



**“Awakening to Beauty, Falling in Love with the World”
Week 3**

July 26, 2020

At home worship with First Lutheran Church

WE GATHER

Threshold Moment

“Divine beauty shimmers and shimmies through the universe
and in every barrio where someone is singing or weeping.
Because of beauty, our spirits are enlivened.”

- Wendy Farley

Are you ready for new life?

**Divine Goodness, prepare my spirit to see
and be beguiled by the beauty of life. Amen.**

If you have wind chimes, brush them softly to focus your attention on the spirit and this time of reflection upon God's Word. See worship preparation materials for options of creating your own set of chimes.

Pastor/Leader:

We try to satisfy our thirst for meaningful life with so many distractions and addictions. Awakening to beauty is to find the well that never runs dry. For it is in beginning to truly see the world with our spirits that our soul's thirst is quenched. "The resilience and beauty of the natural world is a sign of hope, even when things are difficult." A tree is scorched by fire and yet new sprouts shoot up, defiant and optimistically reaching toward the sun. A crack in a sidewalk reveals the seeds just beneath the surface just waiting for a chance to break through. Contemplating this resilient beauty draws us back to our own vitality and the promise that we, too, are capable of new life.

**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!**

[chimes]

Silent Centering

You are invited to a moment of quiet rest, a time of slowing the pace of your body and mind so that the spirit can settle.

Prayer of Opening:

Divine Goodness, Holy One,
Pause us for this moment,
bear us up in this time,
hold us for eternity.
We embrace the brokenness of our lives.
We believe you are creating new light that will shine through.
We open to your possibilities.
And all the people say “Amen.”

Hymn of Beauty: *In the Bulb There Is a Flower*

Hymn of Promise



1 In the bulb there is a flow - er; in the seed, an ap - ple tree;
2 There's a song in ev - 'ry si - lence, seek - ing word and mel - o - dy;
3 In our end is our be - gin - ning; in our time, in - fin - i - ty;



in co - coons, a hid - den prom - ise: but - ter - flies will soon be free!
there's a dawn in ev - 'ry dark - ness, bring - ing hope to you and me.
in our doubt there is be - liev - ing; in our life, e - ter - ni - ty;



In the cold and snow of win - ter there's a spring that waits to be,
From the past will come the fu - ture; what it holds, a mys - ter - y,
in our death, a res - ur - rec - tion; at the last, a vic - to - ry,



un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.

Text: Natalie Sleeth

Music: HYMN OF PROMISE, Natalie Sleeth

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WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

Lectio Divina

Leader: Our “lectio divina”—the ancient practice of contemplating sacred text—is from Psalm 147 today. Imagine that these words are directed at the exiles who find themselves in need of an encouraging word. In this Psalm, the Divine One, Yahweh, is the source of restoration, of binding wounds, of bringing sustenance and life to all living things, especially those who are suffering. There are many ways to feel “exiled” from familiar and beloved places and people. May you drink in these hopeful words, knowing that, like the stars, Divine Goodness knows each of our names.

[You are invited to read these passages several times. Even better, from different Bible Translations. Each time, listen for a word or phrase that grabs your attention. Write it down, so you can carry it with you all week. Let the Holy Spirit inspire and teach you as God Words seeps into your heart and waters it with God's goodness.]

FIRST READING: 1 Kings 3:5-12

Because Solomon did not ask for long life, riches, or the defeat of his enemies, God gave him what he asked for: wisdom to govern the people well.

⁵At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, “Ask what I should give you.” ⁶And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?”

¹⁰It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹God said to him, “Because

you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹²I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you.”

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 147

¹Hallelujah! How good it is to sing praises to our God!

How pleasant it is to honor God with praise!

²The LORD rebuilds Jerusalem,
and gathers the exiles of Israel.

³The LORD heals the brokenhearted
and binds up their wounds.

⁴The LORD counts the number of the stars
and calls them all | by their names.

⁵Great is our LORD and mighty in power;
there is no limit to God's wisdom.

