

# *Spirit of Grace* ELCA UMC



September 18th  
*Season of Creation*  
*Listen to the Stewards of Creation*

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## **- Gathering -**

Prelude

Welcome

Call to Worship

In the beginning, God created the earth  
to bear the abundant fruit of life.

**All Creation Sings, telling the story of God.**

From the tiny bumblebee bat in its cave,  
to the mammoth Blue Whales of the ocean,

**All Creation Sings, showing the love of God.**

In expansive canyons and on snowy mountain peaks,  
In habitats, ecosystems, and biomes across the world,

**All Creation Sings, teaching the Word of God**

May we be faithful students of Creation,

**Listening with hearts open wide.**

Confession & Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
the continual Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer  
of us and all of Creation.

**Amen.**

Gathered together, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God of grace and mercy,  
**you entrusted us as stewards of your marvelous creation,  
but we confess that we have not honored this responsibility.  
In a world of abundance, we have created scarcity.  
In a world of change and renewal,  
we have dug in our heels and resisted these cycles.  
In a world built for community and relationality,  
We have chosen independence and exerted our own superiority.**

**We have hurt instead of healed,  
hoarded instead of helped,  
hastened rather than humbled.**

**We come to you this day to offer  
our deepest sorrow and most humble repentance,  
and ask that you show us again your path of new life.**

Beloved Siblings in Christ, hear the good news:  
In the waters of baptism, God washes away all our sin.  
Just as the sun brings a new dawn each day,  
So too does God's Son offer us endless grace and mercy.  
In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.  
May we use this freedom to grow ever closer  
to the Divine Creator of all Creation.  
**Amen.**

Opening Hymn

All Things Bright and Beautiful – UMH 147  
verses 3 and 4

Greeting & Prayer of the Day

The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray.

Nurturing God, You created us to be stewards and caretakers of your marvelous creation. When the problems of this world seem too great, help us to look for, listen to, and learn from the prophets of our age – those who will show us the path towards becoming Stewards of Life amidst your Divine Creation. In the name of Christ, we pray. **Amen.**

## - Word -

First Reading: Amon 8:4-8

Listen to this, you who live off of the needy and oppress the poor of the land, you who say, “If only the New Moon were over so we could sell our grain,” and “When the Sabbath is over, we will sell our wheat charging higher prices for smaller portions, thus tilting the scales in our favor. That way, we can buy the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals – and even make a profit on the chaff of the wheat!” – YHWH swears by the Pride of Jacob, “I will never forget a single thing you have done.” Will not the land tremble because of this, and all who dwell in it mourn? Will the land not rise up like the Nile, rising and sinking like the river of Egypt?

Word of God, Word of Life  
**Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 113

Alleluia!  
You faithful of YHWH, give praise,  
praise the Name of YHWH!  
**Blessed be the Name of YHWH,  
from now and for all times!**  
From the rising of the sun to its setting,  
praised be the Name of YHWH!  
**You are high over all nations, YHWH!  
Your glory transcends the heavens!**  
Who is like you, YHWH, our God?  
Enthroned so high,  
**you need to stoop  
to see the sky and the earth!**  
You raise the poor from the dust,  
and lift the needy from the dung heap  
**to give them a place at the table with rulers,  
with the leaders of your people.**  
You give the childless couple a home  
filled with the joy of many children.  
Alleluia!

Gospel: Luke 16: 1-13

The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 16th chapter.

Jesus said to the disciples, “There was a wealthy landowner who, having received reports of a steward mismanaging the property, summoned the steward and said, ‘What’s this I hear about you? Give me an account of your service, for it’s about to come to an end.’ The steward thought, ‘What will I do next? My employer is going to fire me. I can’t dig ditches. I’m ashamed to go begging. I have it! Here’s a way to make sure that people will take me into their homes when I’m let go.’

“So the steward called in each of the landowner’s debtors. The steward said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my employer?’ The debtor replied, ‘A hundred jars of oil.’ The steward said, ‘Take your invoice, sit down quickly and make it fifty.’ To another the steward said, ‘How much do you owe?’ The answer came, ‘A hundred measures of wheat,’ and the steward said, ‘Take your invoice and make it eighty.’

