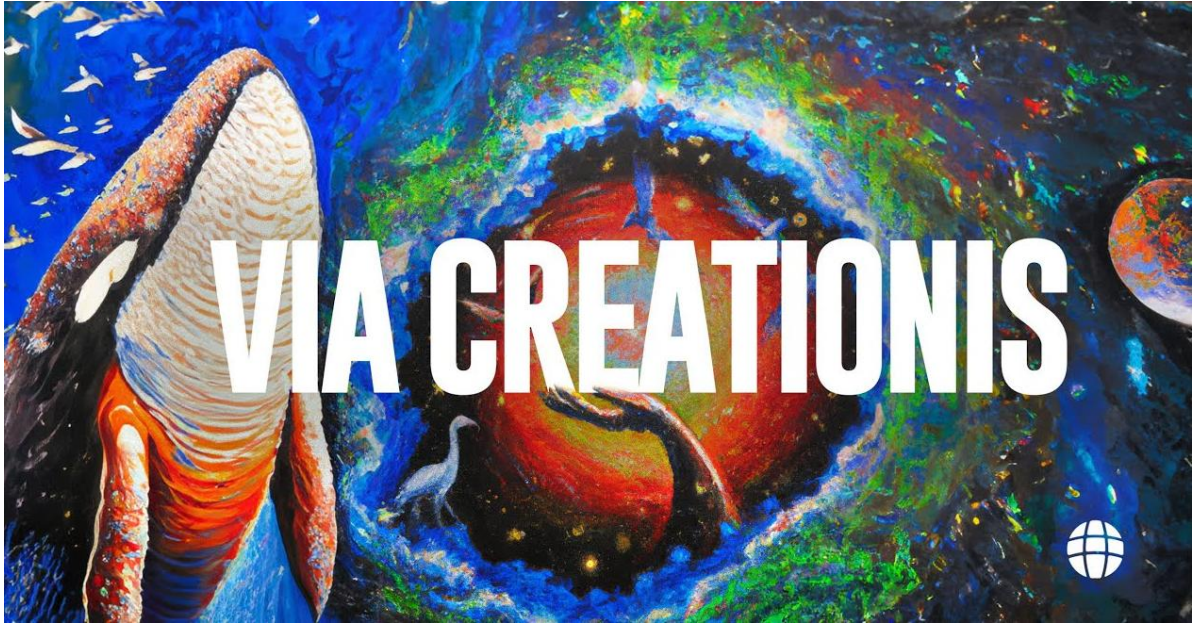


VIA CREATIONIS – *The Way of Creation*



This worship event draws on public domain songs; responses from “Via Creationis,” a liturgy from the *Laudato Si’* movement of the Roman Catholic Church (2023); prayers from ancient texts, especially Celtic saints who saw their Creator’s presence revealed in nature; and two distinct sources of wisdom: The Bible’s book of Genesis (particularly chapter one); and decades of scientific research, distilled into the most-widely-accepted conclusions – here called the “Book of Creation.” Quotations from this “book” were adapted from *The Universe Story: From the Primordial Flaring Forth to the Ecozoic Era--A Celebration of the Unfolding of the Cosmos*, by Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry (1994: HarperOne).

GATHERING MUSIC

He’s Got the Whole World – *Traditional Spiritual*

1. He's got the whole world in his hands
He's got the whole wide world in his hands
He's got the whole world in his hands
He's got the whole world in his hands.

2. He's got the little bitty baby in his hands (3x)
He's got the whole world in his hands.

3. He's got you and me brother in his hands
He's got you and me sister in his hands
He's got you and me brother in his hands
He's got the whole world in his hands

4. He's got everybody here in his hands (3x)
He's got the whole world in his hands.

This Little Light of Mine – *Traditional Spiritual*

1. This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine (3x)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

2. Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine (3x)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

3. Jesus gave it to me, I'm gonna let it shine (3x)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

WELCOME to the CELEBRATION!

