



DOWNTOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Earth Day 2021



Greta Thunberg

Celebration of Worship

Sunday, April 25, 2021,

Fourth Sunday of Easter

[Click Here to Listen](#)

Prelude

The Gift to Be Simple
Lee Wright, organ

Arr. Dale Wood

Words of Welcome

The Rev. Deborah Fae Swift

FACING THE EAST:

Oh Spirit of the East:

You are the Land of the rising Sun, of Air and the winds that blow across the lands. You are the Land of new beginnings and open horizons each day.

We bless you and ask for your wisdom and blessing here with us today.

Please join us, Spirit of the East.

FACING THE SOUTH:

Oh Spirit of the South:

You are the Place of Passion, of Fire, Creation and inspiration. Your warm breath reminds us of summer days. Ignite our hearts with love.

We bless you and ask for your wisdom and blessing here with us today.

Please join us, Spirit of the South.

FACING THE WEST:

Oh Spirit of the West:

You are the Land of the setting Sun, of water and Autumn's whisper. Bless us with the knowledge of peace that follows the harvest of a fruitful life.

We bless you and ask for your wisdom and blessing here today.

Please join us, Spirit of the West.

FACING THE NORTH:

Oh Spirit of the North:

You are the Place of quiet and stillness; the Place of deep earth, where you teach us of thankfulness for the knowledge and blessings that have come to us with time.

We bless you and ask your wisdom and blessing here today.

Please join us, Spirit of the North.

**FACING THE FRONT,
PLEASE EXTEND YOUR PALMS DOWNWARD:**

Oh Spirit of Mother Earth:

You support us each day, welcoming our roots deep into your heart. You nurture and guide us toward finding sustenance and support.

Help us always to give thanks for Your bounty.

We bless you and ask for your wisdom and blessing here today.

Please join us Spirit of Mother Earth.

PLEASE EXTEND YOUR PALMS UPWARD:

Oh Spirit of Father Sky:

You are the home of the angelic realms, and the countless stars of the night reminding us that you are vast, beautiful and majestic beyond all of our knowing or understanding. Your light shines upon the earth both day and night guiding our steps.

We bless you and ask for your wisdom and blessing here today.

Please join us, Father Sky.

PLEASE PLACE YOUR PALM OVER YOUR HEART:

Oh Spirit of our souls within:

You are the Place of union, love and reverence.

We are grateful for this gift of life and for the love that guides our way.

Chime
Introit

Heavenly Display

Shaker Song
Arr. Kevin Siegfried

*"The waves of the ocean imitate the rolls
Of the heavenly music that rolls in heaven.
Ref: O le ul lum ul la, O le ul lum ul la,
O glory to God for this heavenly display.
The wheels of a timepiece imitate the flows
of the heavenly love, love that flows in heaven. Ref.
The wings of an eagle imitate the seraphim
That soar in the heavens of heavenly love. Ref."*
Alan Jones and Anna Martin, soloists

Call to Worship

Pat Tweet

Give us a future that trusts in you and cares for your earth and all your people.

Give us the vision and the will to see your creation restored.

Come and be with us as we ponder these things.

Come and be with us in all the places that we are.

Come and till the ground of our being.

**So that your Spirit might sink its roots deep into our sense of justice and inspire
us to be your prophetic voice crying out in the wilderness.**

Hymn

Morning Has Broken

BUNESSAN

**1 Morning has broken Like the first morning,
Blackbird has spoken Like the first bird.
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!
Praise for them, springing Fresh from the Word!**

**2 Sweet the rain's new fall Sunlit from Heaven,
Like the first dewfall On the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness Of the wet garden,
Sprung in completeness Where God's feet pass.**

3 Mine is the sunlight, Mine is the morning,
Born of the one light Eden saw play.
Praise with elation, Praise every morning,
God's re-creation Of the new day!

Centering Prayer

Pat Tweet

We begin our Centering Time by acknowledging the land:

Every community owes its existence and vitality to generations from around the world who contributed their hopes, dreams, and energy to making the history that led to this moment. Some were brought here against their will, some were drawn to leave their distant homes in hope of a better life, and some have lived on this land for more generations than can be counted. Truth and acknowledgment are critical to building mutual respect and connection across all barriers of heritage and difference. We begin this effort to acknowledge what has been buried by honoring the truth.

