

Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church
E.L.C.A.



Earth Day:
Caring for
the Gift God
Gave Us

Earth Day Celebration Service
Sunday, April 26th, 2026

Bulletin Donated By:

Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church—E.L.C.A.

Earth Day Celebration Service

Sunday, April 26th, 2026

Ministers:

You, All Members of -G.A.

Pastor:

Jaime Decker

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Prelude Music:

Welcome

L: Family of Faith, welcome to GA Lutheran Church. Today’s worship is a unique service, for today we are drawing our attention to creation care. I am sure you are aware of efforts in our country and our world to advocate for the Earth’s care and sustainability. However, it is not only policy that calls us to be caretakers and advocates. Our faith also calls us to be caretakers and advocates for God’s good Earth. So today, we will sing of God’s good creation. Today, we will pray for the well-being of all God’s creatures—from the plants to the marshlands, from the oceans to the rivers, from the land to the sky. Today we will look at the Earth and declare, “It is good,” alongside our Creator.

Friends, let us worship our Holy Creator. Please join me in our call to worship:

Call to Worship

L: Church, where do you see God?

C: We see God in the wide reach of sky, in the towering height of mountains, in the depths of the sea, and in the vividness of flowers.

L: Church, where else do you see God?

C: We see God in early morning sunrises, in the quiet after a snow, in the reaching of rivers and tributaries, and in the stars that light the night.

L: And in your seeing, what do you know?

C: We know that God is here, and we know that God is good.

L: Let us worship the God of creation! **C: Let us worship our with-us God.**

Opening Hymn

Morning Has Broken

ELW #556

Call to Confession

One of the things that is amazing about the Earth is that even after a fire, a flood, or an oil spill, new life always finds a way to grow. Friends, God’s grace is like that. No matter the mistakes we make, the mess we create, or the harm we do, God’s love for us is unending. Trusting in that good news, let us turn to the prayer of confession with confidence that even here, grace is in bloom.

Prayer of Confession

ALL: Creator God, We have lost our way.

L: In the beginning, humanity was instructed to care for creation. However, in pursuit of our own wealth and efficiency, we have done the opposite.

ALL: The oceans are heavy with plastic. The ice caps are melting by the hour. Animals and plants are treated as a means to an end. Corporations fill the atmosphere with pollution. Policies and practices are slow to change.

L: Forgive us, O God.

ALL: Bring us back to the garden.

L: Fill our hearts with compassion for your world.

ALL: Show us where we can make a difference, and help us to see your fingerprints in every glimpse of the natural world.

L: With hope in our hearts for a better day, we pray:

ALL: Amen.

Words of Forgiveness

L: Friends, when it comes to creation care, we have a lot to confess. But even here, even now, God's grace for us is like a mighty rushing stream. So trusting in God's unrelenting mercy, may we be inspired to action. Join me in proclaiming these words of forgiveness:

Just as flowers that bloom after the fire, there is nothing that God cannot redeem.

ALL: We are known. We are loved. We are made new.

L: So may we roll up our sleeves and get our hands dirty **ALL: with the work of justice,**

L: with the work of compassion, **ALL: with the work of mercy.**

L: Thanks be to God for this new day! **ALL: Alleluia! Amen.**

Passing the Peace

Family of faith, God's grace is good news. God's grace is worth celebrating! So in the spirit of joy and abundant gratitude, we are going to celebrate this mercy by passing the peace with our neighbors. For the next few minutes, we invite you to pass the peace through a hug, a high five, a smile, a peace sign with your hands, a fist bump, or a handshake. If you are joining us from home today, then peace be with you also. May the joy of this moment buoy your spirit and remind you of all the ways God delights in you. Family of faith: The peace of Christ be with you!

ALL: And also with you!

Prayer for Illumination

L: Creator God,

ALL: You speak to us in a thousand different ways— in the wind that rustles through the trees, in early morning’s birdsong, and in the first blooms of spring. Everywhere we look, creation whispers of your creativity. So as we turn our hearts toward scripture, clear the distractions from our minds. Silence in us any voice but your own, so that like the birds, and the flowers, and the mighty rushing wind, we might sing of your goodness. We are leaning in. We are in awe. We are listening. Amen.

