



Environmental Justice Sunday
April 19, 2026 10:30 a.m.

"We must always see with both eyes: one focused on the world's suffering so that we might fight against it and one focused on the world's wondrous beauty so that we might give thanks for it." --Rev. Brooks Berndt, Cathedral On Fire

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME AND MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

PRELUDE "Prelude in G" Felix Mendelssohn

LITANY OF LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

(adapted from the Episcopal Church: Resources on the Doctrine of Discovery)

One: O Great Spirit, God of every people and every tribe,
we come to you this day as guests on the land of Missouri Native American
tribes forcefully removed, asking for your forgiveness and guidance.

**All: Forgive us for the colonialism that stains our past, the ignorance that
allowed us to think that we could claim another's home for our own.**

One: Heal us of this history.

**All: Remind us that none of us were discovered since none of us were lost,
but that we are all gathered within the sacred circle of your community.**

One: Guide us through your wisdom to restore the truth of our heritage.

**All: Help us to confront the racism that divides us as we confess the pain it
has caused to the human family.**

One: Call us to kinship. Mend the hoop of our hearts and let us live in justice,
through Jesus Christ, the One who came that all people might live in dignity.

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: We walk in wonder beneath the sun and stars.

All: Creation is God's masterpiece and we are blessed to share it.

One: We give thanks for the air, the land, and the water.

All: and for all the creatures joined together in the web of life.

One: Beauty is before us, around us, over us and beneath us.

All: We join our hearts, minds, and spirits as one in thanks and awe.

***GATHERING HYMN** "For the Beauty of the Earth" #28 *New Century Hymnal*
(For full music, the *New Century Hymnal* is located in each pew rack) vv.1-3

**For the beauty of the earth, for the splendor of the skies,
For the love which from our birth over and around us lies,
God of all, to you we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.**

**For the wonder of each hour, of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light,
God of all to you we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.**

**For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth, and friends above, for all gentle thoughts and mild,
God of all to you we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.**

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Creating God, we admit we sometimes thirst for power and not compassion.

Loving God, renew us.

We see your creation as resources and not members of our community.

Loving God, renew us.

We remove mountaintops and clear-cut forests. We drill for oil in land that should be protected. We drain the earth to fuel our lifestyles.

Loving God, renew us, and transform our hearts and minds so that we might transform the world from which we live. (moment of silent confession)

***WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

The God who creates in love has the power to heal, restore, renew and resurrect.

Thanks be to God!

RESPONSE OF PRAISE "For the Beauty of the Earth" v.4

**For the good that love inspires, for a world where none exclude,
For a faith that never tires, and for every heart renewed,
God of all, to you we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.**

PASSING THE PEACE

CONVERSATION WITH OUR CHILDREN

Robbie Van Nest

"We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children."

- Native American Proverb

CHORAL ANTHEM

LISTENING

God speaks to us in the Word proclaimed.

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING: Psalm 8

Pew Bible p.427

A Word of God that is still speaking, **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

Sarah Fredriksen McCann

SILENT MEDITATION

HYMN OF REFLECTION: "We Have a Common Calling"

(tune: "The Church's One Foundation")

**We have a common calling, O God of love and grace —
to care for your creation, to tend what you embrace.
We have one home, one future; we're not in this alone.
We're called to work together for this our common home.**

**You call us to be partners — to notice and to care;
you make us loving stewards of land and sea and air.
We see our climate changing; God, show us what to do
to care for your creation, to heal the earth with you.**

**O God, as congregations, we don't act out of fear;
our moral obligations will motivate us here.
We seek a blest tomorrow; our voices rise above.
May we, today, be faithful in this great work of love.**

RESPONDING

We respond to God's Word through our prayers and our gifts.

*CREATION JUSTICE COVENANT

In affirming the divine gifts of creation and in affirming our connection to God, each other, and the world around us, we at Hope United Church of Christ in Saint Louis, MO unconditionally commit ourselves as individuals and as a congregation to the intertwined responsibilities of caring for creation and seeking justice for the oppressed.

