



*The First Congregational Church
of the United Church of Christ
Stockbridge, Massachusetts*
CARE FOR CREATION SUNDAY
April 21, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.

Each week in worship we welcome people to share their prayers. If you would like for a worship leader to read your prayer, fill out a prayer slip. Nursery care is available during the worship service; please ask an usher.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

GATHERING MUSIC

PRELUDE

Pastorale by Guiseppe Sammartini

Pastorale by Peter Frost

FRAMING WORDS / WELCOME

Pastor Brent Damrow

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

BRINGING OF THE LIGHT / TIME OF GRATITUDE

*GATHERING SONG

All Things Bright and Beautiful

See page 4

*CALL TO WORSHIP

written by Joan Stott

Sarah Conly

One: "O Lord, our Lord, the majesty of your name fills the earth!

Your glory is higher than the heavens."

We gather to praise you!

All: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth..."

One: "O Lord, our Lord, the majesty of your name fills the earth!

Your glory is higher than the heavens."

We gather to celebrate you!

All: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...

And God saw that it was good..." We gather to celebrate our God.

continued

One: "O Lord, our Lord, the majesty of your name fills the earth!
Your glory is higher than the heavens."
We gather to worship you!

All: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth..."

One: And God saw that it was very good..."

All: We gather to worship the Lord God who made it all!

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

TIME WITH CHILDREN

The Lord's Prayer

Our God, 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Children may go to music / story time.

INTROIT *How Great Thou Art*

CONTEMPORARY READING *Blessing Our World Now*, John O'Donohue
Drea Pecor

*SUNG RESPONSE *God of Grace, God of Glory*, vss. 1, 3, & 5 See page 5

THE GIFT OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Genesis 1:20-31 (Robert Alter translation)

SERMON *Abundance, Blessing, Responsibility* Pastor Brent

*HYMN *Touch the Earth Lightly* See page 6

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY *For the Beauty of the Earth* by John Rutter Hui-Mei Lin, *piano*

*DOXOLOGY

Lasst Uns Erfreuen

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low; Alleluia, Alleluia.
Praise Holy Spirit evermore; One God, Triune, whom we adore.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

*BLESSING OF THE GIFTS

BRINGING OUR PRAYERS

PRAYER RESPONSE *Alleluia* by Jerry Sinclair

GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

INVITATIONS

*SENDING COMMISSION posted by Rev. Gord Michael Deegan

One: We have sung, we have prayed,
we have worshiped together.

All: Now we go back out into the world.

One: We came together to build relationships,

All: relationships with each other, and our relationship with Jesus.

One: We go out as people who are strengthened by our connections

All: Ready to love and to serve. Ready to carry God's love to the world.

One: As we journey through the ups and the downs of the coming week,

**All: let us remember that God, who has invited us into relationship,
is always with us.**

One: As we experience the beauty and joy of this place we call home

All: let us remember to honor our God in the ways we care for creation.

One: Go with God, as the people of God.

All: So be it! Amen

*HYMN *O How Glorious, Full of Wonder* vss. 1 & 4 See page 7

*BENEDICTION Pastor Brent

POSTLUDE Overture to the Opera "Alcina" by G.F. Handel Hui-Mei Lin, *organ*

All Things Bright and Beautiful

267

ROYAL OAK 7.6.7.6 with refrain

English melody, 17th century

Adapt. Martin Shaw, 1915

Harm. for *The Hymnbook*, 1953

Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848

Refrain

All things bright and beau-ti - ful, All crea-tures great and small,

All things wise and won - der - ful: The Lord God made them all. *Fine*

1. Each lit - tle flower that o - pens, Each lit - tle bird that sings:
 2. The pur - ple-head - ed moun-tain, The riv - er run-ning by,
 3. The cold wind in the win - ter, The pleas-ant sum-mer sun,
 4. God gave us eyes to see them, And lips that we might tell

God made their glow-ing col - ors, God made their ti - ny wings.
 The sun - set, and the morn - ing That bright-ens up the sky,
 The ripe fruits in the gar - den: God made them ev - ery one.
 How great is God Al - might - y, Who has made all things well.*

God of Grace and God of Glory

436

Harry Emerson Fosdick, 1930; alt.

Verses
1, 3, & 5

1 God of grace and God of glo - ry, on your peo - ple
2 From the e - vils that sur - round us and as - sail the
3 Cure your chil - dren's war - ring mad - ness; bend our pride to
4 Set our feet on loft - y plac - es; gird our lives that
5 Save us from weak res - ig - na - tion to the e - vils

pour your power; crown your an - cient church - 's sto - ry;
Sav - ior's ways, from the fears that long have bound us—
your con - trol. Shame our reck - less, self - ish glad - ness,
they may be ar - mored with all Christ - like grac - es,
we de - plore; let the search for your sal - va - tion

bring its bud to glo - rious flower. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
free our hearts for faith and praise. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
rich in things and poor in soul. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
in the fight to set us free. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
be our glo - ry ev - er - more. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,

for the fac - ing of this hour, for the fac - ing of this hour.
for the liv - ing of these days, for the liv - ing of these days.
make our bro - ken spir - its whole, make our bro - ken spir - its whole.
in the quest for lib - er - ty, in the quest for lib - er - ty.
serv - ing you whom we a - dore, serv - ing you whom we a - dore.