Let us pray:

Holy Birther, we stand with those who are suffering from environmental Injustice including those in our own country who do not have access to clean water. It is hard to embrace the broad expanse of your holy breath of life when many suffer air pollution. Yet still, it is the environmental racism that endangers and harms us all. Whether it is the plastic pollution of our oceans, or our children and grandchildren facing a future of climate catastrophe we are all in this together, and you, oh Spirit, are our Holy Hope and our greatest inspiration. Amen.

Scripture Reading

1 Peter 3:3-4, 8-13
From the *New Life Version*

Pat Tweet

Music for Reflection

God of the Sparrow

Cary Ratcliff

*"God of the sparrow God of the whale God of the swirling stars
How does the creature say Awe How does the creature say Praise*

*God of the earthquake God of the storm God of the trumpet blast
How does the creature cry Woe How does the creature cry Save*

*God of the rainbow God of the cross God of the empty grave
How does the creature say Grace How does the creature say Thanks*

*God of the hungry God of the sick God of the prodigal
How does the creature say Care How does the creature say Life*

*God of the neighbor God of the foe God of the pruning hook
How does the creature say Love How does the creature say Peace*

*God of the ages God near at hand God of the loving heart
How do your children say Joy How do your children say Home"*

Text: Jaroslav Vajda (1983)
Jason Cloen, piano

Reflection

"Hatchery Musings"

Rev. Swift

Earth Day Litany

So let US connect these words from this First Nation leader with one of our traditional hymns in this piece titled, "We Belong to the Earth."

**For the beauty of the earth, For the glory of the skies,
For the love which from our birth Over and around us lies,
God of all, to Thee we raise This our hymn of grateful praise.**

This we know. The earth does not belong
to us; we belong to the earth.

**This we know. All things are connected
like the blood which unites one family.**

**For the joy of human love, Brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth, and friends above, For all gentle thoughts and mild,
God of all, to Thee we raise This our hymn of grateful praise.**

All things are connected.

**Whatever befalls the earth befalls the
sons and daughters of the earth.**

For the wonder of each hour Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale, and tree and flower, Sun and moon, and stars of light,
God of all, to Thee we raise This our hymn of grateful praise.

We did not weave the web of life; we are
merely a strand in it.

Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.

God of all, to Thee we raise This our hymn of grateful praise.

Invitation to the Offering*

Offertory Anthem

Earth Song

Frank Ticheli

"Sing, Be, Live, See. . .

This dark stormy hour,

The wind, it stirs.

The scorched earth

cries out in vain:

O war and power,

You blind and blur.

The torn heart

cries out in pain.

But music and singing

Have been my refuge,

And music and singing

Shall be my light.

A light of song

Shining strong: Alleluia!

Through darkness, pain and strife, I'll

Sing, Be, Live, See. . .

Peace."

Text: Frank Ticheli

Doxology

Heleluyan
"Heleluyan!"

Native American (Muscogee)

* We gratefully receive your offerings through the mail to the church office:
121 N. Fitzhugh St, 14614, Attn: Penny Crudup.

Prayers for Healing and Transformation

Rev. Swift

Let us begin our prayer time together with Walter Rauschenbusch's unison meditation, "The Beauty of Nature"

O God, we thank you for this earth, our home;
For the wide sky and the blessed sun,
For the salt sea and the running water,
For the everlasting hills
And the never-resting winds,
For trees and the common grass underfoot.
We thank you for our senses
By which we hear the songs of birds,
And see the splendor of the summer fields,
And taste of the autumn fruits,
And rejoice in the feel of the snow,
And smell the breath of the spring.
Grant us a heart wide open to all this beauty;
And save our souls from being so blind
That we pass unseeing
When even the common thorn bush
Is aflame with your glory,
O God our creator,
Who lives and reigns forever and ever.

The Prayer of Jesus is found in global cultures, wherever people follow the Way of Christ. Let us pray together a version from the Nimiipuu people - Nez Perce tribe in north-central Idaho. Let us pray together:

O Great Spirit, Creator of the universe, You are our Shepherd Chief in the most high place. Whose home is everywhere, even beyond the stars and moon. Whatever you want done, let it, also be done everywhere. Give us your gift of bread day by day. Forgive us our wrongs as we forgive those who wrong us. Take us away from wrong doings. Free us from all evil. For everything belongs to you. Let your power and glory shine forever. Amen.

Closing Hymn

The Earth Is Our God's

CRADLE SONG

"The earth is our God's and the fullness thereof."
Creation reminds us, O God, of your love.
By grace we are learning, as year leads to year,
We're called to be stewards, your caretakers here.

