

*Our mission is to love God, to love our neighbor as ourselves,
and to nurture and strengthen our Christian faith.*

Sunday, May 16, 2021
Presiding – Ruth Cross
Reflection – Margie Oakander

We gather as a Christ-infused Community of Faith

SEED OF MEDITATION

Imagine a world where all the peoples of the Earth, all its governments and all its corporations embrace the stewardship of our blue-green planet and all living things with passion, love and commitment.

Ruth Cross

PRELUDE

WELCOME

LIGHTING THE CANDLES

We light the Affirming and Right Relations Candles to remind us to respect and defend all the wondrous diversity we and all people are created in, and to honour the land we live on, the traditional territory of Treaty 7 and Métis 3 peoples.

And we light the Christ Candle to remind us that the light of Christ is with us always - in the world, in the universe and in us.

FOCUSING OUR HEARTS FOR WORSHIP

To the God of Earth,
we come as creatures of Earth.
To the God of the cosmos,
we come as beings made of stardust.
To the God of mystery and making,
we come to the One who is our source and home.
We come to worship and seek wisdom. May it be so.

Brian Day, *Gathering*, LE 2021, page 36. Used with permission.

OPENING PRAYER:

God of the universe, who is the origin of what is and what will be, we thank you for the wondrous planet Earth and its placement among galaxies, stars, and planets.

We thank you for its abundance of life: for the plant life draped green and flowered over the globe, for all the creatures that swim through the seas, for the astounding range of animal life, and for the ways you are seen and sensed in the creatures of Earth.

We thank you for our creation that is part of the fabric of this world, and for the blessing of being inhabitants of Earth.

God of the universe, we thank you for the beauty of this land that is our home, for flowers and birdsong and chorusing frogs, for the stewardship of all who have come before us, and for all who care for the land in our time.

We thank you for the gifts of water and air, and for the sustaining food that soil and human labour yield, and for Earth's provision of all our needs.

We thank you for this world imbued with beauty, for the abundant generosity of your gifts, your world.

God of the universe, we thank you. Amen.

Adapted from Brian Day, *Gathering*, LE 2021, page 36. Used with permission.

HYMN

Touch the Earth Lightly (v. 1, 3, 4)

(VU #307)

1. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.

READINGS

Contemporary Words

His Holiness the 14th Dali Lama of Tibet – excerpt from April 22, 2020 Earth Day address

Whether we like it or not, we have been born on this earth as part of one great family. Rich or poor, educated or uneducated, belonging to one nation or another, ultimately each of us is just a human being like everyone else. Furthermore, we all have the same right to pursue happiness and avoid suffering. When we recognize that all beings are equal in this respect, we automatically feel empathy and closeness towards others. Out of this comes a genuine sense of universal responsibility: the wish to actively help others overcome their problems.

Our mother earth is teaching us a lesson in universal responsibility. This blue planet is a delightful habitat. Its life is our life; its future, our future. Indeed, the earth acts like a mother to us all; as her children, we are dependent on her. In the face of the global problems we are going through it is important that we must all work together.

Words from Scripture

Psalm 65:9-13 Thanksgiving for Earth's Bounty

You care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly.

The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain,
for so you have ordained it.

You drench its furrows and level its ridges; you soften it with showers and bless its crops.

You crown the year with your bounty, and your carts overflow with abundance.

The grasslands of the wilderness overflow; the hills are clothed with gladness.

The meadows are covered with flocks and the valleys are mantled with grain;
they shout for joy and sing.

Job 12:7-10 Creation is our teacher:

But ask the animals, and they will teach you; the birds of the air, and they will tell you; ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of our Creator has done this? In God's hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being.

SPECIAL MUSIC For the Beauty of the Earth (piano improvisation)

REFLECTION Caring for Our Earth

HYMN

Each Blade of Grass

(MV

#37)

1. Each blade of grass, ev'ry wing that soars, the waves that sweep across a distant shore, make full the circle of God.
Each laughing child, ev'ry gentle eye, a forest lit beneath a moon-bright sky, make full the circle of God.
2. Each silent paw, ev'ry rounded stone, the buzz that echoes from a honey'd comb, make full the circle of God.
Each fire-brimmed star, ev'ry outstretched hand, the wind that leaps and sails across the land, make full the circle of God.
3. Each icy peak, ev'ry patterned shell, the joyous chorus that the dawn foretells, make full the circle of God.
Each cosmic hue, ev'ry creature's way, all form the beauty of this vast array, making full the circle of God.

