



First Parish of Sudbury

*Ignite your spirit
Nurture your values
Join our community*

A Welcoming Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Reflections on Nature



February 7, 2021

GATHERING TONE

PRELUDE

Song of the Earth Spirit

First Parish Choir

Stephen C. Jett, words from Navajo Wildlands

David L. Brunner, music

WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Michael Tyo

OPENING WORDS

Leslie Bryant

CHALICE LIGHTING

Leslie Bryant

HYMN #163

For the Earth Forever Turning

For the earth forever turning; for the skies, for ev'ry sea;
for our lives, for all we cherish, sing we our joyful song of peace.

For the mountains, hills, and pastures in their silent majesty;
for the stars, for all the heavens, sing we our joyful song of peace.

For the sun, for rain and thunder, for the seasons' harmony,
for our lives, for all creation, sing we our joyful praise to Thee.

For the world we raise our voices, for the home that gives us birth;
in our joy we sing returning home to our bluegreen hills of earth.

REFLECTIONS ON NATURE

Leslie Bryant

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

The Gospel Isn't Written in the Bible Alone

Elizabeth Alexander words & music

Performed by Terry Lockhart

READING

Excerpt from *Natural History of Massachusetts*
by Henry David Thoreau

Maria von Brincken

READING

The Peace of Wild Things
by Wendell Berry

Pamela Strauss

READING	Excerpt from <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i> by Robin Wall Kimmerer	Michael Tyo
REFLECTIONS ON NATURE		Sheila Davison
OFFERING	<i>For the Beauty of the Earth</i> Music adapted by Jim Scott Lyric adapted by Folliott Sandford Pierpoint First Parish Choir, 2020	First Parish Choir
CHALICE EXTINGUISHING	We extinguish this flame, but not the light of truth, the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment. These we carry in our hearts until we are together again.	Leslie Bryant
CLOSING WORDS		Leslie Bryant
POSTLUDE	<i>Mornings</i> From Acquaintance With Nature Texts taken from Thoreau's Walden and the Journals Gwyneth Walker, music	First Parish Choir

Today's service can be accessed via [this link](#). If you are prompted for a password, enter 12345.

Milestones, announcements, and Q&A will be offered during our online social hour. Please remain in the Zoom meeting after the postlude ends to join us.

Thank you to those assisting today!

Music: Rev. Debra Morris-Bennett and Michael Tyo

Remote Offering

We offer two options for giving remotely.

Online: [Click here](#) to be taken to our online payments portal. If this is your first time using the portal, you will need to create an account using the link in the top-right corner of your screen. Then, select the fund you would like to donate to, whether the gift is one-time or recurring, and put in the amount you would like to give.

By text message: Simply text 833-448-6403 with the amount you would like to give in the body of your text (over \$3). The first time you give this way, you will be directed to fill in your personal and credit card info. Submit, and receive a receipt by email and text!

We thank you for your generosity!

As FPS is charged 2.75% of each credit card transaction, we ask you to consider adding this percentage to your total gift.

Notes on Today's Music

Prelude

Song of the Earth Spirit

David L. Brunner, music

Stephen C. Jett, words from Navajo Wildlands

It is lovely indeed, it is lovely indeed.

I am the spirit within the earth....

The feet of the earth are my feet...

The legs of the earth are my legs...

The bodily strength of the earth is my bodily strength...

It is lovely indeed, it is lovely indeed.

The thoughts of the earth are my thoughts...

The voice of the earth is my voice...

The feather of the earth is my feather...

It is lovely indeed, it is lovely indeed.

All that belongs to the earth belongs to me...

All that surrounds the earth, surrounds me...

It is lovely indeed, it is lovely indeed.

I am the sacred words of the earth...

It is lovely indeed.

I am the spirit within the earth...

It is lovely indeed.

The feet of the earth are my feet...

The legs of the earth are my legs...

The thoughts of the earth are my thoughts...

The voice of the earth is my voice...

I am the sacred words of the earth...

It is lovely indeed.

Musical Interlude

The Gospel Isn't Written in the Bible Alone

Elizabeth Alexander, words & music

Terry Lockhart, soloist

"God writes the gospel not in the Bible alone, but on trees, and flowers, and clouds, and stars." -
Anonymous, often erroneously attributed to Martin Luther

The Gospel is written on the trees and flowers, it's written on the wind and the rain,
Recorded on the rock and sediment and sand.

It's written on the glory of the far-off sun, and also on the very near,
Inscribed upon the palm of every open hand.

You can hear it in the thunder, you can read it in the stars,
You can find it under every leaf and stone.

On a page wide as a prairie there's a message large as life:
The Gospel isn't written in the Bible alone.

The Gospel is painted onto fins and scales, it's ruffled into feathers and fur,
It's spun into the seashell's deep and sacred scroll.

Behold it in the voices of the birds at dawn, composers of the Song of Songs,
Discern it in the Acts of every living soul.

Every pebble holds a Proverb, every spider spins a Psalm,
Every seed's a Resurrection of its own.

On a page wide as a prairie there's a message large as life:
The Gospel isn't written in the Bible alone.

Imagine now, if you were God
Setting forth a Gospel for all you're worth,
Why would you settle for a single book
When you could write the Gospel on the whole wide Earth?

The Gospel is moving over darkened seas, it's working in the change and the flow,
It's written in a tongue we long to understand.

We marvel at the beauty of the poetry encoded in the chromosome,
And braided through the length of every twisted strand.

It is molded into muscle, it is whispered into breath,
It is carved into the curve of every bone.

On a page wide as a prairie there's a message large as life:
The Gospel may be written in the Bible —
But it surely isn't written in the Bible alone.

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Postlude

Mornings

From Acquaintance With Nature

Texts taken from Thoreau's Walden and the Journals

Gwyneth Walker, music

Morning.

There are from time to time mornings, both in summer and in winter,

Mornings, when especially the world seems anew.

The world has been recreated in the night, Mornings of creation, I call them.

It is the poet's hour. Mornings when we are newborn, we who have the seeds
of life in us.

Mornings!

ONE LICENSE #A-736559

Welcome

First Parish of Sudbury Unitarian Universalist is a community of seekers that recognizes the dignity and worth of every human being, affirms each person's search for truth and meaning, asserts our commitment to freedom, and espouses the democratic process. We embrace diversity and include all who share the principles and goals of our community. We are a Welcoming Congregation; we have made the commitment to be intentional about welcoming the presence and participation of gay, lesbian, transgender, and bisexual persons in all aspects of our congregational life. Together we celebrate the interdependent web of existence of which we are all apart.

If you are new to the area or to First Parish, we invite you to sign our guest book. If you have questions, would like to enroll your child in our religious education program, or would like to speak to our minister, please ask an usher for assistance.

Every program at First Parish is funded by voluntary contributions. Members and friends make pledges during our annual canvass. To find out how to make a pledge at another time, please speak to the Assistant Treasurer or to a greeter.

Board of Trustees

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Senior Minister: Rev. Dr. Marjorie Matty (revmjmatty@gmail.com)

Minister of Music: Rev. Debra Morris-Bennett (musicdir@fpsudbury.org)

Parish Administrator: Thomas Stirlen (office@fpsudbury.org)

For up-to-date information, please refer to our website, fpsudbury.org, and our online calendar, available at fpsudbury.org/calendar.