Rev. Susan Anslow Williams, Priest at St Jude's
Katie Young, Music Minister at St Jude's

1st Station

THE GOODNESS OF LIGHT

V. Praise be to you, O God, great Creator:

R. **We praise and thank you for your magnificent Creation.**

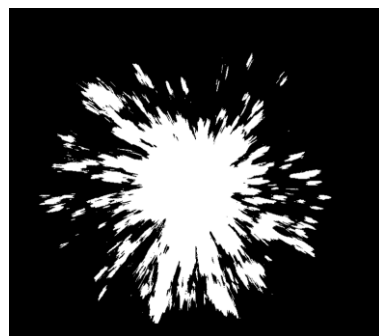
A reading from the Book of Genesis (1:1, 3-4):

In the beginning... God said: Let there be light, and there was light. God declared that the light was good. God then separated the light from the darkness.

A reading from the Book of Creation:

About 14 billion years ago, there was a bang – a very Big Bang!

A sacred flaring forth. The universe began as the primordial flaring, a dramatic outburst. Mysteriously, without us understanding what happened before the first fraction of a second, a fiery microscopic



fireball blew up, resulting in the most colossal of explosions. Energy of unthinkable proportions was released, and the first matter was blasted in all directions. Eventually, there was light. A lot of light. The cosmos began to unfold.

V. God declared that the light was good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

A Song: "Here comes the sun," by *The Beatles* (1969)

Refrain:

Here comes the sun (little darling)

Here comes the sun, and I say, It's all right.

1. Little darling, it's been a long cold lonely winter

Little darling, it feels like years since it's been here. *Refrain*

2. Little darling, the smiles returning to the faces

Little darling, it seems like years since it's been here. *Refrain*

Sun, sun, sun, here it comes! (*repeat*)

3. Little darling, I feel that ice is slowly melting

Little darling, it seems like years since it's been clear. *Refrain*

Let us pray. *Silence*

Do thou, O Christ, our dearest Savior, thyself kindle our lamps, that they may evermore shine in thy temple, and receive unquenchable light from thee that will enlighten our darkness and lessen the darkness of the world. **Amen.**

Columba of Iona, 6th c

2nd Station

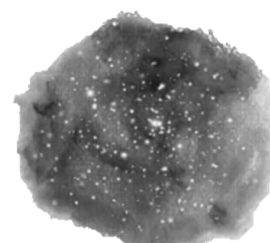
THE GOODNESS OF CELESTIAL BODIES

V. Praise be to you, O God, great Creator:

R. **We praise and thank you for your magnificent Creation.**

A reading from the Book of Genesis (1:14, 16, 18):

Then God said: Let there be lights in the dome of the sky... God made the two great lights, the greater one to govern the day, and the lesser one to govern the night, and the stars... God declared that it was good.



A reading from the Book of Creation:

The materials released by the Big Bang – mostly hydrogen and helium – gradually cooled down and began to cluster, pulled by gravity. Eventually, the first stars were born. Dazzling spheres, releasing massive energy from the nuclear fusion in their cores, adorned the vast expanses of the early universe. Eventually, the primeval stars collapsed in massive explosions known as supernovas. These long cycles of stellar birth and collapse formed new chemical elements, essential for life to flourish later.

R. God declared that the stars were good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

Eventually, stars clustered into galaxies. These flying whirlpools of cosmic matter evolved into all kinds of beautiful shapes and colors, diverse palettes of clouds of dust and gases. In our very own Milky Way Galaxy another supernova took place, about 6 billion years ago. This was a special one for us. An old star, the ancient mother of our Sun, ran out of fuel and collapsed through a massive explosion. A fabulous cloud of cosmic dust was released – dust from which we all come, containing everything from the calcium in our bones to the carbon in our muscles, and much more. Out of remnants of that supernova explosion, a new star was born, the Sun. Our majestic Sun, source of our energy, light, and warmth. Our sacred Sun.

R. God declared that the Sun was good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

Sometime after that, orbiting the Sun, the Earth and other planets formed from the same supernova debris. Earth was a fireball, a soup of molten rock. Our sacred Earth was full of creativity ready to be unleashed. Soon after, our Moon came into being and started orbiting Earth, most likely after the impact of a large body. The giant rock has been our faithful companion since then, adorning our night skies.

