

A Call to Care for God's Good Creation

Interfaith Reader's Theater/Litany

By Tammy Walhof, Lutheran Advocacy, for the Faith & Clean Energy Summit 3-17-2018

READER 1: The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims [God's] handiwork (Hebrew Scriptures/Christian Old Testament – Psalm 19: 1, NRSV)

READER 2: God...has created the universe in all its diversity, richness and vitality: the stars, the sun and moon, the earth and all its communities of living beings. All these reflect and manifest the boundless glory and mercy of their Creator. (Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change)

ALL: All creation is a symphony of praise to God. (Hildegard of Bingen; 1098-1179)

READER 3: Oh Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. (Hebrew Scriptures/Christian Old Testament – Psalm 104:24, NRSV)

READER 2: God created the earth in perfect equilibrium; ...we have been given fertile land, fresh air, clean water and all the good things on Earth that make our lives here viable and delightful; The earth functions in natural seasonal rhythms and cycles: a climate in which living beings – including humans – thrive. (Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change)

ALL: All creation is a symphony of praise to God. (Hildegard of Bingen; 1098-1179)

READER 3: When God created the first human beings, God led them around the Garden of Eden and said: "Look at my works! See how beautiful they are—how excellent! For your sake I created them all. See to it that you do not spoil and destroy my world; for if you do, there will be no one else to repair it." (Midrash Kohelet Rabbah, 1 on Ecclesiastes 7:13)

ALL: Do not spoil and destroy the world. (Midrash Kohelet Rabbah, 1 on Ecclesiastes 7:13)

READER 1: But there is no faithfulness or loyalty, and no knowledge of God in the land... The land mourns, and all who live in it languish; together with the wild animals and the birds of the air, even the fish of the sea are perishing. (Hebrew Scriptures/Christian Old Testament – Hosea 4:1b,3 NRSV)

READER 2: Too often the earth has been treated as a waste receptacle and a limitless storehouse of raw materials to be used up for the sake of economic growth, rather than as a finite, fragile ecological system upon which human and all other life depends. (ELCA Social Statement "Economic Life: Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All)

ALL: Do not spoil and destroy the world. (Midrash Kohelet Rabbah, 1 on Ecclesiastes 7:13)

READER 3: The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers; the heavens languish together with the earth. The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants. (Hebrew Scriptures/Christian Old Testament – Isaiah 24:4)

ALL: Do not spoil and destroy the world. (*Midrash Kohelet Rabbah*, 1 on Ecclesiastes 7:13)

READER 1: [From outside,] the world... looks cleaner and so much more beautiful. Maybe we can make it that way - the way God intended it to be - by giving everyone...that new perspective from out in space.” (Roger B. Chaffee, 1935-1967; NASA Astronaut - Apollo 1)

ALL: The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it.
(Psalm 24:1)

READER 2: Nothing that [God] creates is without value: each thing is created...in truth and for right.
(Qur’an 44: 39)

READER 1: Each creature has its own purpose. None is superfluous. The entire material universe speaks of God’s love, [God’s] boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God...In talking with his disciples, Jesus would invite [the disciples] to recognize the paternal relationship God has with all...creatures. (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’* on the Care of our Common Home, paragraphs 84 & 96)

ALL: [It] must be defended like a holy relic. (Alexei Leonov; b. 1934; Russian Cosmonaut)

Reader 2: The present moment is...critical,...filled with both challenge and opportunity to act as faithful individuals and [congregations] in solidarity with God’s good creation. (Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, ELCA)

READER 3: Love all creation, the whole of it...Love every leaf, every ray of God’s life! Love the animals. Love the plants; love everything. If you love everything, you will soon perceive the divine mystery in things...you will begin to comprehend it better every day. And you will come at last to love the whole world with an all-embracing love. (Fyodor Dostoyevsky, 1821-1881, Russian Orthodox Christian writer in *The Brothers Karamazov*)

READER 1: A sparkling blue and white jewel,

READER 2: a light, delicate sky-blue sphere laced with slowly swirling veils of white, rising gradually like a small pearl in a thick sea of black mystery.

READER 3: It takes more than a moment to fully realize this is Earth . . . our home.
(Edgar Mitchell; 1930-2016; NASA Astronaut)

ALL: [God], seize us with your power and light,

Help us to protect all life,

To prepare for a better future...

Of justice, peace, love and beauty.

Praise be to you! Amen.

(Pope Francis, A Christian Prayer in Union with Creation, May 24, 2015, Rome)