

Sunday Worship Service – Sept 14, 2025
Season of Creation: Peace With Creation
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Welcome

Land Acknowledgement & Welcome Statement

Introduction to the Season of Creation*

Today's focus is on the Season of Creation, an annual ecumenical celebration around the world that unites us to be reminded of the importance to care for our common home, God's creation.

The celebration of the season begins on September 1, also known as the Feast of Creation, and ends October 4, the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology beloved by many Christian denominations.

Each year, the Season of Creation Ecumenical Steering Committee proposes a theme for the Season of Creation. The theme for 2025 is "Peace with Creation" and the symbol is "Garden of Peace", inspired by Isaiah 32:14-18.

The symbol depicts a white dove flying over a tree. The left side of the tree is barren, with roots digging into dry soil, surrounded by arid, desolate landscape. In contrast, the right side of the tree is lush and green, standing amidst a flourishing landscape. The dove, carrying an olive branch in its beak, flies toward the right – symbolizing peace as a transition from a war-torn, overexploited land to one that is fertile, thriving, and hospitable.

Humanity was originally called to tend a garden. As we worship, and continue our thanksgiving as we leave this place, we are invited to reflect on the connection between caring for creation and fostering peace.

Confession and Forgiveness*

Triune God, Creator of all, we praise you for your goodness, visible in all the diversity that you have created, making us a cosmic family living in a common home. Through the Earth you created, we experience love and nourishment, home and protection.

We confess that we do not always think of the Earth as a gift from you, our Creator. Our selfishness, greed, neglect, and abuse have caused the climate crisis, loss of biodiversity, human suffering as well as the suffering of our fellow creatures.

Loving and Creator God, we pray that you will make us sensitive to the needs of your creation and enable us to have the same compassion as that of Jesus, our redeemer.

Words of Forgiveness

May God grant us a fresh vision of our relationship with Creation, and with one another, as diverse people that are all made in God's image. Your sins are forgiven in the name of the + Creating God, Redeeming Son, and the Sustaining Spirit. Amen

#731 Gathering Hymn "Earth and All Stars" (v.1-4)

1. **Earth and all stars! Loud rushing planets! Sing to the Lord a new song!
Hail, wind, and rain! Loud blowing snowstorm!
Sing to the Lord a new song!
God has done marvelous things. I too sing praises with a new song!**
2. **Trumpet and pipes! Loud clashing cymbals!
Sing to the Lord a new song!
Harp, lute, and lyre! Loud humming cellos!
Sing to the Lord a new song!
God has done marvelous things. I too sing praises with a new song!**
3. **Engines and steel! Loud pounding hammers!
Sing to the Lord a new song!
Limestone and beams! Loud building workers!
Sing to the Lord a new song!
God has done marvelous things. I too sing praises with a new song!**
4. **Classrooms and labs! Loud boiling test tubes,
Sing to the Lord a new song!
Athlete and band! Loud cheering people!
Sing to the Lord a new song!
God has done marvelous things. I too sing praises with a new song!**

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 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 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 Saviour 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.

(World Council of Churches, Eco-School at the Orthodox Academy of Crete, Greece, 11-18 November 2023)

#785 Hymn of Praise “When Peace Like a River” (v.1&4)

1. **When peace like a river attendeth my way,
when sorrows like sea billows roll,
whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
it is well, it is well with my soul.**

Refrain: **It is well (It is well) with my soul, (with my soul,
It is well, it is well with my soul.**

4. **Lord, hasten the day when our faith shall be sight,
the clouds be rolled back as a scroll,
the trumpet shall sound and the Lord shall descend;
even so it is well with my soul. (Refrain)**

Prayer of the Day*

Blessed are you, **Creator of all, to you be praise and glory forever as your dawn renews the face of the earth bringing light and life to all creation. Bring hope to your people. May we rejoice in this day you have made. Open our eyes to behold your presence and strengthen our hands to work for justice for all of creation, that the world may rejoice together and give you praise. Amen.**

First Reading: Isaiah 32:14-18

A reading from Isaiah chapter 32:

The palace will be deserted, the crowded city abandoned.
Stronghold and watchtower will become empty fields forever,
suited for the pleasure of wild donkeys, and a pasture for flocks—
until a spirit from on high is poured out on us,
and the desert turns into farmland, and the farmland is considered a forest.

