

GOD GATHERS THE BODY OF CHRIST

Prelude: “Above All”

Spirit of Joy Band

Welcome and Call to Worship (Psalm 148)

Hallelujah!

Praise God from the heavens; praise God from the heights!

Praise God, all you angels;

Praise God, all you multitudes in heaven!

Praise God, sun and moon; praise God, all you shining stars!

Praise God, you highest heavens,

And you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the Most High,

For God commanded and they were created.

God established them forever and ever;

God fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

Praise God from the earth,

You sea monsters and all deeps,

Fire and hail, snow and frost,

Stormy wind fulfilling God's command!

Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!

Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!

Sovereigns of the earth and all peoples,

Royalty and all rulers of the earth!

Young men and women alike, old and young together!

Let them praise the name of God,

For God's name alone is exalted;

God's glory is above earth and heaven.

God has raised up a horn for God's people,

Praise for all the faithful,

For the people of Israel who are close to God. Hallelujah!

Gathering Song: "Come and See"

Hans Peterson

Refrain



Come and see what God has done. The earth is a - live;



thanks to the sun. Ev' - ry plant that grows ev' - ry ri - ver that flows what a



mir - a - cle gift of cre - a - tion!

Verse



The song of a wren, the flight of a hawk, a ba - by's first bond with her
Pon - der the vast - ness of the night sky. The dis - tance you see is a -
Look at a seed, it knows what to do; new life will spring forth from its
Peo - ple of Faith, Grace beck - ons you home to E - den in all of its



moth - er; first flow - ers of spring a - rise — and sing. The
maz - ing. The light trav - els o - ver thou - sands of years be -
fall - ing. And we as peo - ple of the Di - vine can
splen - dor. Do you hear the call? Re - new — the earth! With



world — is filled — with won - der!
fore — you see it star - gaz - ing.
lis - ten as we know our call - ing.
care — now gar - den and tend her.

to Refrain

Prayer of Confession

L: Sisters and brothers, we come to the God of mercy mindful that the world upon which we all depend is suffering. The sacred creation given to us, the immense beauty surrounding us, the complex web of life supporting us has been broken, not only by others, but by our own hand. Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and one another...

(Silence for reflection and confession)

L: Holy God, we confess that we have lost our connection to our home and our neighbors—to the dirt under our feet, to the air we breathe with every breath, and to the waters which quench our thirst and make life possible.

P: **We confess our part in a broken world.**

L: We have lost our connection to the birds of the air, and the fish of the waters, and to every crawling thing that you have created. We have believed that Your call to “have dominion” made us conquerors instead of stewards of what You’ve made.

P: **We confess our part in a broken world.**

L: Forgive us, God, and transform us into wise and imaginative co-creators with You. Empower us to discover the wonder of this sacred place where you have called us. Embolden us to reconcile with all people who call this place home, and to care for one another by caring for the air, water, and land on which our lives depend.

P: **Amen.**

Announcement of Forgiveness

L: There is nowhere that we can run to escape God’s love and compassion. In the generous life and death of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, we have been forgiven. As Children of God, we are invited into the meaningful work of caring for God’s creation in the name of Jesus, who became flesh to make our home His home.

P: **Thanks be to God!**

Hymn of Praise: “Now the Feast and Celebration”

ELW #167

Prayer of the Day

L: The Lord be with you.

P: **And also with you.**

L: Let us pray... Creator God,

P: **in giving us dominion over things on earth, you made us coworkers in your creation. Give us wisdom and reverence to use the resources of nature so that no one may suffer from our abuse of them, and that generations yet to come may continue to praise you for your bounty; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Welcome and Greeting of Peace

A Message for Children

GOD SPEAKS TO US IN THE WORD

The Lesson: Genesis 2:4b-15

Old Testament Pg. 2

The Bible's second creation story tells of the intimate way God scoops humanity out of the earth, and then puts us in a garden to "till it and keep it."

Song for the Word: "Good Soil"



Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.



Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.



When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,



warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.



Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

The Gospel: John 1:14-18

New Testament Pg. 79

John reminds us that, in Jesus the Word-made-flesh, we see the glory of God come to us to make a home with us.

The Message: “The Lord Is in This Place”

Pastor Jeff Eisele

Hymn of the Day: “God of Wonders”

Words on the screen

Affirmation of Faith-Apostles’ Creed

All: I believe in God the Father, the Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of the Church

(As each of the prayers concludes, *Lord, in your mercy*, the congregation will respond, hear our prayer.)

Earthcare Milestone Blessing for Fifth Graders

L: *God of Creation,*

P: We thank you for these fifth graders and their families. Give them a deep love for your creation. As they grow help them to wisely care for the earth. Make them witnesses to your gifts of sun and light, seas, rivers and lakes, prairie and mountains, plants, animals and the whole human family. We ask these things in the name of Jesus, who walked this good earth with us. Amen.



