**St.Andrews**

 **United Church**



**60 West Avenue, St. Thomas 519- 631-4558 e-mail:** **standrewsucgra@rogers.com**

**Website:** [**www.standrewsunitedchurch.com**](http://www.standrewsunitedchurch.com)

**Ministers: The people of St. Andrew’s**

**Pastor: Rev. Cheryl Bolton**

**Ministry of Music: Brian and Lynn Sloan/**

 **Merna Edison/Thomas Bee**

**September 3rd 2023**

**1st Sunday of Creation - Plants**

# **WE GATHER**

**Welcome & Announcements**

**Acknowledging Our Kinship**

As we begin today, we acknowledge the history, spirituality, culture, and stewardship of the land of the Indigenous People of this region. We seek to live in respect, peace, and right relations as we live, work, and worship upon Traditional Territory. We are mindful of broken covenants and the need to strive to make right with all our relations.

**Candle Lighting -** We light this Christ Candle to remind ourselves that God is in our midst. God’s Spirit swirls around us and within us. **Welcome Holy One!**

**Call To Worship**

We invite the forests to worship with us:

**The Pine and the Maple, quivering ferns and glistening moss!**

We quiver with the trees as they shake before God:

**when tempests and tornadoes hit, and raging winds invade the forest.**

We invite tall trees to celebrate life:

**Douglas Fir and Eastern Hemlock,**

**tall timber where squirrels and chipmunks find their home!**

We invite the forest night-life to sing:

**Green tree frogs and timid moths, ancient owls and swirling bats!**

We join with the fauna of the forest in praising God:

**Woodpeckers** **and warblers, Black bears, Bobcats and butterflies!**

We celebrate the song of the forest!

**Sing, forest, sing!**

**Gathering Hymn - Praise to the Lord, the Almighty - 220 VU**

**Prayer of Confession**

**Merciful God, we have not always treated your creation as we should. We have made parts of your world inhospitable to all life. We have behaved as though we are lords and masters of this planet instead of its caregivers. Let us turn back, while there is still time, to find our true place in your creation. Amen.**

**Words of Assurance**

With faith, all things are possible. You, Lord. Hold all of our futures in the palm of your hand. We have nothing to fear. Thanks be to God! Amen.

**Young at Heart - Three Tall Trees**

**Hymn** - **We Praise You for the Sun - 225 VU**

**LISTEN FOR GOD’S WORD**

**Scripture Reading - Psalm 148, Colossians 1: 15-23**

**Meditation - Putting Down and Protecting Strong Roots**

**Hymn - In the Bulb there is a Flower - 703 VU**

**RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD**

 **Invitation to Offering**

**Offering Hymn - Praise God from Whom All Blessing Flow - 541 VU**

 Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

 praise God, all creatures high and low;

 give thanks to God in love made known:

 Creator, Word and Spirit, One.

**Offering Prayer -**

Understanding God, we commit ourselves to the courageous task of caring for your creation, including plants, animal and humans. May these gifts be used to bring about new possibilities for all you care about. We present them to you, thankful for love, compassion and hope. Amen.

***A Minute for Celebrations and Concerns***

**Prayers of Thanksgiving and Concern**

O God,

We thank you for this earth, our home;

for the wide sky and the blessed sun,

for the ocean and streams,

for the towering hills and the whispering wind,

for the trees and green grass.

We thank you for our senses

by which we hear the songs of birds,

and see the splendor of fields of golden wheat,

and taste autumn's fruit,

rejoice in the feel of snow,

and smell the breath of spring flowers.

Grant us a heart opened wide to all this beauty;

and save us from being so blind

that we pass unseeing

when even the common thorn bush

is aflame with your glory.

For each new dawn is filled with infinite possibilities

for new beginnings and new discoveries.

Life is constantly changing and renewing itself.

In this new day of new beginnings with God,

all things are possible.

We are restored and renewed in a joyous awakening

to the wonder that our lives are and, yet, can be. Amen.

**The Lord’s Prayer**

**Closing Hymn - O Lord My God - 238 VU**

**Commissioning and Benediction**

**May the Spirit of God,**

**who is above all and in all and through all,**

**fill you with the knowledge of God’s presence**

**in Earth and the impulse of Christ within you.**

**Go in peace, serving Christ and loving Earth!**

**Announcements**

It is Back-to-School time and many families are struggling to put food on the table let alone pay for back-to-school supplies and healthy snacks.  Please consider buy some non-perishable snacks, juice boxes, granola bars, fruit cups, etc. or donating cash or gift cards to help families meet the needs of the children. Feel free to drop these items off at the church, and we will make sure they get to those in need.

Board Meeting on September 7 at 10:30am in the hall!

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**September 6 – Prayer Shawl- 10:30am**

**September 12th – UCW meets at 11am**

**September 14th- Euchre at 1:30pm**

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