Call to worship: Oh Creator of all was, is and is to come we gather together in the midst of your creation to worship and praise you. We see the beauty of the trees dancing and the birds singing and all the wonderful works of your hands. We know that you have created sacred place wherever we go and have called to be part of this great creation. We pray as we gather in this sacred place that we feel, hear, see, smell and be touched by your presence, that we maybe still and know that you are God. Amen.

LBW: 554 This is my Father’s World.

Litany of Confession
Leader: Oh Lord we have failed to recognize our dependence on you for life breath and all things.
Response: Forgive us and inspire us to change.
Leader: God of life we often rush pass creation failing to feel your presence, only fulfilling our needs with the material things of this world to fill the void that can only be filled by you.
Response: Forgive us and inspire us to change.
Leader: God of Mercy, we confess that we often worry about ourselves and our own selfish needs than being concerned how that impacts creation and all your marvelous creation.
Response: Forgive us and inspire us to change.
Leader: Oh, gracious Lord and savior we confess that we have not done enough to protect the environment. We have done this out of our own greed, not loving our neighbors as you have commanded.
Response: Forgive us and inspire us to change.
All: God of compassion help to make the changes, to be dependent on you, to be fulfilled with your presence, to others fist and to love our neighbors.
Reader: Receive the forgiveness of the Lord, be renewed to the changing of your mind. See, feel and hear the Lord and be blessed the God grace.

WOV: 770 I was There to Hear your Borning Cry

Scripture Reading: Genesis 1
Sermon prayer: Dear gracious creator may we see your creation as part of your graceful presence. May we hear your grace through the spoken words and may know you Lord through the hearing of your words.

Sermon:

Make rain: This is an activity that I would want the whole congregation to participate in. It works best when there is a decent sized congregation, one with a balcony with people in it. Asking the congregation to clear their mind and follow the actions I direct them to do when I direct them to do it. I direct the balcony that anytime I point to them that they are to stamp their feet for three seconds, they will be the thunder. Starting on one side of the congregation I direct them to start with rubbing their hand together as I walk along the front of the congregation directing them all to join in. Then following the same pattern I would like them to snap their fingers, then another time clap on their laps, and finally stamping their feet. This should be done slow as to give the effect of a rainstorm coming in. After hitting the pinnacle of the rainstorm the congregation should be directed in reversed order in the same manner as before, until the rain is gone. During the whole thing rainstorm thunder from the balcony should be intermittingly included.

As I was read this chapter of Genesis the other day I stopped and paused to watch the rain hitting the ground. I watched people running from it scornfully; hiding under umbrellas trudging, around as if they had just been punished by a parental figure sent off to spend some time in their room. As I scanned out the window I saw the rain hitting the dull, brown, lifeless blades from the earth which appeared to be awakening all these members of God’s family. Awakening the dull brown lifeless blades to a new reality, a baptism of new life, all standing up giving praise to God. Giving praise in their new green life giving state. A baptism releasing them from their dead, lifeless condition into a new state of freedom. Set free to give glory to God. Free to give shelter, nourishment, or a place to rest and play for one of God’s creatures. The rain is also washing these tired looking beasts with their arms stretched out unenthusiastically giving thanks to the creator for their mere existence. As the rain baptizes these beasts, it is as if to say, “Arise,
you are my creatures whom I love, in my name you shall have new life.” Springing forth out of this Baptism is the emergence of green on the fingertips of the Beast. As this tired old Beast awakens into a new reality, standing a little straighter, looking a little more youthful all while giving glory to God. Giving glory to God by providing shelter, nourishment, or a place to rest and play to one of God’s creatures.

I looked back at the people running around with the punished child look, scornfully looking at the rain. Realizing we do not often see the beauty of the rain. We are getting to be a part of God pouring out of God’s grace upon the God’s creation. Realizing just how beautiful this baptism really is. In looking at the first chapter of Genesis we get a glimpse of how God pours out God’s grace upon the earth. When reading Genesis we first come to light The light was there for the Wise men and the Sheppard’s to follow. The Light was also surrounding Jesus on the mount during the transfiguration. The light also blinded Paul and turned him away from his persecuting ways. Knowing Jesus Christ through the light is one the foremost ways God’s grace works in our lives however it is not the only way. However the light also provides warmth and growth for the world that we need for our survival on Earth.

