

ST. DAVID'S UNITED CHURCH

SUNDAY September 13, 2020

Growing and Deepening our Spiritual Lives in an Affirming and Inclusive Community

Series: Sacred Earth: Sacred Work

“Sacred Creative Vocation”

Lighting the Affirming and the Treaty 7/Metis Candles

Introduction to worship

Creation Spirituality follows a rhythm of four paths as follows:

- recognizing the inherent goodness of all creation (including our own potential for good)
 - befriending dark places and times in our lives as fodder for new life
 - exclaiming divine creativity and our role in co-creating with God
- embodying compassion and power to bring more wholeness and justice to the world.

The worship series incorporates these as four sections of the worship experience.

Path I: Recognizing Inherent Goodness

The first path invites us to celebrate! The pulse of creation is singing the goodness of God and God's gift of goodness in all things. We become more aware of the beauty of all that is and tap into gratitude as our first task in creating more goodness in the world.

Gathering and Welcoming

God is good!
All the time!
And all the time!
God is good!

Indeed, we gather to honor the presence of God within all created and evolving life. I invite you to stand in body and/or spirit as you are comfortable. Let us give thanks for this opportunity to be together in this time of worship! Share with someone you are with or write down or say aloud WHAT and WHO you are thankful for this morning!

Expanding Our Attention 360° (*Call to Worship*)

Gathering chant

(adapted from a Chant written by Phil Porter)

**Gathered now in the mystery of this hour
Gathered now as one strong body
Gathered now in the struggle and the power
Spirit draw near**

To worship is to . . . We give thanks for the beauty of creation and our place in it.
(Turn to the East as we sing "Spirit draw near.")

[Sing two or three times]

Spirit draw near

In the East, we give thanks for the continual dawning of each new day.
We give thanks new beginnings made possible by our Creator.

(Turn to the south as we sing "Spirit draw near.")

[Sing two or three times]

Spirit draw near

We give thanks for the light of day. The sun makes life possible on earth.
**We give thanks for the gifts God has given to us.
May we share them with energy and passion.**

(Turn to the west as we sing "Spirit draw near.")

[Sing two or three times]

Spirit draw near

We face this place of the setting sun.
We give thanks for patterns letting go.

(Turn to the north as we sing "Spirit draw near.")

[Sing two or three times]

Spirit draw near

We give thanks for the nighttime with its beauty of stars and moon.
May we find our times of rest and ease.

Lighting the Christ Candle

We complete our 360-degree expansion of God's inclusive presence and turn to face the Christ candle.

The Christ, our Light, is the center of this community! When we see the Christ light, when we see how Jesus' light of love changed lives, we see how we too can change lives with God's love.

As we light the candle,

**we affirm that each one of us is created in the image and likeness of God and so
when we see one another, we see more of the Divine shine through.**

**Garden of Grace, your gifts abound, the sacred signs of your presence are all
around. Help us to remember the whole earth is holy ground.**

Gathering chant
Gathered now in the mystery of this hour
Gathered now as one strong body
Gathered now in the struggle and the power
Spirit draw near

And all God's people said, "**Amen!**"

Praising

We affirm this day that the universe, and all life within, around, and beyond it, is fundamentally a blessing, fundamentally good, and created to flourish—including us.
God calls us to flourish with compassion, courage and gratitude. Will we hear the call and respond in faith and with love?

Hymn

Here I Am, Lord

I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in deepest sin my hand will save.
I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

Chorus

Here I am Lord, Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

Made in the image of the Creator, every one of us carries within us the capacity to be a mystic, to be creative, to be visionary, and . . .

Hymn

"Here I Am, Lord"

I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain,
I have wept for love of them; they turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love a lone.
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?

Chorus

Here I am Lord, Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

Praying

Compassionate God,
You who breathed your life and goodness into us,
**inspire us to be who you have created us to be
so that we might offer our best selves to benefit a world
that so desperately needs support, hope, life and joy.
We praise you for nudging us into the future
you have created for each one of us.**

And all God's people say,
Amen.

