

COME GROW SERVE

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2026

Season of Creation: Blessing of the Animals

Welcome to St. Paul's Lutheran Church!

Remembering the life and work of St. Francis, we worship this Sunday with the entire living family on Earth. We celebrate with birds, animals, reptiles, and all our living relatives. We listen to their sounds, watch their movements, and wonder with them as they praise their Creator. We give thanks for and with all our kin in creation.

*Words printed in **bold** are spoken by all. Visitors are invited to sign the guest registry in the Narthex or fill out a pew card and place it in the offering plate.*

THIS SERVICE IS LIVE STREAMED. TELL YOUR FRIENDS!

GATHERING

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Largo Affettuoso from *Sonata in G Major*

Jean-Baptist Loeillet

Judith Zunamon Lewis, oboe Diane Mues, viola; Stefan Westerberg, cello

The assembly is invited to stand.

CALL TO WORSHIP

P: We invite our animal family to worship with us.

All: All our kin living on this planet, from the busiest bee to the tallest giraffe.

A: We remember our animal relatives who have become extinct,

All: Dinosaurs, dodos and Texas grey wolves, Oregon bison and the woolly mammoth.

P: We join our God's all beloved creatures, treasured and diverse,

All: Dolphins and hummingbirds, spiders and gorillas, jellyfish and moose.

A: We summon the kin we have come to love,

All: The curious cat and the tail-wagging dog, the bunny, the parakeet, the turtle and the little gerbil.

A: All our animal family in all the world,

All: Raise your voices to the skies in a family festival of praise.

A: Sing, family, sing!

All: A song of praise for all creatures!

We name, silently or aloud, other living creatures and invite them to join us in praising our Creator.

P: We celebrate with the entire animal family.

All: **Sing, family, sing!**

ELW 835

[Sung] 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!

THANKSGIVING AND CONFESSION

For those with animals: we hold the animal(s) we love and/or place our hand on its body as we give thanks.

P: For all the animals in whole wide world,

All: **We thank you, God!**

P: For all the fun and friendship we have with animals,

All: **We thank you, God!**

P: For all the times we have hurt or neglected animals,

All: **We are truly sorry and repent of our ways.**

P: For all the times we have used poisons that have killed animals,

All: **We are truly sorry and repent of our ways.**

P: For all the times we have destroyed the homes of animals in the forests, oceans or fields,

All: **We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.**

P: For all the fear or trauma caused by animals,

All: **We ask for your reconciling peace.**

ABSOLUTION

P: For your sins against the creatures of Earth, ✠ Christ forgives you and calls upon you to honor and protect all God's animals. May these animal kin be your companions and helpers in life and lead you to celebrate your place in the circle of life and in the mending of creation.

All: **Amen! Amen! Shalom!**

GATHERING HYMN

All Things Bright and Beautiful

Refrain



All things bright and beau - ti - ful, all crea - tures great and small,
all things wise and won - der - ful, the Lord God made them all.

1 Each lit - tle flow'r that o - pens, each lit - tle bird that sings,
2 The pur - ple - head - ed moun - tains, the riv - er run - ning by,
3 The cold wind in the win - ter, the pleas - ant sum - mer sun,
4 God gave us eyes to see them, and lips that we might tell

Refrain



God made their glow - ing col - ors, God made their ti - ny wings.
the sun - set, and the morn - ing that bright - ens up the sky.
the ripe fruits in the gar - den, God made them ev - 'ry one.
how great is God Al - might - y, who has made all things well.

GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy spirit be with you all.

All: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

A: Let us pray. God, our Creator, we celebrate with all living creatures today. Help us see your presence, not only in human history but also in the stories of our kin creation, the great animal family. Teach us to hear the good news of God's loving care flowing through the kingdoms of the wild. Rejoice with us as we behold the mysteries of your Wisdom implanted in all creatures. In the name of Christ who fills heaven and Earth.

All: Amen.

The assembly is invited to be seated

ANIMAL BLESSING

READING: Genesis 2: 18-20

A reading from the Book of Genesis.

¹⁸Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." ¹⁹So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air and brought them to the man to see what he would call them, and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. ²⁰The man gave names to all cattle and to the birds of the air and to every animal of the field, but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner.

Word of God. Word of Life.

All: Thanks be to God.

THE BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Those with animals, please indicate if they wish a blessing. The leaders then move to each animal, saying its name, placing a hand on the animal, and blessing it.