We have already talked about water how it awakens the Earth and brings forth a new creation and how water also is used to awaken us to a new reality in Christ. A reality where we are not wondering whether or not we have done enough, we just are a new creation in Christ. A new creation that has eternal life in Christ. When talking about water we must also address the earth. We see God making covenants with people through land, like Noah where God reassures Noah that his family will help populate the world and that God will no longer flood the Earth. In the Israelites we see Moses leading the
people out of slavery in pursuit of freedom that will be accompanied by land. We see the fulfillment of that promise by Joshua leading his people into the promise land. We are reminded of God’s grace every time we see a farmer bring in a bountiful crop or just getting to take in the pure beauty of this environment.

Out of the land comes forth plant life. The crops and fruit we eat, and really all living creatures, shows us God’s grace for God graces us with plant life for our mere existence. God graces us with plant life for our mere existence. It is also of this creation where we receive the forgiveness of sins from Jesus Christ. Through the grain and the grapes we enter into Communion with Christ. Through this communion we receive forgiveness and eternal life. God gives us plant life for our mere existence in this life and beyond. Every time we eat a ripe plum, plump tomato, or piece of bread we are reminded of God’s grace.

Plant life providing nourishment for every living creature reminds us of another way God graces us. Every living creature whether it swims in the water, flies in the air or walks on the land provides grace for this world. Some people might call it survival I call it grace. We are reminded of the importance of preserving God’s creation in the Flood story. God making sure that when he cleaned the Earth that all God’s creation was not lost. We also are reminded of God’s grace through the multiplying of the fish and the donkey carrying the Lord Jesus Christ to his life giving actions. The sheep also remind us, that Christ is the sacrificial lamb. The lamb that means we are no longer tied by death. Every living creature is important to this system of God’s grace and we see that so far everything that God has made and it is good.
After the creatures come, humanity, made in the image of God told to have dominion over all of God’s creatures. God gives us grace through one another, the gift of fellowship and communion with one another. We also see God taking the form of humankind in Jesus Christ. In Jesus Christ becoming human took on our death out of which death can no longer reign over us. In Christ we have received the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. We as human can spread this grace through the Word of Christ and the proclaiming of this good news.

It also seems that humankind can spread grace to all of God’s creation through this dominion. We are reminded that dominion does not merely mean rule or authority over but responsibility over. There seems to be something expected of us in this creation story we see that everything created before humankind was good and we are just an addition to that goodness. There was not any reason that we are needed to tame and subdue the earth. We are needed to take care and help manage because we are not just given God’s creation.

We are reminded of all that God graces us with through this creation whether through the light, water, earth, vegetation or every living creature. There seems to be a system of Grace that we are part of, it does not revolve around us, we are simply a part of the system. In this system we receive God’s grace from all that God has created but also we are to provide grace back to the creation.

In close we must remind ourselves that we believe that this worship space is holy because it communicates God’s grace, however God’s grace is present in all of God’s creation. Therefore all of God’s creation is holy and sacred. When we leave today we
should remind ourselves that as we leave this room of God’s temple we only leave to
another room of the temple. All rooms communicate God’s grace. Amen

LBW: 564 Praise God, from Whom all Blessings Flow

Pastoral prayer
Leader: Almighty God, We thank you for all the grace that you have poured out on us.
We thank you for creation and allowing us to be part of creation. We pray that we be a
healing presence in this creation. Lord in your mercy.
All: Hear our prayer.
Leader: Lord we ask you to be a healing presence to all of our loved ones that are in need
of your healing presence:
All: Hear our prayer.
Leader: Gracious God, we ask that you use us to inspire change through out our
communities and into the entire world. That we might help people realize the sacredness
of your creation.
All: Hear our prayer.
Leader: into your hand we commend all we say and do into your hands, trusting your
mercy, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
All: Amen

Offertory Prayer
Generous God, you have blessed us with resources to share the good news of your love
for all creation. We dedicate these gifts and pray that they may bring healing, wholeness
and hope to the world, that future generation may also know your graciousness and love.
Amen.

WOV 752: I, The Lord of Sea and Sky

Benediction: God’s grace be present you now and always. Feel the presence of God in
Gods scared creation. May we always know that we are in sacred space and treat it
accordingly
All: Amen

Leader: God in peace serve the Lord.
All: Thanks be to God