

1st Week of the Season of Creation: A Service of Holy Communion

Leader's Guide

GATHERING

Prelude

(begins at 10:10a)

Opening Sentences

Pastor Dustin (begins at 10:20a)

P. We gather in the image of the Creator

A. who is a community of love.

P. We gather in the name of the Redeemer

A. who reconciles all of creation.

P. We gather in the presence of the Life Giver

A. who inspires new life and renews it.

Sung Response

The Earth is Yours by Michael Gungor

A. Holy, Holy! Holy, Holy, Lord

The earth is yours, and singing...

Holy, Holy! Holy, Holy, Lord

The earth is yours, The earth is yours!

Confession and Forgiveness

P. 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.

P. And so we confess. God of mercy and justice, You tell us the land must rest, free from the burden of production.

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

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

A. We confess our vicious consumption of food and energy.

- P. You assure us that we can be filled from the yield of the land.
- A. We confess our lack of trust that we can thrive within the Earth's limits.**
- P. You affirm that our security is found in enough.
- A. We confess our lack of courage to resist the myth of endless growth.**
- P. You tell us that the land must not be sold permanently, because the land is Yours, and everything in it.
- A. We confess to thinking of creation as given, instead of a gift.**
- P. You call us to leave enough fruit on the vine and in the fields to feed our neighbors, animals, and replenish the Earth.
- A. We confess our failure to share what we receive from the Earth.**
- P. You call us to fairness and justice.
- A. We confess our lack of faith, not loving you with our whole heart and strength and mind, or our human and non-human neighbors as ourselves.**
- P. Turn us from fear and mistrust,
- A. 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.**
- P. 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.
- A. Amen.** *(adapted from the Lutheran World Federation.)*

Gathering Hymn

All Creatures of Our God, now Sing!

Greeting

- P. The grace of Jesus Christ our Savior, the reconciling love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- A. And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

P. O Lord God, enliven and preserve your church with your perpetual mercy. Without your help, we mortals will fail; remove far from us everything that is harmful, and lead us toward all that gives life and salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

A. **Amen.**

WORD

First Reading

Romans 13:8-14

AM. Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Musical Meditation

(roughly 3 minutes)

Gospel Reading

Matthew 18:15-20

P. The Gospel according to Saint Matthew.

A. Glory to you, O Lord.

P. [Jesus said to the disciples:] "If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

P. This, my siblings in Christ, is the Gospel of our Lord.

A. Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Rev. Dustin Wright

Hymn of the Day

Let All Creation's Wonders

Prayers of Intercession

P. We ask that you lift up your prayers in the comments section of Facebook Live (or in your hearts) at this time.

P. Hear us, O God

A. Your mercy is great.

Response to God's Call: Micah 6:8

Peace

P. And may the peace of Christ be with you always.

A. And also with you.

P. Let us share a sign of God's peace with one another.

Announcements

Announcements may be shared at this time.

MEAL

Offering

P. At this time, if you'd like to make an online gift using tithe.ly or via mail to Messiah, feel free to do so.

Offering Prayer

AM. Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things.
You have set before us these gifts of your good creation.
Prepare us for your heavenly banquet,
nourish us with this rich food and drink,
and send us forth to set tables in the midst of a suffering world,
through the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

A. **Amen.**

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Lord's Prayer

P. God remember us in your love, and teach us to pray:

Lord's Prayer Video

A. **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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.
Amen.**

Eucharistic Prayer

- P. In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his life-giving death and glorious resurrection, we await your promised life for all this dying world.

Breathe your Spirit on us and on this bread and cup: carry us in your arms from death to life, that we may live as your chosen ones, clothed in the righteousness of Christ. Through him all glory and honor is yours,

Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. Amen.

- A. Amen.**

Invitation to Communion

- P. Even when we cannot be physically together, we are one in Christ Jesus united around a common table. Indeed, at this table, Jesus gathers us all together: the humble and the proud, the joyful and the grieving, the pious and the profane, those of strong faith and those who only long for faith, to everyone, without exception. Come siblings in faith, and join in Spirit filled community!

Distribution of the Sacrament

At this time, all may share Holy Communion amongst their families. A brief musical reflection can be played here.

Post Communion Blessing

- P. The body of our Lord Jesus Christ and His precious blood strengthen you, and keep you in God's Grace. Amen.
A. Amen.

Prayer After Communion

AM. We give you thanks, gracious God,
that you have once again fed us with food beyond compare,
the body and blood of Christ.
Lead us from this place, nourished and forgiven,
into your beloved vineyard
to wipe away the tears of all who hunger and thirst,
guided by the example of the same Jesus Christ
and led by the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

A. Amen.

Blessing

P. Mothering God,
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.

A. Amen.

Sending Hymn

How Great Thou Art!

Benediction

P. 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.

(CTBI Eco-Congregation Programme)

Postlude