Blessing: “[Name of Pet], you were created by God and you are loved by God. May you and your human family experience joy and companionship together and continue to be a blessing to each other.

The assembly is invited to stand for the reading of the Gospel.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Repeat alleluia

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

GOSPEL: Matthew 6:25-29

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to your span of life? ²⁸ And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹ yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.

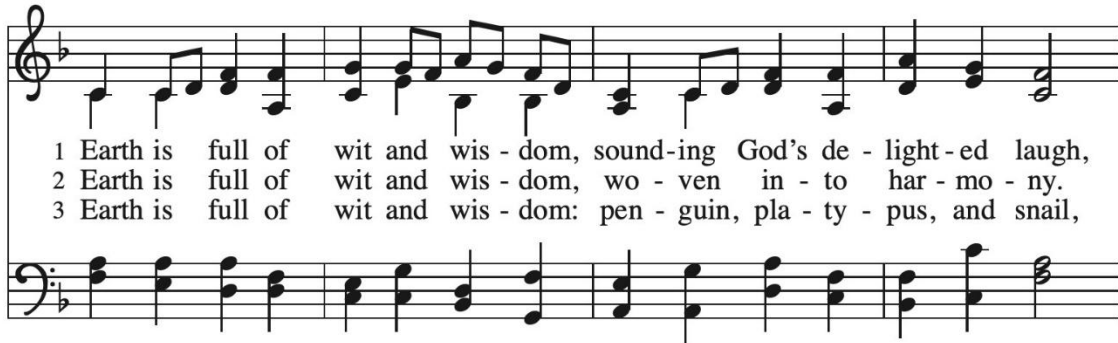
The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

MEDITATION

HYMN OF THE DAY

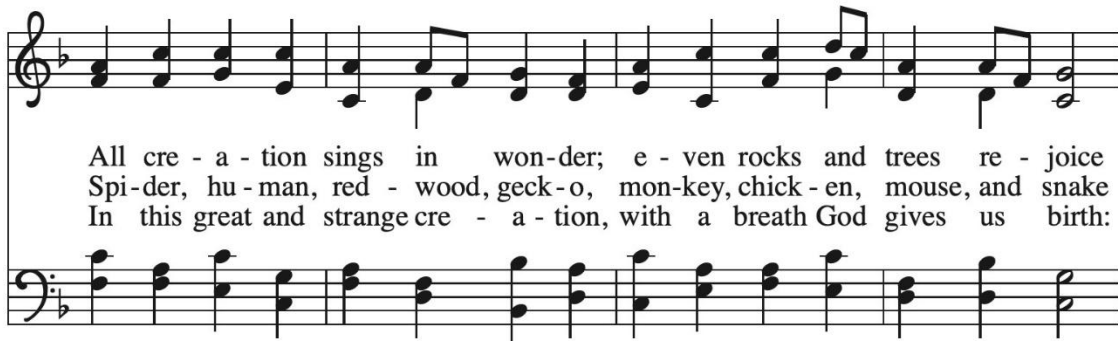
Earth Is Full of Wit and Wisdom



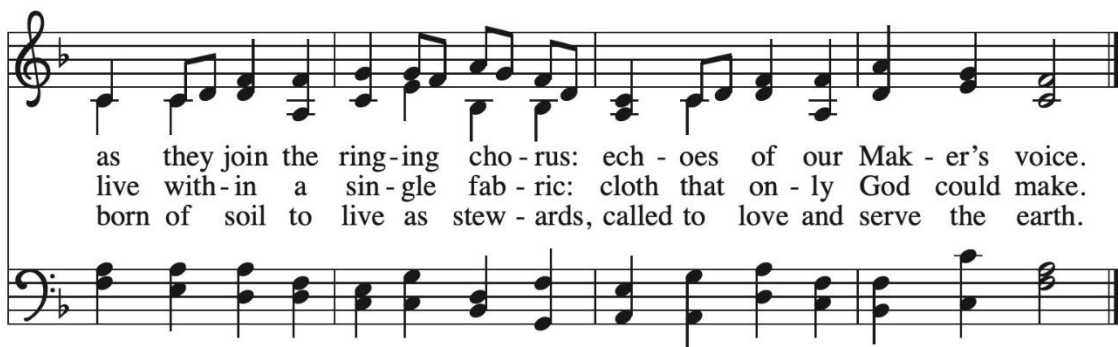
1 Earth is full of wit and wis - dom, sound-ing God's de - light-ed laugh,
2 Earth is full of wit and wis - dom, wo - ven in - to har - mo - ny.
3 Earth is full of wit and wis - dom: pen - guin, pla - ty - pus, and snail,



from the ti - ny ro - ly - po - ly to the tree - top - tall gi - raffe.
Ev - 'ry crea-ture has a pur - pose, ev - 'ry flow'r and bum - ble - bee.
cac - tus, sea slug, oak, and al - gae, from the mi - crobe to the whale.



