



“Pray in the Spirit at all times, with every kind of prayer and petition.” *Ephesians 6:18*

“He has told you, human one, what is good and what the Lord requires from you: to do justice, embrace faithful love, and walk humbly with your God.” *Micah 6:8*

“As United Methodists we are called to participate in God’s healing of creation through acts of personal, social, and civic righteousness. Proclaiming and modeling a new lifestyle rooted in stewardship and justice we work toward the day when all God’s children respect and share in the goodness of creation.”

Social Principals Caring for Creation: A Call to Stewardship and Justice, 2016 Book of Resolutions, #1033 Our Call to Stewardship and Justice

A key part of our journey to better love, honor, and obey God and love our neighbors as ourselves is to develop our role as good stewards of all of God’s creation: both the human parts and the non-human parts. This is not a role we invented and gave to ourselves. In chapters 1 and 2 of Genesis (the first book of the Holy Bible), God gives it to us, not once but twice! Jesus’ birth, life, and death further instruct us. You are part of the new creation launched by the resurrection of Jesus, and it is our hope that your experience of this prayer walk will bear fruit that honors God and helps heal the world.

Visit the EarthCOR website at Church of the Resurrection (<https://cor.org/earthcor>) for links to resources that will help the seeds sown by these reflections grow into fruitful actions that bless all.

1. LIVING WATER STATION

Focus: Environmental Footprint



Scripture:

God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” *Genesis 1:28*

Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the human he had formed. to work it and take care of it. *Genesis 2:8, 15*

Reflection:

When we look at the underlying Hebrew words in the very first commandments that God gives to humankind we discover important nuances. The parts of creation that should be “subdued” (*kabash*) are ONLY the parts that could lead to death, *not the parts that don’t meet our ideas of what is beautiful or important*. Dominion (*radah*) does not imply our *domination* of creation. Instead, it refers to the relationship between a benevolent king and his subjects. Creation serves us (or “pays tribute”) and when we con-serve it in return, we fulfill our role. This imperative is underscored in Genesis 2. ‘*Abad* is commonly translated as “to till” or “to work” but also refers to the duties of a priest serving the sanctuary. *Shamar* is often translated as “keep” but also means “to take care of,” “to look after,” and, perhaps most significantly, to safeguard.

Prayer: Dear God, thank you for creating our beautiful abundant earth, and for entrusting your creation to my care. Help me to be a faithful steward of your gifts, always mindful of my choices and how they reflect my love for you and for my neighbors as myself. Amen.

2. WILDERNESS STATION

Focus: Reduce Waste



Scriptures:

“To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it.” *Deuteronomy 10:14*

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” *Romans 12:2*

“And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, ‘Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost.’” *John 6:12*

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.” *Matthew 6:19*

Reflection:

40% of food grown in the U.S. is wasted. When that food decomposes in landfills it creates leachate that pollutes our water and methane gas that contributes to climate change which threatens every part of God’s creation. Modern consumer culture constantly tempts us to “store up treasures” with the latest version, current trend, or “convenient” but short-sighted product. When we give into these temptations all of God’s creations suffer.

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank you for the life-sustaining wonders of your earth. Please make me ever more aware of the ways my choices and the waste I produce affect other people, other forms of life, and even the earth you made. Amen.

3. DIRECTION STATION

Focus: Shop & Eat Local



Scriptures:

“Jesus went up on a mountain and began to teach them...” *Matthew 5:1-2*

“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.”
Psalms 19:1

“Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things....Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth, burst into jubilant song with music....Let the sea resound, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. Let the rivers clap their hands, let the mountains sing together for joy.” *Psalms 98:1, 4, 7-8*

“The entire law is fulfilled in a single decree: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ But if you keep on biting and devouring one another, watch out, or you will be consumed by one another.” *Galatians 5:14-15*

Reflection:

Christ’s teachings call us to transform our lives and align our actions with his values. When we choose to support local farmers, restaurants and businesses we are blessing our actual neighbors. Shopping and eating locally not only helps create local jobs and strengthen the local economy it also reduces fuel consumption and air pollution.

Prayer: Dear Lord, let me join the rest of your creation in joy by singing of your glory: “For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies,...hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light; Lord of all, to thee (I) raise this (my) hymn of grateful praise.” (from *United Methodist Hymnal #92*)

About the Art: Glazed Ceramic Tile, Artists: Phil Epp and Terry Corbett; Commissioned Artwork by Leopold Gallery

4. FOLLOW ME STATION

Focus: Green Your Ride



Scriptures:

“The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.” *Psalms 24:1*

“Small is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life.” *Matthew 7:14*

Reflection:

One way to reflect your belief that the earth, *and everything in it*, is the Lord's is by changing paths and developing better stewardship habits. Choosing to carpool, combine errands, walk or bike (when distance allows), and to not idle your engine is part of the narrow road that leads to life.

Prayer: O God, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen:

You place us in your creation, and you command us to care for it.

Your works declare glory and splendor, and you call us to praise and reverence.

