

ANTS AND BATS AND THINGS LIKE THAT

Ecology of the Spirit

John E. Swanson

Introduction

Just south of Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center is Castle Rock State Park. In the park State Highway 2 passes through a deep cut in the sandstone rock, an engineering achievement done years ago.

The cut is wide enough for two lanes of vehicular traffic with no space for a shoulder.

Thirty years ago the state speed limit was 65 miles per hour, and people would drive through the cut at whatever speed was comfortable. When Federal Law lowered the speed limit to 55, the traffic slowed a little. Then because of accidents in the cut, the posted speed limit was reduced to 45 mph.

This highway between Dixon and Rockford is very scenic. However, with the winding road comes the peril of accidents. Thus, the state has been trying to maintain the scenic nature of the drive and minimize the danger.

What are the options? Various portions of the road can be widened, but widening the road at the cut would be an expensive feat.

One solution given consideration was relocating the road and routing it through another portion of Castle Rock State Park. However, when studying potential routes it was discovered that the construction would disrupt areas that had unique varieties of plants. With the disruption of these habitats animal life would also be disrupted. This solution would also be expensive.

A third alternative was to lower the speed limit to 35 mph. The road would not need to be rerouted, money would be saved, peril would be reduced, and a natural habitat would be left undisturbed. The Governor of the State of Illinois signed the lower speed limit into law in the fall of 1989.

This action has prompted reactions. Folks want their conveniences added to, not deleted from. Altering one's personal behavior is the least preferred. In rather unique ways people ask: why should my convenience and comfort be denied at the expense of the survival of some plants and animals?

Is it possible that the destruction of a particular habitat would lead to the extinction of particular organisms? If organisms are on the brink of extinction, the preservation of one habitat will not guarantee survival.

Why bother slowing down to 35 mph except that it will save the tax payers expenses for a new road? We need to respect our world, though the actions may be minuscule, appear ludicrous, and be controversial. There are entities that live in various quantities of abundance and for varying periods of time in our ecosystems. New species enter the home, and old ones pass away. We do know that organisms interact with each other, but we do not know the implications of the relationships. We should not destroy our world out of ignorance. The

habitat must be maintained. Decisions should take into account the diversity of the world.

Humanity is contributing to the extinction of species that exceeds the normal rates. The introduction of humans on planet Earth contributes to a greater potential of extinction, but we can use our heads and test our values as we make better judgments for the welfare of the system.

What is at stake is not that a particular species dies off. The problem is that the diversity of organisms is depleted.

Slowing traffic to a snail's pace of 35 mph may be an act that not only saves lives and money; it practices inclusivity, acknowledging that we live with the many facets of this world and are not indifferent to nor over against them. There is something to be celebrated about the whole living entity called the Earth, and we seek to treat everything with respect and reverence.

One can take a stand for economic, ecological, and/or risk avoidance reasons. These are honorable attitudes, and they should be nurtured.

A fourth reason emerges from the teachings of the Church. The Christian recognizes that God is a part of this system, too. The world is also the arena of the Spirit.

This resource is not a study of the theology of the Holy Spirit. It is a study of the ecology of the Spirit. How is the Spirit functioning in the system? The persona (person) of the Trinity called the "Holy Spirit" is a relational person.¹

This resource addresses the three aspects of the ecosystem in which we live. The first is the natural world, the relationship of non-human organisms.

The second aspect of this study deals with the persona of the Holy Spirit who is the source of good works, faith, the Church, and leadership in the Church. Aspect three of this resource treats the arena of the multi-cultural/racial features of our world, our Church, and the camp community.

Before entering into the details of this resource I would like you to explore a deep concern I have regarding religious education and its role in life and the Church.

A key word for me is "conversion." I realize that Lutherans shy away from this word because it smacks of putting feelings over faith, salvation based on experience and work righteousness, humanistic centrality over God-centeredness, and emotional manipulation, just to name a few.

I use "conversion" to describe eye-opening experiences that happen of their own accord and change people's lives. The word does not belong solely to the religious life. People have eye-opening and life-changing experiences in all

¹The Greek word persona means mask.

the first of these is the fact that the system is not a simple one, and that it is not a simple one.

The second of these is the fact that the system is not a simple one, and that it is not a simple one.

