

## Friday Opening Worship

*From around the room, people say: "I've come from X (get five or so people to say where they have come from)"*

### Call to Worship

**Geoff:** From around this country we have come, joined together in the Body of Christ with each other and with Christians around the world.

**All:** **May we be united by our desire to love God and neighbour and to show that love in care for the beautiful and life-sustaining creation God has entrusted to us.**

**Jean:** We come together to praise God for God's goodness in creation and redemption

**All:** **We come together to name and to grieve for the ways in which human sin, our sin, keeps us from seeing God's goodness and distorts right relationships between God, humanity and all creation**

**Geoff:** We come together to repent of our part in that sin, placing our trust in God's forgiveness and the hope of new life

**All:** **We come together to seek God's guidance in paths that lead to hope and healing for ourselves and for our world. Amen.**

### Praise to God for God's Goodness and for the Gift of Creation

**Geoff:** The Scriptures tell us that God is the creator of all things ... that God delights in creation ...and that creation is not only wonderful in itself, but reveals to us aspects of God's character.

We rejoice in this – and we rejoice *with* all creation. Because as the Psalmist says,

**Jean:** "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world"

**Geoff:** And so together with all that God has made, let's offer our thanks and praise for all that God is and all that God has given us:

Song: All Creatures of Our God and King (with Elizabeth pictures from Laudato Si) – Piano? Guitar?

All creatures of our God and king  
Lift up your voice and with us sing,  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Thou burning sun with golden beam,  
Thou silver moon with softer gleam!

O praise Him! O praise Him!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thou rushing wind that art so strong  
Ye clouds that sail in Heaven along,  
O praise Him! Alleluia!  
Thou rising moon, in praise rejoice,  
Ye lights of evening, find a voice!

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O praise Him! O praise Him!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thou flowing water, pure and clear,  
Make music for thy Lord to hear,  
O praise Him! Alleluia!  
Thou fire so masterful and bright,  
That givest man both warmth and light.

O praise Him! O praise Him!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Refrain

Dear mother earth, who day by day  
Unfoldest blessings on our way,  
O praise Him! Alleluia!  
The flowers and fruits that in thee grow,  
Let them His glory also show.

O praise Him! O praise Him!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

And all ye folk of tender heart,  
Forgiving others, take your part,  
O sing ye! Alleluia!  
Ye who long pain and sorrow bear,  
Praise God and on Him cast your care!

O praise Him! O praise Him!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Let all things their creator bless,  
And worship Him in humbleness,  
O praise Him! Alleluia!  
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,  
And praise the Spirit, Three in One!

O praise Him! O praise Him!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**Matt:**

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

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Matt: We move from Praise, Awe and Wonder to a time now of Lament and to grieve for the way that the world is and what is happening in it. We will ask for God's Mercy, Grace and Forgiveness as we spend time in repentance for the part we have played in causing God's creation to groan.

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Matt: The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers, the heavens languish with the earth.

**All: Loving God, Have Mercy**

Simeon: The earth is defiled by its people; they have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes

**All: Loving God, We repent and are truly sorry, Loving God have Mercy**

Matt: Loving and Merciful God we look at the world you made and created. We Lament and grieve that much of it is not how you would want it to be.

**All: Loving God have Mercy**

Simeon: We grieve with our Global Neighbours, our Sisters and Brothers in Christ, and all of your creation. We are mindful that the impacts of Climate Change are often impacting the poorest and most vulnerable the hardest.

**All: We stand in solidarity with our Global Neighbours. Loving God have Mercy**

Matt: We are truly sorry for the part we have played in harming our world. We repent and we seek your forgiveness.

**All: Loving God, Have Mercy**

**Minister: Reading: Colossians 1:15-20**

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. 19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross

**Song (and Video) Beautiful Things by Gungor.**

**Jean:**

**Closing Prayer**

Gracious God, Creator of All,

We raise our hearts in grateful praise

For all the beauty that surrounds us.

May we learn to respect all

As a sacred gift

And do what we can to repair

The damage we have caused

Through our consumerism, greed and carelessness.

Grant us an ecological conversion

So that we can leave

Our next generation

With a future full of hope

Where there is enough for all.

We ask this in the name of Jesus.

Amen

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