

**Congregational Church of Westminster West**  
**A United Church of Christ**  
**Second Sunday of Pentecost**  
***May 26, 2024***

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***In God's Image...***

(Photo Source: [tinyurl.com/49j2n5x6](https://tinyurl.com/49j2n5x6))

**Welcome, Announcements, Acknowledgement of Place**

**Prelude: *The Stolen Child***

Loreena McKennitt

**\* Call to Worship**

*Adapted from NC, 886*

**One Voice:** You, O God, are supreme and holy.

**Many:** You Create our world and give us life.

**One:** Your purpose overarches everything we do.

**Many:** You have always been with us.

**One:** You are God.

**Many:** You are God.

**One:** You, O God, are infinitely generous, infinitely good.

**Many:** You came to us before we came to you.

**\*Hymn 12: *I Sing the Mighty Power of God* Ellacombe, 1784**

**1. I sing the mighty power of God that made the mountains rise,  
That spread the flowing seas abroad, and built the lofty skies,  
I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day;  
The moon shines full at God's command, and all the stars obey.**

**2. I sing the goodness of our God that filled the earth with food;  
God formed the creatures with a word, and then pronounced  
them good.**

**Oh, how your wonders are displayed, where'er I turn my eye;  
If I survey the ground I tread or gaze upon the sky!**

**3. On earth there's not a plant or flower but makes your glory  
known. The clouds arise and spread their showers by order  
from your throne.**

**All life is but a gift from you and ever in your care;  
Wherever people gather, you, O God, are present there.**

**Prayer of Confession** (Unison)

**Creator God, we acknowledge that we take for granted your world in which you have placed us. We would darken your universe with fruitless, selfish deeds. We turn away from the beauty and fragility of life in foolish vanity to wreck our environment to supposedly better ourselves. We deem ourselves apex creations for being last in our scorecard of creation when, in reality, our fragile selves could not survive without sturdier life coming before us. Empty our haughtiness back into the “formlessness and void” and free us to live in your image, full of lifegiving creativity that embraces your world, respects all life, and resounds with your cry of “Good.” In the name of Jesus, called Creator-Sets-Free, who leads in the way of light and life as you have created. Amen**

**Assurance of Pardon** (Unison)

**Take a deep breath and know God’s spirit is in you. Breathe out, and know God’s peace is all around you. Remember this: God is in every breath, God is in every moment, and you are beloved to God. You are cared for. You matter. Give thanks to God, and give grace to one another, and live into God’s peace. Amen.**

*Source: <https://tinyurl.com/sbtsnyu4>*

\*Gloria No. 756 (As a round: unison, once; in parts, twice)

*Gloria, gloria in excelsis deo; Gloria, gloria alleluia, alleluia!*

**Prayers of the People**

L: May the Lord be with you.

**P: And also, with you.**

L: Let us pray.

Joys and Concerns / Silence / Pastoral Prayer

**The Lord’s Prayer**

**Our Father/Mother/Creator, who art in 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And let us not fall into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

**Heaven and Earth**

*The Message*

1 <sup>1-2</sup> First this: God created the Heavens and Earth—all you see, all you don’t see. Earth was a soup of nothingness, a bottomless emptiness, an inky blackness. God’s Spirit brooded like a bird above the watery abyss.

3-5 God spoke: “Light!”

And light appeared.

God saw that light was good  
and separated light from dark.

God named the light Day,

God named the dark Night.

It was evening, it was morning—  
Day One.

6-8 God spoke: “Sky! In the middle of the waters;  
separate water from water!”

God made sky.

God separated the water under sky  
from the water above sky.

And there it was:

God named sky the Heavens;  
It was evening, it was morning—  
Day Two.

<sup>9-10</sup> God spoke: “Separate!

Water-beneath-Heaven, gather into one place;  
Land, appear!”

And there it was.

God named the land Earth.

God named the pooled water Ocean.

God saw that it was good.

<sup>11-13</sup> God spoke: “Earth, green up! Grow all varieties  
of seed-bearing plants,  
Every sort of fruit-bearing tree.”

And there it was.

Earth produced green seed-bearing plants,  
all varieties,

And fruit-bearing trees of all sorts.

God saw that it was good.

It was evening, it was morning—

Day Three.

<sup>14-15</sup> God spoke: “Lights! Come out!

Shine in Heaven’s sky!

Separate Day from Night.

Mark seasons and days and years,

Lights in Heaven’s sky to give light to Earth.”

And there it was.

<sup>16-19</sup> God made two big lights, the larger  
to take charge of Day,

The smaller to be in charge of Night;

and God made the stars.

God placed them in the heavenly sky  
to light up Earth

And oversee Day and Night,  
to separate light and dark.

God saw that it was good.

It was evening, it was morning—

Day Four.

<sup>20-23</sup> God spoke: “Swarm, Ocean, with fish and all sea life!