R. God declared that the planets and moons were good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

A Song: "By the Light of the Silvery Moon," by Edward Madden and Gus Edward (1909)

By the light of the silvery moon,
I want to spoon, to my honey I'll croon love's tune.
Honeymoon keep a shining in June,
Your silvery beams will bring love dreams, we'll be cuddling soon,
By the light of the moon.

Let us pray.

Holy and immortal God, from earliest times you have named us and called us into Discipleship: Teach us to follow the One whose light scatters the darkness of our world, so that we may walk as children of the light. In Christ's holy name we pray. **Amen.**

3rd Station

THE GOODNESS OF THE SKY

℟. Praise be to you, O God, great Creator:

℟. **We praise and thank you for your magnificent Creation.**

A reading from the Book of Genesis (1:6, 8):

Then God said: Let there be a dome in the middle of the waters, to separate one body of water from the other. God made the dome, and it separated the water below the dome from the water above the dome. And so it happened. God called the dome "sky."



A reading from the Book of Creation:

In parallel, about 4.44 billion years ago, a dome started to assemble, stretching as a thin blanket covering Earth. The primeval atmosphere was made mainly from gasses escaping from the planet's boiling core. As the sky dome gradually built up, it started protecting Earth from incoming asteroids and comets as well as from solar radiation, while also creating the pressure needed for liquid water to form. As the dome evolved, it eventually became the sacred air we now breathe.

℟. God declared that the sky was good.

℟. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

Sky Activity: Blowing soap bubbles

A Song: "Blue skies" by Irving Berlin (1926)

Blue skies smiling at me, Nothing but blue skies do I see.
Blue birds singing a song, Nothing but blue skies from now on.

Never saw the sun shining so bright, Never saw things going so right.
Noticing the days hurrying by, When you're in love, my how they fly.

Blue days, all of them gone, Nothing but blue skies from now on.
Blue skies smiling at me, Nothing but blue skies do I see.
Blue birds singing a song, Nothing but blue skies from now on.

Let us pray.

Lord be with us this day: Within us to purify us; above us to draw us up; beneath us to sustain us;
before us to lead us; behind us to restrain us; around us to protect us. **Amen.**

Patrick of Ireland, 5th c.

4th Station

THE GOODNESS OF EARTH AND SEA

V. Praise be to you, O God, great Creator:

R. **We praise and thank you for your magnificent Creation.**

A reading from the Book of Genesis (1:9-10):

Then God said: Let the water under the sky be gathered into a single basin, so that the dry land may appear. And so it happened: the water under the sky was gathered into its basin, and the dry land appeared. God called the dry land "earth," and the basin of water he called "sea." God declared that it was good.



A reading from the Book of Creation:

About 4.43 billion years ago, Earth gradually cooled and its surface of molten rock turned into a crust of rock. A beautiful shell of sacred rock.

V. God declared that the Earth's crust was good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

In parallel, the water vapor escaping through volcanoes from its boiling interior formed clouds that discharged rain. A lot of rain. The process lasted a very long time, drenching the young planet and gradually forming its majestic seas. A never-ending dance of waves and currents suffused the sacred seas.

V. God declared that the sea was good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

The constant parade of clouds also meant that water soaked the land. Flowing water came together in countless streams and rivers. Lakes, lagoons, and wetlands were formed along the way. In the coldest places, snow and mighty glaciers dominated the scene. Sacred water blessed all corners of the globe.

V. God declared that freshwater bodies were good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

Over billions of years, water and sky molded the Earth's rocks into all sorts of sculptures, stones, pebbles, sand grains, and clay. A sacred blanket of rocky ornaments covered the earth. Eventually the "supercontinent" Pangea emerged, with a vast ocean surrounding it. About 175 million years ago, Pangea started to break apart, gradually becoming the seven continents, with a myriad of islands in between. They were adorned with all sorts of mountains, hills, plateaus, and plains: A rich array of sacred landscapes.

