



CELEBRATING OUR EARTH:
A Gift from God

Earth Day Worship
Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church
April 23rd, 2023

Lord, grant us the wisdom to care for the earth and till it. Help us to act now for the good of future generations and all your creatures. Help us to become instruments of your creation, guided by the path of your love.

Welcome/Announcements

Call To Worship

L: God of abundance, the land we walk is holy ground.

C: Send forth your grace to help us heal the wounds of this world.

L: Open up the soil of our hearts to your word of life.

C: May we be strengthened by this time together and grow into who you are creating us to be.

Opening Hymn

For the Beauty of the Earth (Vs 1, 2, 5)

ELW #879

Confession and Forgiveness

C: God of Perfect Rest, we confess before you and one-another that we have failed to love you and our neighbor fully, and that we have tried to cover our sins by our own power. We have run busily from one activity to the next, one possession to the next, one achievement to the next, and one love to the next, all to avoid admitting our need for your grace. Uncurl us from our self-obsession by the love of your Son. Forgive our sins, help us to accept your love, and guide us on right paths for the sake of the world you so deeply love. Amen.

L: God Creator, who is rich in mercy and abundant in love, hears our prayers and crosses eternity to come alongside us. It is my honor and delight as a fellow saint and sinner, created, redeemed, and loved by the Creator, + Redeemer, and Sanctifier to announce to you the complete forgiveness of your sins and your birth into new life through Jesus Christ. **C: Thanks be to God!**

Prayer of the Day

L: Let us pray, **C: The eyes of all look to you, O God. Turn our hearts and minds to your open hand that provides for every living thing, so that we may know your generosity and participate in the healing and restoration of all that you have made, in Jesus name we pray. Amen.**

Psalm 8

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

You have set your glory above the heavens.

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

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

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

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

You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;

you have put all things under their feet,

all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

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

First Reading: 1 Peter 1:17-23 (The Inclusive Bible translation)

Make your minds ready for action, and be sober. Put your hope in nothing but the grace that will be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. Be children of obedience. Don't behave the way you did when, in your ignorance, your desires were all you knew. Be holy in everything you do, since it is the Holy One who has called you - as scripture says, "You will be holy, for I am holy."

When you pray, you call on Abba God, who judges everyone impartially on the basis of their actions. Since this is so, conduct yourself reverently during your sojourn in a foreign land. Realize that you were delivered from the futile way of life your ancestors handed on to you, not by an diminishable sum of gold or silver but by Christ's blood, which is beyond all price: the blood of a spotless, unblemished lamb foreknown before the world's foundation and revealed for your sake in these last days. It is through Christ that you are believers in God, the God who raised Christ from the dead into glory. Your faith and hope, then, are centered in God.

By obedience and truth you have purified yourselves for a genuine love of your sisters and brothers. Therefore, love one another constantly, from the heart. Your rebirth has come not from a perishable seed but from an imperishable one - the living and enduring word of God.

Holy Gospel: Luke 24:13-35

Now on that same day [when Jesus had appeared to Mary Magdalene,] two [disciples] were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him." Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Sermon

Hymn of the Day

This Is My Father's World

ELW #824

Confession of Faith (A New Creed (1968) United Church of Canada)

We are not alone, we live in God's world. We believe in God: who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit. We trust in God. We are called to be the Church: to celebrate God's presence, to live with respect in Creation, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope. In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

Intercessory Prayers

C: O God, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen:

L: Your great love has placed us in your creation, and you commanded us to care for it. Your works declare glory and strength, and you call us to praise and reverence. Where we have degraded or destroyed earth's bounty, forgive us. Where we have taken beauty and majesty for granted, have mercy upon us. Where we have become estranged from the creatures with whom we share this planet, grant us your peace. Creator God, **C: hear our prayer.**

L: As we join together in celebration of the Earth, we know that there are many things that foil our efforts and our responsibilities to your creation. The issues of the environment and conservation are often associated with differing views. For the openness to learn about environmental issues and concerns, we pray: Creator God, **C: hear our prayer.**

L: In such a great and complex world, we often feel so small and helpless, as if what we do has no impact on the rest of your creation. Yet we know that because we are created in your image, we are connected with the entirety of creation, just as you are. For an awareness of how our own lifestyles can be modified to help protect the environment, we pray: Creator God, **C: hear our prayer.**

L: In an environmental catastrophe, the people who suffer first and greatest are often the poorest of the poor. Yet we rarely hear their voices, silenced as they are by the realities of global life. For those who live in poverty and suffer the devastating effects of flooding, drought, and other environmental issues, we pray: Creator God, **C: hear our prayer.**

L: As the snow melts and the water rises and brings the green of spring, it reminds us that we live together in a fragile community of life. For our own community, our city and state, we pray: Creator God, **C: hear our prayer.**

L: As members of this creation, we live and die according to the cycle of life that is common in all the world. For those in our midst who suffer from sickness and death, we pray: Creator God, **C: hear our prayer.**

L: God of the sun and the moon of the mountains, deserts and plains; God of the mighty oceans, of rivers, lakes and streams; God of all creatures that live in the seas and fly in the air; God of every living thing that grows and moves on this sacred Earth, We are formed by Christ into your people, called to bring the world into your marvelous light. As the Body of Christ, we are messengers of ecological vocation. We are entrusted with caring for this Earth which you have created. Help us to love and respect it, to repair what we have damaged, to care for what you have made good and holy. Give us the wisdom and the passion to change our mind, our hearts, and our ways. Let us be the change we pray for, bringing about ecological conversion which grows and spreads to every corner of the Earth, for our sake now and for every generation which is to come. **C: Amen.**

Sharing of the Peace

Offering

Holy Communion

***Words of Institution**

Pg. 207

***Lord's Prayer**

Pg. 208

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

Benediction

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

C: Amen

Closing Song

Have You Thanked The Lord?

ELW #829

Dismissal

L: Go in peace, care for all creation,

C: By sharing the Good News of God's Word and serving the community and the world.

Thanks be to God.

Bulletin Donated: Happy Birthday Large! 🎂

Mission Statement of Gustaf 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.

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