

Apollo 8: Earthrise, Bill Anders
Image Credit: NASA

The Third Sunday of Eastertide **Creation Justice Sunday**

May 4, 2025 | 10:00a



Inspired by the bold and boundless hospitality of Jesus, we are “open to all,” which means we welcome and accept all people into the life of our Church without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, economic status, political affiliation, physical or mental capacity, or religious belief. We believe that God’s call is given to all people, and we embrace the Spirit that continues to cross boundaries in order to unite the world.

**Childcare is available for birth – kindergarten in the childcare room located in the Cornwell Center (on main level). Please see a greeter for more information.
Worship activities for children are available in the Narthex.**

Portions of this service were inspired by the study of *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Knowledge, Scientific Wisdom, and the Teaching of Plants* by Robin Kimmerer. The Thanksgiving Address is an ancient daily pledge offered by many Native People. A river of words as old as the people themselves, it sets gratitude as the highest priority.

Silent Reflection

“We are discovering in this experience our freedom to become new creatures and our responsibility to be faithful stewards in our lives and of this world.” excerpt from MPBC Covenant

Prelude

“The Calling”

Jim Brock, percussion; Rebecca Kleinmann, flute

Introit

“This Land is Your Land”

**This land is your land, this land is my land,
from California to the New York Islands,
from the Redwood Forest to the Gulf Stream Waters.
This land was made for you and me.**

J. Kevin Gray
Woodie Guthrie

Call to Worship

Paula Fricke, Environmental Justice

Invocation

*Opening Hymn

“God, You Spin the Whirling Planets”

See page 10.
AUSTRIA

Welcome of Our Guests

Rev. Dr. Layne Smith

*If you are our guest today, please scan the QR code below
so we may offer you our gratitude for joining us today.*



*Passing of the Peace

Moment of Centering

Sofia Bartholomew, Environmental Justice

Old Testament Reading – Job 12:7-9 (NRSV)

Deborah Steiner, Choir Member

But ask the animals, and they will teach you, the birds of the air, and they will tell you; ask the plants of the Earth, and they will teach you, and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this?

Responsive Reading - Adapted from Genesis 1 and 2, Isaiah 24:4-5, Psalm 24:1

Leader: When Day Five ended, God saw all that God had made, and behold, it was very good.

People: **Very good, indeed!**

Leader: On Day Six, God created humankind, reflecting God's own image.

People: **Yes, God created us in God's image.**

Leader: God gave us responsibility for every living thing that moves on the face of the Earth.

People: **Yes, God entrusted to us the privilege and responsibility of caring for all things, including Mother Earth and all that springs forth from her.**

Leader: And at the end of that day, once again, God looked over everything that God had made; it was so good, so very good!

People: **It was evening, it was morning – Day Six.**

Leader: Then God placed humankind in a pristine, beautiful garden.

People: **God placed us in the garden to treasure it, work it, and keep it in order.**

Leader: However, now, because of our misuse and abuse, the Earth mourns and fades, the world languishes and fades; both heaven and Earth languish.

People: **The Earth is polluted because of its inhabitants, who have transgressed laws, violated statutes, and broken the ancient covenant.**

Leader: We have failed to acknowledge that the Earth is the Lord's, and all that is in it, the world, and all who live in it; for God founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters.

People: **The whole creation looks with eager longing for us to pledge ourselves anew to serve Creator God, the maker of all things.**

Leader: And so, this morning we renew our commitment to care for all of God's creation.

People: **We pledge ourselves to care for creation, to reduce our waste, to live sustainably, and to value the rich diversity of life.**

Leader: May God's wisdom guide us, that life in all its forms may flourish,

People: **May we be faithful in voicing creation's praise.**

Leader: And may the commitment we have made this day to care actively and faithfully for God's creation be matched by our faithful living.

People: **Amen and Amen.**

Leader: For the Word of God in scripture,
for the Word of God among us,
for the Word of God within us.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Silent Reflection

Take a few moments to reflect on the words of the responsive reading in preparation for the sermon.