V. God declared that continents and islands were good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

Earth Activity: *Building Sand castles*

A Song: "Home on the Range," by Brewster Higley and Daniel Kelley (1873)

1. Oh, give me a home where the buffalo roam,
Where the deer and the antelope play;
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

Refrain:

Home, home on the range,
Where the deer and the antelope play;
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

2. How often at night when the heavens are bright
I see light of those flickering stars,
And have laid there amazed and asked as I gazed
If their glory exceeds that of love. *Refrain*

3. Where the air is so pure, and the zephyrs so free,
The breezes so balmy and light,
That I would not exchange my home on the range
For all of the cities so bright. *Refrain*

Let us pray.

God of wind and water, stillness and storm, your Spirit sweeps over the surface of the sea. Give us faith to seek you in times of trouble. Reach out your hand to us when we are sinking so that we may believe and worship you; through Jesus Christ, Sovereign and Savior. **Amen.**

5th Station

THE GOODNESS OF PLANTS

V. Praise be to you, O God, great Creator:

R. **We praise and thank you for your magnificent Creation.**

A reading from the Book of Genesis (1:11-12):

Then God said: Let the earth bring forth vegetation: every kind of plant that bears seed and every kind of fruit tree on earth that bears fruit with its seed in it. And so it happened: the earth brought forth vegetation: every kind of plant that bears seed and every kind of fruit tree that bears fruit with its seed in it. God declared that it was good.



A reading from the Book of Creation:

About 3.5 billion years ago, water enabled the stupendous to happen: life emerged. The first single-celled microorganism was born in the sea. The miracle of life burst forth.

V. God declared that life was good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

About 2.7 billion years ago, cyanobacteria became the first oxygen producers using photosynthesis. After another billion years, cells joined with each other for survival and development – and the first multicellular organisms were born. Life started to become increasingly complex and diverse, including the first sea sponges. The sacred community of living beings multiplied, faster and faster.

V. God declared that the bacteria and multicellular beings were good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

Eventually, the first algae emerged, the very first plants – of microscopic size for starters, then increasingly larger. Sacred algae came in many forms. There was pond scum, seaweeds, giant kelps, and more.

Next some shore-dwelling algae evolved to survive outside of water – the first mosses emerged, tiny ancestors of all terrestrial plants. Cushy green mats began to carpet rocks by the shores. They

proliferated into various species, and eventually developed the first vascular systems, with tubes transporting water and nutrients to enable the plants to grow larger. This is how ferns and other leafed plants were born. Reproducing via spores, they evolved into many shapes and forms, including tree ferns with solid trunks. Sacred forests began to take over the land. First, the conifers emerged. Featuring seeds in iconic cones and needle-like leaves, dense forests began to form in colder and more arid regions. Spectacular tree cathedrals proliferated, with thick columns of cedars, pines, cypresses, redwoods, spruces, and more, reaching colossal sizes in some cases.

℟. God declared that mosses and conifers were good.

℟. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

Later on, about 130 million years ago, the first flowers bloomed and their corresponding fruits ripened. An explosion of flowering plants transformed the face of the earth. Wildflowers, grasses, shrubs, climbing plants, broad-leaf trees, and cacti evolved into all sorts of colors and forms. They come together in lush rainforests, vast grasslands and savannas, dense mangrove and boreal forests, and even overcame the harshness of arid deserts and icy tundras. Sacred plants with their exuberant array of flowers have adorned our beautiful earth since then.

℟. God declared that flowering plants were good.

℟. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

Plants Activity: *The sleeping power inside bulbs*

A Song: "Scarborough Fair/Canticle," by Paul Simon & Art Garfunkel (1966)

Are you going to Scarborough Fair?
Parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme
Remember me to one who lives there
She once was a true love of mine

Tell her to make me a cambric shirt
(*On the side of a hill, in the deep forest green*)
Parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme
(*Tracing of sparrow on snow-crested ground*)
Without no seams nor needle work
(*Blankets and bedclothes the child of the mountain*)
Then she'll be a true love of mine
(*Sleeps unaware of the clarion call*)

Tell her to find me an acre of land
(*On the side of a hill, a sprinkling of leaves*)

Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme
(Washes the grave with silvery tears)
Between the salt water and the sea strands
(A soldier cleans and polishes a gun)
Then she'll be a true love of mine

Tell her to reap it with a sickle of leather
(War bellows blazing in scarlet battalions)
Parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme
(Generals order their soldiers to kill)
And gather it all in a bunch of heather
(And to fight for a cause they've long ago forgotten)
Then she'll be a true love of mine

Are you going to Scarborough Fair?
Parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme
Remember me to one who lives there
She once was a true love of mine

Let us pray.

