



*Living by Faith, Known by Love, A Voice of Hope*



First Church in Windsor, UCC  
April 18, 10 a.m.

## **Earth Day Sunday**

### **Prelude**

### **Welcome**

### **Call to Worship**

One: After the dormancy of winter,

**Two: New growth springs to life.**

One: The birds return from their southern home.

**Two: Buds emerge on the trees as they discover again the warmth of the earth.**

One: Crocuses and other early spring flowers begin to carpet the land as it throws off its wintry coating.

**Two: The creation awakens to the possibilities of spring.**

One: Life shows itself in every corner of the earth.

**Two: God is our Creator, who continues to create in the rhythm of life we call the seasons.**

One: Come let us worship. Come let us enter into the Spirit of God's creative moments. Come let us sow the seeds of new life.

### **Opening Hymn**

*Morning Has Broken*

Traditional Scottish

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**Morning has broken like the first morning.  
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird.  
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!  
Praise for them springing  
fresh from the word!**

**Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from heaven,  
like the first dew fall on the first grass.  
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,  
sprung in completeness  
where his feet pass.**

**Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning  
born of the one light Eden saw play!  
Praise with elation, praise every morning,  
God's re-creation  
of the new day!**

## Prayer of Invocation

Gracious God, open our eyes that we may see the abundance of your creative love in all that surrounds and sustains us. Enable us to become people of hope and life, who plant the seeds of your earthly garden for the benefit of all. Help us to be gardeners and caregivers for the earth that is home for all life. Fill us with your gentle love, that we may walk tenderly on the earth, cooperating with your intention of abundant love and life. Amen.

## Prayer of our Savior

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

## Children's Moment

### Scripture

#### Genesis 1:11-12

Then God said, 'Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.' And it was so. <sup>12</sup>The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good.

#### 2 Peter 3:11-13

Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, <sup>12</sup>waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? <sup>13</sup>But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

### Sermon

“Faith in a Seed: New Heaven and a New Earth”

Pastor Nicole

### Hymn

*Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil*

Words and music by Handt Hanson

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**Lord, let my heart be good soil, open to the seed of your word.  
Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is understood.**

**If my heart is hard, break the stone away.**

**If my heart is cold, warm it with the day.**

**If my heart gets lost, lead it to your way.**

**Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.**

**Lord, let my heart be good soil, open to the seed of your word.  
Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is understood.**

**If my way is dark, help me understand.  
Should I start to faint, refresh me with your command.  
If the thorns surround, lift me to higher ground.  
Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.**

**Lord, let my heart be good soil, open to the seed of your word.  
Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is understood.**

### **Seeding Our Prayers**

Leader: Receive these seeds, signs of the power you have to join with God as stewards of the earth, as people who plant in the soil of the earth and in the soil of our words and deeds.

1. We sow this seed in God's good earth, trusting in the promise of hope.
2. We sow this seed in God's good earth, trusting in the promise of abundant life for all.
3. We sow this seed in God's good earth, trusting in the gift of life for all.
4. We sow this seed in God's good earth, trusting in the possibility of compassion for all.
5. We sow this seed in God's good earth, trusting in the assurance of faith that the dream of God is possible, for a creation that is blessed and named good.
6. We sow this seed in God's good earth, praying for all who care for the land, for all who produce the food that feeds the earth.
7. We sow this seed in God's good earth, praying for a just sharing of the abundance that is part of God's creation.
8. We sow this seed in God's good earth, praying that we would learn to walk gently on the earth and so preserve it for future generations.

*After all seeds are planted, let us say together.*

**We offer the seeds of the earth, the seeds of our lives, that they might bring blessing. We pray in the name of Christ, who sowed the seeds of transforming love. Amen.**

### **Prayers of the People**

#### **Pastoral Prayer**

#### **Prayer Response**

*In the Bulb There is a Flower*  
Words and music by Natalie Sleeth  
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**In the bulb there is a flower, in the seed an apple tree;  
in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!  
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.**

**Announcements**

**Benediction**

**Postlude**

*Sheep May Safely Graze*

By J.S Bach

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