HONOURING OUR GIFTS

God of abundant life, we offer our gifts with love in response to your great love for us. Fill us with the spirit of the risen Christ and inspire us to live in your way. Amen.

LITTLE GIFTS OF NEW LIFE – Jan Clare

DEDICATION PRAYER

Loving God,

**bless these gifts – gifts of time, talents, love and money.
May each of our gifts be a part of co-creating
and tending to the love, safety, belonging, and dignity
You envision for the world. Amen.**

A TIME OF PRAYER

We pray for the Earth and hold in our hearts the planet that holds us.

We pray for all who suffer from a disrupted climate:

for those who endure famines and floods, droughts and wildfires,
hurricanes and heat waves;

for those who face hunger, thirst and disease;

for those displaced by climate and resulting conflicts.

We pray for our sisters, brothers, and siblings all over the earth.

We pray for our animal kindred and kin:

for each species shrunken, threatened, extinct;

for the plants and the animals struggling in our time to adjust to a
swiftly changing world.

We pray for reconciliation, people to people and people to land.

We pray for ourselves, that we, in our words, our choices, and our actions,
may be true and faithful to the Earth and to you, Creator God.

*Adapted from Brian Day, *Gathering*, LE 2021, page 37. Used with permission.*

We thank you, compassionate God,
that you hear the prayers of our hearts.

Into the silence of this moment I invite you to raise the prayers of your heart this morning.

Silence

We lift up these prayers, spoken and unspoken, in your name.

This we pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

And now we pray together, singing the prayer Jesus taught us to pray.

(VU #959)

**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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you have a pastoral care concern, please email Rev. Debbie Stockdale at pastoralcare@sduc.ca or
leave a message with the office.

Two weeks from today, May 30th, will be Celebration of Music Sunday, led by Brent. Brent invites you to send him your favourite hymn to include in the service, and he'd love to include both new hymns and old classics! Please email him at music@sduc.ca or call him at 403-284-2276, x106.

Stroll for the Soul

The Chinook Winds Region has partnered with Janice MacLean of The Prayer Bench to offer Stroll for Your Soul! Stroll for Your Soul offers 21 days of accompaniment on your Walking Challenge through a brief email delivered early each morning to your email inbox. Each email will offer a spiritual practice, a reflection, poem, or photograph giving direction and encouragement to your time spent strolling or rolling. You may choose to do the Walking Challenge as an individual or with a group from your Community of Faith. The program is available to you free; costs are covered by Chinook Winds Region.

So far we have 7 from St. David's signed up. Contact Jan Clare today if you would like to participate. See the worship email for her email address.

BLESSING and SENDING FORTH

May we be blessed by air and water, by earth and fire, by land and sky.

May we be a blessing to all that blesses us.

May we go with the brightness of Earth in our blood, attuned to the sacredness of the world where we live and listening for our parts in the healing of the planet.

May we go as kindred of tree and seal and deer, of moss and flower, eagle and orca, as kindred of all the living world.

May we go to love and serve the God of Creation.

Amen.

Brian Day, *Gathering*, LE 2021, page 37. Used with permission.

HYMN

It's a Song of Praise to the Maker
(v.1, chorus, v.2, 3, 4, chorus)

(MV #30)

1. It's a song of praise to the Maker, the thrush sings high in the tree.
It's a song of praise to the Maker, the gray whale sings in the sea.

Chorus: And by the Spirit, you and I can join our voice to the holy cry
and sing, sing, sing to the Maker too.

2. It's a call of life to the Giver, when waves and waterfalls roar.
It's a call of life to the Giver when high tides break on the shore.
3. It's a hymn of love to the Lover; the bumblebees hum along.
It's a hymn of love to the Lover; the summer breeze joins the song.
4. It's the chorus of all creation; it's sung by all living things.
It's the chorus of all creation; a song the universe sings.

Chorus: And by the Spirit, you and I can join our voice to the holy cry
and sing, sing, sing to the Maker too.

POSTLUDE