



ORDER OF WORSHIP

February 28, 2021 @ 10am
2nd Sunday in Lent

Our Lenten theme this year is “Grounded,” as we seek to ground ourselves once more in some key elements of our faith: church; creation; sin & forgiveness; incarnation; prayer; justice, peace, salvation, & the Kingdom of God; death, resurrection, & hope; and the Holy Spirit.

The Congregational Church of Needham (MA), United Church of Christ
www.NeedhamUCC.org

PRELUDE

Cantabile

by W. Guilmant; Valerie Becker, *organ*

WELCOME & CALL TO WORSHIP

One: In the beginning, the Spirit of God moved over the face of the deep, and God spoke:

Many: “Let all creation come to be, and be free!” And so it was. And God declared it Good.

One: God spoke and divided light and darkness, one creation, and called the light “Day” and the darkness “Night.”

Many: God spoke and divided the land and the waters, one creation, pulling down Cape Cod and raising up Mount Greylock; and God declared it Good.

One: God spoke and called forth plants and animals, one creation, cranberries and milk cows, Atlantic cod and black-capped chickadees, wild turkeys and right whales,

Many: groundhogs and great white sharks and swallowtail butterflies, and God declared them Good.

One: God spoke once more and called forth human beings, one creation, one family,

Many: of every race, gender, sexual orientation, age, and ability, made in God’s image, called to tend God’s garden.

One: God saw that all creation, altogether, was Very Good, and said so. Then on the seventh day, God rested.

Many: So on this Sabbath day, we rest in our connection with the rest of creation.

One: On this first day of a new week and a renewed creation, we commit to living that connection more fully, more gracefully, more justly.

All: Let us worship God together in spirit and in truth, in word and in deed.

HYMN

“For the Beauty of the Earth” (see below)

SCRIPTURE

from the Acts of the Apostles, Acts 17:22-28

TIME ESPECIALLY WITH CHILDREN

The Rev. Maddie Foster

SERMON

“Grounded: Creation: A Family History”

The Rev. John MacIver Gage

HYMN

“God Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens” (see below)

SHARING OUR PRAYERS (“Oh God, hear our prayer”)

THE LORD’S PRAYER (using these or whichever words are closest to your own heart)

Our Father in heaven, holy is your name. Your reign come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING

