

April 28, 2024|
Worship Guide

Welcome

Rev. Ann Willet

Centering Music

Touch the Earth Lightly

Northaven Choir

Words by Shirley Erena Murray
& Music by Tony Alonso

Invitation to Worship: *A Prophet's Dream*
Janet Coplin

Written by Janet Coplin

*A prophet's Old Testament dream
Bends towards a New Testament message
Expressing
What the Lord expects of us
In a paradox of sorts
Lambs and lions together
Harmony among opposites
Harmony with the land
Togetherness*

*In the experience of living
We must find words
Not war
To avoid destruction of the earth
To achieve
Our potential
Finding fairness
Defending the exploited and the poor*

*Defending the earth and all its creatures
And a little child shall lead the way
In this journey*

Opening Song

Come and Worship our Loving Creator

Words by Jann Aldredge-Clanton,

Music by Larry E. Schultz

***Come and worship our Loving Creator,
Mother and Father, source of our lives.
Come, discover the Spirit within us, stirring
fresh hope, our dreams to revive.***

To worship is to dance with the Spirit of Love,
who is alive in each of us.

***Come and worship our Loving Creator,
Mother and Father, source of our lives.
Come, discover the Spirit within us, stirring
fresh hope, our dreams to revive.***

Through worship we speak and sing our
visions of the new creation into reality.

***Come and worship our Loving Creator,
Mother and Father, source of our lives.
Come, discover the Spirit within us, stirring
fresh hope, our dreams to revive.***

Let us celebrate with hope that silenced voices will be heard, trembling voices will be made strong, oppressed people will be set free, so that the Spirit at work yesterday, today, and forever will be proclaimed.

*Come and worship our Loving Creator,
Mother and Father, source of our lives.*

*Come, discover the Spirit within us, stirring
fresh hope, our dreams to revive.*

Children's Lesson

Jen Hanson

A Lament: Weeping Together for our
Earth

Dr. Kendra Weddle

Written by Dr. Kendra Weddle

Why are you weeping?

We, the trees and forests, are devastated by the unthinking, untethered demand of consumers whose selfishness is resulting in our death. Tree-by-tree, forest-by-forest we are exterminated even when we have labored so faithfully to replenish the earth and air.

Why are you weeping?

We, the forest critters, are dying in droves. As deforestation expands, we lose our homes. We are constantly at work maintaining a balanced ecosystem, but with this balance disrupted, we can no longer do our part.

Why are you weeping?

We, the ocean waters, are polluted with your plastic, your demand to drink from straws, your decision to put drinking water into one-time use containers that poison you and us. We keep trying to do our best to mitigate your dirty demands so that the fish and crabs, whales and sharks, starfish and all ocean-dwelling creatures will live. But, we are slowly losing the battle.

Why are you weeping?

We, the bees and butterflies are on the brink of being destroyed. So few humans care enough about our work that they mindlessly make decisions

that make our job of pollination impossible. When will humanity start caring about future generations?

Why are you weeping?

We, the air, the source of life, brought the world and all it contains into being. The air used to be pristine, teeming with life-supporting oxygen. But now, when humanity chooses to value consumerism over life, the air becomes toxic. Birds will soon be unable to sing, clouds will stop dancing, dry wind will sweep over a barren land in deep sorrow.

Why are you weeping?

We, the chickens and pigs and cattle used to be cared for by people who knew us and treated us well. Now we are stuffed into the tightest of pens, forced to live short, unhappy lives, pumped full of hormones to make us quickly fattened, only for the purpose of giving cheap, bountiful meat. We

have become a cog in a world driven by morally unmoored masses.

Why are you weeping?

We, the grass and grains, flowers and fauna are trampled, used, exploited. Seldom are we appreciated as part of a beautiful tapestry of sustaining community. We are bought and sold, used to provide too much to the rich leaving nothing from us for the poor. Where has the cultivation of care gone?

Why are you weeping?

We, the wild bears and badgers, the giraffes and gazelles, kangaroos and coyotes and all of our cousins, too numerous to name, are being squeezed into smaller and smaller places. Our natural homes are stripped away, humans laughing to find us roaming on streets through neighborhoods as if we are the ones who are lost.

Why are you weeping?

I AM the source of creation. I AM created a world habitat where all living creatures and everything alive could be sustained. And you, dear humans, the ones I AM imagined would be capable of loving all, have instead, turned your back on your garden, cultivating a wasteland.

May you, our dearly beloved, return to your mission. Learn again that dominion, not domination, is your task. You must tend and protect the garden you were given. May the sorrow of today turn to dancing as you return to your calling to make the earth whole again.

Serving the Environment

Caroline Willet

Scripture

Isaiah 11:1-9

Dr. Kendra Weddle

Then a shoot will sprout from the stump of Jesse,

*From Jesse's roots, a branch will blossom:
The Spirit of YHWH will rest on you -
A spirit of wisdom and understanding,
A spirit of counsel and strength,
A spirit of knowledge and reverence for
YHWH.*

*You will delight in obeying YHWH,
And you won't judge by appearances,
Or make decisions by hearsay.*

*You will treat poor people with fairness
And will uphold the rights of the land's
downtrodden.*

*With a single word you will strike down
tyrants;*

*With your decrees you will execute evil
people.*

*Justice will be the belt around this your
waist - faithfulness will gird you up.*

*Then the wolf will dwell with the lamb,
And the leopard will lie down with the
young goat;*

*The calf and the lion cub will graze
together,*

And a little child will lead them.

The cow will feed with the bear;

Their young will lie down together.

The lion will eat hay like the ox.

*The baby will play next to the den of the
cobra,*

*And the toddler will dance over the viper's
nest.*

There will be no harm, no destruction

Anywhere in my holy mountain;

For as water fills the sea,

*So the land will be filled with knowledge
of YHWH.*

Holy Wisdom. Holy Word.
Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Nature Heals
Rev. Ann Willet

Sharing of Our Gifts

Nick La Rocca

Offertory

Agnus Dei
Pegasus Limited Edition (Dallas - College
Brookhaven)
Arranged by Paul Halley
Roy Allen, soprano saxophone

Affirmation of Faith

Dr. Kendra Weddle

**We believe that God creates all things,
renews all things, and is present in all
things.**

**We believe earth is a sanctuary, a
sacred planet filled with God's
presence,
a home for us to share with all
creation.**

**We believe that God became a piece of
earth, a human being called Jesus**

Christ, who lived and breathed and spoke among us.

Who showed us how to love one another and to care for all.

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

Closing Song

God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens
HOLY MANNA

Words by Catherine Cameron

and Music by William Moore

God, who stretched the spangled heavens, infinite in time and place, flung the suns in burning radiance through the silent fields of space; we, your children in your likeness, share inventive powers with you. Great creator still creating, show us what we yet may do.

Proudly rise our modern cities, stately buildings row on row; yet their windows, blank, unfeeling, stare on canyoned streets below, where the lonely drift unnoticed in the city's ebb and flow, lost to purpose and to meaning, scarcely caring where they go.

***As each far horizon beckons, may it
challenge us anew,
children of creative purpose serving
others, honoring you.
May our dreams prove rich with
promise, each endeavor well begun.
Great creator, give us guidance till our
goals and yours are one.***

Benediction

Rev. Ann Willet

Sending Forth

Stand By Me

Pegasus Limited Edition
(Dallas - College Brookhaven)
Arranged by Mark DeLisser