Where we have degraded or destroyed earth's bounty, forgive us.

Where we have taken beauty and majesty for granted, have mercy upon us.

Where we have become estranged from the creatures with whom we share the planet, grant us your peace.

Renew us in the waters of baptism, refresh us with the wind of your Spirit and sustain us with the Bread of Life.

In the name of Jesus Christ, and for the sake of the new creation we pray.

Amen.

5. MISSION STATION

Focus: Increase Energy Efficiency



Scriptures:

“Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens, through the praise of children and infants you have established a stronghold against your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger. When I consider your heavens, the works of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what are mere mortals that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? You have made them a little lower than heavenly beings, and crowned them with glory and honor. You made them rulers over the works of your hands, you put everything under their feet; all flocks and herds, and the animals of the wild, the birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas. Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!” *Psalms 8*

“Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” *John 1:5*

Reflection:

One of the beautiful things about God’s love for us “mere mortals” is that the sun comes up each morning. Each sunrise ushers in the chance to better love God and neighbor. One way we can do this is by increasing the energy efficiency of our homes and businesses. If everyone on the planet used as many natural resources as Americans do we would need 5 planet Earths!

Prayer: Lord Jesus, what came into being through you was life, was light. Guide my actions each day as I seek to better steward your resources. Open my eyes to the wonder of your creative power. Open my heart to seek your will so that my light and life push back the darkness too. Amen.

About the Art: Glazed Ceramic Tile, Artists: William Rose, Commissioned Artwork by Leopold Gallery

6. PRAY STATION

Focus: Plant Native



Scripture:

“Then the Lord spoke to Job out of the storm. He said... “Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? ... Who shut up the sea behind doors? Do you know the laws of the heavens? Can you set up God's dominion over the earth?” Then Job replied to the Lord: “I know you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted. My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you (through your creation).” *Job 38:1, 4, 8, 33-34, 42:1-2, 5.*

“I brought you into a fertile land to eat its fruit and bounty, but you came and defiled my land, and made my inheritance detestable.” *Jeremiah 2:7*

“...not my will, but yours be done.” *Luke 22: 41-42*

Reflection:

This station reminds us of the agonizing time that Jesus spent in the garden of Gethsemane and of his choice to set aside his desires and be obedient to God's will. One way we can grow in our obedience to God is by making choices in our own gardens (and lawns) that support God's creation. Planting native trees and flowers create wildlife habitats that sustain bees, butterflies and songbirds. Remember: all of creation has value because of its relationship to God.

Prayer: Dear God, like Job I have seen the glory of your creation, but too often take it for granted or misuse it. Please teach me to appreciate the magnificence of the universe and this earth. Grow in me the wisdom to better care for your fertile land so that your will, not mine, is done. Amen.

7. CRUCIFIED STATION

Focus: Advocate



Scripture:

“The whole creation waits breathless with anticipation for the revelation of God’s sons and daughters. Creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice—it was the choice of the one who subjected it—but in the hope that the creation itself will be set free from slavery to decay.” *Romans 8:19-20*

“God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.” *John 3:16*

“God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.” *Colossians 1:19-20*

“Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing.” *Luke 23:34*

Reflection:

Hanging on the cross, Jesus uses the last moments of his life on earth to underscore the importance of forgiveness and advocacy. The Lord of all advocated for us on earth, and continues to do so in heaven. He sought and seeks forgiveness for us. Our world has become so complex that sometimes we still don’t really know what we’re doing. Whether or not it is known to us, we have all done (or not done) things that have increased the suffering of the human and nonhuman parts of God’s creation. Forgive yourself. Advocate for people who are marginalized and for the parts of creation without voices. Pray for others and especially for those in leadership positions.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, knowing that I am your creation and you love me brings me such comfort. Search my heart for the ways I have fallen short of your will and forgive me. As you redeemed me, so do you redeem the whole of creation. Keep teaching me to love and value what you made. Amen.

8. RESURRECTION STATION

Focus: Worship the Creator



Scripture:

"There were loud voices in heaven which said: 'The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever.'....'The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your people who revere your name, both great and small - and for destroying those who destroy the earth.'" Revelations 11:15, 18

"If my people who belong to me will humbly pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land."
2 Chronicles 7:14

"Let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."
Galatians 6:9

Reflection:

The resurrection of Jesus reassures us that the worst things are never the last things and also marks the beginning of the new kingdom of God here on earth. Although God is the only one with the power to recreate our bodies and the earth, we cannot write this world off or evade our God-given responsibilities. When we exercise dominion over God's creation in such a way that every part of it can multiply and be fruitful we are like the faithful stewards in the parable of the talents. What we do (and do not do) in our time here on earth has eternal importance.

Prayer: Dear God, I can see many ways in which your creative power works in this vast universe, yet the fullness of your ways goes beyond my mortal comprehension. Grow in me a deeper understanding of how to be a better steward of your creation because I not only believe, but count on, your promise that I can be with you on the new earth forever. Amen.