Birds, fly through the sky over Earth!”

God created the huge whales,

all the swarm of life in the waters,

And every kind and species of flying birds.

God saw that it was good.

God blessed them: “Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Ocean!

Birds, reproduce on Earth!”

It was evening, it was morning—

Day Five.

<sup>24-25</sup> God spoke: “Earth, generate life! Every sort and kind:  
cattle and reptiles and wild animals—all kinds.”

And there it was:

wild animals of every kind,

Cattle of all kinds, every sort of reptile and bug.

God saw that it was good.

<sup>26-28</sup> God spoke: “Let us make human beings in our image, make  
them

reflecting our nature

So they can be responsible for the fish in the sea,

the birds in the air, the cattle,

And, yes, Earth itself,

and every animal that moves on the face of Earth.”

God created human beings;

God created them godlike,  
Reflecting God's nature.

God created them male and female.

God blessed them:

“Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth! Take charge!  
Be responsible for fish in the sea and birds in the air,  
for every living thing that moves on the face of Earth.”

<sup>29-30</sup> Then God said, “I've given you  
every sort of seed-bearing plant on Earth

And every kind of fruit-bearing tree,  
given them to you for food.

To all animals and all birds,

everything that moves and breathes,  
I give whatever grows out of the ground for food.”

And there it was.

<sup>31</sup> God looked over everything God had made;  
it was so good, so very good!

It was evening, it was morning—  
Day Six.

2 Heaven and Earth were finished,  
down to the last detail.

<sup>2-4</sup> By the seventh day  
God had finished God's work.

On the seventh day

God rested from all work.

God blessed the seventh day.

God made it a Holy Day

Because on that day God rested from God's work,  
all the creating God had done.

This is the story of how it all started,  
of Heaven and Earth when they were created.

**\*Hymn 567: Stars and Planets Flung in Orbit Stuempfle**

Stars and planets flung in orbit, galaxies that swirl in space,  
Powers hid within the atom, cells that form an infant's face;  
These, O God, in silence praise you: By your wisdom they are made.

Skies adorned with sunset splendor, silent peaks in calm repose,  
Golden fields awaiting harvest, foaming surf and fragrant rose:  
Earth, its bounty clothed with beauty, echoes all creation's praise.

Life in wondrous, wild profusion, seed and fruit, each flower and tree  
Beast and fish and swarming insect, soaring bird, rejoicing free:  
These your creatures, join in chorus, praising you in wordless song.

Humankind, earth's deepest mystery, born of dust but touched by grace.  
Torn apart by tongue and color, yet a single striving race:  
We, in whom you trace your image, add our words to nature's  
song.

**Litany of Darkness and Light**

**NC Hymnal, 880**

**Message:** *The Ecology of A Binary-Free Creation, or How to  
Live in a World without an Owner's Manual*

**Offering of our Tithes and Pledges**

**Offertory:** *Blaenwern*

W.P.Rowlands (1903)

**\*Doxology**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow!*

*Praise God, all creatures here below.*

*Praise God for all that Love has done.*

*Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.*

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

**\*Hymn 586:      *Come to Tend God's Garden*      Dalles**

- 1. Come to tend God's garden, seeds of hope to sow,  
Planting fields of justice, watching mercy grow!  
In an arid wasteland, spread a verdant heath!  
In a land of tumult, cultivate God's peace.**
- 2. As we God's garden, from its furrows rise  
Stems of fresh beginnings, stretching towards the skies!  
Graciousness, our meadow, joyfulness our root,  
Unity, our foliage, righteousness, our fruit!**
- 3. May God's garden flourish, may our toil succeed,  
May God bless our actions, every word and deed!  
Serving Christ each season, with God's diagram,  
Charted by the Spirit, for the task at hand!**

**\*Commissioning and Benediction**

**Postlude: *Both Sides Now*      Joni Mitchell**

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\*Indicates that all who are able shall stand

**Church and Community Notes**

Our pastor, Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno, welcomes visits and calls, and is also happy to visit YOU in your home, workplace, hospital room or wherever. In this post-Covid-Isolation world, as we all assess what was and was not working prior to the shut-down, she is still figuring out the best way to make herself available. She sets Thursday afternoons aside for church work, for sure, and is available at other times by appointment. Susie can be reached at the church (802) 387-2334 if it is not an emergency, but the fastest ways to reach her are via cell (802) 579-8356 or email [susiewt@gmail.com](mailto:susiewt@gmail.com) She reserves Mondays as her Sabbath day, holding that day aside as non-working time.

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**Worship Participants:**

Worship Leader: David Mulholland  
Musician: Fred Gray  
Deacon: Sue Venman  
Technician: Guy Payne  
Trustees: Guy Payne, Chair  
Minister to the Congregation: Susie Webster-Toleno  
Ministers to the World: The Congregation