All cre - a - tion sings in won - der; e - ven rocks and trees re - joice
Spi - der, hu - man, red - wood, geck - o, mon - key, chick - en, mouse, and snake
In this great and strange cre - a - tion, with a breath God gives us birth:



as they join the ring-ing cho - rus: ech - oes of our Mak - er's voice.
live with-in a sin - gle fab - ric: cloth that on - ly God could make.
born of soil to live as stew - ards, called to love and serve the earth.

CREATION CREED

P: Let us affirm our faith together:

All: We believe that God creates all things, renews all things and celebrates all things.
We believe Earth is a sanctuary, a sacred planet filled with God's presence, a home for us to share with our kin.

We believe that God became flesh and blood, became a part of Earth, a human being called Jesus the Christ, who lived and breathed and spoke among us, suffered and died on a cross, for all human beings and for all creation.

We believe that the risen Jesus is the Christ at the core of creation, reconciling all things to God, renewing all creation and filling the universe.

We believe the Spirit renews life in creation, groans in empathy with a suffering creation, and waits with us for the rebirth of creation.

We believe that with Christ we will rise, and with Christ we will celebrate a new creation.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: Remembering the life and faith of St. Francis of Assisi, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

A: Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Give us courage to be prophets of compassion and truth. Where there is hatred, let us sow love. Holy One, in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

PM: Guide us in your ways of humility. Turn our hearts toward the hard work of forgiveness. Be with us in finding places of connection. Where there is injury, let us sow pardon and make us instruments of your peace. Holy One, in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

A: Bring together our words and our actions, that all might see the depth of our life in you. And where there is doubt, let us sow faith. Make us instruments of your peace. Holy One, in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

PM: Your people cry out from every place on your Earth. Be present, Gracious God, in places of suffering from war, with victims of terrifying violence, and in the losses from earthquakes, floods and typhoons. Where there is despair, let us sow hope. Holy One, in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

A: You are the comfort of all creation. Be with those who are in the shadows of health or a dimmed wellbeing in body or spirit. We uplift your beloveds on our prayer list and those we name now, either silently or aloud. *(pause)* And where there is darkness, let us sow light. Make us instruments of your peace. Holy One, in your mercy.

All: hear our prayer.

PM: Your everlasting promises are sure and in your love you bring those who grieve into your embrace. Remind us of the faithful whose lives have guided us to you. Where there is sadness, let us sow joy, and make us instruments of your peace. Holy One in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

A: Loving Source of Life, grant that we may not so much seek, to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love.

PM: For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

All: Amen.

THE PEACE

PM: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All: And also with you.

We share the peace of Christ with one another.

MEAL

THE OFFERING

An offering is gathered and the Table is set.

MUSICAL OFFERING

All Things Bright and Beautiful

John Rutter

MacKenzie Manguillo, soprano; Nicholas Marotta, mezzo-soprano

The assembly is invited to stand as able.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray. God, our Creator,

All: through your love you have given us these gifts to share. Accept our offerings as an expression of our deep thanks and our concern for all in need, including our fellow creatures on Earth. With all creation, we bless our Creator. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