Readings

First Reading: Genesis 1: Six Days of Creation and the Sabbath

1 When God began to create the heavens and the earth, **2** the earth was complete chaos, and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. **3** Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. **4** And God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. **5** God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. **6** And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” **7** So 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. **8** God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day. **9** And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. **10** God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. **11** 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. **12** 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. **13** And there was evening and there was morning, the third day. **14** And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, **15** and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. **16** God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. **17** God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, **18** to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. **19** And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day. **20** And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” **21** So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. **22** God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” **23** And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day. **24** And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. **25** God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind and the cattle of every kind and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good. **26** Then God said, “Let us make humans in our image, according to our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over the cattle and over all the wild animals of the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.” **27** So God created humans in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he

created them. ²⁸ God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." ²⁹ God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. ³⁰ And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the air and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. ³¹ God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Psalm 8 (Please read Responsively)

¹ O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens.

² Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark because of your foes,
to silence the enemy and the avenger.

³ When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you have established;

⁴ what are humans that you are mindful of them,
mortals that you care for them?

⁵ Yet you have made them a little lower than God
and crowned them with glory and honor.

⁶ You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under their feet,

⁷ all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field,

⁸ the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

⁹ O Lord, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Message

Hymn of Day:

For the Beauty of the Earth

ELW #879

Affirmation of Faith

We believe in a creating God who delights in the Earth and calls it good. We believe in the Holy Spirit who moves through creation like a mighty rushing wind. We believe in Jesus of Nazareth who calmed the seas and told stories of mustard seeds, birds, and valleys. We believe that humanity is undeniably intertwined with creation, and that creation is undeniably intertwined with God. Therefore, we believe our faith calls us to care for creation: to plant flowers, to speak tenderly to animals, to thank the Earth for her bounty, to clean the streams, to protect the forests, and to live like we are standing on holy ground, because we are. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Offering

Ways To Give Offering: In Person, Venmo and Online www.galutheranchurch.org



*Because you give...
we worship, fellowship, learn, serve and grow.
Thank you for your generosity!*

Offering Song

Give Thanks

Gray #170

Prayer of Gratitude After the Offering

L: Life Giver and Sustainer, our gratitude for you knows no end. From starry skies to purple sunsets, from weeping willows to fireflies, from babbling brooks to flitting hummingbirds, you have gifted us with so much. So today, as an act of gratitude, we draw close to you with both our prayers and our offerings. Creator God, only you know every prayer that has been written in this room. Only you can sift through these words and see all of us—our gratitude and our heartache. So take these prayers and guide our feet. Comfort where there is comfort needed. Celebrate where there is joy. Guide where there is fear. You know the prayers on our hearts, and for that, we give you thanks. In addition to our written prayers, O God, we also give you our tithes and offerings. And we pray, gracious Creator, that you might use these tithes, offerings, and loose change to care for your creation. Not a day goes by when we do not fret about the state of this planet. Use our gifts to do some good here. With full hearts and hopeful spirits we give, we pray, we turn it all over to you. **All: Amen.**

Meal

Holy Communion

*Great Thanksgiving	Pg. 206
*Holy, Holy, Holy	Pg. 207
*Words of Institution	Pg. 207
*Lord's Prayer	Pg. 208

***Invitation to Communion**

P: Come to the table of new life. Receive the risen Lord.

Communion Distribution (All Are Welcome to Receive Communion Here at GA Church)

***Lamb of God**

Pg. 208

***Post Communion Blessing**

*** Post Communion Prayer**

P: Holy One, through this meal you have made your home among us and are making all things new. Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts, to love our enemies, and to bring your healing to the nations. In the name of Jesus, **C: Amen.**

Blessing:

Now, as you leave this place, may your heart swell for the beauty of this Earth. May it break for the suffering of creation. May you burn with the conviction to do something about it, and may you always be aware of the holy ground beneath your feet. In the name of the Creator, the created, and the source of creativity: Go in peace, and do the good that is yours to do. Amen.

Sending Hymn:

Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

ELW #836

***Dismissal**

P: Go in peace. Praise the Lord. Alleluia!

C: Share the Good News of God’s Word and to serve the community and the world.

Thanks be to God.

*Postlude

Mission Statement of Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church (Adopted in 2022)

To share the Good News of God’s Word and to serve the community and the world.

Matthew 22:39 ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

Matthew 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name
of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

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We celebrate weekly Holy Communion. We welcome all who believe in the Risen Christ and who find in the sacrament our Lord’s real presence for the forgiveness of sins and the renewal of life. If you receive communion in your home congregation, you are invited to receive it here at G.A. Red wine and white grape juice will be offered to you in Christ’s name. You may choose your preference. If you are unable to receive wheat bread, or wine, be sure that in a single element you receive the Presence and all the gifts of the sacrament. *From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2026 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted and live streamed by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #35904. CCLI# 3138595 and #21256999*