

**Nineteenth Sunday  
after Pentecost  
Season of Creation  
September 29, 2024**



**We Gather in Response to God's Invitation**

THE GIFT OF MUSIC TO GATHER US

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND AFFIRMATION OF MISSION:

We declare ourselves to be a Christ-centered Open and Affirming Congregation, welcoming persons into full membership and participation in the Body of Christ regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identities and expressions, ability, culture, economic status, ethnicity, or family composition.

We recognize that there are differences among us, but believe that we can love alike even though we may not think alike. We proclaim this covenant of welcome to all who have known the pain of exclusion or discrimination in church and society. We invite all people to join us in our faith journey toward greater love, understanding, and mutual respect.

\*CALL TO WORSHIP (*RESPONSIVE*)

*\*An asterisk indicates when the people stand in body or spirit. Bolded text indicates when the people speak.*

*One:* Creator God

*All:* **We come before You today**

With open minds and loving hearts.

**We thank You for the gift of Your creation**

And all You have given us

**We are called to be your disciples,**

Teach us how to build a world of love, justice and peace

**and to be better stewards of Your creation.**

\*OPENING PRAYER (*TOGETHER*)

**Gracious, Holy God of all that was, is, and ever shall be, in your goodness and infinite generosity, you pour yourself out into Creation, from the first flaring forth of matter and energy to this very day. Through the slow unfolding over billions of years, you have brought forth a richly diverse, powerful, and nurturing home for all that You have created. Open our eyes in awe at the**

**Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!**

wonder of the Universe. Turn our hearts to gratitude for your ongoing work of Creation. Awaken our hope and stir us to prophetic action for the dream of a renewed Creation where your justice and love will govern all and all will live in Your peace. We ask this in the name of Jesus, our Christ, and of Your life-giving Spirit, in whom we live and move and have our being now and forever. Amen.

\*SINGING TOGETHER:

“From All that Dwell below the Skies”

Black #27

From all that dwell below the skies, let the Creator's praise arise;

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Let the Redeemer's name be sung, through every land by every tongue.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Eternal are your mercies, God; let your truth stand ever high and broad:

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Your praise shall sound from shore to shore, till suns shall rise and set no more.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

## We Pray for Transformation and New Life

INTRODUCTION

So, as we begin, let's enter into the quiet of our spirits ... conscious of God's gift of Earth, its rich diversity of life, ... conscious of its destruction and suffering from overconsumption, exploitation, and warming temperatures ... yet home to millions of people rising up to restore, heal, and save our common home.....

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*TOGETHER*)

Loving Creator God, you have evolved extraordinary consciousness in the human family and revealed to us Creation's overwhelming power, beauty, and splendor, yet we too often respond with greed and abuse rather than awe, gratitude, and care.

**Loving Creator God, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, the human community is polluting Earth's air, land, and waters, driving countless species extinct, turning our greed into global warming, devaluing human life, and tearing the Web of Life of which we all are a part.

**Word of God, have mercy.**

Holy Spirit of God, you are at work in us and among us now in these times, reweaving the web of life, restoring Earth, our common home.

**Wisdom of God, have mercy.**

May God, our Creator, who is raising up prophets and inviting humanity into one loving community in a New Creation, have mercy on us, free us from our sins, and guide us into the fullness of Life.

**Amen.**

*Time of silent confession.*

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS:

**Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!**

God of amazing life and glorious light, as we seek a new relationship with your created order, may we sense grace and peace as you renew your relationship with us. Amen.

**\*PASSING OF THE PEACE**

*(As a sign of our deep fellowship and communion with God and with one another, let us greet one another with a handshake or peace sign and bless one another with the peace that comes from being in Christ.)*

God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, offers us peace that we might be bearers of peace to our neighbors and our common home. The peace of Christ be with you!

**And also with you!**

Let us share the peace of Christ with one another.

**\*SUNG RESPONSE**

“A Creation Hymn”

*chorus from VBS*

**Glory to the one who made it all; the sea great and wide, the land to provide.**

**Glory to the one who made it all: eternally wise, You made us to shine**

**With your glory, with your glory.**

*Amanda Meisenheimer and Andrea Hamilton*

## **We Listen for God’s Word**

**MINISTRY THROUGH MUSIC**

“A Gaelic Blessing”

by John Rutter

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

O God, Lover of humanity, Joy of creation: Pour out your Spirit on us that we may hear your ancient words in a new key. Inspire us to sing your praise in every land and with every generation, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

**HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING**

**NUMBERS 11:25-29**

*Reactions to two unauthorized men who prophesy during as the Israelites wander in the Sinai desert.*

<sup>25</sup> Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke to him and took some of the spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders, and when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did not do so again.

<sup>26</sup> Two men remained in the camp, one named Eldad and the other named Medad, and the spirit rested on them; they were among those registered, but they had not gone out to the tent, so they prophesied in the camp. <sup>27</sup> And a young man ran and told Moses, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.” <sup>28</sup> And Joshua son of Nun, the assistant of Moses, one of his chosen men, said, “My lord Moses, stop them!” <sup>29</sup> But Moses said to him, “Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the Lord’s people were prophets and that the Lord would put his spirit on them!”