The third of these is the fact that the system is not a simple one, and that it is not a simple one.

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The eleventh of these is the fact that the system is not a simple one, and that it is not a simple one.

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The thirteenth of these is the fact that the system is not a simple one, and that it is not a simple one.

walks of life. It affects our thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. It is not a once in a life-time experience. It can happen again and again.

Education is an agent of change. We discover new ways. We are being informed of the past and prepared for the present and the future. We learn to read history and then set out to write history.

Education and conversion are two ways to describe the same phenomena. The difference is that the one tends to be more head and the other more heart. The one prompts thought, and the other prompts action.

Teaching influences intellect, attitude, and action. We teach for change. We expect the learner to be different after the encounter. We teach for conversion.

For some, conversion may mean to come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. This may be so. But even those who know Christ do not know all the nuances of God's work in the world and are not committed to them

So, in the Church we teach for conversion, for eye-opening experiences, for life-changing insights, for amendment of behavior that people may know the depth and the riches of God and God's world.

How did the title of this resource come to be? In 1989 I spent over two weeks in Costa Rica wandering through two tropical rain forests. Among the learnings of this event was that bananas do not grow on trees and bats along with birds and insects are pollinators. A major and much discussed phenomena in the rain forest is the leaf cutter ant, carrying portions of leaves to the ant hill to put in a garden to grow fungi that becomes the ants' food.

The discovery of mutualism and interaction of species in various and unique ways caused me to think about mutualism between humans, humans and non-humans, and God and all creation. There is a benevolent relationship between God and the human world not only for the fulfillment of human life, but also for the benefit of God. This nature of God is called "Spirit."

The key words for this resource are popular in the vocabulary of the 90's: ecosystem, diversity, mutualism, inclusivity, and spirituality.

Chapter I

THE HOME OF GOD

ECOSYSTEM

The word eco (oiko) in Greek means "home." Ecology is the study of the "home" and focuses on relationships in the system.

All of existence is interdependent. "There are no free lunches." Everything has a price. Impact on one aspect of the environment has impact on another.

Under study today is how the depletion of rain forests in South and Central American influences the weather of North America.

A new concept that is receiving more and more acceptance today is that the world itself is a living being. The Gaia hypothesis (the word is the name of the Greek goddess for Earth) holds that life acts as a self-regulating system by controlling the planet's atmosphere. This hypothesis put forth in the mid 1960's by J. E. Lovelock challenges the conventional belief that living matter reacts passively in the face of threats to its existence and argues that earth's living matter - air, water, and land surfaces - forms a complex system which has the capacity to keep our planet a fit place to live.²

Since the environment has become a public issue, we have begun to realize that humans are not the only organism in existence. Other organisms also possess a history. In fact, a revolution similar to the Copernican revolution may be in the making. Remember that Copernicus, the Polish astronomer, proposed that the earth is not the center of the universe. It is the sun. The rebellion to that insight caused Copernicus to be excommunicated from the Church. (What probably upset the Church was not a change in the shape of the solar system. Rather, with the earth no longer at the center, what does one do with the location of Hell, which the Church conceived to be at the center of the universe?)³

The environmental revolution we confront today is that humanity is not the center of the ecosystem as it once was perceived and expressed. It is one of the organisms. What is revolutionary is that organisms have their say, and their value is not based on how humanity is served by them.

There are some thinkers who give the impression that ecosystems are better off without humanity. They perceive the natural order as pristine and good when a habitat is not disrupted by the presence of humans. When the human species is introduced to a natural setting there is a change, and the influence is determined abusive.

The reality is that the ecosystem is not limited to the interaction of species in the non-human world. The ecosystem includes the human species, too. All creation calls Earth "home."

We can consider the world a stage on which all the actors include the props and scenery. In addition Christians affirm that God is an actor on this same stage. We would dare call God the Star.

H. Paul Santmire in The Travail of Nature says that there are three "fundamental data of theological reflection: God, humanity, . . . and the world of

²Lovelock, J. E., Gaia - a New Look at Life on Earth, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

³Ferris, Timothy, Coming of Age in the Milky Way, (New York: William Morrow, 1988), p. 67.

nature."⁴

God lives relationally with the world. If we listen to our rhetoric, our word for God in relation with this world is "Spirit." We do not get carried away with detailing the doctrine of the Trinity. We may use Creator, Savior, Sanctifier, etc. interchangeably. Though a discussion of the Trinity may raise some questions about this notion, the clear division of each of the three persona is commingled when we use the word "Spirit."

