

The Worship of God

Season of Creation – Wilderness Sunday – September 17, 2023 – 9:00 Morning Worship

Welcome to First Presbyterian Church via Zoom!

PRELUDE

“Christ, You Are the Day and Light”

Georg Böhm

WELCOME

GATHERING AROUND GOD’S WORD

CALL TO WORSHIP

God of the wilderness calls us:

Arid lands and frozen tundra, give us ground on which to stand.

We welcome the wilds to stretch our horizons

even as they draw us inward:

Sun-bleached sands and jungled canopies,

open us to breath-blowing Spirit around and within.

We seek your gifts God of the wilderness.

Spur us to your hopes in God.

Salmon and monarchs, carry us to the waters of faith’s birth

and the future land of new life.

OPENING PRAYER

Wild God, like so much of your work,

we arrive on the edge of wilderness

with a sense of what it can be for us.

We imagine it to be many things.

Our imaginations run wild.

Bring us to this spacious place where we might know

how wilderness understands itself.

Move us beyond our assumptions to find wisdom

in what we too quickly assume to be barren and desolate.

Connect us and remind us that we are part of the wilderness.

We are a part of all that is wild.

Teach us who we really are.

Amen.

SING

“I Sing the Mighty Power of God”

#32

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Humans take up more and more space every year.

We claim what we think is our own and tame what is wild.

We do not hear the groaning of Creation but only our own hopes and dreams.

O God, forgive us.

Help us to see all that is connected to our need for hope.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

We are God's good creatures.

We come from the wild and share in a web of creation
that is nurtured by grace.

No matter how far ideas might reach, God's love reaches further.

God loves, supports, and holds us in the family of all wild things.

Thanks be to God.

SHARING GOD'S PEACE

I invite you to turn to one another and share a sign of peace:

You're invited to unmute yourselves and exchange peace with one another

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST LESSON

Exodus 14:19-31

SECOND LESSON

Romans 8:18-27

...The Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

REFLECTION

Reverend Susan Phillips

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

SING

"For the Beauty of the Earth"

#14

GIVING OUR GIFTS

DOXOLOGY

"Alleluia!"

#587

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We are called to step out beyond our homes and to see this world,
to be adventurers who meditate on the vastness of this universe.

God, bless us and the gifts we bring to your vibrant, diverse world of life.

We are all on a lifelong journey to the heart of your presence.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE FROM THE CHAT WINDOW

THE LORD'S PRAYER (debts & debtors)

SENDING INTO GOD'S WORLD

SING

"Restore in Us, O God"

#434

SENDING

We are alive, we are whole, and we are creatures of a vast and vibrant, wild earth.

Let us go forth to serve, love, and nourish this world of wildness!

POSTLUDE

"Canzona in G Major"

Franz Tunder