Path II: Befriending the Dark Places

This second path recognizes with open hearts the pain that coexists with goodness and gratitude. We listen to the groans of the world and the Spirit helps us to grieve and to intercede on behalf of all those who suffer, letting go of our fear that can make things worse at times.

Listening

You are invited to settle yourselves for the depths of stillness and prayer with the sound of the singing bowl. We open this section with a quote from a mystic theologian Rumi.

Dance, when you're broken open.
Dance, if you've torn the bandage off.
Dance in the middle of the fighting.
Dance in your blood.
Dance, when you're perfectly free.

Letting Go and Holding with Love

(Prayers of the People interspersed with the Chant "Breathe in the Pain")

**Breathe in the pain
Breathe on out the love
May my heart be the place
Where this world is changed forever.**

I invite you to make a fist with your hands and imagine. . . more ready to hold, with love, the concerns of others and the pain of the world.

[The following prayers of the people are adapted from liturgy written by John Schimminger, St. John's-Grace Episcopal Church, Buffalo, New York]

Let us pray to the God of all creation, saying,
**Here we are, God, open the eyes of our hearts
and the windows of our minds.**

Creative Divine Presence, bless the whole of your creation, the immensity of which confounds our imagination. Create in us the capacity for wonder that we may more fully comprehend the holiness of your natural world. Grant us true humility that we may have compassion for every creature, all who have been made in your image of love.

**Here we are, God, open the eyes of our hearts
and the windows of our minds.**

Bless all your people throughout the Earth, in every community and nation. Give us the vision to recognize that we are one race and one species, and one only among your numberless creations.

**Here we are, God, open the eyes of our hearts
and the windows of our minds.**

Bless all ministers of the church, both clergy and lay people, and all gathered this morning to be separate but connected in your love and through zoom. Help us all to discern our role in your creative work and to undertake our unique ministries within the community of God.

**Here we are, God, open the eyes of our hearts
and the windows of our minds.**

Bless the Earth with your abundance; with good will among all nations; with civil, political, social and economic justice; and with peace for all peoples of the world. Give us the vision and the will to share the Earth's abundance fairly with all people, to find and follow the paths of peace.

**Here we are, God, open the eyes of our hearts
and the windows of our minds.**

Bless the poor, the sick, the hungry, the oppressed, and those in prison. Give us the strength and courage to work for the relief of suffering wherever we find it. Bless all those who yearn for meaning and purpose, love and compassion, whether they call these by the name of God or by another name. Give us the humility and the inspiration that we need, that we may be the incarnation of your love in our actions toward all members of the fellowship of being, both human and nonhuman.

Here I Am, Lord vs. 3

I, the Lord of wind and flame
I will tend the poor and lame
I will set a feast for them
My hand will save
Finest bread I will provide
'Til their hearts be satisfied
I will give my life to them
Whom shall I send?

Chorus

**Here I am Lord, Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.
I will hold your people in my heart.**

Bless the lives and good deeds of all who have departed from us in death. Grant us both the wisdom to remember the lessons they have taught us and the strength to carry on their good works.

**Here we are, God, open the eyes of our hearts
and the windows of our minds.**

Bless those friends and family members experiencing sickness or other troubles whom we hold within our hearts today, especially Help us to remember that it is only in ministering to others that we can truly show the glow of your compassion and love. Bless those whose birthdays and anniversaries were celebrated this week. It is good to remember that in celebrating, joy and happiness are good for our health and our hearts.

**Here we are, God, open the eyes of our hearts
and the windows of our minds.**

We bring to mind ourselves, our feelings, our concerns, our struggles, our joy... I invite you to place your hands now on your heart. In this silence we up lift all those things difficult to put into words, but are felt in the depths of our heart.

**Breathe in the pain
Breathe on out the love
May my heart be the place
Where this world is changed forever. *[repeat]***

Each week we say a different version of the prayer Jesus taught. This week we encounter a version by Mark Berry, a young pastor of a church in the United Kingdom called, 'safespace.' Let us pray together

**O Breathing Life,
your Name shines everywhere!
Release a space to plant your Presence here.
Imagine your possibilities now.
Embody your desire in every light and form.
Grow through us this moment's bread and wisdom.
Untie the knots of failure binding us,
as we release the strands we hold of others' faults.
Help us not forget our Source,
Yet free us from not being in the Present.
From you arises every Vision, Power and Song
from gathering to gathering.
Amen.**

Path III: Exclaiming the Divine Creative

This third path creates space to explore how God is working in and through us and all of the universe to renew each day every direction. Each moment offers opportunity to express our God-gifted creativity. We hear messages—ancient and new—that express and affirm the Divine at work and encourage us in our creative collaboration with the Divine.

