

Nelson United Church



2nd Sunday of The Season of Creation — Land Sunday — September 13th, 2020

Welcoming Music

Welcome and Announcements

We invite you to light a candle if you are able, and if you can, have a piece of bread ready and something to symbolize “wine”.
Please speak along where you see **bold text**.

Opening Blessing and Christ Candle

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

Holy! Holy! Holy!

Earth is filled with God’s presence.

(Light the Christ Candle)

We come into your presence, O Creator, to worship in this sanctuary called Earth. We invite the land to worship with us:

**wildflowers and mysterious mushrooms,
swirling grasses and goldenrods.**

We invite the farmlands to sing with us:

**wheat fields, orchards, and vineyards,
hay fields, gardens, and wetlands.**

We join with all the fauna of the fields in praising God:

**horses, sheep, and cattle,
snakes and grasshoppers, eagles and crows.**

We invite the ground to stir deep below:

**life-giving microbes restoring the soil,
beetles and worms preparing our food.**

We celebrate the song of the soil!

Sing, soil, sing!

(Today’s service crafted from Resources for the Season of Creation.)

Gathering Hymn MV 174 "Soil of God"

**Soil of God, you and I, stand ready to bear
seeds of faith nourished by God's tender care.
Growing in everyone for here God is found.
All stand together, we are ... Holy ground.**

**Soil of God, you and I, now ready to be
part of God's promise, for others to see.
Open to everyone for here God is found.
All stand together, we are ... Holy ground.**

**Soil of God, you and I, now called to rebirth,
joining as partners with all of the earth.
Living in harmony for here God is found.
All stand together, this is ... Holy ground.**

Prayer of the Day

God, our Creator, whose glory and presence fills all things, help us to recognise your presence among us and our kin in creation, especially in the soil, in the fields, and on the land. Help us to empathize with your creatures who are suffering, the soil that cries out for enrichment and rest, and to serve you as agents for healing the land. In the name of Christ, who reconciles and restores all things in creation. Amen.

Story Time

Echo Prayer

Song AGCS 32 "The Butterfly Song"

**If I were a butterfly, I'd thank you, God, for giving me wings.
And if I were a robin in a tree, I'd thank you, God,
that I could sing. And if I were a fish in the sea,
I'd wiggle my tail and I'd giggle with glee...**

Refrain

***But I just thank you, God for making me me
For you gave me a heart and you gave me a smile.
You gave me Jesus and you made me your child.
And I just thank you, God, for making me me.***

**If I were an elephant, I'd thank you, God, by raising my trunk.
And if I were a kangaroo, you know I'd hop right up to you.
And if I were an octopus, I'd thank you, God,
for my good looks... R**

**If I were a wiggly worm, I'd thank you, God, that I could squirm.
And if I were a billy-goat, I'd thank you, God,
for my strong throat. And if I were a fuzzy wuzzy bear,
I'd thank you, God, for my fuzzy wuzzy hair... R**

Responsive Psalm Reading Psalm 114
Reader: Christine Dudley

Refrain

Hal H. Hopson 1989

Unison

We praise you, O God: we bless your ho - ly name.

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When Israel went out from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language,
Judah became God's sanctuary, Israel God's dominion.
The sea looked and fled; Jordan turned back.
The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like lambs. R

Why is it, O sea, that you flee? O Jordan, that you turn back?
O mountains, that you skip like rams? O hills, like lambs? R

Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob, Leah and Rachel,
who turns the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a spring of water. R

Gospel Reading 18:21-35

The Gospel of Jesus Christ.
Thanks be to God.

Sung Response MV #39 "Mother Earth"

**Mother Earth, our Mother birthing
ev'ry creature from the ground.
Jesus too was flesh and breathing,
kin to all that's green and brown.
Celebrate with all creation:
God has formed the web of life;
Celebrate with all creation:
God has formed the web of life;**

**Christ incarnate, ever with us,
Present in the soil and land.
Jesus bless'd the whole creation,
Ev'ry life by God's own hand.
Celebrate with all creation
God has formed the web of life.
Celebrate with all creation
God has formed the web of life.**

Homily

Hymn VU 307 "Touch the Earth Lightly"

**Touch the earth lightly, use the earth gently,
nourish the life of the world in our care:
gift of great wonder, ours to surrender,
trust for the children tomorrow will bear.**

**We who endanger, who create hunger,
agents of death for all creatures that live,
we who would foster clouds of disaster,
God of our planet, forestall and forgive!**

**Let there be greening, birth from the burning,
water that blesses and air that is sweet,
health in God's garden, hope in God's children,
regeneration that peace will complete.**

**God of all living, God of all loving,
God of the seedling, the snow and the sun,
teach us, deflect us, Christ reconnect us,
using us gently and making us one.**

Prayers of the People—written by Linda Mae Findlay

Communion Thanksgiving Prayer

The Creator be with you and all creation.

