

Melville United Church
Sunday September 17, 2017
Season of Creation - Forest & Land

** Congregation please stand as you are able.*

Bold print invites congregational response.

Presiding Today: Marion Loree



Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Sharing the Light

Call to Worship:

Like mighty cedar trees,

we open our arms to God.

Like swaying palm trees,

we feel Spirit move among us.

We are formed from the dust of the earth;

God's breath gives us life.

The earth feeds our bodies.

God's Spirit feeds our souls.

Come, people of God, let us worship the Creator together.

***Hymn:** All Creatures of the Earth and Sky

(words attributed to St. Francis of Assisi (tune VU 217)

**All creatures of the earth and sky,
come, kindred, lift your voices high,
Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Bright burning sun with golden beam,
soft shining moon with silver gleam:
Sing praises. Sing praises.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**Swift rushing wind so wild and strong,
white clouds that sail in heav'n along,
Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Fair rising morn in praise rejoice,
high stars of evening find a voice:
Sing praises. Sing praises.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

Melville United Church

St. Andrew Street West, Fergus, ON: 519-843-1781

Team Ministry

Minister of Worship & Pastoral Care	Rev. Marion Loree
Minister of Faith Formation & Outreach	Jen Auger
Minister of Music:	Matthias Schmidt
Church Secretary:	Gerri McCullough
Custodian:	Robert Mitchell
Chair of Church Council:	Allan Hons
Pastoral Care	Alison Rainford, Rev. Marion Loree
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Cool flowing water, pure and clear,
 make music for all life to hear,
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 Dance, flame of fire, so strong and bright,
 and bless us with your warmth and light:
 Sing praises. Sing praises.
 Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Embracing earth, you, day by day,
 Bring forth your blessings on our way,
 Alleluia, Alleluia!
 All herbs and fruits that richly grow,
 let them the glory also show;
 Sing praises. Sing praises.
 Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Opening Prayer: Earth-rise - Psalm 24 - (*paraphrase- James Taylor -
 Everyday Psalms*)

Turning and turning, our pale blue globe
 burns bright in the blackness of eternity.

**The Earth is God's, and all that is in it -
 all life embodied in the only home we know.**

God created life in the oceans,

and nourishes it with nutrients from the mountains.

Trace the course of a river to its source;

stand among the mountains and marvel.

Who would dare defile this paradise?

God sees through our deceit and pretense;

we cannot claim innocence when we have dirty hands.

We can only approach God with clean hands and pure hearts.

Then we will see a smile on the face of God;

then God's wisdom will be evident in the world.

So seek God in high and holy places.

Let the vast valleys throw open their arms,

let the summits stand tall in pride,

for this is the body of our God!

With all the glory of the universe to choose from,

with all of creation quivering in expectation,

the God of life picked this planet to be our home.

So throw open your valleys, oh earth!

Spread wide your plains to welcome your Creator!

For the God of all creation lives here.

Words of Assurance:

The wisdom we are offered is that God is good
 and God's Creation is good.

God's love is unconditional and is for everyone and everything.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Theme Conversation:

Hymn: All Things Bright and Beautiful (vs 1,3,5) **VU 291**

Children's parting prayer:

Dear God,

Help our lips to praise (*touch lips*)

Help our hands to serve (*hold our hands*)

Help our hearts to love. (*Fold hands across chest*)

Amen.

Scripture: Acts 17:22-28

Then Paul stood up before the council of the Areopagus and delivered this address: "Citizens of Athens, I note that in every respect you are scrupulously religious. As I walked about looking at your shrines, I even discovered an altar inscribed, 'To an Unknown god.' Now, what you are worshiping in ignorance I intend to make known to you.

"For the God who made the world and all that is in it, the Sovereign of heaven and earth, doesn't live in sanctuaries made by human hands, and isn't served by humans, as if in need of anything. No! God is the One who gives everyone life, breath - everything. From one person God created all of humankind to inhabit the entire earth, and set the time for each nation to exist and the exact place where each nation should dwell. God did this so that human beings would seek, reach out for, and perhaps find the One who is not really far from any of us - the One in whom we live and move and have our being. As one of your poets has put it, 'We too are God's children.'"

Reader: Lynn Lamb

Reflection: Seeing the Forest for the Trees**Scripture:** Genesis 2:4b-10, 15 (*The Inclusive Bible-The First Egalitarian Translation*)

At the time when YHWH made the heavens and the earth, there was still no wild bush on the earth nor had any wild plant sprung up, for YHWH had not yet sent rain to the earth, and there was no human being to till the soil. Instead, a flow of water would well up from the ground and irrigate the soil.

So YHWH fashioned an earth creature out of the clay of the earth, and blew into its nostrils the breath of life. And the earth creature became a living being.

YHWH planted a garden to the east, in Eden - "Land of Pleasure" - and placed in it the earth creature that had been made. Then YHWH caused every kind of tree, enticing to look at and good to eat, to spring from the soil. In the centre of the garden was the Tree of Life, and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

A river flows through Eden to water the garden, after which it branches into four tributaries.

Then YHWH took the earth creature and settled it in the garden of Eden so that it might cultivate and care for the land.

Reflection: Loving the Land**Hymn:** God of the Sparrow **VU 229****Offering:*****Offering Hymn:** For the Gift of Creation **VU 538**

**For the gift of creation, the gift of your love,
and the gift of the Spirit by which we live,
we thank you and give you
the fruit of our hands.
May your grace be proclaimed
by the gifts that we give.**

***Offertory Prayer:**

Giver of life, all that we have is yours

Bless these gifts.

We commit to share not only our material resources but our physical and spiritual resources as well.

Bless these gifts.

Multiply our prayers, our presence, our gifts and our service, that they may help to extend love and justice to all.

Bless these gifts. Amen.**Joys and Concerns:****Prayer Prelude:** Holy Sacred Spirit **MV 15****Holy sacred Spirit,****breathe your breath on us.****Holy sacred Spirit,****breathe your life in us. (Repeat)****Prayers of the People:****Prayer of Jesus:*****Hymn:** In the Bulb There is a Flower **VU 703*****Blessing:** (*Based on Isaiah 55:12 - The Message*)

Go out in joy...

...And let the people say...

Amen!

Parting Song:** You Shall Go Out with Joy **VU 884*Postlude:****Prayer of the Week:**

God of Freshness, like a towering cedar tree with outstretched branches, you are a place of shelter. You plant yourself among us, sustaining us by the deep roots of your presence. May we ground ourselves in this world even as we reach toward heaven. Amen.

Partners in Prayer: Elora Canadian Reformed Church

Prayer Cycle for Hamilton Conference: Bethany, Dunnville

Prayer Tree Captain: Alison Rainford

Welcomers: Lynne Lamb, Bob Zirk,
Joan and John Cuming

Counters: David Gohn and Larry Broome