Your rainforests nurture the world that we share.
Your wetlands give animals shelter and care.
Your coral reefs cradle the life of the sea.
You've shown us, in love, what your good world can be.

Too often, O God, we abuse your good earth.
We fail to remember its beauty and worth.
We take from creation much more than we need,
We threaten your world through indifference and greed.

May we be good stewards of all that you give,
Protecting creation wherever we live.
May we be a church that renews and restores
And lovingly cares for this earth that is yours.

Benediction

Rev. Swift

May the sun bring us new energy by day,
may the moon softly restore us by night,
may the rain wash away our worries,
may the breeze blow new strength into our being,
may we walk gently through the world and
know it's beauty all the days of our lives.
- Apache Blessing

And let the people of the Earth cry out: **AMEN!**

Postlude

Fugue in C Major the "Jig"

Dietrich Buxtehude

Choral Offering

The Bluebird

C.V. Stanford

*"The lake lay blue below the hill,
O'er it, as I looked, there flew
Across the waters, cold and still,
A bird whose wings were palest blue.*

*The sky above was blue at last,
The sky beneath me blue in blue,
A moment, ere the bird had passed,
It caught his image as he flew."*

Text: Mary E. Coleridge

Hannah Stokes, soprano

Afternoon on a Hill

Eric William Barnum

*"I will be the gladdest thing under the sun!
I will touch a hundred flowers and not pick one.*

*I will look at cliffs and clouds with quiet eyes,
Watch the wind bow down the grass, and the grass rise.*

*And when lights begin to show up from the town,
I will mark which must be mine, and then start down!"*

Text: Edna St. Vincent Millay

Thank you to . . .

Participants: Rev. Deb Swift, Pat Tweet,
Jason Cloen, Juli Elliot, Alan Jones, Anna Martin, Emmalouise St. Amand and Lee Wright

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Call to Worship Adapted from materials provided by 2021 Ecumenical Advocacy Days for
Global Peace with Justice at [AdvocacyDays.org](https://advocacydays.org)

Centering prayer Adapted from Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Global Peace with Justice.
Earth Day 2021. <https://advocacydays.org/>

This version of the Lord's Prayer was written by Hattie Corbett Enos, Nez Perce,
great grandmother of Rev. Irvin Porter. Gifts of Many Cultures, 1995,
Maren C. Tirabassi and Kathy Wonson Eddy, United Church Press, Cleveland, OH

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On Earth Day we reflect on our shared vision to ensure that everyone has the right to experience nature and access to clean water, clean air, clean soil, and a safe environment. There are so many ways to work individually, in our community, and with our legislators to make this vision a reality. Below are a few suggested activities, but there are so many other ways you contribute. If you want to share other activities you are engage in, please e-mail the Justice Team at jm@downtownpresbyterian.org and we can share it in the next edition of Celebration.

ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

PERSONAL:

1. Get your soil & water tested for lead.
2. Learn about public transit and advocate for better access- air pollution leads to respiratory conditions such as asthma. Advocate for better public transit in your municipality. Also do your part to try to bike, walk, or carpool.
3. Visit The Native Land App to learn about the indigenous people from the land you occupy.

COMMUNITY:

1. Get involved in gardening and/or food access justice. The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the disparities in food distribution systems. Growing your own food can lower your grocery bill and it cuts down emissions from food transportation. You can also volunteer at a community garden that supplies fresh produce to food pantries.
2. Learn how your church can become a hub of climate resilience at creationjustice.org/resilience

3. Find where waste from your community goes? Waste is disproportionately disposed of in communities of color. Sometimes waste and recycling are even shipped to be disposed of in other countries. Find ways to reduce your own waste through reducing consumption, composting, and refusing to acquire products that will end up in landfills.

LEGISLATIVE:

1. Bookmark creationjustice.org/action to participate in timely monthly action opportunities.
2. Mark your calendar for Ecumenical Advocacy Days 2021 & participate in the day of action. This year is free of charge and online. The theme is "Imagine! God's Earth & People Restored". Creation Justice Ministries will be hosting six excellent workshops.
3. Do you know which watershed you live in? Learn about the bodies of water near you, the watershed you live in, and the pollutants your water faces. Water is a human right and gift from God, advocate for everyone to have equitable access to potable water.

The Downtown Church Staff

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