P: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

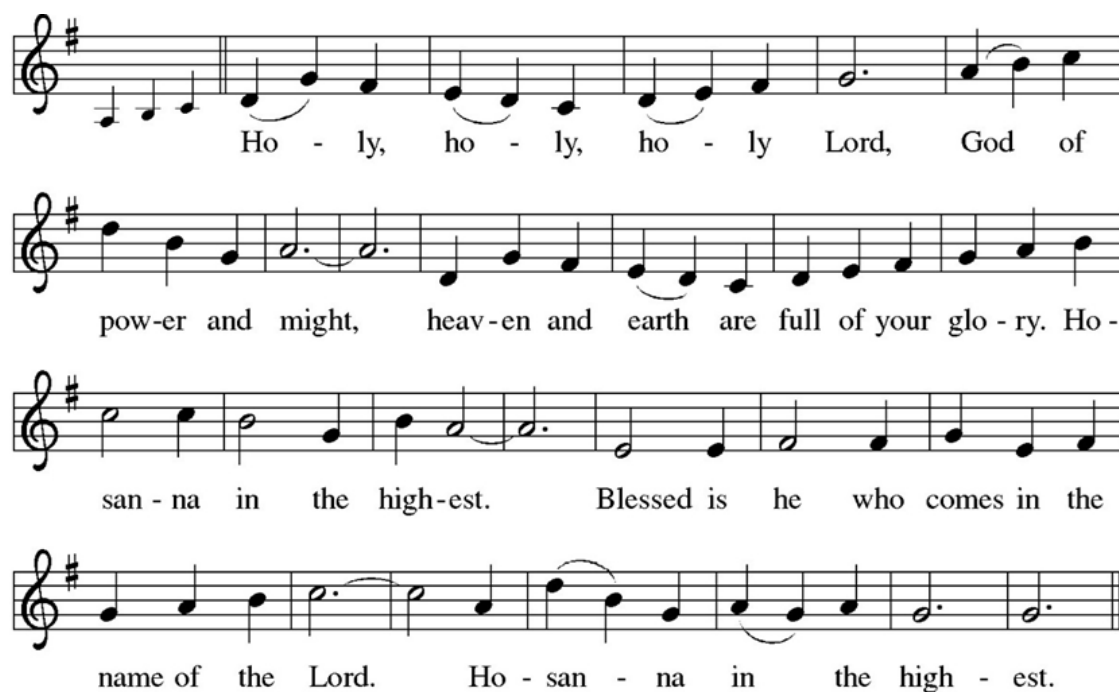
All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through your eternal Word, the Wisdom from on high by whom you created all things: our Savior, Jesus Christ. You laid

the foundations of the world and enclosed the sea when it burst out of the womb. You brought forth all creatures of the earth and gave breath to humankind.

Wondrous are you, Holy One of Blessing; all you create is a sign of hope for our journey. And so as the morning stars sing your praises, with the heavenly beings and all creation, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

P: O God, how majestic is your name in all the earth. Over the eons your merciful might evolved our home, a fragile tree of life. Here by your wisdom are both life and death, growth and decay, the nest and the hunt, sunshine and storm, darkness and light. Sustained by these wonders, we creatures of dust join in the ancient song: The earth is full of your glory.

All: **The earth is full of your glory.**

P: O God, you took on our flesh in Jesus our healer. In Christ you bring life from death; we remember his cross, we laud his resurrection. Broken like bread, he enlivens our body. Outpoured like wine, he fills the earth with goodness. Receiving this mystery, we mortals sing our song: The earth is full of your glory.

All: **The earth is full of your glory.**

P: We praise you for the heart of Jesus, so filled with your love for this earth. 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, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Gathered around this table, we your children unite in this song: The earth is full of your glory.

All: The earth is full of your glory.

P: O God triune, you create the worlds, you uphold the living, you embrace the dead. Send forth your Spirit and renew the face of the earth. Strengthen us for our journey with this meal, the body and blood of Christ. Give us a future that trusts in you and cares for your earth. Empowered by your promises, we rise from our deaths to praise you again:
The earth is full of your glory.

All: The earth is full of your glory.

P: Amen, and amen.

All: Amen, and amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: Together as one body, we pray the prayer Jesus taught us.