Bless to me, O God, each thing my eye sees; bless to me, O God, each sound my ear hears; Bless to me, O God, each odor that reaches my nostrils; Bless to me, O God: each taste the goes into my lips, each not that goes into my song, each ray that guides my way, each purpose that I pursue, each lure that tempts my will, the zeal that seeks my living soul; the Three that seek my heart, the zeal that seeks my living soul, the Three that seek my heart. **Amen.**

Carmina Gadelica, vol III

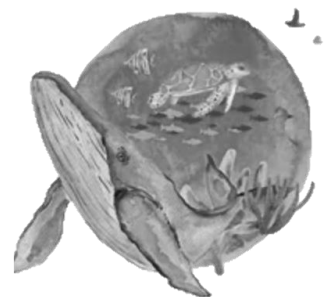
6th Station

THE GOODNESS OF WATER AND AIR CREATURES

✠ Praise be to you, O God, great Creator:
✠ **We praise and thank you for your magnificent Creation.**

A reading from the Book of Genesis (1:20-21):

Then God said: Let the water teem with an abundance of living creatures, and on the earth let birds fly beneath the dome of the sky. God created the great sea monsters and all kinds of crawling living creatures with which the water teems, and all kinds of winged birds. God declared that it was good.



A reading from the Book of Creation:

In parallel to the emergence of aquatic plants, about 600 million years ago, worms and jellyfish appeared in the seas. They featured the first nervous systems, allowing them to sense their environment and swim around. They evolved into all sorts of sacred invertebrate creatures, with growing complexity and intelligence – molluscs, sea snails, trilobites, crabs, lobsters, shrimp, squids, octopus, and more. Curiously, evolution also entailed predation and extinction. Anticipating the Cross, life requires death, to evolve into further beauty and diversity.

V. God declared that aquatic invertebrates were good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

About 500 million years ago, fish emerged. They featured cartilage and bones, which also protected their nervous system – a key development for further complexity. They evolved into countless types of sacred fish, ranging from tiny seahorses, eels, and coral fish, to huge sharks, swordfish, and manta rays – and everything in between.

After a long evolutionary journey inland, the first marine reptiles emerged about 250 million years ago and the first marine mammals about 50 million years ago. Still breathing air on the sea surface, they ventured into deeper waters and became great swimmers. Reptilian divers like marine dinosaurs, sea turtles, crocodiles, and marine iguanas; fin-footed creatures like seals, walruses, manatees, and dugongs; as well as full-fledged cetaceans like the majestic whales, dolphins, orcas, and narwhals.

V. God declared that marine reptiles and mammals were good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

About 390 million years ago, the first flying creatures emerged from water, an ancient species of dragonfly. All kinds of sacred flying insects would follow later, as flies, beetles, ladybugs, fireflies, and grasshoppers, and the pollinators like butterflies, moths, bees, and wasps.

V. God declared that flying insects were good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

In parallel, after a long evolutionary journey begun as reptiles, birds eventually emerged about 150 million years ago. After mastering flying with their light feathers, they evolved into an awe-inspiring array of sacred flapping life. Giant condors and tiny sparrows, musical canaries and discreet hummingbirds, solitary eagles and dancing flocks of starlings, colorful parrots and camouflaged owls, running ostriches and swimming cormorants.

V. God declared that birds were good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

Flying Insects Activity: *Butterfly kite*

A Song: "Somewhere over the Rainbow," *original by Harold Arlen and Yip Harburg (1939).
Arrangement by Israel Kamakawiwo'ole (1990).*

[Intro] Oooh...

Somewhere over the rainbow, Way up high
And the dreams that you dreamed of, Once in a lullaby
Oh, somewhere over the rainbow, Bluebirds fly
And the dreams that you dreamed of,
Dreams really do come true.

