



*We are an Open and Affirming, Creation Justice Congregation*

## Order of Service

Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 22, 2020

### We Gather in God's Presence

**Light a candle and center** yourself in the presence of God, connecting the light of the candle with the divine light within you.

**Remember the words of our welcome** – *“No matter who you are and no matter where you find yourself on life’s journey, you are welcome here.”*

For this week’s welcome I’d like to offer a slight edit to those words that we usually begin with. Today my invitation to you is to hear not just *“No matter who/where”* but instead **“Because of who...because of where...”**

Take a moment to think about the gifts of **“Who”** you are. Think about how today you can bring forth and offer to the universe those gifts which are uniquely yours – your love, light, joy, compassion, concern. Celebrate that there is no one exactly like you in all of creation. That you are an irreplaceable expression and child of God. That you give glory to God by being you.

Take a moment also to think about the gifts of **“Where”** you are. “Where” could be your cosmic address –

My living room/couch/sunroom etc,  
My postal address\_\_\_\_\_,  
State (Vermont), United States, Earth,  
The Solar System, Orion Arm, The Milky Way,  
Local Group, Virgo Cluster, Virgo Super-Cluster,  
Universe

“Where” could be your ecological address...what hill, mountain, river or valley you live with and by, what fellow creatures are your neighbors, what trees are your closest elders...

“Where” could also be your emotional-spiritual address. I invite you to participate in a **three word exercise**. Choose one (or two if you prefer) word that describes:

- 1) Something beautiful in your world/life right now\_\_\_\_\_
- 2) How you are feeling\_\_\_\_\_

- 3) Your relationship to or experience with social distancing and the coronavirus pandemic generally is \_\_\_\_\_.

*We will begin our 11am Zoom Fellowship Hour with a chance to share our three words.*

**CREATION CARE MOMENT** — This week's Creation Care Moment comes from Rie Richard:

“During this time when many of us are housebound or at least not often going out, we have an opportunity to plan for summer. We can look online (<https://www.americanmeadows.com/wildflower-seeds>) at a catalog from the company American Meadows and order their suggestions for plants and seeds which encourage pollinators. We can plant the seeds along the sides of our properties, or in regular garden beds or in window boxes or in pots. I ordered their northeast Wildflower Seed Mix, a quarter of a pound for \$9.95. They would have mailed it to me but they have a call center at 2438 Route 7, Shelburne, VT and I drove there. Their phone is 877-309-7333”



**CALL TO AWARENESS AND ATTENTION**

**One Day**, by Laura Foley

I didn't read the news.  
I raked a rainbow  
of pungent autumn leaves,  
played abroad with happy dogs,  
held my granddaughter in my arms,

and sat beneath an amiable maple,  
attentive to current events.

HYMN

Be Thou My Vision

*Here's a lovely instrumental (Violin & Harp) version of the tune...*

1. Be thou my vi - sion, O God of my heart; naught be all else to me,  
2. Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word; I ev - er with thee and  
3. Rich - es I heed not nor vain em - pty praise; thou my in - her - i - tance,  
4. Great God of heav - en, my vic - to - ry won, may I reach heav - en's joys,  
save that thou art. Thou my best thought, by day or by  
thou with me, Lord; Thou and thou on - ly, first in my  
now and al - ways; Thou my soul's shel - ter, thou my high  
O bright heaven's sun! Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be -  
night, wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.  
heart, great God of Hea - ven, my treas - ure thou art.  
Tow - er: Raise thou me heav - en - ward, O Power of my power.  
fall, still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God, we open our hearts to you this day, and offer the truth of our lives:  
The fear that stifles us,  
The prejudice that blinds us,  
The ignorance that hobbles us,  
The doubt that plagues us.  
Help us, we pray, that we will  
Find courage in unlikely place,  
See the world with new and gracious eyes,

**Move to those places where love is needed,  
Have faith that you are with us.  
This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

#### SILENT REFLECTION

#### WORDS OF ASSURANCE

**“Sorrow Is Not My Name,” by Ross Gay**

—*after Gwendolyn Brooks*

No matter the pull toward brink. No  
matter the florid, deep sleep awaits.  
There is a time for everything. Look,  
just this morning a vulture  
nodded his red, grizzled head at me,  
and I looked at him, admiring  
the sickle of his beak.  
Then the wind kicked up, and,  
after arranging that good suit of feathers  
he up and took off.  
Just like that. And to boot,  
there are, on this planet alone, something like two  
million naturally occurring sweet things,  
some with names so generous as to kick  
the steel from my knees: agave, persimmon,  
stick ball, the purple okra I bought for two bucks  
at the market. Think of that. The long night,  
the skeleton in the mirror, the man behind me  
on the bus taking notes, yeah, yeah.  
But look; my niece is running through a field  
calling my name. My neighbor sings like an angel  
and at the end of my block is a basketball court.  
I remember. My color's green. I'm spring.

#### We Listen for God's Word

**SCRIPTURE**     [Watch Deacon Liana read today's scripture](#), or read it on your own here:  
[John 6: 1-24](#)

**SERMON(S)** - 1. Visit the church website to [read a sermon](#) on the first part of today's scripture (from Thanksgiving Sunday, 2019). 2. [Watch this week's sermon, which focuses on the second part of the scripture here.](#)

## We Respond to God's Word

### OFFERING OF GIFTS

- *We will be checking the church mailbox each week, so please continue to donate to our life and mission together through the mail.*
- *Today and throughout this next week we'll be collecting our church's contribution to the wider church One Great Hour of Sharing offering. [Learn more about OGHS here](#). Checks can be made out to the Weybridge Church with OGHS in the memo line.*

**DOXOLOGY** We sing together: *"Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God all creatures here below; Praise God above ye heavenly host; Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost."*

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

## Intercessory Prayer in the midst of the spread of COVID-19

O God our Healer, show your compassion for the whole human family that is in turmoil and burdened with illness and with fear. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Come to our aid as the coronavirus spreads globally, heal those who are sick, support and protect their families and friends from being infected. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Grant us your spirit of love and self-discipline so that we may come together, working to control and eliminate the coronavirus. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Make us vigilant, attentive, and proactive in the eradication of all diseases, malaria, dengue, HIV & AIDS, and others [may be named out- loud or in silence]... that create suffering and often result in death for many people. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Heal our self-centeredness and indifference that makes us worry only when the virus threatens us, open ways beyond timidity and fear that too easily ignore our neighbor. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Strengthen and encourage those in public health services and in the medical profession: care-givers, nurses, attendants, doctors, all who commit themselves to caring for the sick and their families. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Inspire, give insight and hope to all researchers focused on developing a vaccine. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Sustain all workers and business owners who suffer loss of livelihood due to shut-downs, quarantines, closed borders, and other restrictions... protect and guard all those who must travel. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Guide the leaders of the nations that they speak the truth and act with justice so that all your family may know healing. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Heal our world, heal our bodies, strengthen our hearts and our minds, and in the midst of turmoil, give us hope and peace. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Hold in your gentle embrace all who have died and who will die this day. Comfort their loved ones in their despair. Hear our cry, O God,

**Listen to our prayer.**

Remember all your family, the entire human race, and all your creation, in your love.

**Amen!**

We Depart to Serve God in the World

**BENEDICTION**

*“May God bless you and keep you. May God’s face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May God look upon you with kindness and grant you peace.”*

*All are invited to an online Zoom Fellowship Hour at 11am.*