



SEASON OF CREATION

LITURGICAL CALENDAR - 3RD SUNDAY



CLIMATE
WITNESS
PROJECT



Cover image by Betsy Ratzsch, originally for Church of the Servant in Grand Rapids, Michigan, representing the theme of Gathering. The image includes a variety of grains: rice, millet (major food source in Africa), thistle, wheat, and oats to symbolize the diversity in our gathering as we join with churches all over the world in celebrating the Season of Creation.

Gathering

Call to Worship

(Please rise in body or in spirit)

Leader: We have been appointed by God to join our voices with every creature under heaven.

People: Let us raise a song of praise and thanksgiving to God.

Gathering Hymn

This version of the familiar hymn uses the original language as written by St. Francis of Assisi.

All sing: All creatures of our God and King,
 lift up your voice and with us sing,
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 O brother sun with golden beam,
 And sister moon with silver gleam,
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

 O brother wind and breezes soft,
 O clouds that ride the winds aloft,
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 O sister water, pure and clear,
 make music for your Lord to hear,
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

 Dear Mother Earth who day by day
 Unfolds such blessings on our way,
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 The flowers and fruits that in thee grow,

let them God's glory also show,
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Greeting

Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: And also with you.

Leader: God of creation, we give thanks for the beauty and goodness of the earth that you called into being and continually nurture and sustain. Our voices join in praise with all creation: with the sea that roars, the trees that clap their hands, and the birds that sing in joy. By your Spirit, weave us anew into your purposes for abundant life, in the name of Jesus Christ we pray,

People: Amen.

(Please be seated)

Lament and Confession

Leader: Beloved, we are made in the divine image, and God called us good. Yet we go our own way, causing harm to ourselves, to one another, and to the earth. So let us lament, and confess our sin to God and to one another.

Song of Lament

(In silence we lament the brokenness in Creation.)

Leader: God of all mercy, we confess that we have sinned against you.

People: We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf. We acknowledge that we have benefitted from and participated in the exploitation of your creation through fossil fuel industries, through plastics that have suffocated our landscapes, through

the pollution of waterways, extinction of species, and destruction of places called home both near and far, and through a broken relationship with the earth which gives us life. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve your purpose of shalom for the whole community of creation. Amen.

Silent prayer of confession.

Assurance

Leader: Friends, hear the good news: Jesus Christ says, “See, I am making everything new!” In Christ, we are forgiven. In the living waters of baptism, the Holy Spirit has washed us clean! Glory to God!

People: Glory to God in the highest!

Word

(Please be seated)

Prayer for Illumination

Leader: Gracious God, as we open the scriptures today, speak your Word to us, that we may be recreated in your Son, Jesus Christ. In his life, may we have new life; in his light, may we see light.

People: Amen.

Old Testament Reading: Genesis 1:1-13

Leader: ¹In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.

³Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

⁶And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” ⁷So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. ⁸God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

⁹And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. ¹¹Then 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. ¹²The 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. ¹³And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

New Testament Reading: Ephesians 1:3-14

Leader: ³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹²so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ,

might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Creation Psalm: 65

Leader: Awesome things will you show us in your righteousness, O God of our salvation, O hope of all the ends of the earth and of oceans far away.

People: You make firm the mountains by your power; you are girded about with might.

Leader: You still the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the clamor of the peoples.

People: Those who dwell at the ends of the earth will tremble at your marvelous signs; you make the dawn and the dusk to sing for joy.

Musical refrain

Leader: You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you make it very plenteous; the river of God is full of water.

People: You prepare the grain, for so you provide for the earth.

Leader: You drench the furrows and smooth out the ridges; with heavy rain you soften the ground and bless its increase.

People: You crown the year with your goodness, and your paths overflow with plenty.

Leader: May the fields of the wilderness be rich for grazing, and the hills be clothed with joy.

People: May the meadows cover themselves with flocks, and the valleys cloak themselves with grain; let them shout for joy and sing.

Sermon

Offertory

Leader: Beloved, everything in heaven and earth belongs to our merciful God. Let us come with joy and offer what God has entrusted to us, gifts as a sign that we dedicate our whole lives to the healing and flourishing of all people and all creation, through Jesus Christ.

(Offering)

Prayer of Great Thanksgiving to God the Creator

Leader: We lift up our hearts to you, Creator God. You spread the dazzling canopy of the heavens and established the deep foundations of the earth; you lifted up mountains and hills, and poured out oceans and rivers. You filled the earth, teeming with life, revealing your glory, and made human beings in your image to help care for this world, our beautiful and precious home.

