” they need!