As the song begins, 1st – 5th graders are invited to leave for Children's Worship. They will exit at the front of the Sanctuary with Shaina Bailey, Director of Children's Ministry, and leaders. Parents can pick up children from room 212 in the education building between 11-11:15. For those staying through Spiritual Growth, please pick up children in the childcare room at noon.

*Sermon Hymn

"Restless Weaver" verses, 1, 2 and 3

See page 11.
BEACH SPRING

Sermon

"Living in God's World on God's Terms"

Rev. Dr. Layne Smith

Musical Reflection

Jim Brock, percussion; Rebecca Kleinmann, flute

Church at Prayer

Robin Buck, Environmental Justice

Leader: We now turn our thoughts to the Creator and send greetings and thanks for the gifts of creation. Everything we need to live a good life is here on Mother Earth. For all the love that is still around us, we gather our minds together as one and send our choicest words of greeting and thanks to the Creator.

Spoken: Now our minds are one.

Singing: This land was made for you and me.

Leader: We give thanks to all the waters of the world for quenching our thirst and providing strength and nurturing life for all beings. We are grateful that the waters are still here and meeting their responsibility to the rest of creation.

Spoken: Now our minds are one.

Singing: This land was made for you and me.

Leader: We turn toward the oceans of air working many wonders. The air sustains all life forms. We give thanks and look forward to breathing fresh air for generations to come.

Spoken: Now our minds are one.

Singing: This land was made for you and me.

Leader: Standing around us we see all the trees. Some provide shelter and shade, others fruit, beauty and many useful gifts. Trees are a symbol of peace and strength and with one mind we greet and thank the tree life.

Spoken: Now our minds are one.

Singing: This land was made for you and me.

Leader: With one mind we honor and thank all the food plants we harvest from the garden. Since the beginning of time, the grains, vegetables, beans, and fruit have helped the people survive. Many other living things draw strength as well. We gather together in our minds all the plant foods and send them a greeting and thanks.

Spoken: Now our minds are one.

Singing: This land was made for you and me.

Leader: We gather our minds together to give our greetings and thanks to all of the beautiful animal life of the world. They have many things to teach us as people. We are grateful they continue to share their lives with us and hope it will always be so. Let us put our minds together as one and send our thanks to the animals.

Spoken: Now our minds are one.

Singing: This land was made for you and me.

The Lord's Prayer

Amy Johnson, Environmental Justice

People: Our God in heaven, hallowed be your name,

Leader: remind us that we do not need to look up to heaven to find you, but that you exist in all that is around us. Let us see your glory in the songs of birds, the creeks that sustain life, and the faces of those around us.

People: Your kingdom come, your will be done, on Earth as it is in heaven.

Leader: May we see your kingdom as something we are called to embody now. Align our hearts with your justice, embolden us to act today.

People: Give us today our daily bread.

Leader: Help us remember that our sustenance does not come from our own striving but from your provision. Teach us gratitude for the soil, the rain, the hands that have labored to bring food to our tables, and the creatures that have given their lives. May we seek ways to ensure that all your children are fed.

People: And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Leader: God forgive us for the systems that we exist in that exploit the vulnerable parts of society, including creation. Have mercy on our complacency

People: And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from doing evil.

Leader: Teach our hearts to love creation as you do and actively work to protect it. Save our hearts from apathy, thinking we are unable to bring change.

People: For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Invitation to Offering

Nancy Hudson, Deacon

You are invited to give by scanning the QR code below or dropping your offering in the plate.



Offertory Anthem

Chancel Choir with McKenzie Coleman and Jarret Ward

John Rutter

“Look at the World”

Look at the world: everything all around us.
Look at the world: and marvel every day.
Look at the world: so many joys and wonders,
so many miracles along our way.

Refrain:

Praise to thee, o Lord for all creation.
Give us thankful hearts that we may see,
all the gifts we share and every blessing,
all things come of thee.

