

Coast to Fells Mission Community Service
Celebrating Creation-tide
1st September 2020



Opening prayer: Rev. Becky Gibbs

We gather in the name of the Triune God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of the Earth and all its creatures!

Praise be to the Holy Trinity! God is sound and life, Creator of the Universe, Source of all life, whom the angels sing; wondrous Light of all mysteries known or unknown to humankind, and life that lives in all.

(Hildegard of Bingen, 13th Century)

Opening sentences: Rev. Becky Gibbs

We gather in the image of the Creator.

Who is a community of love.

We gather in the name of the Redeemer.

Who reconciles all of creation.

We gather in the presence of the Life Giver.

Who inspires new life and renews it.

Hymn: All Creatures of our God and King

(As we listen and join in with this hymn of celebration, you may wish to focus on the painting which celebrates harmony on earth. This hymn was recorded remotely by the Choral Scholars of St Martin-in-the-Fields in their homes, and edited together.)

- 1 All creatures of our God and King
lift up your voice and with us sing,
Alleluia, alleluia.
Thou burning sun with golden beam,
thou silver moon with softer gleam,
O praise him, O praise him,
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

- 2 **Thou rushing wind that art so strong,
ye clouds that sail in heaven along,
O praise him, alleluia.
Thou rising morn, in praise rejoice,
ye lights of evening, find a voice;
Chorus**
- 3 **Thou flowing water, pure and clear,
make music for thy Lord to hear,
Alleluia, alleluia.
Thou fire so masterful and bright,
that givest us both warmth and light:
Chorus**
- 4 **Let all things their creator bless,
and worship him in humbleness;
O praise him, alleluia.
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
and praise the Spirit, Three in One;
Chorus**

William Henry Draper (1855-1933)

based on Laudato sii, O me signore St Francis of Assisi's Canticle of the Sun

Psalm 104: Father Paul Johnstone

Bless the Lord, O my Soul!

All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.

You have made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting. You make darkness, and it is night, when all the animals of the forest come creeping out.

All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.

The lions roar for their prey and seek their food from God; The sun rises, and they steal away; they return and lie down in their dens. Then people go out to their work, to their labour until evening.

All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.

From your lofty abode you water the mountains; You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills, giving drink to every wild animal;

All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.

You cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for people to use, to bring forth food from the Earth, wine to gladden the human heart, oil to make the face shine, and bread to strengthen the human heart.

All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.

The Earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.

All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time.

When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.

May the glory of the Lord endure forever!

Mary Oliver: My work is loving the world read by Rev Nicki Pennington

My work is loving the world.

Here the sunflowers, there the hummingbird -
equal seekers of sweetness.

Here the quickening yeast; there the blue plums.

Here the clam deep in the speckled sand.

Are my boots old? Is my coat torn?

Am I no longer young and still not half-perfect? Let me

keep my mind on what matters,

which is my work,

which is mostly standing still and learning to be astonished.

The phoebe, the delphinium.
The sheep in the pasture, and the pasture.
Which is mostly rejoicing, since all ingredients are here,
Which is gratitude, to be given a mind and a heart
and these body-clothes,
a mouth with which to give shouts of joy
to the moth and the wren, to the sleepy dug-up clam,
telling them all, over and over, how it is
that we live forever.

Anthem: Christ has no body but yours...

(This anthem takes its theme from the words of Teresa Avila:

"Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours."

As we move into a time of confession, let us reflect on how we can use our physical presence on this fragile earth to bless, preserve, protect and nurture)

Confession: led by Deacon Kina Saunders

(based on Leviticus 25:1-25)

We praise you God, for the Earth that sustains life.
Through the planetary cycles of days and seasons,
renewal and growth, you open your hand to give all creatures
our food in the proper time.

In your Wisdom you gave a Sabbath for the land to rest.
But these days our living pushes the planet beyond its limits.
Our demand for growth, and an endless cycle of production and consumption
are exhausting our world.

The forests are leached,
the topsoil erodes,
the fields fail,
the deserts advance,
the seas acidify,

the storms intensify.

Humans and animals are forced to flee in search of security.

We have not allowed the land to observe a Sabbath,
and the Earth is struggling to renew.

