

Prayer: Creator God, we thank you for your beautiful creation. Thank you for all the places – land, mountains, water and fields- that you created. For beautiful cities and remote parks. The beauty that surrounds us help us praise your name! Christ, our God to thee we raise. This, our sacrifice of praise! Amen.

Hi church! It's Pastor Genelle Netland from your synod staff here and I want to share with you today a reading from Psalm 96.

¹ O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. ² Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. ³ Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples. ⁴ For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods. ⁵ For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens. ⁶ Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.
The word of the Lord; Thanks be to God.

For the Beauty of the Earth; hymn verses read by the

Netland family For the beauty of the earth, for the

beauty of the skies,

For the love which from our birth over and around us lies:

Refrain

Christ, our God, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise.

For the wonder of each hour of the day and of the night,

Hill and vale and tree and flow'r, sun and moon and stars of light;

Refrain

For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and

mind's delight, For the mystic harmony

linking sense to sound and sight:

Refrain

For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child,

Friends on earth and friends above; for all gentle thoughts and mild:

Refrain

For each perfect gift of thine, peace on earth and

joy in heav'n; For thyself, best gift divine, to our

world so freely giv'n:

Refrain

Folliott Pierpoint was a man born in Bath, England. In Roman times it was a town on the Avon river and was considered one of the most beautiful places in the world. As a boy Folliott couldn't see the beauty because it was all he knew. When he was 29 years old he returned to his hometown and wrote a song praising God for the beauty around him. The hymn is entitled

For the Beauty of the Earth, and it was written around 1864 and it captures the beauty of God's creation. Between each verse the refrain came from the book of Hebrews, chapter 13, verse 15; "Lord of all to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise."

Hello everyone, Pastor Genelle Netland from your synod staff here and I just want to invite you into just an imagination with me. Have you ever traveled someplace that you've really, really, really wanted to go? For me it's the holy land, going to Rome, even going to the national parks here in America or even in my backyard! After I've taken in some of God's beauty, what do I

do? I grab for my phone and I want to capture the moment and share it with all my friends. And you know after I show people the pictures on my phone or even get them developed (do you remember when we used to do that?) and I would share them with my friends, I would find that I would always say, "Gosh, this doesn't quite capture what I wanted it to capture. It doesn't quite capture it all and I wanted to share it all with you." Have you ever felt that way? I have too! And so I've tried a new discipline now. When I've gone someplace where I've really wanted to go and taken in God's amazing beauty of creation, I put down my phone and I just try to soak it in! Through all my senses, I try to take in, drink in, God's beautiful creation, and then I try to re-create it through my experience instead of through a photograph.

And I thank God in that very moment to be immersed in God's beautiful creation. It's hard not to share it with a photo, but I think the imagery of my mind shares the beauty of God's earth just as well.