Look at the Earth: bringing forth fruit and flower.
Look at the sky: the sunshine and the rain.
Look at the hills, look at the trees and mountains,
valley, and flowing river, field, and plain. *[Refrain]*

Think of the spring, think of the warmth of summer,
bringing the harvest before the winters cold.
Everything grows, everything has a season,
til' it is gathered to the creator's fold. *[Refrain]*

Every good gift, all that we need and cherish,
comes from God in token and in love.
We are God's hands, stewards of all God's bounty,
his is the Earth and hers the heavens above. *[Refrain]*

*Presentation of Gifts and the Doxology

**God made all creatures wild and free,
each atom, every galaxy;
praise our Maker!
Alleluia!
God places Earth in human care,
land, living beings, water, air;
come now folk from every nation,
help our God renew Creation!
Alleluia!**

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

text: Paula W. M. Testerman

*Prayer of Dedication

Nancy Hudson, Deacon

*Closing Hymn

“Lead With Love”

Melanie DeMore; second & third verse by J. K. Gray

Refrain:

You gotta put one foot in front of the other and lead with love,

You gotta put one foot in front of the other and lead with love. [Repeat]

The future’s bright. **The future’s bright.**

For God is here. **For God is here.**

Let’s do the work. **Let’s do the work.**

Our way is clear. **Our way is clear. [Refrain]**

We have a charge, **We have a charge,**

To save the Earth, **To save the Earth.**

To give it space, **To give it space**

For a rebirth. **For a rebirth. [Refrain]**

We are the ones, **We are the ones.**

To change it all. **To change it all.**

We love this world, **We love this world.**

Let’s heed the call! **Let’s heed the call! [Refrain]**

Invitation to Action

Betsy Thigpen, Environmental Justice

Benediction

Rev. Dr. Layne Smith

Leader: We have now arrived at the place where we end our words. Of all the things we have named, it is not our intention to leave anything out. If something was forgotten, we leave it to each of you to send such greetings and thanks in your own way. Every day let these words of the people be our thanks to the land, and the God who created it.

People: **In the silence that falls at the end of these words, let us pause and listen, ... longing for the day when we can hear the land give thanks for the People in return. And now our minds are one.**

Postlude

Jim Brock, percussionist

As the postlude plays, please follow Lucas Bartholomew out of the sanctuary to Shalom Hall.



If you are our guest today, please connect with a minister after worship and receive a Welcome bag

Audio/Video Team Members are Wes Cobb, Joe Kuhlmann,
Hannah Combs and Eric Roberts.



HOW TO JOIN MYERS PARK BAPTIST CHURCH

Becoming a member of Myers Park Baptist is as simple as filling out a joining card.

To receive a card or learn more, contact
Rev. Dr. Layne Smith at lsmith@myersparkbaptist.org.





Join the MPBC AIDS Walk Team – Support RAIN’s Life-Saving Work!

Led by Scott Crowder, our MPBC team is raising funds for RAIN’s programs that support people living with HIV in our community. While HIV is now treatable, many in the Deep South, including North Carolina, still face high rates of new diagnoses and deaths due to stigma and inequality.

RAIN provides compassionate care, helping those affected by HIV live long, healthy lives. The **AIDS Walk Charlotte** is RAIN’s signature fundraiser, and we’ve set a goal to raise **\$8,000**.

Join us on **Saturday, May 31**, for the walk, or make a donation today to help us reach our goal. Together, we can make a lasting impact.