And so we confess.

God of mercy and justice

You tell us the land must rest, free from the burden of production.

**We confess our demand that the Earth produce beyond its limits, and our
bondage to desire more.**

You call us to pause from sowing, pruning, and reaping in ways that destroy the
soil.

We confess our vicious consumption of food and energy.

You assure us that we can be filled from the yield of the land.

We confess our lack of trust that we can thrive within the Earth's limits.

You affirm that our security is found in enough.

We confess our lack of courage to resist the myth of endless growth.

You tell us that the land must not be sold permanently, because the land is Yours,
and everything in it.

We confess to thinking of creation as given, instead of a gift.

You call us to leave enough fruit on the vine and in the fields to feed our
neighbours, animals, and replenish the Earth.

We confess our failure to share what we receive from the Earth.

You call us to fairness and justice.

**We confess our lack of faith, not loving you with our whole heart and strength
and mind, or our human and non-human neighbours as ourselves.**

Turn us from fear and mistrust,

And free us to imagine a life reconciled to the Earth and all creatures, through the Good News of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray.

The Spirit helps us in our weakness;
for we do not know how to pray as we ought,
but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.
And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit,
because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God
Amen.

(adapted from the Lutheran World Federation)

**Reading of Scripture: Leviticus 25: 8-12: The Year of the Jubilee.
Read by Father Paul Johnstone**

Reflection: Rev Ian Parker

Profession of faith: led by Rev Ian Parker

We belong to the Creator in whose image we are all made.

In God we are breathing, in God we are living, in God we share the life of all creation.

We belong to Jesus Christ, the true icon of God and of humanity.

In him God is breathing, in him God is living, through him we are reconciled.

We belong to the Holy Spirit, who gives us new life and strengthens our faith.

In the Spirit love is breathing, in the Spirit truth is living, the breath of God always moves us.

We belong to the Holy Trinity, who is one in all and Three-in-One.

In God we are all made, in Christ we are all saved, in the Spirit we are all united.

(Per Harling)

Prayers led by Rev Becky Gibbs

We pray in thanksgiving for Mother Earth in whom all life is rooted, Brother Sun whose energy radiates life, Sister Water who nurtures and revives us, and co-creatures with whom we live, and for whom we are called to till and keep this garden.

Enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. Creative Spirit,

Enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this Earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the Earth. Creative Spirit,

Enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. Creative Spirit,

Enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

In the wake of the COVID-19 global pandemic, hear our cries of compassion, and heal our world and all creatures. Inspire our hearts with a holy imagination, to rise, freed from the demands to produce and consume to imagine a just, sustainable way of living, where all have enough, and all may be restored.

Enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

During this Season of Creation, grant us courage to observe a Sabbath for our planet. Strengthen us with the faith to trust in your providence. Inspire us with the creativity to share what we have been given. Teach us to be satisfied with enough. And as we proclaim a Jubilee for the Earth, send Your Holy Spirit to renew the face of the ground.

Enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.

We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace. Creative Spirit,

Enlighten our hearts and remain with your world. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father,
who art in Heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
your kingdom come,
your 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 yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Benediction: Father Paul Johnstone

May God who established the dance of creation,
Who marvelled at the lilies of the field,
Who transforms chaos to order,
Lead us to transform our lives and the Church
To reflect God's glory in creation. Amen

(CTBI Eco-Congregation Programme)

Hymn: For the Fruits of Creation.

(recorded remotely by the Choral Scholars of St Martin-in-the-Fields in their homes and edited together.)

**1 For the fruits of his creation,
Thanks be to God;
For his gifts to every nation,
Thanks be to God;
For the ploughing, sowing, reaping,
Silent growth while we are sleeping,
Future needs in earth's safe-keeping,
Thanks be to God.**

- 2** In the just reward of labour,
God's will is done;
In the help we give our neighbour,
God's will is done;
In our world-wide task of caring
For the hungry and despairing,
In the harvests we are sharing,
God's will is done.
- 3** For the harvests of his Spirit,
Thanks be to God;
For the good we all inherit,
Thanks be to God;
For the wonders that astound us,
For the truths that still confound us,
Most of all that love has found us,
Thanks be to God.