

# God's Green Earth

Twenty First Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday, August 22, 2021



Mixed Media

Laura Curtis, (b. 1996) member of Faith Church

*Welcome to worship at Faith Presbyterian Church! We are glad you joining us this morning. Whoever you are, wherever you come from, whomever you love, whatever your faith or your doubt, we welcome all whom God welcomes, and that means you. As we begin our time together, take a few deep breaths and settle in, to make the transition from getting here to being here, and to prepare your mind and body for worship.*

## Faith Presbyterian Church ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Cat Dodson Goodrich

Joys and Concerns

### GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Prelude *For the Beauty of the Earth*

Emma Lou Diemer  
(b. 1927)

*\*Please rise in body or in spirit; unison parts are in bold.*

**\*Call to Worship**

**Leanora Eubanks**

Life-giving God, we come to celebrate the miracle of creation.

**At your word, water springs forth in the desert.**

Renewing God, we come to delight in the beauty of creation.

**Your Spirit makes barren land into fertile pastures.**

Sustaining God, we come as stewards of the gift of creation.

**Let us worship God together.**

**\*Hymn 309** *Come, Great God of All the Ages*

ABBOT'S LEIGH

verses 1-3

**Call to Confession**

**Prayer of Confession**

**Almighty God, creator and sustainer of life, we confess that we have been careless with the creation you so lovingly crafted. We have taken more than we need, and are indifferent to the consequences: a changing climate, mass extinctions, polluted waterways, smoggy air. Forgive our greed and complacency! In your great mercy, remake us into the people you would have us be, and help us embrace new ways of living for the well-being of all. We open ourselves to you in silent prayer...**

**Assurance of Grace**

**Gloria 591** *Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!*

HALLE, HALLE

**PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**

**A Moment with Faith Kids**

**Prayer for Illumination**

**Psalter Reading** Psalm of Praise & Lament: Psalm 107:1-9, 33-43

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
for his steadfast love endures for ever.

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so,  
those he redeemed from trouble  
and gathered in from the lands,  
from the east and from the west,  
from the north and from the south.

Some wandered in desert wastes,  
finding no way to an inhabited town;  
hungry and thirsty,  
their soul fainted within them.  
Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,  
and he delivered them from their distress;  
he led them by a straight way,  
until they reached an inhabited town.  
Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love,

for his wonderful works to humankind.  
For he satisfies the thirsty,  
and the hungry he fills with good things.

He turns rivers into a desert,  
springs of water into thirsty ground,  
a fruitful land into a salty waste,  
because of the wickedness of its inhabitants.  
He turns a desert into pools of water,  
a parched land into springs of water.  
And there he lets the hungry live,  
and they establish a town to live in;  
they sow fields, and plant vineyards,  
and get a fruitful yield.  
By his blessing they multiply greatly,  
and he does not let their cattle decrease.

When they are diminished and brought low  
through oppression, trouble, and sorrow,  
he pours contempt on princes  
and makes them wander in trackless wastes;  
but he raises up the needy out of distress,  
and makes their families like flocks.  
The upright see it and are glad;  
and all wickedness stops its mouth.  
Let those who are wise give heed to these things,  
and consider the steadfast love of the Lord.

**Sermon**                      *God's Green Earth – Lament over the Destruction of Creation*    **Rev. Goodrich**

### **Prayer Stations for the Preservation of Creation**

**Music** *All Things Bright and Beautiful*

Larry Shackley  
(b. 1956)

**Psalter Reading** Psalm of Thanksgiving: Psalm 104:1a,10-24, 27-30

Bless the Lord, O my soul.  
O Lord my God, you are very great.  
You are clothed with honour and majesty,  
You make springs gush forth in the valleys;  
they flow between the hills,  
giving drink to every wild animal;  
the wild asses quench their thirst.  
By the streams the birds of the air have their habitation;  
they sing among the branches.  
From your lofty abode you water the mountains;  
the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.