We at Hope UCC recognize that the impacts of environmental exploitation, degradation, and global climate change disproportionately impact historically marginalized communities, especially people of color.

As followers of Christ, we have a calling and a responsibility to work on behalf of all those who face issues of environmental injustice and oppression.

With purposeful resolve, we at Hope UCC commit ourselves with an awareness of how the abuses of creation may cause suffering and of how factors such as race and inequality inevitably cause some to suffer more than others. We understand our responsibility as a church to care for creation and to help heal and restore it.

PRAYER OF HEALING AND HOPE

"It is our collective and individual responsibility to preserve and tend to the world in which we all live." — Dalai Lama

NAMING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

OFFERTORY "Meditation in D Minor" George Oldroyd
(A QR code at the end of the bulletin is available for online giving.)

* RESPONSE OF PRAISE (tune: "Lasst Uns Erfreuen")

Praise God, the Giver and the Gift,

Hearts, minds and voices now uplift, Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise, praise the breath of glad surprise, Freeing, uplifting, opening eyes.

Three-In-Oneness, Love Communing, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

SENDING

With God's blessing, we are sent forth to follow Christ in the world.

*COMMISSIONING HYMN: For the Fruit of All Creation" #425
(For full music, the New Century Hymnal is located in each pew rack)

For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God.

For God's gifts to every nation, thanks be to God.

For the plowing, sowing, reaping, silent growth while we are sleeping,

Future needs in earth's safe-keeping, thanks be to God.

In the just reward of labor, God's will is done.

In the help we give our neighbor, God's will is done.

In our worldwide task of caring for the hungry and despairing,

In the harvests we are sharing, God's will is done.

For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God.

For the good we all inherit, thanks be to God.

For the wonders that astound us, for the truths that still confound us,

Most of all that love has found us, thanks be to God.

*COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION: INTERFAITH CLIMATE PRAYER

We hold brothers and sisters who suffer from storms and droughts intensified by climate change.

We hold all species that suffer.

We hold world leaders delegated to make decisions for life.

We pray that the web of life may be mended through courageous actions to limit carbon emissions.

We pray for right actions for adaptation and mitigation to help our already suffering earth community.

We pray that love and wisdom might inspire my actions and our actions as communities,

so that we may, with integrity, look into the eyes of all beings and truthfully say,
we are doing our part to care for them and the future of the children.

May love transform us and our world with new steps toward life.

Amen!

"The Earth is what we all have in common."—Wendell Berry

POSTLUDE "Trumpet in Dialogue"

Louis Nicolas Clerambault

Prayers and responses adapted from www.creationjustice.org

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***Hope United Church of Christ Statement
of Welcome and Mission***

No matter where you are on life's journey, you are invited to enter the big red doors of Hope United Church of Christ. We are an open congregation. We believe that every person is a child of God and all are welcome, regardless of race, economic background, marital status, gender, gender identity(ies) / expression(s), sexual orientation, age, physical or mental ability, nationality or faith history. It is our mission, inspired by God's Holy Spirit, to engage persons in living out the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Please come, for all things are ready.

--Adopted by Hope UCC Congregation August 29, 2010

Donate from your
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Thanks for your
contribution to the
ministries of Hope UCC!

"Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect." - Chief Seattle

An Opportunity for you!

Register for the annual **UCC Earth Summit** on **April 25th** at 12 Noon (Central Time) at www.ucc.org/event/2026-earth-summit/

The theme for the fourth annual Earth Summit is "A Future with Hope" (Jeremiah 29:11). To ground and inspire us as people of faith in difficult times, the Jim Antal Keynote Address will be delivered by the Rev. Dr. Kenneth Samuel, a renowned advocate and organizer for justice who serves as the pastor of Victory for the World Church in Decatur, Georgia.

.32