**GOSPEL READING**

**MARK 9:38-50**

*Jesus’ disciples ask about an exorcist working in Jesus’ name. With much hyperbole, Jesus then teaches about the temptation to sin.*

**Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life’s journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!**

<sup>38</sup> John said to him, “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him because he was not following us.” <sup>39</sup> But Jesus said, “Do not stop him, for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. <sup>40</sup> Whoever is not against us is for us. <sup>41</sup> For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

<sup>42</sup> “If any of you cause one of these little ones who believe in me<sup>l</sup> to sin, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. <sup>43</sup> If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. <sup>45</sup> And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. <sup>47</sup> And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, <sup>48</sup> where their worm never dies and the fire is never quenched.

<sup>49</sup> “For everyone will be salted with fire. <sup>50</sup> Salt is good, but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

May these words of scripture speak life into your spirit.

**Thanks be to God.**

MEDITATION:

“Salty Christians”

Rev. Lou Ann Jones

SINGING TOGETHER

“You are Salt for the Earth, O People” Black #181

**You are salt for the earth, O people: salt for the reign of God!**

**Share the flavor of life, O people: life in the City of God!**

*Refrain: Bring forth the reign of mercy, bring forth the reign of peace;*

**Bring forth the reign of justice, bring forth the City of God!**

**You are a light on the hill, O people: light for the City of God!**

**Shine so holy and bright, O people: shine for the City of God! (*refrain*)**

**You are a seed of the Word, O people: bring forth the reign of God!**

**Seeds of mercy and seeds of justice, grow in the City of God! (*refrain*)**

**You are a blessed and a pilgrim people: bound for the reign of God!**

**Love our journey and love our homeland: love is the City of God! (*refrain*)**

## **We Respond to God’s Word**

A TIME FOR PRAYER

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

*You are invited to share joys and concerns we can pray for together. Let our sharing itself be an act of prayer.*

**Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life’s journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!**

PRAYERS ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE

THE PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

**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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

ENCOURAGEMENT TO SHARING OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

*You are invited to place your gifts in the offering basket as you arrive or depart from our worship together. From the explosive death of a star, our Creator has planted the seeds of life on Earth. Through billions of years, God prepared and given us a rich diversity of Earth's gifts to share.*

SUNG RESPONSE: DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God for all that love has done;  
Creator, Christ, and Spirit One. Amen.**

DEDICATING OUR OFFERING (TOGETHER)

**Loving Creator God, through our gifts this morning we offer our lives, our talents, and our commitment to care for all in need on Earth and to work for the restoration of this planet as the common home for all who dwell on it and in it. Receive our offering and transform our gifts and our energies into life-giving blessings for your children and world. We ask this in the name of Christ, Jesus. Amen.**

## We Go Out to Serve

\*SINGING TOGETHER

"Go Make a Difference"

Sing! #199

**Go make a difference. We can make a difference.**

**Go make a difference in the world.**

**Go make a difference. We can make a difference.**

**Go make a difference in the world.**

**We are the salt of the earth, called to let the people see**

**The love of God for you and me.**

**We are the light of the world, not to be hidden but be seen.**

**Go make a difference in the world.**

**Go make a difference. We can make a difference.**

**Go make a difference in the world.**

**Go make a difference. We can make a difference.**

**Go make a difference in the world.**

**Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!**

**We are the hands of Christ, reaching out to those in need,  
The face of God for all to see.**

**We are the spirit of hope, we are the voice of peace.  
Go make a difference in the world**

**Go make a difference. We can make a difference.**

**Go make a difference in the world.**

**Go make a difference. We can make a difference.**

**Go make a difference in the world.**

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**\*GOOD WORDS FOR GOING FORTH**

*Based on "A Christian Prayer in Union with Creation" by Pope Francis from Laudato Si.*

We believe that all creatures come forth from the all-powerful hand of the Creator, evolving through time and space, filled with God's presence and tender love.

May God awaken our praise and thankfulness for every creature and bless us with the grace of feeling profoundly joined to everything that is. **Amen.**

Through Christ all things were made. Formed in the womb of Mary, Christ Jesus became part of this Earth, gazing upon this world with human eyes. May Christ bless us with eyes to see him alive in every creature in his risen glory. **Amen.**

The Holy Spirit guides this world toward the Creator's love and accompanies Creation as it groans in travail. May this Holy Spirit dwell in our hearts and inspire us to do what is good, to care wisely and with love for Earth, our common home. **Amen.**

And may our Triune God, wondrous community of infinite love, bless us all with justice, peace, love and beauty, God who is Creator, Word and Holy Spirit now and forever. **Amen.**

**\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

"For You Shall Go Out"

Sing! #52

**For you shall go out and be let forth with peace,  
And the mountains and hills shall break forth before into song;  
and the leaves on the trees shall clap xx their hands.**

**TAKE WITH YOU GOD'S GIFT OF MUSIC**

**WE RETURN TO THE WORLD**

**RENEWED AND EMPOWERED BY GOD'S SPIRIT**

As our worship ends, our service begins.

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