Someday I'll wish upon a star
Wake up where the clouds are far behind me
Where trouble melts like lemon drops
High above the chimney tops, that's where you'll find me, oh
Somewhere over the rainbow bluebirds fly
And the dream that you dare to, oh, why, oh, why can't I, I?

Oh, someday, I'll wish upon a star
Wake up where the clouds are far behind me
Where trouble melts like-a lemon drops
High above the chimney top, that's where you'll find me
Oh, somewhere over the rainbow way up high
And the dream that you dare to, why, oh, why can't I, I?

Let us pray and affirm together:

**There is no plant in the ground, but is full of his virtue; there is no form in the strand
but is full of his blessing. Jesu, Jesu, Jesu! Jesu, who ought to be praised.**

**There is no life in the sea, there is no creature in the river, there is naught in the
firmament, but proclaims his goodness:**

Jesu, Jesu, Jesu! Jesu, who ought to be praised.

**There is no bird on the wing, there is no star in the sky, there is nothing beneath the
sun, but proclaims his goodness:**

Jesu, Jesu, Jesu! Jesu, Jesu, who ought to be praised.

Carmina Gadelica vol. I

THE GOODNESS OF LAND CREATURES

V. Praise be to you, O God, great Creator:

R. **We praise and thank you for your magnificent Creation.**

A reading from the Book of Genesis (1:24-25):

Then God said: Let the earth bring forth every kind of living creature: tame animals, crawling things, and every kind of wild animal. And so it happened: God made every kind of wild animal, every kind of tame animal, and every kind of thing that crawls on the ground. God declared that it was good.



A reading from the Book of Creation:

About 500 million years ago, in tandem with the colonization of land by plants, the first insects appeared as well. They gradually evolved into all sorts of sacred landbound creatures: tiny ants and giant stick insects, communal termites and solitary mantids, colorful beetles and stealthy leaf insects, silent shield bugs and musical cicadas and crickets. Other invertebrates also proliferated, such as worms, snails, pill bugs, centipedes, millipedes, and spiders.

V. God declared that the invertebrates – the bugs – were good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

About 370 million years ago, the first amphibians appeared. Feasting on insects and loving the water, they evolved into countless types of frogs, toads, salamanders, and newts. Some time later, about 320 million years ago, some evolved into reptiles with lungs and shelled eggs. They branched off into all sorts of forms and shapes – tiny lizards and giant dinosaurs, slithering snakes and rigid tortoises, climbing geckos and morphing chameleons. Sacred four-legged creatures began to take over the land.

V. God declared that amphibians and reptiles were good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

About 200 million years ago, warm-blooded mammals appeared for the first time, feeding milk to their little ones. First with a rodent-like appearance, they evolved into a sacred line-up of incredible diversity. Prickly porcupines and scaly pangolins, tiny mice and towering giraffes, bouncing kangaroos and climbing monkeys, hairless hippos and furry bears, energetic squirrels and lazy sloths, fragile koalas and mighty tigers, long-eared rabbits and long-tusked elephants, and so many more.

V. God declared that mammals were good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

A Song: (All God's Critters Got) "A Place in the Choir," by Bill Staines (1979)

Chorus:

All God's critters got a place in the choir
Some sing low, some sing higher
Some sing out loud on the telephone wires
And some just clap their hands, or paws, or anything they got now.

1. Listen to the bass, it's the one on the bottom
Where the bullfrog croaks and the hippopotamus
Moans and groans with a big to-do,
And the old cow just goes moo.

2. The dogs and the cats they take up the middle
While the honeybee hums and the cricket fiddles
The donkey brays and the pony neighs
And the old coyote howls.

Chorus

3. Listen to the top where the little birds sing
On the melodies with the high notes ringing
The hoot owl hollers over everything
And the jaybird disagrees.

4. Singin' in the night time, singing in the day
The little duck quacks, then he's on his way
The 'possum ain't got much to say
And the porcupine talks to himself.

Chorus

5. It's a simple song of living sung everywhere
By the ox and the fox and the grizzly bear
The grumpy alligator the hawk above
The sly raccoon and the turtle dove.

Chorus

Let us pray.

