Springfield Presbyterian Church

April 25th, 2021

4th Sunday After Easter | Earth Day | Creation Care

For the Wonders of the World

I. The Lost Words Blessings

As we listen to the sweet tones sung by Brittany and her crew, we hear words of nature that tie us again and again to the Earth that God created. This song has been brewing since around 2015 as three well-known authors came out with this statement, “Childhood is undergoing profound change; some of this is negative; and the rapid decline in children’s connections to nature is a major problem.” And from this statement, words and music grew. Initially, a book was written in 2018 called “The Lost Words Blessings” by Macfarlane and Morris to try and restore the language of creation to young children. This particular song we hear this morning was developed by a group of Scottish folkloric musicians, wanting to inspire children to see and smell and taste and wonder at all of creation and the metaphors that pull humanity and creation close.

This song, admittedly, makes me tear up every time I hear it, because of the strong use of imagery and this sense of newness to a child first embarking in nature. It also beautifully opens up this freedom for a child to explore, to wander, to play, and respect the great gifts of God that are opened unto them as they take their first steps. I believe this tune also calls you and me back into that childlike wonder, that renewal of the streams and the fresh air that whips around the trees – it calls us back to both the simplicity and complexity of God’s good gifts.

II. Psalms

As we hear our Scripture lesson this morning, we hear the beautiful verses from Psalm 8 that speak to this integral tie to nature. We are but mere mortals, yet God has given us this gift of creation and has handed us the responsibility of making sure the land is cared for and the animals are fed. Who are we to receive such an honor? The emphasis is humility, humility in knowing that the wonders and the gifts of this world are just that – wonders, gifts – not our own to abuse and use in negligent ways.

We know that these are but God’s alone, and entrusted to our care, so I ask of you this Sunday following Earth Day, in what ways will we continue or start anew the important work of healing and maintaining the Creation that God has so freely given us?

III. Earth Day

The answer to the question can be as complex or as simple as you feel led. Let the melody of the psalm and the song you’ve heard let you lean into discerning what comes next. It may be as simple as planting a tree or placing a bulb in the ground. It may be going around our house and seeing ways in which we can conserve energy or use our land to grow food for nourishment. It may be choosing to bike to work instead of drive, if possible, or finding ways we can cut down on our carbon footprint. It may be letting the wilderness grow, not clearing a path, but letting wildlife claim the land as their home. It may be anything – but anything is a step in the right direction.

Whatever you choose to do, to celebrate and honor this Creation Sunday, I ask that you consider the act to be one of recommitment, not simply to the Earth, but to serving and respecting God’s gifts. May your tangible movement remind you of God’s love for you, God’s great love of Creation, and the ways in which God has weaved both our humanity and landscape into one for service and praise. Amen.