



## EARTH DAY

### MUSIC & WORSHIP RESOURCES

**Sunday, April 20, 2008**

**Nolan Williams, Jr., Lectionary Team Liturgist**

#### **Worship Planning Notes**

More than ever, Earth Day should be a day to do God's work. For the growing number of environmentally conscious Christians, this observance that began thirty-one years ago has taken on a new religious meaning.

Reverend Howard Snyder, Chair of Wesley Studies at Tyndale Seminary, calls for Christians to “reflect Christianly and biblically” on the issue of creation care. Knowing what we do know about the effects of global warming on God’s creation, we need to realize how familiar Biblical passages also apply to those actions which cause global warming or hurt creation in other ways. In his reflection entitled Spoiling Creation Breaks All Ten Commandments (**See #2 Responsive Reading**), Snyder challenges us to see the Ten Commandments as more than a list of rules. They are a call for us to care for God’s world, and all creation therein.

We are called to honor God, to not put our want of convenience and habits ahead of following God's commandments. We are called to honor one another and to protect life, which is a call to protect creation. As Christians, our love for God should compel us to take great care of God’s creative work!

Encourage your congregation to experience God through their daily encounters with nature and the environment, instead of simply using nature to our own ends. Through our worship of the God of creation we do not worship creation, but rather we view creation as a window through which

the Creator may be seen.

In Real Worship: Playground, Battleground or Holy Ground?, Warren W. Wiersbe tells us that “Creation is God’s holy gift to us and as stewards, we must use this gift for the good of humankind and the glory of God.” “The God of creation and the God of salvation are the same God, and creation and redemption must not be divorced from each other.” He goes on to share that the practical results of this kind of worship are:

- (1) We will take better care of God’s creation and not waste or exploit it.
- (2) We become faithful stewards of all that God has given to us and will better understand how to use our means for his service.

### **1. Invocation**

O God, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen:

You place us in your creation, and you command us to care for it.

Your works declare glory and splendor, and you call us to praise and reverence.

Where we have degraded or destroyed earth's bounty, forgive us.

Where we have taken beauty and majesty for granted, have mercy upon us.

Where we have become estranged from the creatures with whom we share this planet, grant us your peace.

Renew us in the waters of baptism,  
refresh us with the winds of your spirit,  
and sustain us with the bread of life.

In the name of Jesus Christ, and for the sake of the new creation, we pray. Amen.

### **2. Responsive Reading**

Post the responsive reading on screens with scenic backgrounds. See 14b. for suggestions and sources.

#### **Spoiling Creation Breaks All 10 Commandments**

**Reader:**                    \*God has called us to be stewards and caretakers of God’s creation.  
And the Creator spoke all these words: I am God, your God:

CONGREGATION: YOU SHALL HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME

**Reader:**                    **When we despoil the creation, we are not honoring God; we are putting our own selfishness and comfort before God and his stewardship mandate to us.**

CONGREGATION: YOU SHALL NOT MAKE FOR YOURSELF AN IDOL

**Reader:**                    **Failing to care for God’s creatures, we make an idol (in a shortsighted way) of ourselves. We put ourselves ahead of God and his glory and mission.**

CONGREGATION: YOU SHALL NOT MISUSE THE NAME OF THE LORD YOUR GOD

**Reader:**                    **When people profess to be Christians but don’t take care of the earth,**

**or claim ownership of the land, they misuse the Lord who says, “The earth is mine, and the fullness thereof.”**

CONGREGATION: REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY BY KEEPING IT HOLY

**Reader: The Sabbath principle is rest and acknowledgment of God as sovereign provider. God says the land shall be allowed to rest, to rejuvenate itself, to be properly cared for.**

CONGREGATION: HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER, SO THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG IN THE LAND

**Reader: Honoring God-established family relationships and peaceful living in the land are tied together in God’s revelation. Since our parents (and all future generations) depend on the land, we dishonor our father and mother if we exploit the land.**

