

First Parish Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

April 23, 2017 Earth Day Celebration



ALL ARE WELCOME

*“Friend, you enter this church not as a stranger, but as a guest of God.
Come, then, with joy in your heart and thanks upon your lips,
and offer God today your love and your service.”*

(Adapted from a 12th Century Church in Hampshire, England)

April 23, 2017

Earth Day Celebration

First Parish Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, is a community of faith built upon a firm foundation of worship, prayer and education. In affirming diversity, we are dedicated to welcoming all people who seek the Word of God, Christian fellowship and service to others. In partnership with Christ and led by the Holy Spirit, we reach out to the ever-widening community through active and loving ministry.

WE GATHER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN NO. 28 *“For the Beauty of the Earth”*

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Come, let us dwell in God’s shelter. Let us dwell in God’s work of art.

People: **Come, because the earth is the Lord’s and God’s earth is our home.**

Leader: We live in God’s world. We are not alone. We share this life with the heavens and the earth, with the waters and the land,

People: **With the trees and grasses, with fish, birds and animals, with minerals and creatures of every form, and all our sisters and brothers.**

Leader: God is good and everything God makes is good. God is love and everything God makes is love’s fruit.

All: **Let us worship God!**

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (in unison)

Heavenly Gardener, as the sunlight is transformed into energy by plants, let your light shining upon us transform us. Let your word sown into our hearts blossom into amazing acts of love and service. Open us to your presence and fill us with your spirit so that we may reflect your love for all living things. Let others experience your warmth and love through us. Amen.

*SONG OF PRAISE NO. 236

“Halleluja”

Hal-le, hal-le, hal-le-lu-ja. Hal-le, hal-le, hal-le-lu-ja.

Hal-le, hal-le, hal-le-lu-ja. Hal-le-lu-ja, hal-le-lu-ja.

WE INVITE FORWARD GOD’S LITTLE CHILDREN

CHILDREN’S OFFERING #31

All Things Bright and Beautiful (refrain only)

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

In our thanks, these gifts we bring. For You give us everything.

Teach us how to follow You ~ in all we say, and all we do. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (debts)

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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory forever. Amen.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD FOR US

*HYMN NO.569

"Touch the Earth Lightly"

HEBREW SCRIPTURES

Psalm 65:9-13

(O.T. p. 583)

2 Readings from the Apocrypha

Wisdom of Solomon 11:24-12:1

Sirach 42:15-25 & 43

Earth Day Meditations – Sue Handy and Cathy Zylinski

Dialogue: Letter to All The People

Attributed to Chief Seattle (Read by Alec Cobban and Margie Ives)

CHOIR ANTHEM

"Creator Rhythm"

by Pepper Choplin

WE RESPOND WITH OUR PRAYERS AND STEWARDSHIP

PASTORAL PRAYER

CHORAL RESPONSE

WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION

As the days become warmer and the buds of summer leaves swell, we are reminded of the many ways God interacts with the world in order to meet its many needs. God has shown us the meaning of generosity in the beautiful diversity of creation. We are all the stewards of the earth. Let us now offer our gifts to God as an acknowledgment of our responsibility to be good caretakers of our world.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

*DOXOLOGY #780,

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise God, all creatures here below, Praise God above, you heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

All good gifts come from you, O God, and you reveal glimpses of your grace through them. Thanks you for inviting us to be partners with you in caring for your creation. We offer these gifts now, knowing that they come first from you, then from other members of your family of creation, then from us. Bless these gifts as symbols of our awareness that we depend on you and your creation for all that we call “ours”. Please accept these gifts and our desire to be your partners. Amen.

WE ARE SENT OUT TO LOVE AND SERVE GOD

*HYMN

Heaven Waits with Eager Longing (insert)

BENEDICTION

*All that are able may stand

MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH

DEACONS OF THE MONTH

LAY READER

USHERS Ken Gould, Dee Deranian, Shirley Dickason and Michael Bryan

GREETER(s) Beth Hunter

SENIOR PASTOR AND TEACHER

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Susan Handy

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR

Christine Lehoullier

ACCOMPANIST/ORGANIST

Chris Ferrin

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Hannah Collier



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