

Spirit of Grace

ELCA UMC



September 15th, 2024

Season of Creation

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Silence for a grounding breath

Call to Worship

Come, let us worship God, who gifted us with life and Creation to sustain life.

We praise God for the wondrous Creation.

Come, let us follow Lord Jesus Christ,

who inspires us to hope and act for justice and righteousness.

We give glory to God, who restores the groaning Creation and the vulnerable.

Come let us move with the Holy Spirit,

striving to establish justice and produce the firstfruits of hope.

We praise God for the abundant life that is assured to all Creation.

Heavenly Triune God and Creator of all,

we gather here, made in the image of the Creator,

Who created in love.

We gather in the name of the redeemer, our Savior Jesus Christ,

Who reconciles all of Creation.

We gather in the presence of the life Giver, your Holy Spirit,

Who inspires new life and instills hope.

Hymn of the Season

Can You Feel the Seasons Turning

ACS 1065

Confession & Thanksgiving for Creation

Eternal God, the whole world is full of your glory.
We bear forth the anguish of Creation in the time of the climate crisis to you.
In your grace, grant us the opportunity to do good, as your created co-creators.
Abba God have mercy.
Christ have mercy.

Jesus Christ, you have walked the Earth and lived in our midst.
Make us sensitive to the suffering of humankind and the entire creation.
Strengthen us in our endeavors to create a life of dignity,
in justice, and solidarity with those who live and will live.
Abba God have mercy.
Christ have mercy.

Holy Spirit, power of courage and self-control, you speak to our consciences.
Comfort us when we suffer and are plagued by anxiety.
Make us worry when we are numb in the calmness of complacency.
Re-create us to become what we are: one humanity under the same sky.
Abba God have mercy.
Christ have mercy.

God of Holy Dreaming, great Creator Spirit, from the dawn of Creation
you have given your children the good things of our mothering Earth.
In the vast desert and the dense forest, in the cities and at the water's edge,
Creation sings your praise.
The sunrise of your Son colored the Earth anew
and bathed it in glorious hope.
In Jesus, we have been reconciled
to you, to each other and to your whole Creation.
Lead us on, Great Spirit, as we gather from the four corners of the Earth;
enable us to walk together in trust
from the hurt and shame of the past
into the full day that has dawned in Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Centering Hymn

Morning Has Broken
UMH 145 – verses 1-3

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.

Abba God, we long to see your new creation birthed among us – yet we are slow to relinquish our old ways of living. Open our eyes and unclench our hands, that we may see the path you call us towards and follow without resistance; a path that may put us at odds with the ways of the world, but will lead us into your promised kingdom of heaven, where we will finally be in harmony and peace amidst the Beloved Community. In the name of Jesus, who leads us on this path, we pray.

Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 50:4-9a

Exalted YHWH has given me
a skilled and well-trained tongue,
so that I can sustain the weary
with a timely word.
God awakens me morning after morning –
wakens my ear, to listen like a student.
Exalter YHWH opened my ears
and I have obeyed, I did not turn away.
I offered my back to those beating me,
offered my cheeks to those who would humiliate me.
I did not hide my face from insults or spitting.
Because Exalted YHWH helps me,
insults cannot wound me,
for U have set my face like flint,
because I know I will not be put to shame.
My vindicator is at my side.
Who would dare accuse me?
Let us confront each other!
Who are my adversaries?
Let them accuse me!
It is Exalted YHWH who helps me.
Who will judge me guilty?

Word of God, Word of Life

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 33

Rejoice in the Beloved, O you holy ones!
Praise is a grace of the loving.
**Praise the Beloved with strings and reeds,
Give praise with dance and leaps;
sing a new song, and shout with a joyful heart!**

For the work of the Creator is truth,
and all creation reflects the faithfulness of the Beloved.
**Justice and mercy we render to the Holy One,
to the universe filled with Love Divine.**

Through Love Consciousness
the heavens and earth were created,
And all who dwell on earth
by the Creator's breath of Life.
**All creation, from the distant stars
to the depth of the seas,
Is held together by the Oneness of Love.**

May all the earth reverence the Beloved,
may everyone stand in awe of Love!
**For when the Beloved speaks, it comes to pass;
As Love's way guides and directs,
thus it stands.**

Without Love, the nations' counsel comes to nothing,
the plans of the people are futile.
**The counsel of the Creator is eternal,
available to every generation.**
Blessed are the nations that listen
in silence and make decisions
with Wisdom's Counsel;
Blessed are all people who respond to Love's Way.

For, the Beloved dwells in every heart
that is open and receptive;
**Into our hands, into our hearts,
does the Beloved surrender,
that we might do with Love what we will.**
Do we not know, that the nations
are not saved by military might,
just as generals are not saved by their own strength?
**All such arms are the outward expression
of greed in fearful hearts;
They will reap only despair, death, and destruction.**

Behold, the Love of the Beloved is stronger
than ten thousand bombs,
more to be desired than the wealth of all nations.
**Do we not know that to dwell in
the heart of the Beloved
is the promise to every nation,
the birthright of all people,
the journey to life eternal?**

Our soul yearns for the Beloved,
for peace, joy, and assurance.
**Then will our hearts be glad and sing
songs of gratitude,
Praising the name of the Holy One!**
May every nation come to live in
the steadfast Love and Wisdom
of the Spirit of Truth!
May all peoples work with Love Divine!