CONGREGATION: YOU SHALL NOT MURDER

**Reader: We are to nurture the life of others, not destroy. We now know that polluting the climate is increasing untimely deaths, especially among the poor. There is a connection between environmental exploitation and death at multiple levels. Creation care is pro-life.**

CONGREGATION: YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY

**Reader: Adultery comes from lust toward someone or something that does not properly belong to us; taking the person or the thing for our own gratification, disregarding their rights—and thus dishonoring God. So the Bible speaks much of spiritual adultery and prostitution. Jesus made plain that the issue is not the mere act, but the self-centered intention. Failure to practice creation care is an ecological adultery.**

CONGREGATION: YOU SHALL NOT STEAL

**Reader: Despoiling the land is stealing from God, who owns the land, and from the poor, to whom God gives special rights with regard to the land and its produce.**

CONGREGATION: YOU SHALL NOT GIVE FALSE TESTIMONY AGAINST YOUR NEIGHBOR

**Reader: When we blame others, not ourselves, for the spoiling of creation (when we blame politicians, or environmentalists, or environmental pollution from countries with larger populations, and especially when we blame God’s will or providence), we are bearing false witness, failing to recognize our environmental interdependence and co-responsibility. When we say we have no clear God-given responsibility for local and global creation care, we are bearing false witness against God’s Word.**

CONGREGATION: YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR’S HOUSE . . . OR ANYTHING THAT BELONGS TO YOUR NEIGHBOR

**ALL:** God says to practice mutual respect, especially with regard to those things that properly “belong” to us as God’s creatures. The earth does not belong to us, but the right to the proper enjoyment of the land and its beauty and bounty does belong to the whole human family (certainly not just to ourselves or our family or nation or religion). Creation care means not coveting the land or economic advantages or profits of others.

### **3. Hymns and Congregational Songs**

#### Hymns

- (a) All Creatures of Our God and King. By Francis of Assisi
- (b) How Great Thou Art. By Stuart K. Hine
- (c) For the Beauty of the Earth. By Folliot S. Pierpoint
- (d) This Is My Father’s World. By Maltbie D. Babcock
- (e) My Heavenly Father Watches Over Me. By W. C. Martin

### **4. Spiritual**

He’s Got the Whole World in His Hand.

### **5. Gospel Songs for Choirs, Ensembles, or Praise Teams**

- (a) The Heavens Are Telling. By Donald Lawrence
- (b) Awesome God. By Donnie McClurkin
- (c) This Is the Day. By Fred Hammond
- (d) Created to Worship. By William Murphy

### **6. Liturgical Dance Music**

- (a) Psalm 8. By Richard Smallwood
- (b) Colorful World. By CeCe Winans

### **7. Anthems**

- (a) The Heavens Are Telling (from The Creation). By Franz Joseph Haydn
- (b) God Made Our Hands. By Jill Jackson and Sy Miller. Arr. by Hawley Ades
- (c) Here I Am, Lord. By Dan Schutte

### **8. Modern Songs**

- (a) Touching Heaven, Changing Earth. By Hillsong

(b) Cover the Earth. By Israel Houghton

(c) God of Wonders. By Caedmon's Call

### **9. Offertory Song or Instrumental**

(a) You Can't Beat God Giving. By Doris Akers

(b) Siyahamba (We Are Marching in the Light of God). South African Folk Song

### **10. Song or Instrumental for the Period of Prayer**

(a) We Are an Offering. By Radical for Christ

(b) As the Deer. By Salvador

### **11. Sermonic Selection**

(a) He's Got the Whole World in His Hand. Traditional 

(b) For the Glory of Your Name. By Michelle Tumes

### **12. Invitational Song or Instrumental**

Song

(a) In the Garden. By Kirk Whalum

Instrumental (Piano)

(b) When Morning Gilds the Skies. German Traditional

### **13. Benediction Song or Instrumental**

Song

(a) All Things Come of Thee. Text: 1 Chronicles 29:14, Tune Attr. to Ludwig van Beethoven