You cause the grass to grow for the cattle,  
and plants for people to use,  
to bring forth food from the earth,  
and wine to gladden the human heart,

oil to make the face shine,  
and bread to strengthen the human heart.  
The trees of the Lord are watered abundantly,  
the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.  
In them the birds build their nests;  
the stork has its home in the fir trees.  
The high mountains are for the wild goats;  
the rocks are a refuge for the coney.  
You have made the moon to mark the seasons;  
the sun knows its time for setting.  
You make darkness, and it is night,  
when all the animals of the forest come creeping out.  
The young lions roar for their prey,  
seeking their food from God.  
When the sun rises, they withdraw  
and lie down in their dens.  
People go out to their work  
and to their labour until the evening.

O Lord, how manifold are your works!  
In wisdom you have made them all;  
the earth is full of your creatures.  
These all look to you  
to give them their food in due season;  
when you give to them, they gather it up;  
when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.  
When you hide your face, they are dismayed;  
when you take away their breath, they die  
and return to their dust.  
When you send forth your spirit, they are created;  
and you renew the face of the ground.

This is the word of God, for the people of God.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### RESPONDING TO THE WORD

\***Hymn 470** *There Is a Longing in Our Hearts* LONGING  
verses 1-3

**Affirmation** *from the Iona Community*

**We believe that God is present in the darkness before dawn; in the waiting and uncertainty where fear and courage join hands, conflict and caring link arms, and the sun rises over barbed wire.**

**We believe in a with-us God who sits down in our midst to share our humanity. We affirm a faith that takes us beyond a safe place: into action, into vulnerability, and onto the streets.**

**We commit ourselves to work for change and put ourselves on the line; to bear responsibility, take risks, live powerfully and face humiliation; to stand with those on the edge; to choose life and be used by the Spirit for God's new community of hope.**

## Invitation to the Offering

*If you wish to contribute online, please scan the QR code with your mobile device to be directed to Faith's online giving site.*



## Offertory

**Ayanna Freelon, soprano**

## Prayers of the People and Our Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever.**

## SENDING GOD'S PEOPLE INTO THE WORLD

\***Hymn 23** *God, You Spin the Whirling Planets*

PLEADING SAVIOR

\***Charge and Benediction**

**Postlude** *Final on Lasst uns erfreuen*

Denis Bédard  
(b. 1950)

\***Passing of the Peace**

## LEADING WORSHIP TODAY

**Rev. Cat Dodson Goodrich, Pastor**  
**Dr. Samuel Springer, Minister of Music & Organist**  
**Leanora Eubanks, Liturgist**  
**Ayanna Freelon, Soloist**  
**Andy Fuller, Audio/Camera Operator**  
**Patrick Baker, Zoom Moderator**  
**Dawn Shirey, PowerPoint**

**Please pray for:**

Sandra McWhirter in rehab after heart surgery.

Kay Ballard navigating cancer treatment options.

Delevena Brown recovering from knee surgery.

Ron and Judy Sperling as Ron completes the radiation treatments.

**Continued prayers:**

Nan Pohl

John Reale and the Seavers-Reale family

Ann Scheck

Faith's Homebound Members

## FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



### Neighborhood Free-for-All

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 28**

**10am-1pm**

**On the South Lawn**

(Loch Raven & Woodbourne)

**Come and Help Us Reuse & Recycle!**

Free Household Goods, Furniture,  
Toys, Artwork, and other Items.

**Dedication of Little Free Library at 11am**

Rain Date Sunday, 8/29 from 2pm-4pm



## Prayer Stations for Creation

### Station One: Prayers of Lament and Supplication (Map of the World)

“The iron rule of climate change is the less you did to cause it, the more and the quicker you suffer...” -Bill McKibben<sup>1</sup>

As the amount of CO2 in the atmosphere increases, the water cycle intensifies: dry places get drier, wet places get wetter. This means glaciers melt, sea levels rise, storms get stronger and more frequent, and droughts are more severe, and famine, conflict, and mass migration become more common.