“Upon hearing this, the owner gave this devious worker credit for being enterprising! Why? Because the children of this world are more astute dealing with their own kind than are the children of the light. So I tell you: make friends for yourselves through your use of this world’s goods, so that when they fail you, you’ll be welcomed into an eternal home. If you can trust others in little things, you can also trust them in greater, and anyone unjust in a slight matter will also be unjust in a greater. If you can’t be trusted with filthy **lucre**, who will trust you with true riches? And if you haven’t been trustworthy with someone else’s money who will give you your own?

“Subordinates can’t have two superiors. Either they’ll hate the one and love the other, or be attentive to the one and despise the other. You can’t worship both God and Money.”

Word of God for the people of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Rev. Miranda Bermes-Goller

Hymn of the Day

Touch the Earth Lightly – ELW 739  
*verses 1, 2, and 4*

Affirmation of Faith – Gurukul Theological College, India

*Please stand as you are able as we confess our faith in God together using the words of our common creed:*

**We believe in God, who creates all things,  
who embraces all things, who celebrates all things,  
who is present in every part of the fabric of creation.  
We believe in God as the source of all life,  
who baptizes this planet with living water.  
We believe in Jesus Christ, the suffering one, the poor one,  
the malnourished one, the climate refugee,  
who loves and cares for this world and who suffers with it.  
And we believe in Jesus Christ, the seed of life,  
who came to reconcile and renew this world and everything in it.  
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the breath of God,  
who moves with God and who moves among and with us today.  
We believe in everlasting life in God.  
And we believe in the hope that one day  
God will put an end to death and all destructive forces.  
Amen.**

Joys & Concerns

*If you have any joys, concerns, or prayer requests to share, please type them into the comment section of the livestream so that we may lift them up together as a community.*

## Prayers of the People

United in Christ and guided by the Spirit, we pray for the church, the creation, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

Loving God, who hears every voice, knows each cry of injustice, and is attentive to the suffering of the earth: teach us to listen. Bring healing to our lives, and reveal to us the ways in which we have failed to hear your voice in how we treat the earth.

God, who listens to every living thing,

**Help us listen as you do.**

Ruler of the nations, you direct those in authority. Give leaders wisdom and compassion so that all may live in peace. Inspire public servants to listen to the words of the people, follow the example of courageous leaders, and safeguard the dignity of each person.

God, who listens to every living thing,

**Help us listen as you do.**

Helper of the needy, you lift up those who are oppressed. Breathe justice into economic and social systems that perpetuate poverty and hunger. Sustain food ministries, clothing banks, and emergency shelters, especially those in our immediate community (FISH Food Bank, Hood River Warming Shelter, The Nextdoor). May we listen and serve the needs of our community.

God, who listens to every living thing,

**Help us listen as you do.**

Sustainer and giver of life, grant healing and comfort to those suffering with sickness and pain in body, mind, heart, or soul. Ease that which ails them, and send your servants to surround them with your love and support in all things.

God, who listens to every living thing,

**Help us listen as you do.**

God of peace, we pray for victims of war and violence across the world. Send your Spirit to show us how to turn swords into plowshares, that nations might work together to create a culture of peace.

God, who listens to every living thing,

**Help us listen as you do.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Since we have such great hope in your promises, O God, we lift these and all of our prayers to you in confidence and faith; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

## - Meal -

### Offering

*At this time, if you are willing and able, please consider giving to Spirit of Grace Church to support our ongoing ministry. Checks can be mailed to 1140 Tucker Road, Hood River OR, 97031. Online Donations can be made through the link below:*  
[Spirit of Grace Church](#)

### Offering Prayer

God of goodness and growth,  
all creation is yours, and your faithfulness is sure.  
Word and water, wine and bread:  
These are signs of your abundant grace.  
Receive these gifts we bring,  
and nourish us to proclaim your abiding love  
in our communities and in the world,  
through Jesus Christ, our strength and our song.  
**Amen.**