Instrumental

(b) Mayenziwe (Your Will Be Done). South African traditional

### **14. Audio Visual Suggestions**

(a) Video: This Is My Father's World. By Fernando Ortega 

(b) Screen shots of planet Earth, sky, trees and greenery, sun, rivers, oceans, mountains

(c) Download sound clips of ocean waves

### **15. Other Recommendations**

(a) Create sensory experiences—breezes, warmth, sounds of ocean waves, soil—to support the singing, reading of scripture, and images on screens.

(b) For a tactile experience, distribute small sachets of soil to your congregation. For the period of prayer, have your congregation feel the soil between their fingers as the prayer is given.

## Cites and Additional Information for Music and Material Listed

**1. Invocation** - Earth Day Prayer of Confession written by Ken Carter, Providence United Methodist Church © 2005. Used with permission.

**2. Responsive Reading** - Soiling Creation Breaks All Ten Commandments written by Howard Snyder, Distinguished Professor, Chair of Wesley Studies, at Tyndale Seminary. Used with permission.

*NOTE: First line, marked by asterisk (\*) added by Nolan Williams, Jr., taken from Exodus 20:1 (MSG)*

### **3. Hymns and Congregational Songs**

(a) All Creatures of Our God and King. By Francis of Assisi

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2001. #147

The New National Baptist Hymnal 21st Century Edition. Nashville, TN: Triad Publications, 2005. #33

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. The A.M.E. Zion Hymnal Official Hymnal of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Charlotte, NC: A.M.E. Zion Pub. House, 1996. #66

Church of God in Christ. Yes, Lord! Church of God in Christ Hymnal. Memphis, TN: Church of God in Christ Pub. Board in association with the Benson Co., 1982. #21

(b) How Great Thou Art. By Stuart K. Hine

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #148

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church Hymnal. #47

Lead Me, Guide Me: The African American Catholic Hymnal. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 1987. #181

New National Baptist Hymnal 21st Century Edition. #43

Yes, Lord! Church of God in Christ Hymnal. #39

(c) For the Beauty of the Earth. By Folliot S. Pierpoint

Location:

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church Hymnal. #6

The New National Baptist Hymnal 21st Century Edition. #8

Yes, Lord! Church of God in Christ Hymnal. #68

(d) This Is My Father's World. By Maltbie D. Babcock

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #149

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church Hymnal. #14

The New National Baptist Hymnal 21st Century Edition. #41

Yes, Lord! Church of God in Christ Hymnal. #49

(e) My Heavenly Father Watches Over Me. By W. C. Martin

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #144

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church Hymnal. #84

Lead Me, Guide Me: The African American Catholic Hymnal. #231

The New National Baptist Hymnal 21st Century Edition. #53

Yes, Lord! Church of God in Christ Hymnal. #49

#### **4. Spiritual**

(a) He's Got the Whole World in His Hand.

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #150

The New National Baptist Hymnal 21st Century Edition. #162

#### **5. Gospel Songs for Choirs, Ensembles, or Praise Teams**

(a) The Heavens Are Telling. By Donald Lawrence

Location:

Clark-Sheard, Karen, Kierra Sheard, and Missy Elliott. The Heavens Are Telling. New York, NY: Elektra, 2003.

(b) Awesome God. By Donnie McClurkin

Location:

Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs. New York, NY: Verity, 2005.

(c) This Is the Day. By Fred Hammond

Location:

Free to Worship. New York, NY: Zomba, 2006.

(d) Created to Worship. By William Murphy

Location:

The William Murphy Project All Day. New York, NY: Sony Urban Music/Epic, 2005.

## 6. Liturgical Dance Music

(a) Psalm 8. By Richard Smallwood

Location:

Richard Smallwood with Vision Persuaded, Live in D.C. New York, NY: Zomba Recording, 2007.

