

Trinity-Grace United Church
ORDER OF SERVICE - FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
APRIL 21st, 2024

PRELUDE

WELCOME

INTROIT: ““Each Blade of Grass” (MV 37)

Soloist/**All**:

1. Each blade of grass, ev’ry wing that soars,
the waves that sweep across a distant shore,
make full the circle of God.
**Each laughing child, ev’ry gentle eye,
a forest lit beneath a moon-bright sky,
make full the circle of God.**
2. Each silent paw, ev’ry rounded stone,
the buzz that echoes from a honey’d comb,
make full the circle of God.
**Each fire-brimmed star, ev’ry out-stretched hand,
the wind that leaps and sails across the land,
make full the circle of God.**
3. Each icy peak, ev’ry patterned shell,
the joyous chorus that the dawn foretells,
make full the circle of God.
**Each cosmic hue, ev’ry creature’s way,
all form the beauty of this vast array,
making full the circle of God.**

CANDLE LIGHTING

OPENING RESPONSES

One/All:

God summons the day to dawn,
The breath of God's spirit wakens the earth.

**Wisdom arises from creation,
and speaks through the voices of those who cry for justice.**

Today Christ invites us into true freedom,
into relationship with all beings.

**The God of love invites us into loving community;
Come, let us worship!**

GATHERING PRAYER

Leader:

As we gather on this earth Sunday,
we are thankful for your Creation:

for light and darkness;

for air, wind, and sky;

for earth and sea;

for seeds, harvests, and plant life;

for sunlight, moonlight, and starlight;

for every living creature, swarming, flying, creeping, and grazing.

In our actions, meditations, and prayers,
may we honour and celebrate your very good Creation,
as we seek wisdom on how to share our gratitude and love
in good and healing ways.

All: Amen

HYMN: "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You"

(VU 232)

Joyful, joy, we adore you
God of glory, life and love
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before you
Opening to the sun above.

Melt the clouds of sin and sadness
Drive the gloom of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness
fill us with the light of day.

All your works with joy surround you
Earth and heaven reflect your rays
Stars and angels sing around you
Center of unbroken praise.

Field and forest, vale and mountain
Flowery meadow, flashing sea;
Chanting bird and flowing fountain
Sound their praise eternally.

You are giving and forgiving
Ever blessing, ever blest
Wellspring of the joy of living,
Ocean depth of happy rest.

Source of grace and fount of blessing
Let your light upon us shine
Teach us how to love each other
Lift us to the joy divine.

PRAYER FOR RELEASE AND RENEWAL

Leader:

Creator God,
we come before you in a time of crisis.
We know that much of your creation struggles;
we begin to see and acknowledge the changes around us;
we search for the causes and the cures

and the collaborative ways we can commit to care for creation.

All:

**We want to do what's right
but we don't always know what that is
or agree how best to do it.**

**Help us learn what we must,
listening to the diverse voices of creation itself.**

Help us understand and love what you have loved and called "very good."

Leader:

Enliven that understanding, we ask,
to allow ourselves to be moved to act as we should
and to halt actions that harm.

Guide us as we try to discern how best to truly listen to each other,
to creation, and to the call of your spirit.

All:

**We ask for forgiveness where we have taken too much or cared too little,
for hearts willing to listen and change
and for the will to follow through.**

**May the knowledge of your presence and the assurance of your love
shape our time here and always.**

We pray in your name, Amen.

(Silence is held)

A WORD OF GRACE

Leader:

Jesus said, Come to me all you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Friends, trust that peace and forgiveness are God's gift to you this day. Be renewed by the power of the Spirit that moves with you into each new day.

Response: “Halle, Halle, Halle” (VU 958)

Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!
Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!
Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!
Hallelujah, Hallelujah!

SHARING PEACE

One: May the peace of Jesus Christ be with you all.

All: **And also with you!**

We take a moment to greet each other and share a sign of peace.

ENCOUNTERING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

One:

God of Word and Wisdom,
send us your Holy Spirit as we listen to the witness
of your people in the Scriptures.
May we claim the story of your redeeming love again,
and praise you with our lives through Christ, our Saviour and Guide.

All: **Amen.**

READING

1 John 3:16-19, 23-24

¹⁶We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. ¹⁷How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

¹⁸Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. ¹⁹And

by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him.

²³And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. ²⁴All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

One: This is the record of our ancestors in faith.

All: **May their witness reveal God's word for us today.**

EXPLORING THE WORD

- Message by Rev. Sandra Nixon, Coordinating Minister

RESPONDING

HYMN: "Called by Earth and Sky" (MV 135)

During the hymn, the offering box is brought forward

Refrain

*Called by earth and sky,
promise of hope held high.
This is our sacred living trust,
treasure of life sanctified,
called by earth and sky.*

1. Precious these waters, endless seas,
deep ocean's dream,
waters of healing, rivers of rain,
the wash of love again. **Refrain**
2. Precious this gift, the air we breathe;
wind born and free.
Breath of the Spirit, blow through this place,
our gathering and our grace. **Refrain**

3. Precious these mountains, ancient sands;
vast fragile land.
Seeds of our wakening, rooted and strong,
Creation's faithful song. **Refrain**

4. Precious the fire that lights our way,
bright dawning day.
Fire of passion, sorrows undone,
our faith and justice one. **Refrain**

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

Trinity-Grace is grateful for the many ways we are gifted and called to contribute to God's mission through this faith community.

Prayer of Dedication

Leader:

God our Maker, you have filled the world with so much abundance.
We offer our gifts to you, knowing they are part of your abundance.
Bless them and use them to bring hope, resurrection and new life
to a world in need, in Christ's name.

All: Amen.

CONNECTING IN COMMUNITY

We share announcements, insights, joys & concerns.

PRAYERS OF GRATITUDE AND CONCERN (The Prayers of the People)

Periods of silence will be left for you to offer your own prayers

THE PRAYER OF THE DISCIPLES (The Lord's Prayer)

All:

**Our loving God in whom is heaven,
hallowed be your name.**

**Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread,
and 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.**

HYMN: "Go Make A Difference"

(MV 209)

Refrain:

Go make a diff'rence.

We can make a diff'rence.

Go make a diff'rence in the world.

Go make a diff'rence.

We can make a diff'rence.

Go make a diff'rence in the world.

- 1.** We are the salt of the earth,
called to let the people see
the love of God for you and me.
We are the light of the world,
not to be hidden but be seen.
Go make a diff'rence in the world. ***Refrain***
- 2.** We are the hands of Christ
reaching out to those in need,

the face of God for all to see.
We are the spirit of hope;
we are the voice of peace.
Go make a diff'rence in the world. **Refrain**

3. So let your love shine on,
let it shine for all to see.
Go make a diff'rence in the world.
And the spirit of Christ
will be with us as we go.
Go make a diff'rence in the world. **Refrain**

SENDING & BLESSING

Leader:

Go from this place with the peace of Christ within you,
to love one another, and Mother Earth in truth and action.
And may God's resurrecting love bless you,
the Spirit of life abide in you,
and the presence Christ embrace and empower you.

SUNG RESPONSE: "Amen"

VU 974

All:

Amen, Amen, Hallelujah, Amen!
Amen, Amen, Hallelujah, Amen!

POSTLUDE

+ + +