

**GOIN' GREEN - REMEMBERING**  
**Psalm 104:10-18**

Today starts our series of St. James Goin' Green. This morning I would ask each of you to remember something that fills you with awe each time you think or experience it. In today's reading, the Psalmist speaks of creation and seeing the mighty acts of God in creation. When the Hebrews wanted to be awed, they took a walk in the wilderness or strolled beside the sea.

In July my husband and I took a cruise to various ports in Alaska on the inter-coastal waterway. As we journeyed on the waters the color would change which I learned was due to the fact of the differences in glaciers in the area. There were mountains with streams of water and at times clouds that settled not too far above the water. The further north we went, the more we experienced the lush abundance of God's earthly creation. The water, trees, mountains and even blue ice floating in the water were beyond description ... it wasn't merely the sight of it all, but the serenity as we watched the birds fly unobstructed through and around it all. At one point I was looking at the water from our balcony and I saw a sea otter staring directly at me which was a pleasant surprise. No words can describe the sense of awe and wonder that came over me. For that moment, for that time, I was one with God's creation.

I remember reading that Teddy Roosevelt, maybe more than any other President of the U.S., had a deep appreciation for nature. When he

entertained diplomatic guests at the White House, Mr. Roosevelt loved to take them out on the back lawn at the end of the day. Back then the vast array of stars were not dimmed by the city lights. The heads of state could sit there and enjoy the beauty of heaven. After a while Mr. Roosevelt would say, “Gentlemen, I believe we are small enough now. Let us go to bed.”

This Fall, throughout our worship schedule, we will be speaking about Goin’ Green and exploring what that means for us. It is a familiar phrase that we hear and see more and more today. Simply stated, Goin’ Green is about taking care of creation. How do we do that?

Psalm, 24, states that the “Earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it.” Humans simply hold the Earth in trust for God. We are tenants here, called to care for creation on behalf of future generations and all species. The Bible calls us to “till and keep the garden” and names human beings as the trustees of creation. Because God created all the Earth and all of us, creation is beautiful and good and sacred. We are called by our devotion to God and our love for God’s works to protect it. More specifically, in our United Methodist Church Social Principles it is stated “All creation is the Lord’s, and we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it. Water, air, soil, minerals, energy resources, plants, animal life, and space are to be valued and conserved because they are God’s creation and not solely because they are useful to human beings.”

In other words, Creation is in itself a testimony to God’s glory and greatness, to God’s power and purpose. John Calvin, the Reformer of the

church, speaks of a book of nature alongside the book of Scripture. The world, created and loved by God (John 3:16), bears witness to the God who is both the origin and sustaining foundation of all that is, seen and unseen.

Of course, we do not worship the creation, but the One who brings creation into being; we are for the creation because of our responsibility as stewards; we need to take the time and find the space to contemplate God's goodness and mercy in a stream, a forest, a waterfall, an ocean wave; we listen for God's music in the stillness of Creation. On this Rally Day, the first day of our Goin' Green Series WE REMEMBER the words of St. Francis:

Let all things their Creator bless,  
And worship him in humbleness,  
O praise ye! Alleluia!  
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,  
And praise the Spirit, Three in One!  
O praise ye! O praise ye!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Today we also REMEMBER or commemorate the day of 9/11. Ten years ago on this day horrible atrocities were committed in the name of God. The destruction of land and people led to a violence as we pursued "justice", also in the name of God. Not only was there devastation of land, but thousands of men, women and children on all sides have lost their lives. Whatever we think or feel about the events of the past several years, it might be well for us to ask, how do we go green or care for creation when something like 9/11 happens?

I have to be perfectly honest and say that I am not entirely certain how to answer that question except to say that maybe Jesus knew there would be times such as these. In God's majestic creation, not in a building, one day on a hill by a lake, he gathered his disciples and told them to pray like this: "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven...". Perhaps that is where we begin. With all the devastation, hurt, pain, shame, guilt, anger and betrayal, perhaps we need to remember where we should begin today. Let us pray, "Our Father ....."

Praying isn't only what we do, it defines who we are and whom we belong to. After listening to the chimes commemorating the 10 year anniversary of 911, let us take time in silence for reflection and prayer. Amen.