⁶The LORD lifts up the lowly,
but casts the wicked to the ground.

⁷Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;
make music upon the harp to our God,

⁸who covers the heavens with clouds
and prepares rain for the earth, making grass to grow upon the mountains.

⁹God provides food for the cattle
and for the young ravens when they cry.

¹⁰God is not impressed by the might of a horse,
and has no pleasure in the speed of a runner,

¹¹but finds pleasure in those who fear the LORD,
in those who await God's steadfast love.

SECOND READING: Romans 8:26-39

GOSPEL: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-45, 51-52

³¹[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;³²it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that

the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

³³He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

⁴⁴“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it

⁵¹“Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” ⁵²And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermo Divina

“I want to teach you a fun word today. It is a Japanese word, “wabi-sabi.” Let’s say that together: “wabi-sabi!” What a fun word. And what it means is also really wonderful. Wabi-sabi is the idea that everything is beautiful, even things that are imperfect—things that might have been broken or made in an unusual way. In fact, this Japanese idea says that imperfection or out-of-the-ordinary makes things *more* interesting and special. There is also an ancient art of repairing broken things with gold. That’s called “kintsugi.” Instead of hiding the cracks, gold is put there to show us the beautiful design that the crack made.

This week we have made a coloring page for you that shows a broken bowl with cracks in it. You are invited to color this any way you want, whatever colors will show it’s beauty. If you are a little older (like even the *adult* “children of God”), you are invited to journal a bit on that coloring page, writing your thoughts about the broken parts of life that you’d like God to help you see as opportunities to be changed and seen as beautiful. The beauty of life includes all things.” (from children’s time reflection)

WE RESPOND

[There are many ways to enter into this time of contemplation on God's Word. Maybe capture images with photography, sketches or painting, quilting, with poetry like haikus, listen or play music, go for a prayer walk. Journal with the prompts given in the supplemental Preparation at Home materials. Share your reflections with the congregation, family or friends.]

SONG OF THE DAY:

(ELW 603, odd verses)

God, When Human Bonds Are Broken



1 God, when hu - man bonds are bro - ken and we lack the
2 Through that still - ness, with your Spir - it come in - to our
3 You in us are bruised and bro - ken: hear us as we
4 Send us, God of new be - gin - nings, hum - bly hope - ful
5 Give us faith to be more faith - ful, give us hope to



love or skill to re - store the hope of heal - ing,
world of stress, for the sake of Christ for - giv - ing
seek re - lease from the pain of ear - lier liv - ing;
in - to life. Use us as a means of bless - ing:
be more true, give us love to go on learn - ing:



give us grace and make us still.
all the fail - ures we con - fess.
set us free and grant us peace.
make us stron - ger, give us faith.
God, en - cour - age and re - new!

Text: Fred Kaan, b. 1929

Music: MERTON, William H. Monk, 1823-1889

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Confession of Faith

We believe in God, who made us in God's own image.

We live, we love, we laugh, because we are like God.

We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Lord and Savior.

He had the last laugh on the devil when He rose from the dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, coequal and coeternal with the Father and the Son.

Our counselor, our guide, our motivator - The Spirit is our joy!

Forgive us, O God,

when we take ourselves too seriously,

when we lose sight of your divine goodness,

when we don't claim the happiness that is rightfully ours as your children,

when we forget that you will have the last laugh in this world.

Restore to us the joy of our salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Beloved of God,

by the radical abundance of divine mercy

we have peace with God through + Christ Jesus.

Through Christ you have been given grace upon grace.

Your sins are forgiven.

Let us live together, now in hope.

Amen.

Prayers of the People

Praying separately in our homes yet united in the Spirit, let us together intercede for all the needs of the world. In response to each bid, you are invited to offer your own prayers, silently or aloud, and to conclude each petition with the words,

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

A brief silence.