God, You Spin The Whirling Planets

AUSTRIA 8 7 8 7 D

Jane Parker Huber

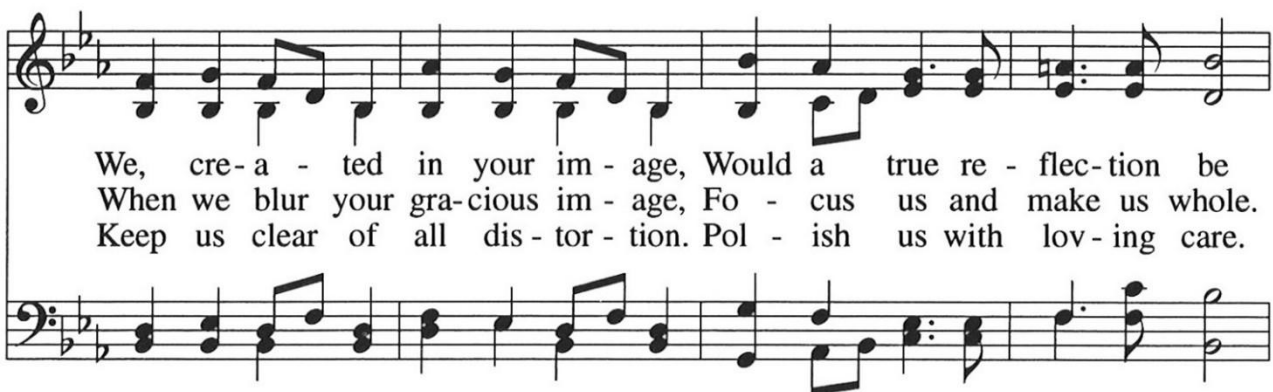
Franz Joseph Haydn, 1797



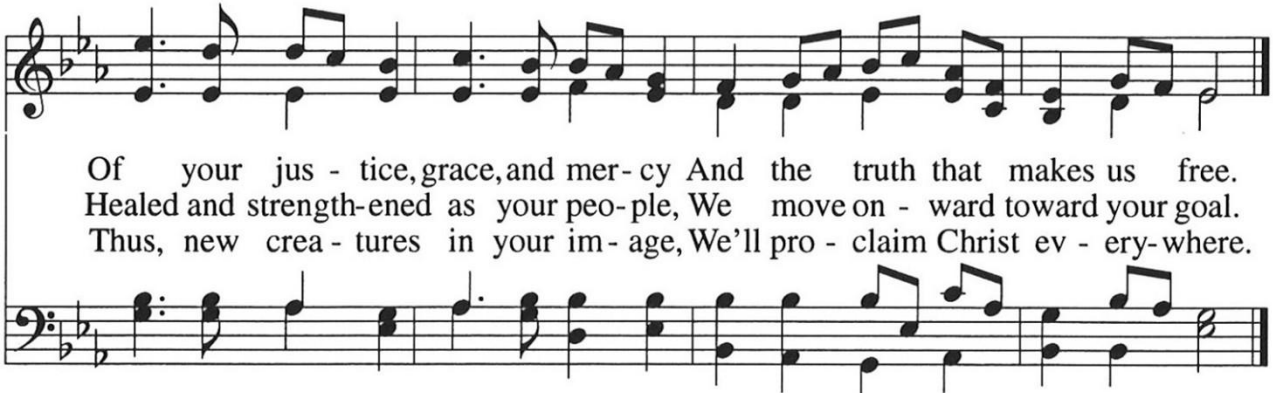
1. God, you spin the whirl-ing plan-ets, Fill the seas and spread the plain,
2. You have called us to be faith-ful In our life and min-is-try.
3. God, your word is still cre-at-ing, Call-ing us to life made new.



Mold the moun-tains, fash-ion blos-soms, Call forth sun-shine, wind, and rain.
We re-pond in grate-ful wor-ship Joined in one com-mu-ni-ty.
Now re-veal to us fresh vis-tas Where there's work to dare and do.



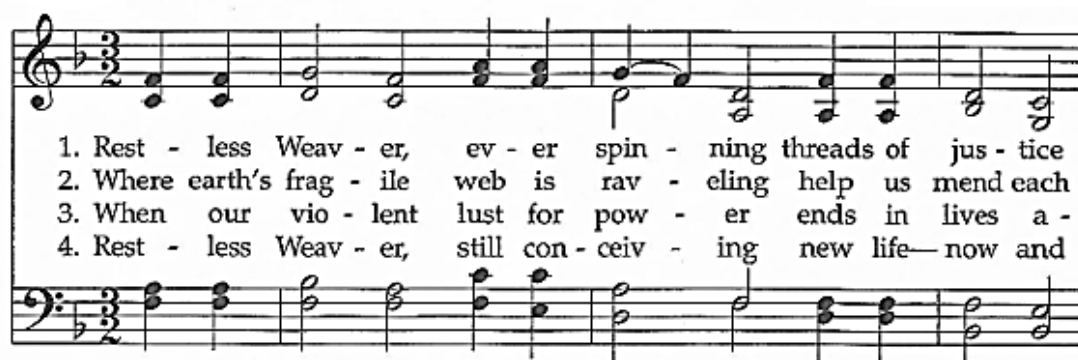
We, cre-a-ted in your im-age, Would a true re-flec-tion be
When we blur your gra-cious im-age, Fo-cus us and make us whole.
Keep us clear of all dis-tor-tion. Pol-ish us with lov-ing care.