Allemande from Cello Suite No.1
Emily Verschoor-Kirss, *saxophone*

by J.S. Bach

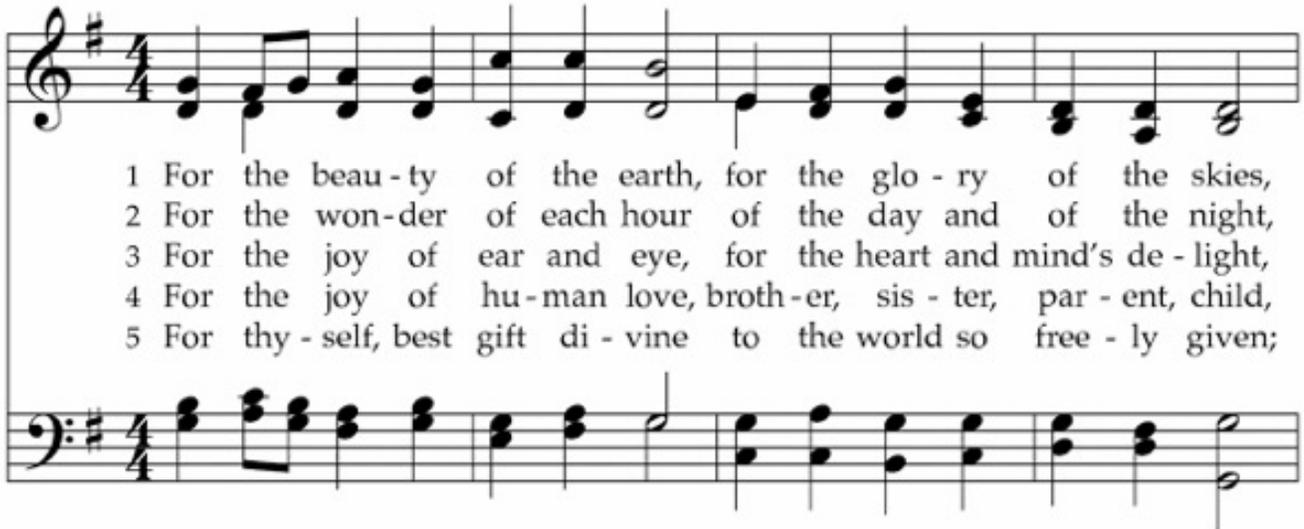
OFFERING OUR THANKS & OURSELVES

SINGING OUR PRAISE

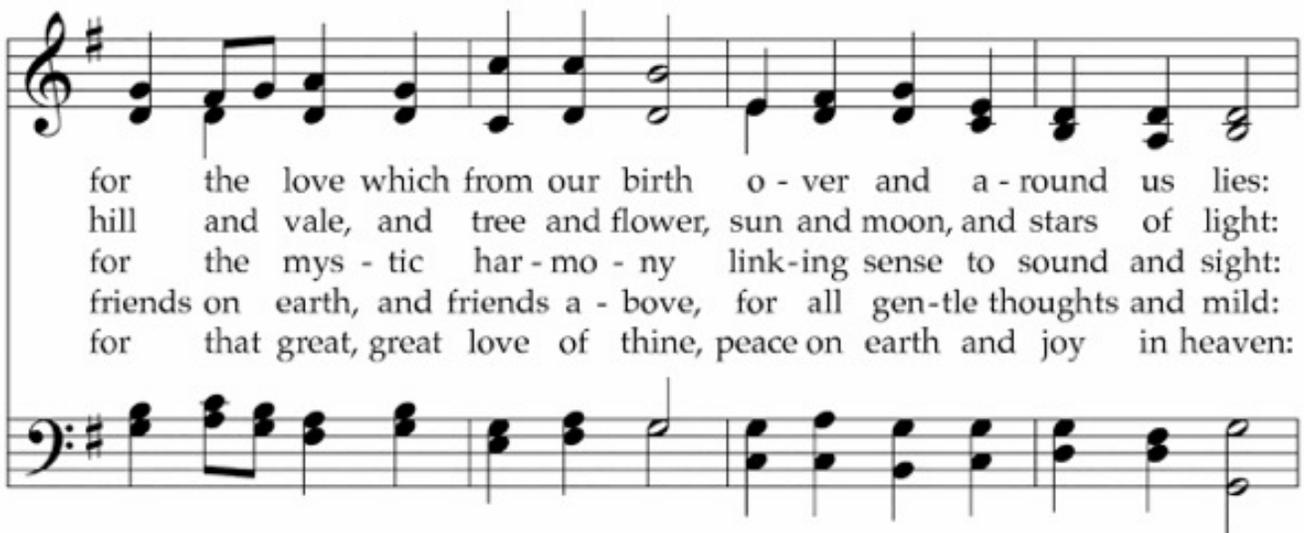
Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below.
Praise God above, you heavenly hosts; Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

BLESSING & COMMISSION

For the Beauty of the Earth

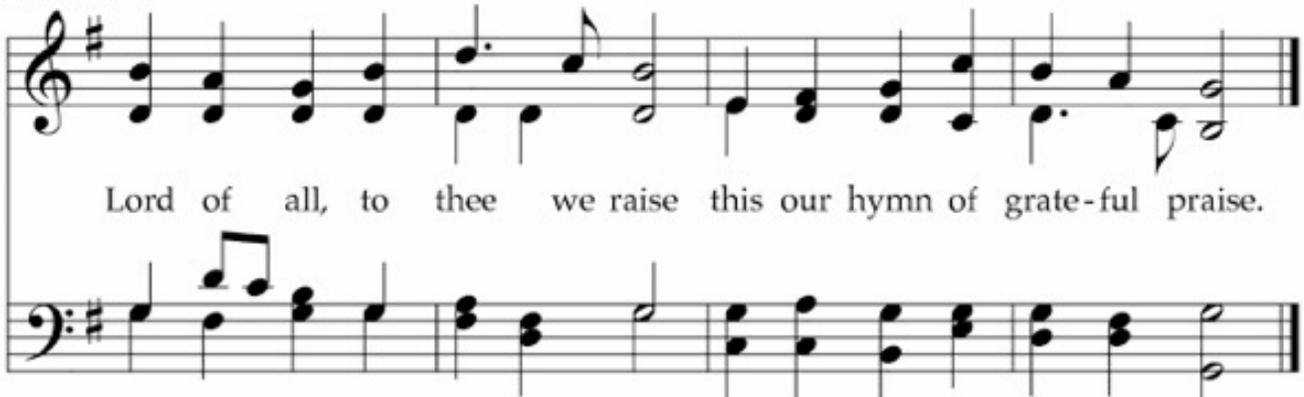


1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the glo - ry of the skies,
2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,
3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de - light,
4 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,
5 For thy - self, best gift di - vine to the world so free - ly given;