When we affirm our faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed, the Third Article speaks of God in the present as one who acts relationally. The First Article confesses God the Creator, and the Second, God the Redeemer. However, the Third Article confesses the Spirit in connection with:

the Christian Church, the communion of saints
the forgiveness of sins
the resurrection of the body, and
life everlasting.

More than likely one is startled when Spirit is used in a multitude of dimensions. However, the concern of this resource is not theological but ecological. How does God relate to the world? God is Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. God is movement. God acts.

The world is God at work. God cannot be excluded from the process of life.

In the Nicene Creed the Holy Spirit is proclaimed as proceeding from the Father and the Son. The imagery of this statement is intriguing because it gives powerful substance to the concept of the Spirit. The Spirit is not the whimsical activity of God to do the bidding of whatever or whoever. The Spirit is the Creator creating, the Redeemer redeeming, etc.

Another way to analyze the concept of the Spirit is to see the Spirit as the one who makes temporal the events of creation and redemption.

One way to interpret the work of the Spirit is to understand the meaning of light years. Distances of stars from the earth are measured in light years. With light traveling 186,000 miles per second it is much easier to state a distance in years than in miles. As we look to the sky we see stars that are many light years away. The sun, for example, is about 8 minutes away from the earth. But other stars that can be seen are hundreds of years from the earth.

This method of measuring is telling us that we are seeing in the present an event that created light in the past. It is possible that we are able to see light today that came into existence at the time of Christ.

Using the above analogy we can say that the Spirit conveys to the world what happened several thousand years ago. The Spirit makes the past history of God present. The Spirit brings to our experience God's saving act in Jesus

⁴Santmire, H. Paul, The Travail of Nature, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), p. 9.

Christ.

Possibly the best way to say it is: "Spirit" is the ecological word for God.

When viewing our ecosystem and reflecting ecologically, it is imperative that we recognize that within the human world community there are many races and cultures.

The tendency is to perceive the world that is only within one's territory and experience. Anyone beyond this realm is only a number, possibly a non-person, maybe an alien.

In the natural world "endemic" is used to describe species that are isolated to a particular location, e.g. an island.

There may have been a day not many years ago when people could be isolated from each other, but that time has passed.

Isolation and barriers have broken down because of TV, transportation, and the mobility of people. Our world community comes to our door. We discover many people who call the same place "home."

Chapter II

NICHE KNOWING

DIVERSITY

Everything that exists has a place in the ecosystem. Ecologists call this a "niche," meaning profession, occupation, business.

In the natural world an organism is described as a producer, consumer, or a decomposer. In many instances a species' role is understood. However, the niche of some species, e.g. ticks, is unknown or maligned. How about ants and bats?

Unfortunately, in our anthropocentrism an entity's worth is often determined by its known usefulness. If an organism is not deemed useful to humans, then it is often considered worthless. This is arrogance on the part of human beings when one realizes that we do not know everything. Also, worth, at least for Christians, is something that is given by God before we learn an organism's niche or an organism's value to us.

We are learning that a species' occupation at the least is its contribution to the diversity of its habitat.

There are three unique facets to a species' diversity: characteristics, history, and profession. The profession, the niche, is what the organism does for the sake of its habitat and for its own survival. Characteristics are the external and internal features of the organism. The history of an organism is

what has happened to shape 1) the entity itself and 2) the entity's function. As a species interacts with the environment it adapts to be able to survive and procreate. In all instances a species has developed to what it is today over the ages. Scientists call this adaptation or evolution.

We are told, for example, that beetles were the earliest pollinators of flowers. As we observe the process of pollination by various birds, insects, and mammals we see that flowers have adapted to allow certain species to pollinate them. Obviously, these are not beetles. Over millions of years of development species have taken over the profession once the domain of the beetles.

Diversity in the natural world is most clearly seen in the Tropics. In the Temperate Zone, the one in which we live, the variety of species is fewer and the population of any given organism tends to be more concentrated geographically. In the Tropics plant and animal species are more greatly distributed. Thus, there is a greater variety of species in a given space.