Of your jus-tice, grace, and mer-cy And the truth that makes us free.
Healed and strength-ened as your peo-ple, We move on-ward toward your goal.
Thus, new crea-tures in your im-age, We'll pro-claim Christ ev-ery-where.

Words from "A Singing Faith" by Jane Parker Huber.

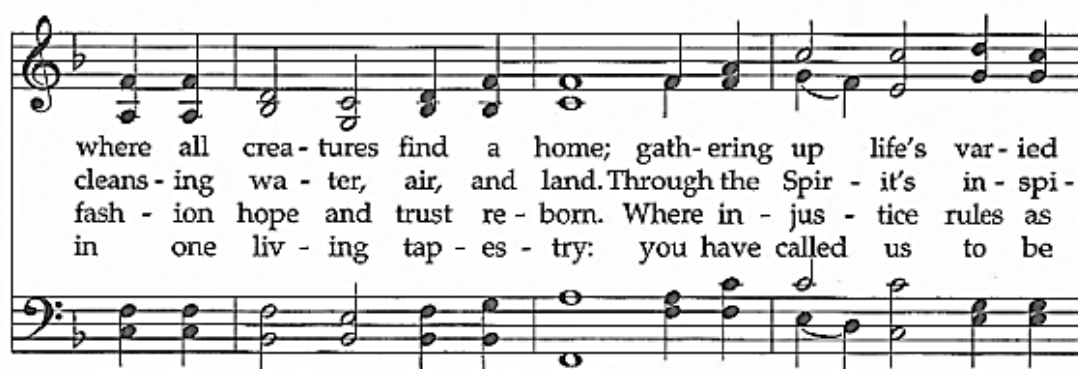
© 1987 Jane Parker Huber. Used by permission of Westminster/John Knox Press.



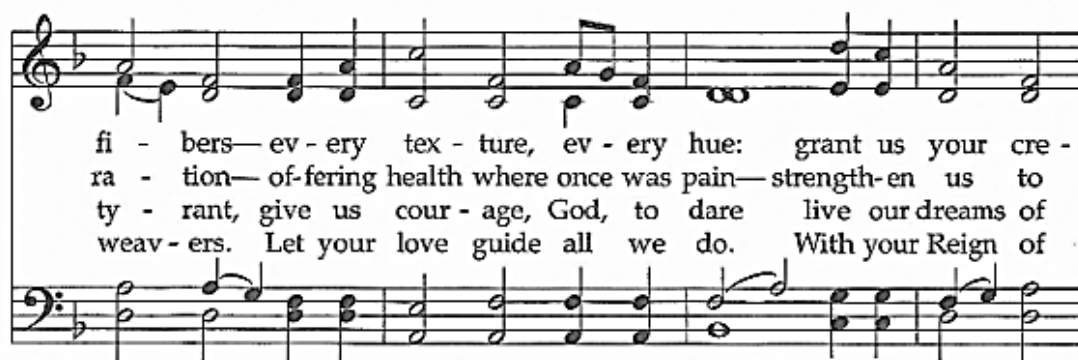
1. Rest - less Weav - er, ev - er spin - ning threads of jus - tice
 2. Where earth's frag - ile web is rav - eling help us mend each
 3. When our vio - lent lust for pow - er ends in lives a -
 4. Rest - less Weav - er, still con - ceiv - ing new life—now and