Confident of your care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Merciful God, your reign is revealed to us in common things: a mustard shrub, a woman baking bread, a fishing net. Help your church witness to the surprising yet common ways you encounter us in daily life. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

When your word is opened, it gives light and understanding. Increase our understanding and awe of your creation; guide the work of scientists and researchers. Treasuring the earth, may we live as grateful and healing caretakers of our home. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

As the birds of the air nest in branches of trees, gather the nations of the world into the welcoming shade of your merciful reign. Direct leaders of nations to build trust with each other and walk in the way of peace. (*Here a particular world struggle may be named.*) Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Your Spirit helps us in our weakness and intercedes for the saints according to your will. Help us when we do not know how to pray. Give comfort to the dying, refuge to the weary, justice to those who are oppressed, and healing to the sick (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

You show steadfast love and direct us to ask of you what we need. Help this congregation ask boldly for what is most needed. Refresh us with new dreams of being your people in this place and time. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

In you our lives are never lost. Strengthen us by the inspiring witness of your people in all times and places. Embolden our witness now and one day gather us with all your saints in light (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

THANKSGIVING

OFFERING

Share what you are grateful for.

If you would like to offer financial support for the ministries of First Lutheran, you can mail them to the church. 526 S. Olive, Ave. Sandpoint, ID 83864

SONG OF THANKSGIVING *Doxology (Sing or Speak)* (ELW 884)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise him all creatures here below.
Praise God above ye heavenly hosts.
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

HOLY COMMUNION

If you are with someone or on the phone with friends or family, Holy Communion can be shared now. Follow the liturgy in the “Spirit and Life” document, beginning on page 7.

LORD’S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
 hallowed be thy name,
 thy kingdom come,
 thy 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 lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
 and the power, and the glory,
 forever and ever. Amen.**

RITUAL ACTION FOR THE WEEK

Leader: With each week’s message, we will find a way to integrate contemplative practices into our daily lives as a way of opening to the Divine in deeper ways, thereby training our spirits for compassion in all things. This week’s ritual action could include the journaling we suggested in the children’s time—take a moment each day to contemplate your own healing process. Or it could be a contemplative moment of fixing something you’ve been putting off for a time. Does something

needs some super-glue or spackling or mending? If so, do this with a prayerful intention. You may want to put a note somewhere in a highly-visible place—“Find beauty within the imperfections of life and accept peacefully the natural cycle of growth and decay. Be reminded to offer grace for imperfections... for the beauty of the earth.”

And now, let us add our singing to the song of creation already in progress...

WE GO FORTH

Closing Hymn:

(ELW 807)

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing



1 Come, thou Fount of ev - 'ry bless-ing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
 2 Here I raise my Eb - en - e - zer: "Hith-er by thy help I've come";
 3 Oh, to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con-strained to be;



streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud - est praise.
 and I hope, by thy good plea - sure, safe - ly to ar - rive at home.
 let that grace now like a fet - ter bind my wan-d'ring heart to thee.



While the hope of end - less glo - ry fills my heart with joy and love,
 Je - sus sought me when a strang - er, wan - d'ring from the fold of God;
 Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love.



teach me ev - er to a - dore thee; may I still thy good - ness prove.
 he, to res - cue me from dan - ger, in - ter - posed his pre - cious blood.
 Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

Text: Robert Robinson, 1735–1790, alt.

Music: NETTLETON, J. Wyeth, *Repository of Sacred Music*, Part II, 1813

Benediction

The world is so varied and beautiful.
Seek wisdom wherever it is to be found.*
And may the goodness of the Creator,
the companionship of the Christ,
and the insight of the Spirit,
infuse your life now and always.
Amen.

Benediction Song Reprise

**God of all to thee, we raise,
This our hymn of grateful praise!**

Worship Notes:

* The first two lines of the Benediction are a quote from Dr. Wendy Farley's father, Dr. Edward Farley, a renowned theologian.

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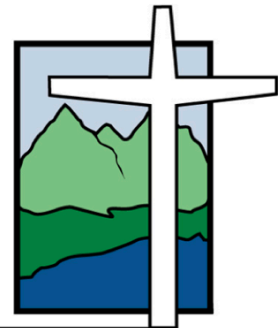
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