

St. John's Reformed Church
Season of Creation | 3rd Sunday: Wilderness Sunday
September 20, 2026

*(Please join responsively by speaking aloud the **bold** sections)*

Pre-Prelude

Announcements & Hospitality

Our Approach to God

Prelude

Votum: The Spirit is a deep impulse breathing life into creation, suffering with creation and renewing all creation.

*Call to Worship:

We invite the wilderness to worship with us:
thickets and rugged terrain, deep gorges and mountain ranges.
We invite the hot sands to celebrate life:
to lift their voices to our God at the sound of rain on the dust.

We invite the flora to sing in the sun:

cactus and tumbleweed, brush and bristle.

We join with the fauna of the wilderness in praising God:

lizards and black bears, rattlesnakes and hovering hawks.

We invite the spirits of the wilderness to join us in praise:

songs of ancient custodians deep in the rock, spirits of life deep in the sand and the hills. We celebrate the song of the wilderness!

*Hymn: **#10 We Sing the Mighty Power of God v.1-3**

Salutation & Prayer of Invocation

Call and Prayer of Confession

We remember the wilderness God created, the wild places on Earth, the worlds of wonder and mystery, the spirit of the wilderness. We remember the wild worlds and the hiding places of our childhood, places where we played, where we felt the mystery of caves, fantasy, and strange creatures.

Jesus Christ, from the wilderness hear our cry: We regret that we have become alienated from Earth, and have treated this garden as a beast to be tamed, as a domain to be dominated, and as a place to be ruled for our gain. We remember and confess how we have violated and polluted the wild places of our garden planet. We have polluted deserts with radioactive waste. We have torn holes in

the ozone layer. We have desecrated sacred sites in the mountains. We have destroyed the homes of wild creatures. We are sorry.

Moment of Silence

Kyrie Eleison ***“Lord have mercy upon us: Christ have mercy upon us; Lord have mercy upon us”***

Assurance of Pardon

Summary of the Law: 1st Chronicles 16:29b, 31-33: “Worship the Lord in holy splendor: tremble before him, all the earth...let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice, and let them say among the nations, “The Lord is king.” Let the sea roar and all that fills it; let the field exalt and everything in it. Then shall the trees of the forest sing for joy before the Lord.”

May the Spirit guide us to be obedient to this Word. Amen.

*Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, Amen, Amen.

Musical Meditation

The Word of God In Proclamation

Prayer for Illumination

Lesson from Old Testament: Joel 1:8-10, 17-20

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Lesson from the New Testament: Romans 8:18-27

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*Hymn: **#655 Out of the Depths I Cry to You on High v.1-3**

*Lesson from the Gospel: Mark 1:9-13

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Prayer for Blessing

Our Response to God's Grace

*Affirmation of Faith:

God creates all things,
renews all things and celebrates all things.

This we believe.

Earth is a sanctuary,
a sacred planet filled with God's presence,
a home for us to share with all creatures.

This we believe.

God became incarnate,
a part of Earth, like Adam, a human being called Jesus Christ,

who lived and breathed and spoke among us,
suffered and died on a cross
for all human beings and for all creation.

This we believe.

The risen Jesus is the Christ
at the center of creation
reconciling all things to God,
renewing all creation and filling the cosmos.

This we believe.

The Spirit renews life in creation,
groans in empathy with a suffering creation,
and waits with us for the rebirth of all creation.

**This we believe. We believe that with Christ we will rise
and with Christ we will celebrate a new creation.**

*The Peace The peace of Christ be with you. **And also, with you.**

The Offering

*Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise Him all creatures here below.

Praise Him above ye Heavenly host

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen

*Prayer of dedication

**God, our Creator, through your love you have given us these gifts to
share. Accept our offerings as an expression of our thanksgiving and as a
sign of our concern for those in need, including all our fellow creatures
on planet Earth.**

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

Prayer Response *Threefold Amen Amen, Amen, Amen.*

*Hymn: #796 *Oh, the Deep Deep Love of Jesus v.1-3*

*Benediction

*Congregational Amen **"Go Now in Peace"**

*Postlude *Indicates congregation to stand if able.

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Upper Red Hook, New York