Let me illustrate. In the Temperate zone trees of the same species tend to grow in close proximity to one another. At Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center our forest is oak and hickory. There are few maples, box elders, hackberry, and walnuts mixed in. In the Tropics trees are spread over vast geographical areas. To scientists this explains why tropical trees tend to have more colorful flowers and fruit. Pollination is relatively easy when the same plants are close to one another. But when they are spread out over great distances the tree needs to wave an indicator so the appropriate pollinator can more successfully find the specific species. The fruit is also more lush in appearance so that animals responsible for seed dispersal will be more interested in assisting the tree.

The greater the diversity of an area the more organisms spend energy to compete for their survival.

How did diversity in the non-human world get started? No one really knows. One hypothesis is that diversity is a way organisms avoid disease and become less vulnerable to pests.⁵

Paul Ehrlich says that diversity is the most precious nonrenewable resource of our planet. The greater the diversity in an ecosystem, the healthier that system is.⁶

When diversity is discussed biblically, it is in terms of one's profession. Paul says the profession of each person is a gift of the Spirit.

What is interesting is that Paul is more concerned with the diversity of

⁵Ehrlich, Paul, The Mechanics of Nature, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986), p. 234.

⁶Ibid., p. 213.

gifts, talents, and professions than he is with the characteristics and histories of the people (I Corinthians 12:14-31). In fact, he says specifically that in Christ there is no diversity, neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female. All are one in Christ (Galatians 3:25-29).

Within the Church and world communities diversity is affirmed as more than profession. There is diversity of characteristics and histories.

It seems to me that diversity in all three facets is a gift of the Spirit. One's profession, characteristics, and history are equally gifts of God.

When we reflect on the multi-cultural/racial nature of human existence, it is essential that all people see themselves and others as bringing into the situation something very special.

In this sense the human is organically different from other species.

A person's skin color, culture, history, and occupation may be related in some way, but they are not as integral for humans as they are in the non-human world.

In the non-human world a species' history and characteristics zero in on that species' niche. In the human world the contribution of each individual is made to the system in all three facets, each being important.

Human diversity is viewed as a problem, obstacle, and pest. There was a melting pot notion at one time in the United States. The diminishing of differences was the goal.

Diversity has been the cause for division and war. Lines are drawn that people of different races and cultures do not cross.

Diversity is a cause of fear. When someone different arrives on the scene, there is need to cautiously proceed in developing relationships if one has not already run off. Often, the risk to relate to that person at all is minimized if one can exercise some type of power over the other.

The negative aspects of diversity in the human community are manifested in competition and the desire to be better and elite. Diversity has also been cause for lording one race or culture over another and treating humans as commodities.

The racial arena has been fomenting for many years. The religious arena has been fomenting much longer in world history.

How do we look at the diversity of people? Is diversity a gift of the Spirit or is it a mark of Cain? Is it something to be celebrated or negated? Is diversity an evil in its own right, a "necessary evil," or a gift of the Spirit of God?

To focus on diversity in this resource is to help us:

1. See diversity of our characteristics, history, and occupation as

a gift of the Spirit. As God has endowed people with talents and abilities to serve the Church and the world, so has God gifted us with our characteristics and our histories to benefit each other.

2. Accept diversity of people as crucial for the well-being of the human community as we see diversity in the non-human world as a nonrenewable resource.

3. Practice diversity within the human and non-human community.

When Luther explains the First Article of the Apostles' Creed he says, "I believe that God has created me and all that exists." What does "and" mean? Is it simply a way to include everything in some thoughtless way? Or does it have some implications with regard to equating all things?

The Church has struggled over the problem of elitism and inclusivity. Where do we draw the line?

I learned in Sociology 101 that cultures who were not as developed as ours in the United States were experiencing "cultural lag." I interpreted that to mean that we were far ahead of many types of people in this world.

Now I have learned that 1) "primitive" means "original" and 2) people we call "primitive" are further advanced in ways that we are not.

One can say that diversity levels everything in God's creation. Or one can say that diversity lifts everything up. Diversity has nothing to do with superiority and inferiority. Diversity is a gift of the Spirit in its own right and for the sake of the ecosystem.