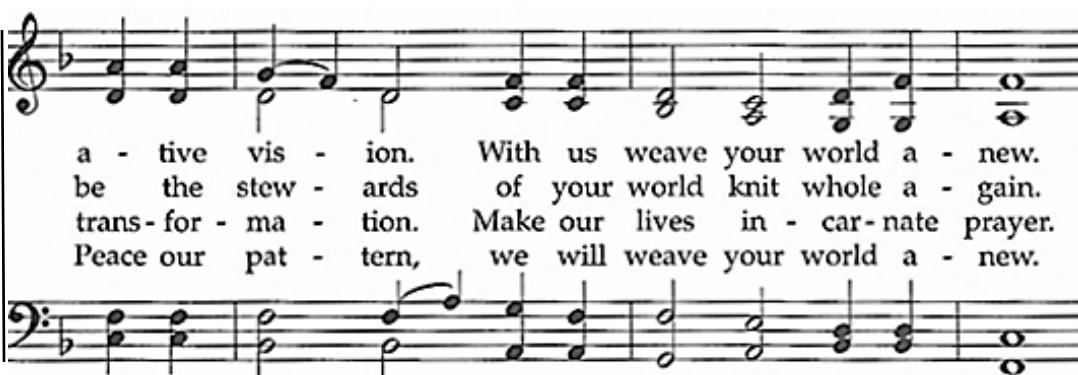
and sha - lom; dream-ing pat - terns of cre - a - tion
 bro - ken strand. Bless our ur - gent, bold en - deav - ors
 bused and torn, from com - pass - ion's stur - dy fab - ric
 yet to be— bind - ing all your vast cre - a - tion



where all crea - tures find a home; gath - ering up life's var - ied
 cleans - ing wa - ter, air, and land. Through the Spir - it's in - spi -
 fash - ion hope and trust re - born. Where in - jus - tice rules as
 in one liv - ing tap - es - try: you have called us to be



fi - bers—ev - ery tex - ture, ev - ery hue: grant us your cre -
 ra - tion—of - fer - ing health where once was pain—strength - en us to
 ty - rant, give us cour - age, God, to dare live our dreams of
 weav - ers. Let your love guide all we do. With your Reign of



a - tive vis - ion. With us weave your world a - new.
 be the stew - ards of your world knit whole a - gain.
 trans - for - ma - tion. Make our lives in - car - nate prayer.
 Peace our pat - tern, we will weave your world a - new.

Our Covenant

We, the members of the Myers Park Baptist Church, are a people on a journey of faith. By God's grace we are experiencing love through Jesus Christ and in the community of the faithful. We are discovering in this experience our freedom to become new creatures and our responsibility to be faithful stewards of our lives and of this world.

We will be open to all new light, strengthened by God and each other in our faith. We will sustain a critical examination of Scripture, belief and ritual as interpreters of God's active presence in the world. We will accept controversy as a reality of life together and an opportunity for growth toward maturity. We covenant to be a community of God's New Creation and affirm that we are open to all and closed to none.

We covenant together to nurture this church as a community of faith and as an instrument for reconciliation in the world: by worship, by Christian education, by the dedication of our personal and material resources and by all the other ways we express the significance of our lives with God and one another.

We covenant together to be priests celebrating God's presence in community and in the world, believing we are participants in God's kingdom on Earth.

OUR MINISTERS

Rev. Dr. Layne Smith

Interim Senior Minister

lsmith@myersparkbaptist.org

Rev. Marina Luckhoo

Associate Minister

mluckhoo@myersparkbaptist.org

J. Kevin Gray

Minister of Music & Worship

kgray@myersparkbaptist.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 6

12:00p Sage-ing Lunch featuring poet and member, Eddie Bell.

May 31

9:00a RAIN Walk join our MPBC team on Saturday, May 31 for the largest HIV fundraising event in the Carolinas.



JUSTICE
IS what
LOVE
looks like
MYERS PARK BAPTIST CHURCH

704.334.7232

mpbc@myersparkbaptist.org

We are affiliated with
allianceofbaptists.org  Alliance
of Baptists

We occasionally take photographs during our worship service. If you would prefer not to be included, please contact Laura Geer | Communications Director | lgeer@myersparkbaptist.org.

One License A-729324 | WorshipCast License CCS # WC-12779 | CVLI Video License #504 239 870