

**Environmental Workshop for “Not Ordinary Times”**

**June 19, 2014 in Randolph**

**10 AM: Welcoming Remarks and Introductions: any questions you bring to the day, what you hope to gain from it**

**10:30: Worship**

**Creating Sacred Space**

**Opening Hymn: At the Dawn of Your Creation ("Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee") Words by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette (<http://www.carolynshymns.com/> )**

**Contemplative Viewing of Clip from “Journey of the Universe”**

**Liturgy of Confession and Reassurance:** (Adapted from Confession and Lament for Creation, and Not Ordinary Times Web-site: Rev. Allyson Sawtell, Rev. Peter Sawtell)

**Unison: Oh God of time and space**

**We confess we are running out of both.**

**Species whirling into extinction faster than ever before.**

**Habitat created over millennia**

**destroyed in the blink of an eye**

**Sea levels rising, threatening, moving closer**

**and the poor and the brown and the voiceless taste the bitter salt**

**Oh God of time and space, we confess we are running out of both.**

*Reader: Habitats and ecosystems have been damaged and destroyed. A substantial percentage of tropical rainforests have been felled for lumber or converted to cropland. Mangrove swamps -- a coastal buffer zone and the breeding ground for many species -- have been replaced by beach-front housing and shrimp farms around the world. Wetlands and marshes have been drained to expand fields and housing.*

*R: We are in the midst of a sudden and widespread extinction of species. The current rate of extinction is roughly 1,000 times what has been normal for millions of years before us. The loss of biodiversity is occurring among all types of plants and animals.*

**All: Oh God of hope and Resurrection,**

**We confess to despair**

**that creates the denial**

**of a Good Friday world.**

**We tremble on the brink**

**of the temptation**

**to simply give up.**

*R: Toxic chemicals have been spread throughout ecosystems, and are found around the planet. Some of those chemicals have been designed and created by people with the intention of being poisonous -- spread on lawns and fields, and then washed, blown and spread through food chains to far beyond their origin.*

*We have used up the topsoil -- eroded and degraded it -- at rates far exceeding the ability of natural processes to restore soil fertility. Deserts are expanding, where once was productive pasture or cropland.*

**All: Oh God of transformation, we confess to choosing Business as Usual  
because it is easier  
because it hurts too much to care  
because we don't want to give up what we have.  
because we are afraid.**

**Oh God of deep sighing, these are our prayers.**

*R: Because greenhouse gases – especially carbon dioxide – are persistent in the atmosphere, human impacts on the global climate will continue for thousands of years.*

*The atmospheric carbon dioxide which is being absorbed into the world's oceans is making sea water more acidic, with especially dramatic effects on coral and shellfish.*

*Feedback effects have set processes in motion that amplify humanity's climate disruptions. Thawing tundra releases quantities of methane that will significantly increase global warming. Melting sea ice and glaciers change the ratio of reflected/absorbed solar energy, adding to the warming of oceans and soil, which leads to even more rapid melting.*

**All: And we know it is not only from you we need to ask forgiveness, but from all your creation**  
**You polar bears**  
**Forgive us, we pray**  
**You coral reefs**  
**Forgive us, we pray**  
**You Black Rhino and Green Turtle**  
**Forgive us, we pray**  
**You Monarch butterfly, Ivory-Billed woodpecker, Gray Wolf**  
**Forgive us, we pray**  
**Oh air that we breathe, oceans that give us life, mountaintops of Appalachia,**  
**Forgive us, we pray**

*R: The damage to Earth has long-term consequences. If the causes of damage and depletion were to suddenly stop, the impacts would still ripple through natural systems far into the future. The stability and resilience of natural systems have been upset.*

**Time for silent and shared Confession of ways humans have harmed God's Creation that move you the most.**

**Words of Assurance:**

Hilegard of Bingen: (Earth Care, p. 80)

Bill Moyers: The news is not good these days. I can tell you, though, that as a journalist I know the news is never the end of the story. The news can be the truth that sets us free – not only to feel but to fight for the future we want.

Gus Speth: We are carried forward by a radical hope, that a better world is possible and that we can build it. The only option is for something to change in the sphere of the spirit.

Larry Rasmussen: Faith is the name of the strong power behind the renewal of moral-spiritual energy. World-weariness is combated by a surprising force found amidst earth and its distress. Creation carries its

own hidden powers. It supports the confidence of the gospel that a steadfast order exists that bends in the direction of life and gives it meaning.

Gospel of John: For God so loved the COSMOS that he gave his only begotten Son.

**Closing prayer: All: Remake us, oh Creator. Transform us into a new being.**

**Open us to your love which can open our eyes and our hearts.**

**Give us courage to walk in your path with all creation.**

**Forgive us and make us free, for healing and for hope. Amen**

**11:00- 11:45 Introduction to Resources:**

- Resources for worship from books and web-sites: liturgies and hymns
- Green Justice Congregation web-site, and grid

**11:45- 12:15 Lunch**

**12:15 – 12:45 Showing of excerpts of “Cosmos,” “The Wisdom to Survive.”**

**12:45 – 1:15 Conversation around NOT “Core Questions” from NOT web-site**

**1:15 -1:45 Discussion of Books and other Resources**

**Time for group to share suggestions**

**1:45 – 2:00 Closing**

- Time for suggestions from group– what would you like from us? What would help?

*Litany of Commitment* (By Jay Rochelle from Not Ordinary Times web-site)

Leader: As we seek to relax our grip so that the earth, our fragile sister, might rest from our labors, help us to see our world more vividly than we have done in the past.

**People: Grant us vision for the challenges of this age and give us hearts full of courage for the future.**

Leader: As we seek to be wise stewards of the gifts of the earth in timber and oil, coal, and gas, help us to know your world more humanely than we have in the past.

**People: Make us learn that wisdom which we see among those wise and humble people of the earth, that we might walk with care and reverence so as to caress our fair sister.**

Leader: Sharing God, draw us to contemplation and silence so that we might see, in wonder, our lives intertwined with the squirrels and the cardinal, the creatures great and small, the beauty of each season. Help us to see the birth, growth, death, and rebirth so as to give us courage in the ongoing creation of our Creator.

**People: Deepen our faith and enliven our thinking, nourish our bodies and strengthen our souls, that we may be your message in the world, your servants for the common wellness of the earth.**

**Make us weavers of a new order, crafters of a new earth.**

Leader: Grant us grace through the Christ of the Cosmos. Call us to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, in the love with earth, and with our brothers, and sisters. Give us a measure of the Spirit that these commitments we make before you might make our work holy.

Leader: Let us go forth from this sacred ark with steady hand up lifted heart, with clear eye and alert mind, with firm step, and willing hands. May we arrive at fresh springs of renewal through God's holy Word, in our communities of faith, and in deep solidarity with all creation.

**People: Amen. Let all the creation hear and bear witness. Amen**

**Closing song: "We are part of God's Creation" to tune of "Jacob's Ladder"**

**We are part of God's Creation (3x) ...Children of the Earth**

**Every creature has its purpose...**

**Wolves and whales and owls and otters...**

**All God's creatures need our caring...**

**Sacred places feed our spirits**

**We are saving God's Creation....**