



**First Reformed Church, Schenectady**  
In-person worship requires masks, distance,  
and no singing.

**Order of Worship September 20, 2020**  
**Special Music: Heather Ipsen**  
**Liturgist: Bill Levering**  
**Preacher: Daniel Carlson**

**Prelude Honeybee**  
**Greeting and Call to Worship**

**\*Hymn Spirit**

Spirit, spirit of gentleness,  
blow through the wilderness, calling and free,  
Spirit, spirit of restlessness,  
stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.

You moved on the waters, you called to the deep,  
then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep;  
and over the eons you called to each thing;  
“Awake from your slumbers and rise on your wings.”

You swept through the desert, you stung with the sand  
and you gifted your people with a law and a land;  
and when they were blinded with thier idols and lies,  
then you spoke through your prophets to open their eyes.

You sang in a stable, you cried from a hill,  
then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still;  
and down in the city you called once again,  
when you blew through your people on the rush of the wind.

You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes.  
From the bondage of sorrow all the captives dream dreams;  
our women see visions, our men clear their eyes.  
With bold new decisions your people arise.

**\*Our Need for God (unison)**

**O God, maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things seen and unseen:  
where we have destroyed earth's bounty, forgive us.  
Where we have taken majesty for granted, have mercy upon us.  
When we have failed to care for the creatures of this earth,  
give us new resolve.  
Renew us in the waters of baptism,  
refresh us with the winds of your spirit,  
and sustain us with the bread of life, we pray. Amen.**

**\*God's Forgiving Love**

**\*Response of Praise (hummed)**

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

**\*Affirmation of Faith (FRC Creation Care Resolution)**

**Scripture reveals that God, through Word and Spirit,  
creates, sustains, loves, and owns the world.  
We commit to make care of creation  
a central priority in our congregation,  
for the blessing of the world, the strengthening of our lives, the  
transformation of our communities, and the glory of God.**

**Special Music** Wherever I May Wonder

**First Reading** Mark 1:4-13

**Children's Message**

**Second Reading** Joel 1:2-3,8-14,17-20

**Sermon** *“Burning, Grieving, Praying, Changing”*

**Musical Offering** God, You Made Your Creation Good

**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.**

**Closing Hymn** God Be With You 540

God be with you till we meet again;  
Loving counsels guide, uphold you,  
With a shepherd’s care enfold you;  
God be with you till we meet again.

God be with you till we meet again;  
Unseen wings protecting hide you,  
Daily manna still provide you;  
God be with you till we meet again.

God be with you till we meet again;  
When life’s perils thick confound you,  
Put unfailing arms around you;  
God be with you till we meet again.

**Benediction**

Go out into the world in peace. Give no person evil for evil.  
Strengthen the fainthearted, support the weak. **Honor all people.**  
May the blessings of God: Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer,  
be with you now and always.

The wilderness is a healing experience for people. We can see it in people's faces between the time they check out a kayak and gear and the time they return. – Samantha Brooks

One picture that I very much wanted to take--which we finally were able to take--was a picture of the Earth from the outskirts of the solar system. And there it was...That's where we live. There were everyone we know, everyone we love, everyone we ever heard of, everyone who has ever lived--every one of us and all the other beings, live on that pale blue dot. To me that underscores our responsibility, because you look at that dot and you think how fragile and vulnerable it is. Our central responsibility is to cherish and care for the environment on the only home we have ever known and the only home for all those other beings with whom we are so profoundly connected. – Carl Sagan

The destruction of the environment cries out for urgent repentance and conversion. We are beckoned to rediscover a biblical vision and new understanding of ourselves and God's creation. The only future foreshadowed by the present crisis, both social and ecological, is massive suffering, both human and other than human. "Giver of life--Sustain your Creation!" is our prayer; we should pray it without ceasing. – World Council of Churches

The root cause of all our difficulties lies in human selfishness and human sin. What is asked of us is not greater technological skill but deeper repentance, or metanoia, which in the literal sense of the Greek word signifies, "change of mind...We need a new way of thinking about our own selves, about our relationship with the world and with God. Without this revolutionary change of mind, all our conservation projects, however well intentioned, will remain ultimately ineffective. For we shall be dealing only with symptoms, not with their causes. Lectures and international conferences may help to awaken our conscience, but what is truly required is a baptism of tears. – Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I

What can I do for justice, peace, and creation?  
To learn a new love for life, my life, part of creation,  
related to everything that lives and moves.  
To let myself be challenged  
when I see around me human destruction of the world.  
To break through the veil of deception  
that hides from my eyes brutal facts.  
And to resist wherever I can, with subversive power.  
– Marga Buhrig