

April 23, 2023
3rd Sunday of Easter

Service of Worship
SHINE Mission Sunday/Earth Sunday

First Presbyterian Church
Cedar Falls

Prelude

Welcome

Choir Anthem

“The Lord’s My Shepherd, I’ll Not Want”

Arr. Hal Hopson

Call to Worship*

One: The good news resounds through all creation:

ALL: Christ is alive! Alleluia!

One: God’s steadfast love endures forever!

ALL: Love has won! Alleluia!

One: As the earth slowly awakens to spring,

ALL: God reveals something new in us.

Gathering Hymn #250

“In the Bulb There is a Flower”

all verses

Prayer for Illumination*

Scripture Reading

Time for Wonder

SHINE Mission - Noisy offering to benefit Heifer International

Sermon

Hymn #346

“For the Healing of the Nations”

all verses

A Litany of Hope for All Creation*

We have gathered this day, O God, as your people, as members of your Church.

We join together to worship and praise you, our Creator, and we join in lifting our prayers for the Earth.

With the prophets and the psalmists,
we have the courage to speak to you of our despair and our fear.

**Behold, O Lord, for we are in distress,
our souls are in tumult, our hearts are wrung within us.** (Lamentations 1:20)

We raise to you, O God, our awareness of the trauma of our world:

the suffering and death inflicted by toxins and pollution,
the destruction of places where we once found beauty and serenity,
and the ongoing devastation of ecosystems.

Give ear to our words, O Lord; give heed to our groaning. (Psalm 5:1)

We lift our anguish at the demise of species and the loss of diversity, the pollution of air and water and soil,
the transformation even of oceans and atmosphere. We grieve and fear at the Earth’s distress.

Give ear to our words, O Lord; give heed to our groaning. (Psalm 5:1)

Because we trust in you, O God, we are not defeated! We live in faith, and with vision that goes beyond the
distress of this day.

**We trust you, O Lord. Our times are in your hand;
Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the Lord!** (Psalm 31:14-15, 25)

God of the exodus, God who makes all things new, we lift our hope for transformation and change. We hope for new ways of living that flow gently within your creation; we hope for healing of the tattered web of life.

We will hope continually, and will praise you more and more. (Psalm 71:14)

We hope for vision and courage from our political leaders; we hope for restless insistence for change from our people; we hope for cooperation for healing among the nations of the earth.

We will hope continually, and will praise you more and more. (Psalm 71:14)

We hope for change within our own lives and our society, that we might free ourselves from a mindless and destructive questing after things, that we might find joy and fulfillment in simple pleasures.

We will hope continually, and will praise you more and more. (Psalm 71:14)

We hope for new technologies that will lessen our impact on the world; we hope for change in economic systems so that the destruction of nature is not profitable, so that the exploitation of people is not rewarded.

We will hope continually, and will praise you more and more. (Psalm 71:14)

We hope for growing leadership from your church, calling us to faithful stewardship of creation, calling us to seek justice for all people around this globe, and proclaiming values that preserve and enhance all life.

We will hope continually, and will praise you more and more. (Psalm 71:14)

We are your people, O Christ, a resurrection people! In the sure and certain hope of your saving love and grace, we turn away from the exploitation of your creation, and we align ourselves your purposes.

We are your people, O Christ, a resurrection people! In your name, we seek reconciliation and healing.

We are your people, O Christ, a resurrection people! In your name we seek shalom: peace, justice and harmony for all of creation.

We are your people, O Christ, a resurrection people!

We find hope in the midst of despair, courage in the midst of struggle.

God of history, you call us to face the realities of the world, to acknowledge the powers and principalities aligned against us, to face honestly the struggles that lie before us.

We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed. So we do not lose heart. (2 Corinthians 4:8, 16)

We are people of faith, and in we are strengthened by being part of the community of faith.

May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may abound in hope. Amen! (Romans 15:13, alt.)

Response to Hope #582

“Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me”

all verses

Offering Invitation & Dedication

Gifts may be given online at firstprescf.org

Doxology (tune #609)

For death-defying hope, we praise;—for love that conquers all, we raise—alleluias! Alleluia!
For justice here on earth we sing—and righteousness as if a stream.—Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

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Prayer of Love and Healing for Earth & Responsive Lord's Prayer

Specific prayer concerns are listed in the weekly newsletter

One: Our Creator in heaven	ALL: you are also at home in the air, soil, forests, and oceans.
One: We strive to honor your name	ALL: by the care we take of your creation.
One: Your kin-dom come	ALL: where all are treated as the good you made.
One: Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven	ALL: your will for peace and healing.
One: Give us today our daily bread	ALL: so that all may live life in fullness.
One: Forgive us our sins	ALL: our greed, our exploitation, our lack of concern for other species, and for future generations.
One: As we forgive those who sin against us	ALL: by working toward justice through reconciliation.
One: save us from the time of trial	ALL: that comes from defining dominion as a right to exploit
One: and deliver us from evil	ALL: the evil of destroying your gift of creation
One: for yours is the kin-dom	ALL: the kin-dom of mutual relationship
One: the power and the glory	ALL: in the cross and resurrection
One: for ever and ever	ALL: you are the beginning and you are the end. Amen.

Our Life Together

Sending Hymn #713

"Touch the Earth Lightly"
Using tune 664, "Morning Has Broken"

all verses

Blessing and Charge

Postlude

Go in peace and boldness to love and serve the Risen Christ!