When studying the conditions of land, a phrase getting more usage today is "site specification." This has to do with the reality that the nature of a given piece of real estate (an interesting notion) is different than others. In order to know what to do in and for the sake of a given space, one must treat it as unique. We must let the Earth speak. Thus, each location has its own specific composition and nature. It is "site specific." Each piece is diverse.⁷ All creation is "site specific."

Chapter III

FIGS AND WASPS

MUTUALISM

As scientists research the non-human world, there are new discoveries on how various species benefit one another. Susan Grant, author of a book entitled Beauty and the Beast, states that what we once thought were aggressive

⁷"How to Heal the Land," Whole Earth Review, March, 1990, p. 72.

relationships between organisms are in reality mutually beneficial relationships.

The underlying theme in this portion of the resource is this: God creates a world in which species benefit one another. Each entity fulfills its niche by what is done for other species. This mutualism is realized between organisms in the non-human world, between the human and non-human world, within the human world, and between God and the human and non-human world.

I am using the word "mutualism" for two types of activity in the natural world: cooperation and competition. Let me explain.

First, when viewing the natural world it is important to remember that we are observing species and not individuals. Individuality is peculiar to the human world. Suggesting individuality in the non-human world introduces sentimentality and romanticism and smacks of "bambyism."

Mutualism emphasizes that species interact with one another and react to one another. In some cases there is cooperation, sometimes antagonism.

It may seem absurd to refer to antagonism as a mutual relationship. Antagonism can be expressed two ways. One expression is an organism protecting another organism by fending off the enemy. The other expression is one organism as the source of energy for the sake of the other, i.e. food. It is this latter definition of antagonism that is being used to call antagonistic behavior mutual.

Cooperative mutualism can be illustrated with several dramatic examples. One is the relationship between figs and wasps.

Each of some 900 species of fig plant . . . is pollinated exclusively by its own species of fig wasp. The flowers of the fig plants are tiny and grow inside the roughly spherical fig that people eat (which is not strictly a fruit, but closer to an inside-out bouquet). The tiny female wasp enters the fig, deposits pollen on the flowers, lays eggs in the flowers, and then dies. The wasp larvae grow inside the flowers, which they largely consume, and form pupae. The wingless male fig wasps emerge before the females and march around inside the fig looking for flowers containing females. They use their telescoping abdomens to copulate with the females before the latter emerge from their pupae. The males then die without even leaving the fig. The winged females emerge, collect pollen from the remaining flowers, and leave that fig in search of another in the proper condition to begin the cycle again.

The figs (including the commercial varieties) and their wasps are utterly dependent upon one another. The fig sacrifices some of its tissue to the feeding wasps in return for being fertilized. The wasp cannot mature anywhere else. Thus if there were no figs, there would be no fig wasps and vice versa. Indeed, the first Smyrna figs that were grown in California could not produce a crop of mature figs until the appropriate species of fig wasp was intro-

duced.⁸

(Each fig has its own special fig wasp.)

Another illustration is the relationship between certain trees and ants.

Thomas Belt, an English engineer and enthusiastic naturalist working in Central America (in the nineteenth century), noticed that the bull's-horn acacia tree harbored ants. This tree, common to the New World tropics, has fat hollow thorns near the bases of its feathery leaves. Ants live inside the thorns and in hollow twigs on the tree. At the tip of the leaflets, the acacias grow tiny pellets of nutritious material, now called Beltian bodies. The ants greedily devour the Beltian bodies. They eat no other part of the tree, though, and they attack any caterpillar or grazing mammal that tries to feed on a bull's horn acacia. Belt commented, "I think that these facts show that the ants are really kept by the Acacia as a standing army."

Later biologists were not so sure. It was suggested in the 1920's that the ants exploited the trees, sheltering in the hollow thorns but giving no real protection. One biologist quipped that the trees got "as much use from their ants as a dog from its fleas." Conclusive evidence on the question came in 1969 with experiments in the field. Insecticide sprays were used to deprive several acacias of their ant hordes. Other acacias were merely sprayed with water, and kept their ants. The results were spectacular. The deprived acacias were far more heavily damaged by herbivores. And, in an unexpected side-effect, they were last overrun by neighboring vines and trees. So the ants not only protect their acacias from animal attack, but may even help them out in competition with plant rivals.⁹

A third example of cooperative mutualism is the leaf cutter ant. These I observed in Costa Rica in January of 1989. Ants would parade from their hill to a plant several hundred yards away, cut leaves the size of a human thumb nail, and then carry their treasure back to the nest.