## The Great Thanksgiving

Preface - TFWS 2257-a

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,  
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,  
Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.  
Before the mountains were brought forth, or you had formed the earth,  
from everlasting to everlasting, you alone are God.  
You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth.  
You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life.  
When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.  
You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God,  
and spoke to us through your prophets.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Sanctus - TFWS 2257-b

Thanksgiving at the Table & Words of Institution

O God triune,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth.  
Over the eons your merciful might  
evolved our home, a fragile tree of life.  
Here by your wisdom  
are both life and death,  
growth and decay,  
the nest and the hunt,  
sunshine and storm,  
darkness and light.  
Sustained by these wonders,  
we creatures of dust  
join in the ancient song:  
The earth is full of your glory.  
**The earth is full of your glory.**

O God triune,  
you took on our flesh  
in Jesus our healer.  
In Christ you bring life from death;  
we remember his cross,  
we laud his resurrection.  
Broken like bread, he enlivens our body.  
Outpoured like wine,  
he fills the earth with goodness.  
Receiving this mystery,  
we mortals sing our song:  
The earth is full of your glory.  
**The earth is full of your glory.**

We praise you for the heart of Jesus,  
so filled with your love for this earth.

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.

Gathered around this table,  
we your children unite in this song:  
The earth is full of your glory.  
**The earth is full of your glory.**

O God triune,  
you created the worlds,  
you uphold the living,  
you embrace the dead.  
Send forth your Spirit  
and renew the face of the earth.  
Strengthen us for our journey  
with this meal,  
the body and blood of Christ.  
Give us a future that trusts in you  
and cares for your earth.  
Empowered by your promises,  
we rise from our deaths  
to praise you again:  
The earth is full of your glory.  
**The earth is full of your glory.**

Amen, and amen.  
**Amen, and amen.**

### The Disciple's Prayer

Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us, using the language or translation that you are most familiar with – the language of your heart. Together, we pray:

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

*Instructions for Communion*

This table of bread and wine has now been made ready.  
So come to this table,  
You who have much faith  
and you who would like to have more;  
you who have been here often  
and you who have not been here long  
you who have tried to follow Jesus,  
and you who have failed;  
Come and eat. It is Christ who invites us all to meet him here.

*Communion Distribution*

Prayer after Communion

Living God,  
as the disciples ate and drank with their risen Lord,  
We have been nourished with the very presence of Christ.  
Through this meal may we be strengthened to keep your word  
and to proclaim the power of your love  
in Jesus Christ our Savior.  
**Amen.**

*- Sending -*

Announcements

Sending Song:

As a Fire is Meant for Burning – TFWS 2237  
verses 1-3

## Benediction & Dismissal

In the words of Octavia E. Butler,

*“God is change –  
seed to tree, tree to forest;  
rain to river, river to sea;  
grubs to bees, bees to swarm.  
From one, many; from many, one.  
Forever uniting, growing, dissolving –  
forever Changing.  
The universe is God’s self-portrait.”*

May we dance in delight of this blessing  
God has bestowed upon us;  
to be a part of this Divine Revelation.  
May we live justly and walk humbly,  
as we honor the responsibility this entails.  
**Amen.**

Go in peace, the Spirit of God is alive in you!  
**Thanks be to God!**



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**Church Office Hours**

**Closed on Fridays**

**Pastor Miranda Bermes-Goller**

M-Th 9-1, or by appointment

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**Linda Boris, Pastoral Assistant**

Tuesday 10-1

## Attributions

Call to Worship: *written by Rev. Miranda Bermes-Goller, 2022*

Confession & Forgiveness: *written by Rev. Miranda Bermes-Goller, 2022*

Opening Hymn:

Prayer of the Day: *written by Rev. Miranda Bermes-Goller, 2022*

Hymn of the Day:

Affirmation of Faith: *Gurukul Theological college, India / adapted by Keld B. Hansen 2009 – used with permission*

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Sending Song:

Benediction: *written by Rev. Miranda Bermes-Goller, 2022*