Center your heart and your mind in prayer and consider the map of the world which God created, and loves. Circle a location somewhere on the map to represent your prayers for the earth: for the Spirit to keep species safe from extinction, to bring peace in a place of conflict, or to protect climate refugees and migrants. Breathe in.... pray, “may your Spirit come,” ...breathe out... pray, “and renew the earth.”

### Station Two: Prayers of Thanksgiving Snack

Then God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.” And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. – Genesis 1:11-12

So often, we take the food that we eat and the plants around us for granted, without stopping to give thanks or consider the gift of sustenance found in each meal we share. Eat a bite of the snack you prepared. As you savor the sweetness or the saltiness of the snack, give thanks for God’s creative power made real in the earth’s abundance. Pray that God’s creative and life-giving Spirit will continue to sustain creation. Take another bite, and slowly enjoy the gift of sustenance. Our God provides!

### Station Three: Prayers of Confession and Commitment

“The world is being destroyed, no doubt about it, by the greed of the rich and powerful. It is also being destroyed by popular demand. There are not enough rich and powerful people to consume the whole world; for that, the rich and powerful need the help of countless ordinary people. We acquiesce in the wastefulness and destructiveness of the national and global economics by acquiescing in the wastefulness and destructiveness of our own households and communities. If conservation is to have a hope of succeeding, then conservationists, while continuing their effort to change public life, are going to have to begin the effort to change private life as well.” –Wendell Barry<sup>2</sup>

Watch the images of Creation. Pray that God will give you the wisdom and the strength to care for creation and conserve the environment. Consider what you are doing or can do to be part of the solution to our current ecological crisis. Ask God to help you commit to make a positive change in your life that will help you walk more lightly on the earth. Write a word to indicate your commitment on the post-it and leave it where you will see it each day as a reminder!

### Station Four: Action in the Face of Climate Catastrophe

The US House of Representatives will return from recess next week to consider two major bills: the infrastructure bill and the budget. Prayerfully consider writing your representative to express your concern about our changing climate, to let them know that climate action can’t wait. Ask that they ensure adequate investments in climate, clean energy, and environmental justice be included in infrastructure and spending legislation.

Here are some talking points you can include:<sup>3</sup>

- Protect the Justice40 Initiative, ensuring that 40 percent or more of the benefits of relevant federal legislation be invested in frontline communities, especially communities of color.
- Achieve 80 Percent Emissions Reductions (80% below 2005 levels) from the Power Sector by 2030, to put us on the path to 100% soon thereafter. Make bold investments in more renewable energy sources!
- This summer of storms, fires, drought, and other devastation makes it clear that communities need public and technical assistance to help them better prepare for, respond to, and recover from the effects of climate change.

Sign your postcard with your name, and address your postcard to your representative:

District 7: Representative Kweisi Mfume  
1010 Park Ave., Suite 105,  
Baltimore, MD 21201

District 3: Representative John Sarbanes  
600 Baltimore Ave., Suite 303,  
Towson, MD 21204

As you mail your postcard, pray that those with power to act will do so decisively in the face of this existential threat to creation.

<sup>1</sup> “Why Bill McKibben Sees Rays of Hope in a Grim Climate Picture,” e360 interview and article by Elizabeth Kolbert, Yale Environment 360, April 30, 2019, <https://e360.yale.edu/features/why-bill-mckibben-sees-rays-of-hope-in-a-grim-climate-picture>

<sup>2</sup> Wendell Barry, qtd. by Sam Hamilton-Poore, *Earth Gospel: A Guide to Prayer for God’s Creation*, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2008, p. 160.

<sup>3</sup> Talking points suggested by the Union of Concerned Scientists, “Climate Action Can’t Wait: Tell Congress to Act Today!” <https://secure.ucsusa.org/a/2021-climate-action-cant-wait-tell-congress>.