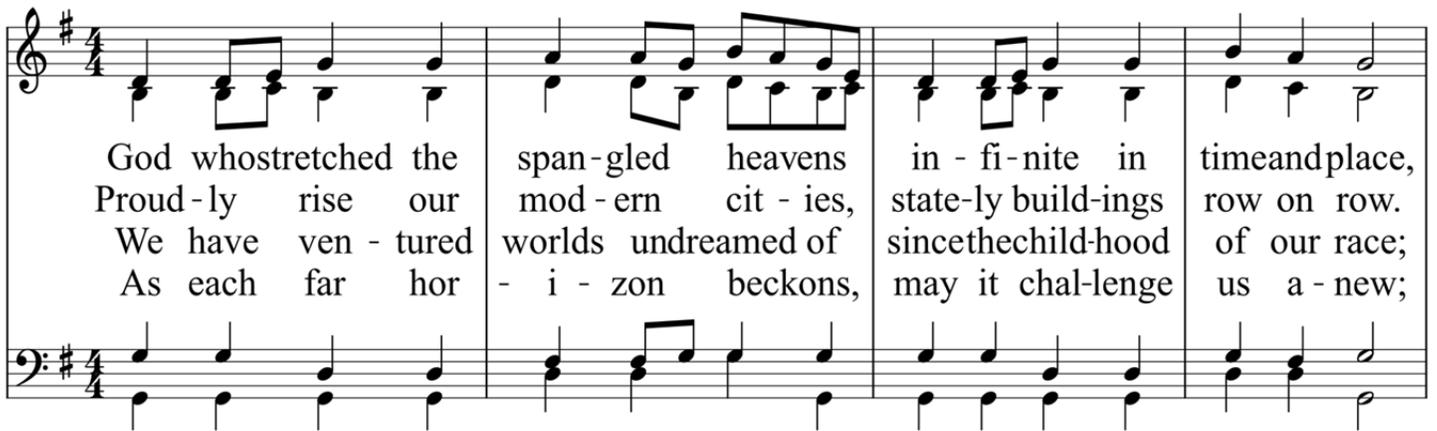
for the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies:
hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light:
for the mys - tic har - mo - ny link - ing sense to sound and sight:
friends on earth, and friends a - bove, for all gen - tle thoughts and mild:
for that great, great love of thine, peace on earth and joy in heaven:

Refrain



Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grate - ful praise.

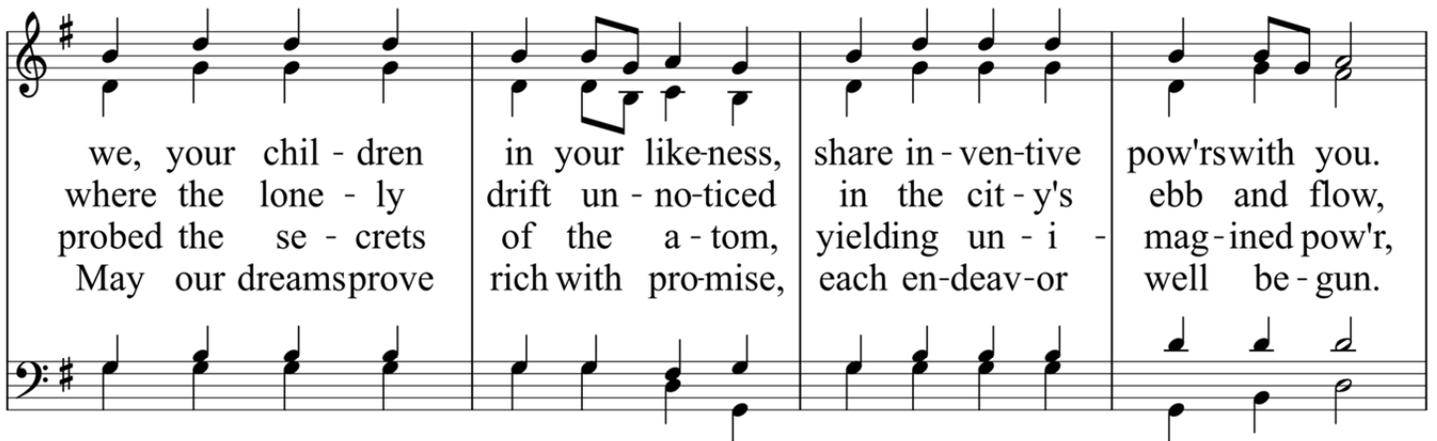
God Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens



God who stretched the span-gled heavens in - fi - nite in time and place,
Proud - ly rise our mod - ern cit - ies, state - ly build - ings row on row.
We have ven - tured worlds undreamed of since the child - hood of our race;
As each far hor - i - zon beckons, may it chal - lenge us a - new;



flung the suns in burn - ing ra - dience through the si - lent fields of space,
Yet their win - dows, blank, un - feel - ing, stare on can - yoned streets be - low,
known the ec - sta - sy of wing - ing through un - trav - eled realms of space;
child - dren of cre - a - tive pur - pose, ser - ving oth - ers, hon - 'ring you.



we, your chil - dren in your like - ness, share in - ven - tive pow'r with you.
where the lone - ly drift un - no - ticed in the cit - y's ebb and flow,
probed the se - crets of the a - tom, yielding un - i - mag - ined pow'r,
May our dreams prove rich with prom - ise, each en - deav - or well be - gun.



Great Cre - a - tor, still cre - a - ting, show us what we yet may do.
lost to pur - pose and to mean - ing, scarce - ly car - ing where they go.
fac - ing us with life's de - struc - tion or our most tri - um - phant hour.
Great Cre - a - tor, give us guid - ance till our goals and yours are one.

Events, Fellowship and Mission



THIS SUNDAY After-Worship Conversations Sundays 2/28, 3/14, & 3/28 @ 11:15am - LIVE! via Zoom

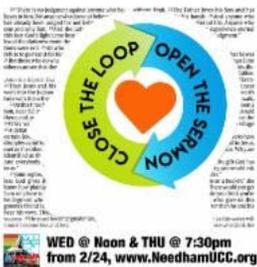
It takes a whole church to be a whole church. Our church needs your input and participation in order to be as healthy and sustainable a community as we can be. We've already seen marvelous growth in our stewardship pledge campaign to fund the church budget in 2021, but there's more we need to do. The Boards of Directors and Deacons have identified three areas, in particular, where we need your help in new ways. Please plan to be a part of one or all of these important conversations:

2/28: Growing Membership

3/14: Fundraising for the Operating Budget

3/28: Growing Rental Income

There's more about each of these topics in the Lenten Focus newsletter, available for download at <https://www.needhamucc.org/uploads/1/2/3/8/123837902/2021lentenfocus.pdf>



"Close the Loop, Open the Sermon" conversation series LIVE! via Zoom during Lent at our usual worship link: <http://zoom.us/j/907548568> Rev. John will be offering what he's calling "Close the Loop, Open the Sermon" conversations LIVE! on Zoom each Wednesday @ 12 Noon and Thursday @ 7:30pm throughout the "Grounded" Lenten sermon series to give us a chance to really talk about each of these essential topics.

WED @ Noon & THU @ 7:30pm
from 2/24, www.needhamucc.org

As Rev. John says, "Just because they're essential—especially because they're essential!—doesn't mean there's just one way to understand them, and especially not just my way. It's good to reflect together."

2/28: Creation A Family History.

3/7: Sin & Forgiveness Not just the dots, but the whole picture. And how to change the picture.

3/14: Incarnation God is in the house, and not just in Jesus.

3/21: Prayer The feedback loop. The transforming power of reflection and sharing.

3/28 (Palm Sunday): Justice, Peace, Salvation, & the Kingdom of God The point, here and now.

Needham Community Council Presentation - March 7th

After worship on Sunday, March 7, 2021, Sandra Robinson, Executive Director of The Needham Community Council, is happy to join us to share information about the Council's activities and contributions to our community. The 30 minute presentation will include a video (11 minutes) showing the variety of services provided by the Council, a short talk by Sandra, followed by a 15 minute Q&A session. This month, she is providing a similar presentation to folks at the Baptist Church.

EMT Lenten Carbon Fast - During Lent, the Environmental Ministry Team would like to invite you to be stewards of Creation by reducing your carbon footprint. Please check out ideas for reducing your production of climate changing pollution on EMT's church web page at <https://www.needhamucc.org/environmental-ministries.html>.

Worship Flower Donations - We will have a live plant in Worship on Sundays. If you would like to sponsor the flowers you can sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0844A8AA23A2FD0-worship> or email the church office at office@needhamucc.org with 2 date choices and your dedication for the Order of Worship. Donations can be made via check or the church's paypal account(see below).



PayPal Donation QR code and link: https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=QKTT469ND37G6