Then justice will reside in wild lands, and righteousness will abide in farmlands.

The fruit of righteousness will be peace, and the outcome of righteousness, calm and security forever.

Then my people will live in a peaceful dwelling, in secure homes, in carefree resting places.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading: Philippians 4:5-7

Let your gentleness show in your treatment of all people. God is near.

Don't be anxious about anything; rather, bring up all of your requests to God in your prayers and petitions, along with giving thanks.

Then the peace of God that exceeds all understanding will keep your hearts and minds safe in Christ Jesus.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

#520 Gospel Acclamation "Dearest Jesus, at Your Word" (v.1&3)

- 1. Dearest Jesus, at your word we have come again to hear you; let our thoughts and hearts be stirred and in glowing faith be near you as the promises here given draw us wholly up to heaven.**
- 3. Radiance of God's glory bright, Light of Light from God proceeding, Jesus, send your blessed light; help our hearing, speaking, heeding, that our prayers and songs may please you, as with grateful hearts we praise you.**

Gospel Reading: John 14:15-17

The holy gospel according to John, the 14th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. I will ask the One who sent me, to give you another Helper, a Companion who will be with you forever. This Companion is the Spirit of Truth, whom the world can't receive because it neither sees the Spirit nor recognizes the Spirit.

You know the Spirit, because the Spirit lives with you and will be with you.

The gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

#835 Hymn of the Day *"All Creatures Worship God Most High"* (v.1-2,4, 6)

1. **All creatures, worship God most high!
Sound ev'ry voice in earth and sky: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Sing, brother sun, in splendor bright;
sing, sister moon and stars of night:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**
2. **Sing, brother wind; with clouds and rain
you grow the gifts of fruit and grain: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Dear sister water, useful, clear,
make music for your Lord to hear:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**
4. **All who for love of God forgive,
all who in pain or sorrow grieve: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Christ bears your burdens and your fears;
still make your song amid the tears:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**
6. **O sisters, brothers, take your part,
and worship God with humble heart: Alleluia! Alleluia!
All creatures, bless the Father, Son,
and Holy Spirit, Three in One:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

Affirmation of Faith

**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, and her bounty shared justly.
So be it. Amen.**

*(Adapted From India. Source: Sinfonia Oecumenica, Gütersloher Verlagshaus, Gütersloh 1998.
Reproduced by ECEN for Creation Time 2003)*

Prayers of Intercession

Creating God, we come to you in prayer for all of creation, including the church, the world, and all in need. Prayer petitions will end with “God of Creation,” and the response is “receive our prayer.”

We pray for your created world. You created the universe and all that lives and exists in it. The earth is filled with your creations. You make the grass, plants, and fruit-bearing trees grow, you feed the birds of the sky, you care for all your creatures on Earth. Out of your love you created human beings, give us the strength to faithfully till and keep your created world according to your will. God of Creation, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for humanity, for every community, and every person in it. May we treat our fellow human beings with respect: that we may accept all in their diversity, that we may support and uphold the human dignity of our neighbours. Give us a grateful heart, that we may see ourselves as part of the great and rich whole of which you have created humanity. We pray for understanding, responsible thinking, and valuable work. God of Creation, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for your Church, that we may be a messenger of life and an agent of your love throughout the world. Instill courage in the hearts of those who follow you, that we may dare to proclaim hope to those who live in fear, encouragement to those who doubt, comfort to those who despair. Give your Church the strength of unity to proclaim your Gospel in word and deed as part of the world in crisis. God of Creation, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for the sick, the destitute, the oppressed and the vulnerable. We pray for our fellow human beings and for all of creation affected by war, conflict, genocide, and ecocide. Serve justice to those who cry out to you, and to those who have no ability to cry out. Give us the courage to act on behalf of those who silently endure injustice and guide our steps in the way of righteous and long-lasting peace. Act in our world your life-giving will. God of Creation, **receive our prayer.**

Creating God, grant that the future of the world, of humanity, of the Church and of all people may be in your hands, and that we may live in true hope, justice, and peace for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

*(Source: Oratio Oecumenica; Zsuzsa Koltai, Ecumenical Working Group for Season of Creation, Hungary.
Translation: Season of Creation.)*

Sharing of the Peace

May the peace of the Lord, and peace with Creation, be with you always!
And also with you!