Harry Emerson Fosdick, a prophetic preacher and writer, taught at Union Theological Seminary from 1915 to 1946. This hymn was written for the opening service and dedication of Riverside Church, New York City, which he served for twenty years.

Tune: CWM RHONDDA 8.7.8.7.8.7.7.
John Hughes, c. 1907

Unison
Brightly

Shirley Erena Murray, 1992

1 Touch the earth light - ly, use the earth gent - ly,
 * 2 We who en - dan - ger, who cre - ate hun - ger,
 3 Let there be green - ing, birth from the burn - ing,
 4 God of all liv - ing, God of all lov - ing,

*The second verse only may be sung in A minor, omitting the sharps except where indicated in parentheses.

nour-ish the life of the world in our care:
 a - gents of death for all crea - tures that live,
 wa - ter that bless - es, and air that is sweet,
 God of the seed - ling, the snow, and the sun,

Gift of great won - der, ours to sur - ren - der,
 We who would fos - ter clouds of dis - as - ter—
 Health in God's gar - den, hope in God's chil - dren,
 Teach us, de - flect us, Christ re - con - nect us,

trust for the chil - dren to - mor - row will bear.
 God of our plan - et, fore - stall and for - give!
 re - gen - er - a - tion that peace will com - plete.
 us - ing us gent - ly, and mak - ing us one.

Shirley Erena Murray's notes on this hymn state that the title line is borrowed from an Australian Aboriginal saying. The "clouds of disaster" mentioned in stanza 2 refer to nuclear testing by France, which New Zealand has protested at the United Nations many times.

Tune: TENDERNESS 5.5.10.D.
 Colin Gibson, 1992

Verses
1 & 4

O How Glorious, Full of Wonder

558

Curtis Beach, 1958, rev. 1980; alt.

Ps. 8

1 O how glo - rious, full of won - der is your name o'er all the earth,
2 When we see your lights of heav - en, moon and stars, your power dis - played,
3 You have set us in com - mu - nion with the won - ders of your hand,
4 O how won - drous, O how glo - rious is your name in ev - ery land,

God, who wrought cre - a - tion's splen - dor, bring - ing suns and stars to birth!
Who are we that you should love us, crea - tures that your hand has made?
Made us fly with ea - gle pin - ion, pil - grims o - ver sea and land.
God, whose pur - pose shines be - fore us toward the goal that you have planned!

Rapt in rev - erence we a - dore you, mar - veling at your mys - tic ways.
Born of earth, yet full of yearn - ing, mix - ture strange of good and ill,
Soar - ing spire and ru - ined cit - y, these our hopes and fail - ures show.
Yours the will our hearts are seek - ing, con - scious of our hu - man need.

Hum - bly now we bow be - fore you, lift - ing up our hearts in praise.
From your ways so of - ten turn - ing, yet your love does seek us still.
Teach us more of hu - man pit - y, that we in your im - age grow.
Spir - it in our spir - it speak - ing, make us yours, O God, in - deed.

United Church of Christ minister Curtis Beach submitted this hymn to the editorial committee of the Pilgrim Hymnal (1958). It was one of two psalm paraphrases by Beach to be accepted. The hymn was also included in The Hymnal of the United Church of Christ (1974).

Tune: IN BABILONE 8.7.8.7.D.
Traditional Dutch melody
Arr. Julius Röntgen, c. 1906
Alternate tune: HYMN TO JOY

The New Century Hymnal (1995)

News and Announcements

Stockbridge Festival Chorus

Spring Concert, Saturday, April 27, 3:00 pm at First Congregational Church of Stockbridge. The featured work is *Melodious Accord: A Concert of Praise* by Alice Parker for chorus and solo quartet, accompanied by Berkshire Brass, harp, and piano. \$20 at the door, \$10 for community chorus members, and free for 18 and under.

Cathedral of the Beloved We need volunteers to help cook together in the church kitchen on Saturday, April 27, and/or set up and serve the meal on April 28. Sign-up sheet in the JE Room.

All Church Birthday Party Celebrate our birthdays after church on May 5! Sign up in the JE room or call the office. Our theme is The Four Seasons – sit with your friends born in your season! Eat Cake! Seasonal attire encouraged.

Music Notes ~ Peter Frost

Alcina (see today's Postlude) is an opera seria composed by Handel in 1735. The work contains several musical pieces written for dance and specifically written for a dancer named Marie Salle.

Alcina was composed for the first season at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, in London. It premiered on April 16, 1735. Like Handel's other works in this genre, this opera fell into obscurity. There was a revival in 1738, but it was not performed again until 1928.

Welcome! We are Open and Affirming, which means that we invite persons of every sexual orientation, gender identification and expression, racial and cultural identity, age, physical ability, economic circumstance, faith background and family structure to share fully in the ministry, leadership and fellowship of this congregation's life in Christ.

As followers of Christ and committed to Isaiah's charge to "maintain justice and do what is right," we acknowledge with gratitude and humility that we are learning, speaking, gathering, and worshiping on the ancestral homelands of the Mohican people, who are the indigenous peoples of this land. Despite tremendous hardship in being forced from here, today their community resides in Wisconsin and is known as the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. We pay honor and respect to their ancestors past and present as we commit to building a more inclusive and equitable space for all.

(413) 298-3137 | office@stockbridgeucc.org | stockbridgeucc.org

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