

**Creation Care Sunday**  
**“Brother Sun and Sister Moon”**  
**Genesis 1:26-31, Psalm 148**  
**Rev. Joy Laughridge**  
**June 22, 2025**

One time, I ate a bite of fresh pineapple that tasted so sweet and delicious that I was inspired in that moment to write a haiku about it. It started like this.

*Fruit is a wonder!*

Fruit is a wonder, isn't it? When you stop and think about it- the varieties, the shapes, the flavors, the colors, the natural packaging!

Speaking of natural packaging, let's consider the banana. It has a peel, and you can just throw it in your lunch bag. No plastic container needed! They're also a source of several nutrients that are good for us as fruits and vegetables are. Bananas are famous for being packed with potassium which is important for heart health and maintaining good blood pressure. Let's not stop with the banana.

Let's consider the wonder of the lime. They have a beautiful vibrant green color that is pleasing to the eye. They are a wonderful source of vitamin C and the British Navy figured out that keeping limes on board for the sailors on long sea voyages helped prevent scurvy.

And what about the dragon fruit? This is just exotic looking, but it's also packed with antioxidants that can help prevent heart disease, and diabetes, and cancer.

See, fruit *is* a wonder, but there was more to the haiku. It went on like this.

*Fruit is a wonder!  
Plants grow that are good to eat.  
God made it for us.*

Now, I don't ordinarily eat and then write a poem about it, but something special happened on that day when I ate that juicy bite of pineapple. It was a true spiritual experience, an awakening from my usual mindless eating routine to the overwhelming realization of just how incredible and glorious it was to be eating a pineapple! This amazing fruit grew out of the ground, and I could eat it, and it tasted good, and this was all by God's design. I was genuinely awed, and my haiku was, and is, a true expression of praise and worship to the One who made a world that feeds and sustains us.

When we pause and make it a point to pay attention to the wonders of creation, it's impossible not to be amazed. The brilliant colors of a sunrise or sunset will leave you awestruck. The sound of birds singing in the trees is sweet music to our ears. The vastness of the ocean and the power of the waves can cause you to tremble. The glorious scent of the neighbor's jasmine flowers can stop you in your tracks when you pass by on your daily walk. A sip of some plain old cool and refreshing water hits the spot and satisfies your thirst like nothing else can on a hot day. I could go on and on describing how nature not only delights us but also supports and sustains us. We all could, *now that we're thinking about it*, but this is kind of the problem. Too often, we aren't thinking about it. Too often we are just going through the motions of life, all the while benefiting from the gifts of Creation as we go, but without paying attention; without listening; without really seeing.

One of the things I noticed as I was reading Genesis 1 this week is that every time God creates something then God sees it. God made the sky and saw that it was good. God made the lights in the sky and saw that it was good. That's the pattern. God pauses to observe and appreciate what God has made, and after God created humankind, God told *them* to see, also. "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed...". So, it seems like seeing and paying attention to creation is important which is what we are pausing to do today with a service like this.

One of the things we see when we look at creation and pay attention to it is what I've already mentioned. We see its beauty and the wonder of the created world. That's what happened when I saw the pineapple. I saw how amazing the pineapple was, but that wasn't all I saw. The glory of the pineapple pointed me beyond the pineapple to the glory of the One who made the pineapple, and this is what creation is always doing. It's why Israel's ancient poets sang about the glories of the natural world saying things like, "the heavens are telling the glory of God and the firmament proclaims his handiwork" (Psalm 19:1). Every part of Creation testifies to God's creative power and wisdom. The beauty of every blooming flower is a glimpse of God's beauty, and all of it exists to tell us that God is good, and real, and worthy of our worship and praises. We are people who tend to become self-consumed and forgetful, but God has created a world that is constantly singing praises and declaring the glory of God. We simply need to stop and listen, and when we do, not only do we hear its song, but we also hear the invitation to join in with our own lives and voices in giving glory to God. Psalm 148 teaches us that creation needs help from us in offering a song of praise that is worthy of the Creator, and we also need help from Creation. As one commentator says, "[creation's] loudest and longest praise cannot match [God's] work and status. Only with the concerted voices of all of God's creatures can a significant attempt be made to reflect God's majesty

back to him.” When we pay attention to Creation, we hear it praising God and calling us to praise God. We also hearing it calling us back to the vocation that God gave us in Genesis.

If you have a pet at home, think of that loveable little creature. You know we have a dog, and we also got a cat about a year ago. Our cat has a habit of coming into our bedroom in the morning between about 4:30 and 5 am, and he snuggles up very close and begins to purr. I have never heard a cat purr as loud as our cat purrs. So, he purrs loudly, and if that doesn’t get any response, he begins walking on top of my husband (he has learned which body is eventually going to respond), and paws at his face, and then he starts meowing. Why does he do all of this? Because he wants his breakfast! He’s communicating with us. Now, think about the grass in your yard or your houseplants. Lately, we have had a lot of rain, so your grass is probably pretty green, but when dry season comes, it starts turning brown. And if you haven’t watered your house plants lately, the leaves might be looking droopy. If you have brown grass and the leaves on your plants are drooping, they are saying something to you. They are saying, “we’re thirsty!” They’re communicating.

Creation does speak to us to remind us we are meant to be caretakers and stewards of the earth and all its resources. The Genesis 1 account of creation culminates with the creation of humankind made in the image of God. Because humankind is made in the image of God, we are created with the ability to act as God’s representatives in caring for and managing the created world, and from the beginning this is the responsibility that God assigned to us. This is what it means when the Lord says in Genesis, “let them have dominion.” It doesn’t mean God has given us license to use and abuse creation for selfish purposes. We are never meant to use and abuse anyone or anything for selfish purposes. To have dominion means that we are called to preserve, and protect, and even love the

earth and her gifts, and our pets, and our plants, and also creatures and critters covered in oil from a spill, and rising temperatures, and violent storms, call out to us saying that creation needs us to do what God gave us to do.

When I think about loving and taking care of the earth, I think about St. Francis of Assisi. He is known for his attentiveness to God's creatures and the created world, and some might think he took things too far by talking to animals and referring to the heavenly bodies as Brother Sun and Sister Moon, but Francis's practices help us understand, as he seems to have understood, that creation is a friend. We were made by God for relationship – with God, with people, *and* with the created world, and when we think about our responsibility to preserve and protect and care for the earth, it can be helpful to remember that the earth is a friend. We show interest in our friends, and we enjoy them. If a friend a friend that we love is hurting, we show concern. We stand ready to help alleviate their suffering if we can, and we certainly try to avoid doing anything that would make the suffering worse. When we hear the call to address environmental concerns and crises in our world, the issues may be complicated and complex, but we can't ignore them, because God has made us the managers, and it is our friend who is in trouble.

So, today we are mindful of Creation which is a special friend given to us by God. We are stopping to think about her, and we're paying attention because when we pay attention Creation helps us and leads us to do what God made us to do. We were made to worship, and glorify, and enjoy God, and God's beautiful world inspires us to worship and assists us as we offer up the praise that is due to the Lord. We were also made to be stewards of the world God made. We were made to love her, and care for her, and protect her as we would any other friend. You may be inspired to respond to what you have heard today by making it a point to listen more attentively to

what Creation is saying. You may be inspired to respond by writing a haiku or lifting up a song of praise. You may be inspired to go home and pay more attention to your pets and houseplants, or you may be inspired to make a greater commitment to reducing waste. There are many ways we may be led to respond when we pay attention so keep paying attention. Smell the flowers. Snuggle the cat. Listen to the bird's song, and praise the Lord. Amen.