All: 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

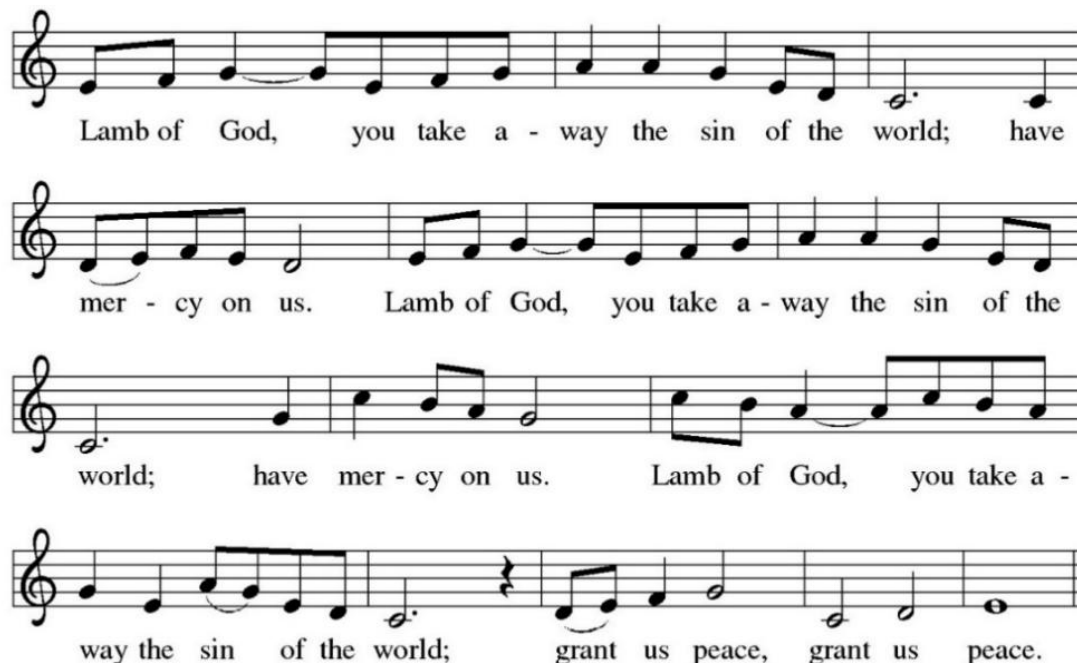
INVITATION TO COMMUNE

P: The gifts of creation for God's beloved creatures. Come and share.

	<u>DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION</u> <i>We will commune one side of the church at a time. Please come forward to receive the bread first. Gluten free wafers are available.</i> <i>You may choose a cup of red wine or white grape juice.</i> <i>Move to the side eat and drink.</i> <i>Place your empty cup in the tray provided.</i>
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All are welcome at Christ's Table. We believe Jesus is the host and the gifts of God are for everyone. Children will be offered communion unless otherwise indicated by parents. The wine is red and grape juice is white.

LAMB OF GOD



COMMUNION HYMN

God of the Sparrow

ELW 740

Please stand as you are able.

TABLE BLESSING

P: Now may the power of Christ's body and blood reach deep into your heart, your mind, and your body to heal your wounds and, through your healing to all the earth. In Jesus' name,

All: Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A: Let us give thanks for this meal.

All: We thank you Christ for the meal we have celebrated with you and we pray that through your body and blood we may be healed and become agents of healing for our kin on Earth. Amen.

SENDING

Please be seated for the announcements.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The assembly is invited to stand.

SENDING BLESSING (From St. Clare, fellow worker with St. Francis)

P: Live without fear: your creator has made you holy, has always protected you, and loves you as a mother. Go in peace to follow the good road and may God's blessing be with you always.

All: Amen.

SENDING HYMN

All Creature Worship God Most High

ELW 835, v. 1-4

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace! Serving Christ and loving Earth!

All: We go in peace, serving Christ and loving Earth. Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Final from Carnival of the Animals

Camille Saint-Saens

Renee and Kurt Westerberg, piano four hands



We have been blessed to have Pastor Peg lead us as the Pastoral Fellow for the Season of Creation! **We never like to say good-bye, but see you soon!**

THANK YOU

To our musicians, Judith Zunamon Lewis, oboe; Diane Mues, viola; Stefan Westerberg, cello, MacKenzie Manguillo, soprano and Nicholas Marotta, mezzo-soprano, Renee Westerberg, piano.

To Diane Mues for donating Altar flowers to beautify our sanctuary.

To the Kelly family for hosting coffee fellowship.

PRAYER REQUEST

For Joan Brandt.

For Jan Rock, as she recovers from stenoses.

For Bill Kastilahn, recovering from eye interaction with medication.

For Deborah Green, friend of LuAnne Origer, as she recovers from brain surgery.

For the family of Sue Salisbury as they mourn the death of her uncle, Gernard "Bud" Drayer.

For the family of Diane DiFrancesco, as they mourn the death of her cousin, Vince Della Sola.

For the family of Diane DiFrancesco, as they mourn the death Of Matthew Christopher Reese.



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