Opportunities to Offer Our Time and Tithes for Mission and Ministry

Offering Special Music - Spirit of Joy Band

GOD COMES TO US IN THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Great Thanksgiving

L: The Lord be with you.

P: **And also with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts.

P: **We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

P: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Words of Promise

The Lord's Prayer

All: 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass 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 and ever. Amen.

The Communion

All persons seeking the forgiveness of sins and a renewed relationship with Jesus Christ are invited to meet the Risen Christ by eating and drinking at our table. You may choose from red wine or white grape juice in our tray of cups. Young children are invited forward to receive a blessing.

Communion Hymns:

“Beautiful Things”

“Amazed”

Spirit of Joy Band

Words on the screen

The Communion Blessing

GOD SENDS US INTO THE WORLD TO SERVE

The Blessing

L: May God our Creator bless and keep you. May Jesus, Child of the earth, walk with you, and may the Holy Spirit, wind and fire, give you hope and peace. Amen.

Sending Song: “I’ve Got Peace Like a River”

Words on the screen

The Dismissal

L: Go in peace. Care for all creation! P: **Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Why Lutherans Care for Creation

Foundations for an Eco-Justice in the Ongoing Reformation of the Church
For the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation (2017)

1. **Theology:** Rooted in the Scriptures as received by theology of Martin Luther and the Lutheran confessional tradition, we affirm God as creator of all, with an incarnation theology that cherishes the continuing presence of God in, with, and under the whole creation. We see redemption through Christ as a “new creation.” We experience the Holy Spirit as sustainer of all, straining toward the fulfillment of creation.

2. **Cross and Resurrection:** The gospel of the cross leads us to see God in solidarity with the human situation and all creation in its pain and agony, especially the most vulnerable humans and other forms of life. A theology of the cross gives us communion with “creation groaning in travail” and stresses that God redeems all creation. Justified by grace alone, we are freed to acknowledge our complicity in personal and systemic sin against creation, to repent, and to empty ourselves in service to Earth community. Our affirmation of resurrection offers hope for the world to come and the here and now.

3. **Worship and Sacraments:** We affirm that the material world is good and capable of bearing the divine and that Christ is present in such ordinary elements such as grapes, grain, and water—the basis for our delight in and reverence for all creation. Our worship invites us into transforming encounters with God in the flesh and in the whole natural world. We are called to worship God with creation, joining in the song of the whole creation.

4. **Vocation:** Our biblical vocation is “to serve and to preserve” Earth. Because the church exists for the sake of the world, we are called to “ongoing reformation” from generation to generation in response to new needs and current crises of this life. Our vocation to economic/ ecological justice is an expression of “the care and redemption of all that God has made.”

5. **Ethics:** We have an ethic of faith-active-in-love for vulnerable neighbors including the vulnerable throughout the whole Earth community. Liberated from a legalism that limits and enslaves, we live in the freedom to address new situations, such as the ecological state of the world. We do so not to dominate but as servants to the Earth community. We do so not out of fear or guilt or arrogance but joyfully out of gratitude,

grace, and love.

6. Social Ministry: With a heritage rooted in the Reformation, Lutherans have a history of social service to the poor, the elderly, the sick, the oppressed, the marginalized—through hospitals, homes for the elderly, social ministry agencies, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, Lutheran Disaster Relief, the Malaria Campaign, and Lutheran World Relief. ELCA’s commitment to racial justice and economic justice recognizes that ecological degradation disproportionately devastates communities of color and the poor, both in the US and globally. (www.elca.org/careforcreation).

7. Public Witness and Advocacy: The ELCA has official social statements “Caring for Creation” and “Sustainable Livelihood for All,” a fulltime Director of Environmental Education and Advocacy in Washington DC., and Lutheran Public Policy offices (www.elca.org/advocacy). ELCA calls its people “to speak on behalf of this earth, its environment and natural resources and its inhabitants.”

8. Scholarship and Education: Lutheran scholars have taken the lead in promoting ecological theology, ethics, Bible study, and social commentary. ELCA colleges and seminaries have ecological justice programs and Earth-friendly campus lifestyles that prepare Lutherans for leadership in the church and in the world.



9. Organizations for Earthkeeping: Lutherans have led in the Green Congregation Program, made available care for creation worship (www.letallcreationpraise.org), and provided resources and programs through Lutherans Restoring Creation (www.lutheransrestoringcreation.org).

10. Collaboration. Lutherans continually learn from and applaud the ecological commitments of other religious and ethnic traditions. We are eager to collaborate with other denominations, religions, and secular organizations in addressing the environmental issues of our time, along with the related issues of race, gender inequality, exploitation of the poor, and inequality of wealth.

Conclusion. Lutherans are called to listen to the cry of the Earth along with the cry of the poor and to take leadership in these critical issues. Ecological justice is not an add-on. It is foundational for our faith. This is how we seek to love God in, with, and under all creation: as neighbors of all living things on Earth and as pilgrims with all things in the cosmos. We call upon all persons of good will to be participants, with us, in this, the

great work of our time.