Almighty and Everliving God, you bring forth and sustain every living thing; help us grow in compassion and care for the multitude of your creatures, that we may see them not as objects for our use, but as brothers and sisters that sing your never-ending praise. Through Jesus Christ, our Shepherd and guide. **Amen.**

THE GOODNESS OF HUMANS

V. Praise be to you, O God, great Creator:

R. **We praise and thank you for your magnificent Creation.**

A reading from the Book of Genesis (1:26-27):

Then God said: Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the tame animals, all the wild animals, and all the creatures that crawl on the earth. God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.



A reading from the Book of Creation:

After a long journey of over 3.5 billion years, the miracle of life eventually turned into the miracle of humans. Evolving from an incredible journey that began in the sea, of microorganisms, bacteria, invertebrates and fish, and an equally incredible journey on land of amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and primates, the first human ancestors walked on Earth over 2 million years ago, in Eastern Africa.

The lineage most likely started with the *Homo Habilis*, who developed the ability to create rudimentary stone tools. Then, eventually, they evolved into the *Homo Erectus*, who improved social coordination and better tools, and even learned how to use fire. The prevalent pattern was the ever-increasing size of the brain. Moreover, they began to show a new level of empathy towards sick and injured members.

V. God declared that the *Homo Erectus* creatures were good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

About 300,000 years ago, the first *Homo Sapiens* emerged, with lighter bones, smaller jaws, and bigger skulls holding very large brains. They began to interact with each other and their natural surroundings in increasingly complex ways. About 40,000 years ago, human language began; artistic expressions such as painting and music emerged; and the first rituals took place to connect with the divine mystery.

V. God declared that the *Homo Sapiens* were good.

R. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

About 12,000 years ago, the revolution of agriculture began. Humans learned how to grow food from plants and animals, allowing them to settle down in villages and towns. Creativity exploded on all fronts. Increasingly sophisticated tools: pottery, textiles, wheels, and much more. Increasingly

sophisticated cultural expressions: storytelling, all sorts of artistic endeavors, and, eventually, writing. And so much more.

Most importantly, both good and evil behaviors intensified when living in groups. Sin and virtue take center stage. On one hand, humans become capable of unthinkable atrocities, such as slavery and war. On the other hand, paradoxically, humans become capable also of immense compassion and selflessness, often nourished by spiritual experiences. The drama of human history, with all its lights and shadows, intensifies.

℞. God declared that human cultures were good.

℞. **For the goodness of all Creation, praise be to God!**

Humans Activity: *How shall we care for Creation? Led by Amy Freeman*

A Song: "Lean on Me," by Bill Withers (1972)

1. Sometimes in our lives, we all have pain, we all have sorrow
But if we are wise, we know that there's always tomorrow

Chorus

Lean on me when you're not strong
And I'll be your friend, I'll help you carry on.
For it won't be long 'til I'm gonna need
Somebody to lean on.

2. Please swallow your pride
If I have things you need to borrow,
For no one can fill those of your needs
That you won't let show.

You just call on me, brother, when you need a hand
We all need somebody to lean on.
I just might have a problem that you'll understand
We all need somebody to lean on.

Chorus

3. If there is a load you have to bear
That you can't carry,
I'm right up the road, I'll share your load
If you just call me.

Call me, if you need a friend.
Call me, uh-huh, Call me...

Let us pray.

Almighty God, in giving us dominion over things on earth, you made us fellow workers in your Creation: Give us wisdom and reverence so to use the resources of nature, that no one may suffer from our abuse of them, and that generations yet to come may continue to praise you for your bounty; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

9th Station

THE GOODNESS OF EVERYTHING

V. Praise be to you, O God, great Creator:

R. **We praise and thank you for your magnificent Creation.**

A reading from the Book of Genesis (1:31, 2:3):

God looked at everything he had made, and found it very good... God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work he had done in creation.



A reading from the Book of History:

A few thousand years ago, the love story began between God and the People of Israel. Among other things, we were taught about the goodness of the whole cosmos and the importance of contemplative rest. We were invited to enjoy and be thankful for this created world that is “very good”.