Offering

Source of every good gift, **give us joy in our giving, wisdom in our spending and in our consumption and peace in our hearts for the good of your creation. May our words and actions reflect your love. Amen.**

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Eucharistic Prayer

Throughout all ages, mountains dance and trees applaud.
Your *Sabbath and Jubilee* insist: "Refreshment and rest for all Creation".
But we made exceptions. Your people sought milk and honey,
yet injustice laid lands waste.
Your prophets: priests and farmers call us to account.
Yet your loving signs of warning fall often by the wayside.
Yet still comes Christ Jesus, friend of wildlife, beloved of the poor.
When with Christ we shoulder the cross of healing.
Risen and present through food and faith,
Christ calls us afresh to care for a damaged world.

Blessing of Bread & Wine

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, Jesus took the cup,
Gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the covenant in my blood,
Shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us, and on these gifts of bread and wine.
May they remind us that we are one in Christ,
no longer divided by race or country or any other earthly sign.
For all these gifts, we give our thanks and praise. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:
**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.**

Communion *(for online worshippers)*

Communion Distribution

#481 Communion Hymn "Come to the Table"
**Come to the table of mercy, prepared with the wine and the bread.
All who are hungry and thirsty, drink and your soul will be fed.
Come at the Lord's invitation, receive from his nail scarred hand;
eat of the bread of salvation, drink of the blood of the Lamb.**
(repeat song 3x)

Communion Blessing

Prayer after Communion**

God of creation, invited and fed at your table we are renewed.
 May this food empower us to cherish your Creation, who we also are.
 And whether our cares be light or heavy, our song be strong or weak,
 keep our hearts warm, our hands open,
 our lives ever embracing and embraced by your love. Amen.

Announcements

Blessing

May your life be a river.
 May you flow with the purpose of the One who created and called you,
 who directs your course, and turns you ever toward home.
 May your way shimmer with the light of Christ
 who goes with you, who bears you up, who calls you by name.
 May you move with the grace of the Spirit
 who brooded over the face of the waters at the beginning
 and who will gather you in at the end.
 In the name of God our Creator, Jesus our Healer,
 and the Holy Spirit our comforter. Amen.

(Written by Jan L. Richardson, and posted on The Painted Prayerbook. <http://paintedprayerbook.com/>)

#881 Sending Hymn “Let All Things Now Living”

1. **Let all things now living a song of thanksgiving
 to God the creator triumphantly raise,
 who fashioned and made us, protected and stayed us,
 who still guides us on to the end of our days.**
**God’s banners are o’er us, God’s light goes before us,
 a pillar of fire shining forth in the night,
 till shadows have vanished and darkness is banished,
 as forward we travel from light into light.**
2. **God rules all the forces: the stars in their courses
 and sun in its orbit obediently shine;
 the hills and the mountains, the rivers and fountains,
 the deeps of the ocean proclaim God divine.**
**We too should be voicing our love and rejoicing;
 with glad adoration a song let us raise
 till all things now living unite in thanksgiving:
 “To God in the highest, hosanna and praise!”**

Sending

Go in peace, to live in peace with creation and to love and serve God.

Thanks be to God!

Sources:

Bible passages (except where otherwise indicated) from Common English Bible (CEB) and adapted for inclusive language.

Resources indicated with * from:

Season of Creation 2024 Celebration Guide: To Hope and Act with Creation

Resources indicated with ** from:

Season of Creation 2025 Celebration Guide: Peace with Creation