



Caring for God's Creation

February 26, 2023

11 a.m.

Flowers given by: **Mel and Deb Pohlman**, in memory of **our parents**, and in honor of **our children and grandchildren**

PRELUDE

From Sonata VI, Andante

Felix Mendelssohn

INVITATION to WORSHIP

One: Creation continues to preach and teach us about our Creator.

Many: **From the stars that twinkle calling us to shine bright to the snail that invites us to slow down.**

One: We gather open to God's first testament of creation.

Many: **We gather open to the truth of the psalms that hills, streams, and trees have something to tell us if we listen.**

One: So come, people of God, made from stardust and soil, remember the truth that we are connected to all that is above, around, and beneath us.

Many: **We celebrate the web of interconnectivity and God who spins the silky bonds between us and all that is. Alleluia and Amen.**

I sing the mighty power of God that made the mountains rise, That spread the flowing seas abroad, and built the lofty skies. I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day; The moon shines full at God's command, and all the stars obey.

I sing the goodness of our God that filled the earth with food; God formed the creatures with a word, and then pronounced them good. Oh, how your wonders are displayed, where'er I turn my eye: If I survey the ground I tread, or gaze upon the sky!

On earth there's not a plant or flowers but makes your glory known. The clouds arise and spread their showers by order from your throne. All life is but a gift from you and ever in your care; Wherever people gather, you, O God, are present there.

*OPENING PRAYER

By Rev. Dr. Howard Thurman

I am surrounded by the love of God. The earth beneath my feet is the great womb that nourishes me. I prayerfully acknowledge all my life; my very body depends upon creation. There is at work in the soil a mystery by which the death of seed is reborn a thousand-fold in newness of life. The magic of wind, sun and rain creates; a climate that nourishes every living thing. It is law and more than law; it is order, and more than order – there is a brooding tenderness out of which it all comes. In the contemplation of the earth, I know that I am surrounded by the love of God. Amen.

*SUNG RESPONSE

Fairest Lord Jesus

Fairest Lord Jesus, Ruler of all nature, O thou of God to earth come down, thee will I cherish, thee will I honor, thou, my soul's glory, joy, and crown.

ENGAGING SCRIPTURE

Matthew 6:25-34

²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet God feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to your span of life? ²⁸ And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹ yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. ³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will God not much more clothe you—you of little faith? ³¹ Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ ³² For it is the gentiles who seek all these things, and indeed God knows that you need all these things. ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and God's justice, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ “So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.

SERMON

Where We Call Home

Rev. Brooks Berndt

ANTHEM

There is No Creation that Does Not Have a Radiance

Carol Dyck

PASTORAL PRAYER and LORD'S PRAYER (*SUNG*)

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN *God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens* #556

God, who stretched the spangled heavens infinite in time and place, Flung the suns in burning radiance through the silent fields of space; we, your children, in your likeness, share inventive powers with you; Great Creator, still creating, show us what we yet may do.

We have ventured worlds undreamed of since the childhood of our race; Known the ecstasy of winging through untraveled realms of space; Probed the secrets of the atom, yielding unimagined power, Facing us with life's destruction or our most triumphant hour.

As each far horizon beckons, may it challenge us anew, Children of creative purpose, serving others, honoring you. May our dreams prove rich with promise, each endeavor, well begun; Great Creator, give us guidance till our goals and yours are one.

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Praise To the Lord

arr. Paul Manz