(b) Colorful World. By CeCe Winans

Location:

Purified. New York, NY: Sony, 2005.

## 7. Anthems

(a) The Heavens Are Telling (from The Creation). By Franz Joseph Haydn

Location:

The Pine Forge Academy Choir. Rock in a Weary Land. Pine Forge, PA: Pine Forge Academy Choir, 2007.

Online location: [www.digstation.com](http://www.digstation.com)

(b) God Made Our Hands. By Jill Jackson and Sy Miller. Arr. by Hawley Ades

Location:

The Pine Forge Academy Choir. Rock in a Weary Land. Pine Forge, PA: Pine Forge Academy Choir, 2007.

Online location: [www.digstation.com](http://www.digstation.com)

(c) Here I Am, Lord. By Dan Schutte

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #567

## 8. Modern Songs

(a) Touching Heaven, Changing Earth. By Hillsong

Location:

Touching Heaven, Changing Earth. Sydney, AU: Hillsong Music Australia, 1998.

(b) Cover the Earth. By Israel Houghton

Location:

Cruse Ratcliff, Cindy, and Israel Houghton. Cover the Earth: Lakewood Live. Mobile, AL: Integrity Media, 2003.

(c) God of Wonders. By Caedmon's Call

Location:

In the Company of Angels. Brentwood, TN: Essential, 2001.

## 9. Offertory Song or Instrumental

(a) You Can't Beat God Giving. By Doris Akers

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #671

(b) Siyahamba (We Are Marching in the Light of God). South African Folk Song

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #164

### **10. Song or Instrumental for the Period of Prayer**

(a) We Are an Offering. By Radical for Christ

Location:

Radical for Christ, and Fred Hammond. Praise in the House. Mobile, AL: Integrity Music, 1995.

(b) As the Deer. By Salvador

Location:

Worship Live. Nashville, TN: Curb/Word Entertainment, 2003.

### **11. Sermonic Selection**

(a) He's Got the Whole World in His Hand. Traditional

Location:

Performed by Anthony Brown. Toil and Triumph: African American Spirituals. Self-Produced by Anthony Brown. Kansas City, KS, 2002.

(b) For the Glory of Your Name. By Michelle Tumes

Location:

Very Best of Michelle Tumes. Brentwood, TN: Sparrow Records, 2006.

### **12. Invitational Song or Instrumental**

Song

(a) In the Garden. By Kirk Whalum

Location:

Whalum, Kirk, Doc Powell, John Stoddart, Sean McCurley, Lalo Davila, and Marc Harris. Hymns in the Garden. Burbank, CA: Warner Bros. Records, 2005.

Instrumental (Piano)

(b) When Morning Gilds the Skies. German Traditional

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #186

### **13. Benediction Song or Instrumental**

Song

(a) All Things Come of Thee. Text: 1 Chronicles 29:14. Tune Attr. to Ludwig van Beethoven

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #668

The New National Baptist Hymnal 21st Century Edition. #356

Instrumental

(b) Mayenziwe (Your Will Be Done). South African traditional

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #666

#### **14. Audio Visual Suggestions**

(a) Video: This Is My Father's World. By Fernando Ortega

(b) Screen shots of planet Earth, sky, trees and greenery, sun, rivers, oceans, mountains

Location:

SermonSpice.com: [www.sermonspice.com](http://www.sermonspice.com) Type in "Earth" in search for videos or video loops

Faithvisuals.com: [www.faithvisuals.com](http://www.faithvisuals.com) Type in "creation" in search for video Loops. Suggestions: Nature Loop 1, 2, 3

(c) Download clips of ocean waves.

Location:

Soundrangers.com: [www.soundrangers.com](http://www.soundrangers.com) Under "sound effects categories," click on "nature," and then on appropriate sound clips for review and/or download.

#### **15. Other Recommendations**

Wiersbe, Warren W. Real Worship: Playground, Battleground, or Holy Ground? Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000.