And also with you.

Open your hearts.

We open them to our Creator.

Let us give thanks to the Maker of heaven and earth.

It is right to join every creature in praising God.

We thank you, O God, for creating all things, renewing all things, and celebrating all things. We are thankful that Earth is a sanctuary, a sacred planet filled with your presence, a home for us to share with all creatures. We are thankful that every creature joins us in praising you.

And yet, we see many suffer with Earth because of our abuse of your creation. We are grateful that you chose to become incarnate as a part of Earth; Jesus Christ lived and breathed and spoke among us, suffered, died on a cross and was raised to life as sign that all creation might be renewed.

We sing songs that proclaim that the risen Jesus Christ fills the whole creation, reconciling all things to you, renewing all things. And we celebrate your Spirit, which renews life in creation, groans in empathy with every suffering creature, and waits with us for the rebirth of the whole creation.

We believe that with Christ we will rise and with Christ we will celebrate a new creation, reconciled, restored, and renewed.

On the night that Jesus was betrayed and arrested, a diverse community of people gathered to share a meal; Jesus broke bread and passed it around the table and said, "Eat this bread all of you; and whenever you do so, remember me."

After the supper was over, Jesus took a cleansing cup of wine, passed it to those at table and said, "This is a covenant made with my life. Whenever you drink from this cup, remember me."

And so, we come to the tables around which we gather, knowing that your Spirit is upon and with us. All things are now ready. We gather with all our kin and share with all in need: the gift of healing for those in pain, the gift of assurance for those in doubt, and the gift of hope for those in tears. And so, knowing the Spirit is with us, we say together...

May we who share these gifts, share Christ with one another and with all our kin, the forests of the earth, the creatures and each of us contributing to the diversity of life.

With one voice, we pray the prayer that Jesus taught, saying:

Our Creator, our Parent and Life-Giver, who is in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your Kin-dom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For yours is the Kin-dom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Sharing Communion

In your own homes, as you are able and as you choose, you are invited to eat a piece of bread, which we will do at the same time, and drink a small amount of "wine" as we share communion together.

Prayer After Communion

O Christ, teach us to empathize with Earth. Make our spirits sensitive to the cries of creation, cries for justice from the hills and the trees. O Christ, make our faith sensitive to the groans of the Spirit, groans from the deserts, the plains, and the winds. O Christ, make our souls sensitive to the call of our kin, species in pain calling from land, sea, and air. O Christ, as we are grateful for your presence in us and all creation, renew in us compassion for the earth. Amen.

Hymn VU 306 "God of the Farmlands (Tune: VU 75)

**God of the farmlands, hear our prayer,
God of the growing seed,
O bless the fields, for to your care
we look in all our need.**

**God of the rivers in their course,
God of the swelling sea,
where we must strive with nature's force,
our guardian ever be.**

**God of the dark and sombre mine,
God of its hard-won store,
your love through toil and peril shine,
your strength our hope secure.**

**God of the city's throbbing heart,
God of its industry,
bid greed and base deceit depart,
give true prosperity.**

**Source of authority and right,
God of all earthly power,
to those who govern grant your light,
your wisdom be their dower.**

**God of the nations, all our kin,
God of each humble soul,
we seek your gracious aid again:
O come and make us whole.**

Commissioning and Blessing

Let us go from here to proclaim the good news:

God takes on flesh in the strange and surprising. Love liberates from the margins.

Jesus teaches us to be at one with Earth.

May our spirits be made sensitive to the cries of creation, cries for justice from the hills and the trees.

Jesus makes us sensitive to the groans of the Spirit from the deserts, the plains, and the winds.

Jesus invites us to be sensitive to the songs of our kin, songs of celebration in the land, the sea, and the air.

May the God who is above and through all and in all
fill you with the knowledge of God's presence in Earth,
the pulsing of Christ through Earth
and the dream of the Spirit
that all will be reconciled, renewed, and restored
through Christ our wounded healer.

Amen.

Choral Blessing MV 41 "O Beautiful Gaia"

O beautiful Gaia, O Gaia, calling us home.

O beautiful Gaia, calling us on.

Soil yielding its harvest, O Gaia, calling us home.

Soil yielding its harvest, calling us on.

O beautiful Gaia, O Gaia, calling us home.

O beautiful Gaia, calling us on.

Postlude

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