

Brief Reflection during Intergenerational Worship

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So we've taken time to observe just a bit of God's beautiful, beloved creation today. We remember that in the story of Creation, God called each and every part of creation good - the trees, the sky, the soil, every animal and plant, and us, too.

We know from that same story of creation that we are called to care for God's world.

We've been reminded so beautifully of our call to have a HEART for the EARTH.

And we heard the words of Jesus this morning - that we are also called to have a heart for all of God's people.

I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, **36** I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.... just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'

I know some folks who say, when they think about the kind of life they want to live, they say, "I want to be a Matthew 25 Christian." Someone who takes care of those who are in need.

I think these two ideas - having a heart for the earth and having a heart for all of God's people - are actually just one big idea.

We know that our planet, God's beautiful creation, has some problems right now, including pollution and climate change.

And that can feel scary, especially for the grownups, I think - because we want to make sure you have a wonderful and safe world to live in, always.

I want to share two really important ideas, for when we get concerned for creation and wonder what we can do.

The first idea is: return to love. What we love, we will work for, and protect. If we have a heart for the earth and all of God's beautiful creation it's both motivation and strength

for taking care of the earth. If we have a heart for our neighbors, our love helps us to serve them.

The second idea is: we are not alone. Do you remember last week, when Rev. Alex visited and told us a little about the wider United Church of Christ that we are part of? He reminded us that we are not alone. And the UCC has been working on environmental issues - making connections between pollution and those who are most impacted by it since 1987. In fact the UCC was a pioneer in all this, and we've been advocating to stop climate change for a long time, too. It's not just the UCC - there are plenty of folks - from high school to their 90s - in Lexington and all over the world - who are working on these issues. We are not alone in our care and our commitment. And guess what, God loves all of creation, too. We are not alone in caring for creation, and both our love for the earth and our love for our neighbors are strong.

So this year, for the season of Lent, our focus is on caring for creation - and I invite each of us to start from a place of love, and remember that we are not alone in this. Then pick one good, loving, and concrete thing you can do to care for creation this season.

