

Greening the Cross

A joint worship service of the congregations of Capitol Drive, Divine Word, Good Shepherd and Pentecost Lutheran Churches. Sunday, April 26, 1998, Capitol Drive Lutheran Church, 5229 W. Capitol Drive, Milwaukee, WI 53216

GATHERING

Hymn Sing (beginning 15 minutes before service time)

"Blessed Assurance," With One Voice (WOV) 699

"I, The Lord of Sea and Sky," WOVS 752

"Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound," Lutheran Book of Worship (LBW) 448

"How Great thou Art," LBW 532

Neighborly Introductions

Greeting/Invocation

Participatory Rain (Choir members and children lead the congregation)

Entrance Procession and Hymn ("Lift High the Cross," LBW 377)

Psalm 147 (congregation alternates reading verses)

Leader: Hallelujah! How good it is to sing praises to our God! How pleasant it is to honor him with praise!

All: Great is our LORD and mighty in power.

Leader: The Lord rebuilds Jerusalem; he gathers the exiles of Israel. He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. He counts the number of the stars and calls them all by their names.

All: Great is our LORD and mighty in power.

Leader: Great is our LORD and mighty in power; there is no limit to his wisdom. The LORD lifts up the lowly, but casts the wicked to the ground. Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; make music to our God upon the harp.

All: Great is our LORD and mighty in power.

Leader: He covers the heavens with clouds and prepares rain for the earth; he makes grass to grow upon the mountains and green plants to serve mankind. He provides food for flocks and herds and for the young ravens when they cry.

All: Great is our Lord and mighty in power.

Leader: He is not impressed by the might of a horse; he has no pleasure in the strength of a man; but the LORD has pleasure in those who fear him, in those who await his gracious favor.

All: Great is our LORD and mighty in power.

Leader: Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion; for he has strengthened the bars of your gates; he has blessed your children within you. He has established peace on your

borders; he satisfies you with the finest wheat.

All: Great is our LORD and mighty in power.

Leader: He sends out his command to the earth, and his word runs very swiftly. He gives snow like wool; he scatters hoarfrost like ashes. He scatters his hail like bread crumbs. Who can stand against his cold? He sends forth his word and melts them; he blows with his wind, and the waters flow.

All: Great is our LORD and mighty in power.

Leader: He declares his word to Jacob, his statutes and his judgments to Israel. He has not done so to any other nation; to them he has not revealed his judgments. Hallelujah!

All: Great is our LORD and mighty in power.

Hymn of Praise: "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty," LBW 543

Salutation

Prayer of the Day

WORD

First Lesson: Jeremiah 31:21-25

Choir: "Acclamation" (Robert Ray, Gospel Mass, Jenson)

Second Lesson: Revelation 21:21-22:5

Gospel Acclamation: Call/Response, Glory to God

Gospel: John 12:23-36

Gospel Response: Call/Response, Glory to God

Sermon (includes guidance for participation in Greening ceremony)

Greening: The cross--a large, framed piece of woodwork--lies flat on the chancel floor. To green it, worshipers are invited to come forward any time during this section of the service and place greens, boughs or flowers into the frame. The action should be respectful, reverential and without haste. Worship continues during this time.

Hymn: "There in God's Garden," WOV 668

Silence

Prayers

Silence

Dialogue (adapted from "Care of the Earth" liturgy by the Rev. Jennifer Edinger)

Leader: People of faith, we are gently shaped in the womb of God's creative power. The seed of Christ's new life is sown, and we are made a new creation. As God's new creation, we are nursed and sustained by the Holy Spirit. Together with rattling leaves, blooming flowers, splashing sprinklers and roaring mowers, we add our shouts of praise to God, who give life in creation, who gives new life in Jesus Christ, and who nourishes that life by the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Leader: We believe God creates.

Congregation: God spoke. Light and darkness; heaven and earth; land, sea and plants; sun, moon and stars; fish and birds and animals came to be. God spoke and made us. God gave us responsibility to care for creation. God spoke and all life God created is good.

Leader: We believe God re-creates.

Congregation: God spoke in the living word, Jesus Christ. At the cross, Christ spent himself to reclaim us from our human brokenness, to shower renewing forgiveness into our lives, and to place us before new horizons of life, lived in harmony with God and people and creation.

Leader: We believe God caresses.

Congregation: The Holy Spirit delivers us into a family of faith. The Spirit cultivates in our lives the fruit of holy living: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. The Spirit harvests us into the glory of resurrection.

Choir: "The Tree of Life" (unpublished ms., Alice Parker)

Silence

Prayers

Silence

Hymn: "Touch the Earth Lightly" (the cross is raised during this hymn)

Closing Prayer (Prayer of St. Basil--spoken by the congregation):

O God, enlarge in us the sense of communion with all living things; our brothers and sisters the plants and animals. You have given them the earth as their home in common with us. We remember with shame how we have exercised our high dominion with ruthless cruelty. The voice of the earth, meant to rise to you in song, has been a groan of pain. Make us mindful that all you creatures live not just for us but for themselves and for you, that they may love the sweetness of life. Amen.

Greeting of Peace

MEAL

Offering

Worshippers are encouraged to give their regular offering in their home church's envelopes. Special donations will be earmarked for Martin Luther King Scholarship Fund.

Choir: "Life Tree" (David Cherwien, Concordia)

Offertory ("Let the Vineyards," LBW p. 66)

Offertory Prayer (from "Care of the Earth" liturgy by the Rev. Jennifer Edinger)

Leader: Loving God, we are surrounded by the beauty of creation. We are supported by the abundance of creation. We gratefully receive your gifts of love and life--gifts which fill our lives with joy and satisfaction.

Congregation: In thankful response to your generosity, we place before you pieces of ourselves and of your creation--food from the earth we till, energy from the moments of our life, money from the skills you give, bread from the seeds that were sown and wine from the grapes that grow, and our abundance to share with others. Receive them as signs of our love and gratitude.

Eucharistic Prayer (from "Care of the Earth" liturgy by the Rev. Jennifer Edinger)

Leader: We give you thanks for your gifts that tumble into, and saturate, our lives: for family and friends and strangers who enrich us; for the sunrise that energizes the day, and darkness that give quiet and rest at day's end; for rains that quench the thirsts of life and sun that warms the soil and germinates the seed; for winter snow that blankets the sleeping world.

Congregation: All of creation unveils your glory.

Leader: As your fingerprint is upon all creation, your love is embossed on the human family. You called Abraham and Sarah to parent the nation of your holy people so all people could be drawn into your loving embrace. You sent the prophets to speak your comforting and cleansing

word. You sent your son, Jesus the Christ, to proclaim your kingdom. Jesus carried our sins to the cross in order that we might be forgiven, and died our death so we might live fully now and in God's future.

Congregation: In the life, ministry and death of Jesus, we are invited to be apart of your new creation.

Leader: In the night in which he was betrayed our Lord Jesus took bread and gave thanks; broke it and gave it to those closest to him, saying: Take and eat; this is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks and gave it to all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me. In this bread and cup, the seed of your kingdom is planted in us, and we are made new. The bread and wine we share draws us into the Body of Christ.

The Lord's Prayer

Distribution of Communion

Music at Distribution:

"Come, Let Us Eat," LBW 214

"This Is My Father's World," LBW 554

"Sent Forth by God's Blessing," LBW 221

Post-Communion Prayer

SENDING

Closing Hymn, "Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee," LBW 551

Benediction

Dismissal