Gospel: Mark 8:27-38

The Holy Gospel according to Mark the 8th chapter.

Then Jesus and the disciples set out for the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way, Jesus asked the disciples this question: "Who do people say that I am?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptizer; others, Elijah; still others, one of the prophets."

"And you," Jesus went on to ask, "who do you say that I am?"

Peter answered, "You are the Messiah!" But Jesus gave them strict orders not to tell anyone about him.

Then Jesus began to teach them that the Promised One has to suffer much, be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and religious scholars, be put to death, and rise again three days later. Jesus said these things quite openly.

Peter then took him aside and began to take issue with him. At this, Jesus turned around and, eyeing the disciples, reprimanded Peter: "Get out of my sight, you Satan! You are judging by human standards rather than by God's!"

Jesus summoned the crowd and the disciples and said, "If you wish to come after me, you must deny your very self, take up your cross, and follow in my footsteps. If you would save your life, you'll lose it, but if you lose your life for my sake, you'll save it. What would you gain if you were to win the whole world but lose yourself in the process? What can you offer in exchange for your soul? Whoever in this faithless and corrupt generation is ashamed of me and my words will find, in turn, that the Promised One and the holy angels will be ashamed of that person, when all stand before our God in glory."

Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Rev. Miranda P. Bermes

Hymn of the Day

Lift High the Cross
ELW 660 – verses 1-3

Affirmation of Faith

Please stand as you are able as we confess our faith in God together:

**We have faith in one God,
one Source of all life,
one Ground of the whole Earth,
who created all things good.
And we have faith in Christ,
in whom we have been shown
the special role of humanity
to bear God's likeness in working and caring for Creation,
in seeking to understand her mysteries and powers,
in working with these powers
for the wellbeing of life on Earth.
And we have faith in God's Spirit
who leads us to a meek, unselfish and compassionate lifestyle.
So that the Earth is inherited in peace,
her life is transformed for all creatures
and her bounty shared justly.
So be it. 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

Drawn together in the power of the Holy Spirit, we pray with confidence for the church, God's good creation, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church throughout the world. Form us into communities of forgiveness and grace. Help us to notice where you are calling us into new relationships, and give us courage to embrace the uncomfortable and unfamiliar. God, in your grace,
Receive our prayer.

We pray for the earth and all its inhabitants. Protect lands at risk of wildfire and heal dying forests. Where fire brings destruction, raise up new growth. Guide us in tending precarious ecosystems. God, in your grace,
Receive our prayer.

We pray for those who govern nations, tribes, and cities. Open them to the cries of people in need. Direct them in shaping policies that prioritize the health and well-being of all who struggle with hunger and housing insecurity.

We pray especially for the innocent lives of your children suffering in Gaza and the West Bank. Bring an end to the violence of genocide that rages. Protect those who care for the victims of violence, and send your Spirit of comfort to rest on those consumed by hopelessness and despair. Let the ways of war and conflict cease so that the wisdom of peace and understanding may be heard.

God, in your grace,
Receive our prayer.

We pray for all who are ill, all who are lonely or anxious, and all who grieve. Draw them close to you and soothe them with the promise of your enduring love. God, in your grace,
Receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Since we have such great hope in your promises, Creator God, we lift these prayers to you in confidence and faith, in the name of your son Jesus Christ, we pray.

Amen.

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](#)

Offertory Prayer

Blessed are you, O God,
source of every gift of your creation.
By these gifts and with our lives,
help us to serve one another and all in need,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
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.
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, who looked for that day
when justice shall roll down like waters
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream,
when nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war anymore.

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

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.

Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us, using the language you are most familiar with - the language of your heart.

**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

Holy God,
you have welcomed us to this meal
and fed us with dignity at your table.
Send us now to welcome others
and to be at peace with one another,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Sending Song:

Creation Sings
W&S 3018 – verses 1+2

Blessing

The blessing of God,
Creator of the universe,
Redeemer of creation,
and Sustainer of abundant life
⛦ be upon you now and forever.
Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. The Spirit of God is alive in you!
Thanks be to God!



1140 Tucker Rd. Hood River, OR 97031
541-386-3993
www.hoodriverchurch.org

Church Office Hours
Closed on Fridays
Pastor Miranda Bermes
M-W 9-1, or by appointment
spiritofgracepastor@gmail.com
Linda Boris, Pastoral Assistant
Tuesday 10-1

Attributions

Call to Worship: World Council of Churches, Eco-School at the Orthodox Academy of Crete, Greece, 11-18 November 2023 – Season of Creation Celebration Guide 2024

Confession & Thanksgiving: Adapted from “Prayer for the Climate” from the “Bishop’s Letter for the Climate” of the Church of Sweden and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Liturgical Resources – Season of Creation Celebration Guide 2024

Affirmation of Faith: Adapted From India. Source: Sinfonia Oecumenica, Gütersloher Verlagshaus, Gütersloh 1998. Reproduced by ECEN for Creation Time 2003 – Season of Creation Celebration Guide 2024

Offering Prayer, and Prayers of the People- copyright Augsburg Fortress, 2024

Communion Liturgy: “The Great Thanksgiving for the Season after Pentecost,” Copyright © 1972 The Methodist Publishing House; Copyright © 1980, 1981, 1985 UMPH; Copyright © 1986 by Abingdon Press; Copyright © 1987, 1989, 1992 UMPH. Used by permission.”