Bringing Words to Life

Quote by Meister Eckhart, *Sermons of Meister Eckhart*

“The eye through which I see God is the same eye through which God sees me; my eye and God's eye are one eye, one seeing, one knowing, one love.”

Isaiah 6: 1-8

Here I Am, Lord vs. 1

I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in deepest sin my hand will save.
I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

Chorus

**Here I am Lord, Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.
I will hold your people in my heart.**

This is a Word of God.

Thanks be to God.

All creation is a word of God.

All creation speaks volumes of God.

Sermonizing, ‘Seeing with the eyes that God see us’

Hymn

Seeing and Honoring All Life

(Tune: VU #387, Text by Rev. Peggy)

God of courage, God of wisdom,
with our hearts we long to see
how to love each other fully,
honor our divinity.

Life is sacred, life is precious,
life of each, a gift of grace.
God's own beauty finds expression
in each cherished human face.

When we see all life has value,
healing stirs the heart awake.
Cherishing all human living,
bitter chains of hate we break.

Path IV: Embodying Compassion and Power

The fourth path will lead us out. We pray for movement within our own hearts to embody peace and passion—compassion and power—on behalf of spreading goodness throughout the week. We are not at the mercy of “the way it is,” we can claim our agency to be fully present and fully active in the world into which we now go.

Making Something New

As Brent plays, I invite each of you to write on one side of the paper heart what you do to fill your hearts, and on the other side, what you are creating in this world that will cause positive ripples into the future?

Offering

I have asked people to include in their worship space a special collection or offering dish. Each Sunday during the series I invite people to put something in that offering dish and at the end of the series to send your dedications offerings to St. David's.

Thanks

Prayer of Thanksgiving

(adapted from Fyoder Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*)

God, may we love all creation,
all the earth
and every grain of sand in it.

**May we love every leaf,
every ray of your light.**

Love the animals, love the plants,
love each separate thing.

**If we love each thing
we will perceive your mystery in all;
And when once we perceive this,
we will henceforth grow everyday
to a fuller understanding of it:
until we come at last
to love the world
with a love that will then be
all-embracing and universal.**

This offering is an outward expression of our thanks. Amen.

Holding On

Announcements

ACTS MINISTRY STUDIES BEGINNING IN SEPTEMBER!!

This Autumn, Our Groups Meet on Zoom

Monday Night Study 7:00PM to 8:30PM (90 minutes)

Online classes run from September 14th to November 23rd.

Our Book - "The Universal Christ" by Richard Rohr

You buy it from Amazon.ca or Indigo

It will be your only cost for the series.

Thursday Morning Bible Study 10:00AM to 11:00AM (60 minutes)

We meet September 17th to make our fall study Bible selection

Classes run until the end of November

Invite new friends to join us via Zoom.

If you have questions, contact Wayne at waholst@telus.net

Go for It!

Spiritual practice: It is through the work of spiritual practice that we move beyond fear into compassion and discover our deep and true selves. Engaging in spiritual practices—whether that looks typically religious (like praying) or not (like walking) have intentionality in common. They draw us closer to the Creator and who we were created to be—free and compassionate beings. This week engage in one spiritual practice that enables you to send out positive ripples to people around you indicating to them that they are seen, loved and accepted.

Benediction and sending out

As we leave this worship time let us remember . . .

Benediction Song VU #884

"You Shall Go Out with Joy"

You shall go out with joy

And be led forth with peace.

The mountains and the hills will break forth before you.

There'll be shouts of joy

And the trees of the fields

will clap, will clap their hands.

And the trees of the fields will clap their hands,

the trees of the fields will clap their hands,

the trees of the fields will clap their hands,

While you go out with joy.