When human violence, corruption, and greed laid waste to your good creation, still you called us, again and again, to return. You revealed your righteous Law to show the path.

Then, in the fullness of time, out of your great love for the world, you sent Jesus Christ to redeem and restore the earth, heal our brokenness, and make all things new. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, with all creatures great and small, and with all the faithful of every time and place who forever sing to the glory of your name:

People: Holy, holy, holy, Lord. God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Hymn: All on Earth and All in Heaven. *Lift Up Your Hearts* #922

Sending

Benediction

Leader: May the One who creates us, go with and before us; may the One who saves us, lead us into everlasting life; may the One who gives us wisdom, guide us in the way of justice and peace.

People: Amen.

Leader: Go and join the song of creation, go and attend to the groaning of creation, go and work for the healing and wholeness of all the earth.

People: Alleluia! Amen!

All sing: last stanza of “All Creatures of Our God and King”

Let all things their Creator bless,
And worship God in humbleness,
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
and praise the Spirit, Three in One:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

“All Creatures of Our God and King” Text: St. Francis of Assisi, tr. William H. Draper; music: Geistliche Kirchengesänge, arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams

Thank you to Church of the Servant in Grand Rapids, Michigan for allowing adaptations of their original liturgies.

Appendix

If you are celebrating communion, you may include the following in the liturgy according to the order of your service.

Table

Preparing the Table

Leader: Sisters and brothers in Christ, everything in heaven and earth belongs to our merciful God. Let us come with joy and offer what God has entrusted to us, gifts as a sign that we dedicate our whole lives to the healing and flourishing of all people and all creation, through Jesus Christ.

People come forward and place their tithes and offerings in the baskets at the communion table. A church member brings forward the bread and wine for the communion.

Offertory

Prayer of Great Thanksgiving to God the Creator

Leader: We lift up our hearts to you, Creator God. You spread the dazzling canopy of the heavens and established the deep foundations of the earth; you lifted up mountains and hills, and poured out oceans and rivers. You filled the earth, teeming with life, revealing your glory, and made human beings in your image to help care for this world, our beautiful and precious home.

When human violence, corruption, and greed laid waste to your good creation, still you called us, again and again, to return. You revealed your righteous Law to show the path.

Then, in the fullness of time, out of your great love for the world, you sent Jesus Christ to redeem and restore the earth, heal our brokenness, and make all things new.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels, with prophets,

apostles, and martyrs, with all creatures great and small, and with all the faithful of every time and place who forever sing to the glory of your name:

People: *Holy, holy, holy Lord.* God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

(Please be seated.)

...for the work of Jesus Christ

Leader: You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh in the body of a woman. Christ is the Word that brings order to chaos, revealing all things, birthing life by the Spirit. Christ is the Bread of Life, feeding the poor and hungry, giving wisdom and strength for each day. Christ is the True Vine, binding us together in unity of the Spirit, empowering us to bear fruit for the world. And so we give thanks that this same Christ gave us this memorial of his sacrifice until his coming again.

On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

People: We who are many are one body for we all share the same loaf.

Leader: After supper, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and said, "Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

People: The cup which we all share is our fellowship in the blood of Christ.

Leader: Remembering God's faithfulness to us and to all of creation through Jesus Christ, let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

People: *Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.*

...for the presence of the Holy Spirit

Leader: God of all creation, through your goodness we receive this bread and wine: fruit of the earth and work of human hands. By your Holy Spirit, may this bread and wine become for us the bread of life and the cup of salvation. Make us one with Christ, and one with all who share this meal. Heal your stricken world today, that the groaning of the soil, the skies, and the seas may be transformed to rejoicing

as you remember your covenant and reveal your glory.

People: Amen.

The Invitation to the Table

(Please rise in body or in spirit)

Leader: Congregation in the Lord Jesus Christ, our loving Redeemer has prepared this table for all who love and trust in him for their salvation. Anyone baptized in the name of the Triune God is now invited to come with gladness to this holy meal. The gifts of God for the people of God.

Communion

Thanksgiving

Leader: Let us give thanks to God.

People: We give you thanks, eternal God, that you have fed us in this sacrament. Fill us with a vision of your new creation where all may have abundant life; through Jesus Christ, the bread of life. Amen.