V. As God declared, we also see that everything is good, very good.

R. **All Creation is good, very good. Praise be to God!**

About 2,000 years ago, the Creator became a creature. The womb of a young Jewish woman was the setting for the incredible mystery of the Incarnation. A few decades later, that Creator-and-creature was nailed to a cross, redeeming the whole cosmos – ranging from the most distant stars to the tiniest insects in our midst.

V. As God declared, we also see that everything is good, very good.

R. **All Creation is good, very good. Praise be to God!**

In recent times, we have learned to look at everything God has made with awe-inspiring detail, ranging from the telescopic to the microscopic. And yet, in the last few decades, instead of contemplating how everything is “very good,” too many humans have realized how everything on Earth is “very exploitable.” Driven by greed and selfishness, we have ravaged our forests, polluted our waters, poisoned our soil, disrupted our climate, and decimated the number of non-human populations, while also hurting the most vulnerable among us humans. The human family now laments the damage we have caused.

And so today, more than ever, we uplift the sacredness of all Creation. Today, more than ever, we honor God as Creator. Today, more than ever, we celebrate the cosmos' web of matter and the planet's web of life.

✠ As God declared, we also see that everything is good, very good.

✠ **All Creation is good, very good. Praise be to God! Amen.**

Litany of the Circle, by Tom Hanson and Loretta Whalen (1989)
inspired by a prayer of Chief Seattle (1780-1866).

One: *Every part of this earth is sacred,
Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore.
Every mist in the dark woods,*

All: Every clearing and humming insect is holy.

One: *The rocky crest, the juices of the meadow, the beasts and all the people,*

All: All belong to the same family.

One: *Teach your children that the earth is our mother.*

All: Whatever befalls the earth befalls the children of the earth.

One: *The water's murmur is the voice of our father's father.*

All: We are part of the earth, and the earth is part of us.

One: *The rivers are our brothers; they quench our thirst.*

All: The perfumed flowers are our sister.

One: *The air is precious, for all of us share the same breath.
The wind that gave our grandparents breath also receives their last sign.
The wind gave our children the spirit of life.*

All: This we know, the earth does not belong to us; we belong to the earth.

One: *This we know, all things are connected, like the blood which unites one family.*

All: All things are connected.

One: *Our God is the same God, whose compassion is equal for all.
For we did not weave the web of life; we are merely a strand in it.*

All: Whatever we do to the web we do to ourselves.

One: *Let us give thanks for the web in the circle that connects us.*

All: Thanks be to God, the God of us all.

One: *Let us pray for God's help in caring for the Creation.*

Please freely add your petitions.

...Amen.

A Song: "This Land is Your Land," by Woody Guthrie (1940)

Chorus:

This land is your land, this land is my land,
From California to the New York Island,
From the Redwood Forest to the Gulf Stream Waters
This land was made for you and me.

1. As I went walking that ribbon of highway
I saw above me that endless skyway
I saw below me that golden valley
This land was made for you and me.

Chorus

2. I roamed and rambled, and I followed my footsteps
To the sparkling sands of her diamond deserts
All around me a voice was sounding
This land was made for you and me.

Chorus

3. As the sun was shining, and I was strolling
And the wheat fields waving and the dust clouds rolling
A voice come chanting as the fog was lifting
This land was made for you and me.

Chorus

Another Song: "What a Wonderful World," by George David Weiss and Bob Thiele (1967)

I see trees of green, red roses too,
I see them bloom for me and you,
And I think to myself: What a wonderful world.

I see skies of blue and clouds of white,
The bright blessed days, the dark sacred nights,
And I think to myself: What a wonderful world.

The colors of the rainbow, so pretty in the sky
Are also on the faces of people going by.

I see friends shaking hands, saying, "How do you do?"
They're really saying, "I love you."

I hear babies cry, I watch them grow,
They'll learn much more than I'll ever know,
And I think to myself: What a wonderful world.
Yes, I think to myself: What a wonderful world.

✠ Go in peace, rejoicing in the beauty of God's Creation. Alleluia, alleluia!

✠ **Thanks be to God – Alleluia, alleluia!**

Please stay for fellowship and a chili supper, up the ramp in our Parish Hall.

A place for your notes and doodles _____