The ants have a garden in the nest which they feed with these leaves. The garden produces a fungi which is food for the ants.

The dependency between the fungi and the ants has become such that the fungi has no reproductive system. When a queen ant leaves the nest to establish a new community, the queen takes a portion of the garden with her.¹⁰

Competitive mutualism is found within the food chain or predator/prey relationship. We need to investigate this relationship.

⁸Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 163.

⁹Grant, Susan, Beauty and the Beast, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1984) pp. 16-18.

¹⁰More examples found in Appendix I.

From a dispassionate perspective we understand the food pyramid. The base is herbs. Above that are various insects and other herbivores, then carnivores. We move up the pyramid until something is at the top. We know there are eagles, tigers, etc. which will not survive as herbivores and which are not the prey except for human aggression.

The food chain is recognized as the way of life.

Now to become a little more passionate about this relationship we call it predator/prey. Prey includes animals and plants.

This competitive relationship involves adaption of prey and the prey's determination to avoid the predator.

Prey, though necessary for the predator, do not make itself immediately and easily accessible to the predator. Prey need to survive and procreate. Thus, if the prey would not adapt, the predator would probably bring a particular species to its demise.

When observing the mutualism in the predator/prey phenomena, one notes that the prey do not allow themselves to be the prey. Prey use many methods to avoid being captured. Animals develop speed and camouflage. Plants use chemical warfare, mast cropping, seed coating, and timing. (Mast cropping is when huge quantities of seeds are produced beyond what the predator can consume.)¹¹

As prey adapts predators also adapt. This process is very slow. However, it works out in the economy of life, that as we move up the food pyramid the number of species decreases.

It is a truism that the prey determines the destiny of the predator. As the prey adapts, so does the predator. Otherwise the latter will go hungry. At the same time as the prey is depleted because a habitat is disrupted, this depletion impacts entities up the food pyramid.

In spite of the competitive aspects of the process the species in the food chain exist for the benefit of others. One gives itself up so the other can live. Life builds on life. The building process is death. Death is life-giving.

From a scientific perspective the way relationships have developed may best be described as accidental. The origins of entities and how two entities happened to encounter each other cannot be demonstrated scientifically. This may disturb some folks who want to see connections and have them proved so that their god is not disrupted, given no direct purposeful act. Unfortunately, connections cannot be demonstrated.

The observance of mutualism in the environment is an exciting trip. Though we cannot identify the origins of things, we can see how things of the world

¹¹Grant, op. cit. pp. 28-29.

interact. It is this interaction for the mutual benefit of others that is the intention of the God who creates and makes new.

When describing the work of God in the human world, we can see variety of ways that God gives power so that people can live in mutually beneficial relationships with each other.

Galatians 5 is a case in point.

In Galatians 5:22-23 Paul talks about styles of life in this way: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law." (RSV) It is significant to note Paul's metaphorical use of fruit and Spirit.

In the natural world, in order for fruit to occur, a flower must be pollinated. There are two basic methods of pollination: animals (birds, mammals, and insects) and wind. Animals do most of the pollinating in the Tropics. As we get further away from the equator we see wind pollination more frequently.

Fruit, by the way, is not simply the type we eat. All seeds are fruit, some being more edible than others.

Just as fruit depends upon an outside source to be pollinated so we can talk about the Spirit of God as an outside source who touches us and causes good to be done through and by us.¹²

What are these fruits the Spirit creates?

HUMILITY/KINDNESS/JOY - Humility is not the putting down of the self, but the lifting up of the "other". It is not that one is lesser or considers oneself lesser. Humility is the capacity to make others great!

The context and tension within which humility is best discussed is that of human limitation and sin, on the one hand, and human potential, on the other. Humility as limitation drives us to depend upon the righteousness of Christ and the forgiveness of sins, and not to depend upon our own goodness. We are unworthy in the sense of sin. On the other hand, we are worthy as we are gifted by the Spirit to enable others.

Humility is the opposite of arrogance and pride which finds itself centered in the ego. The Greek words for "humility" are praus and praotes. These words are also translated as "gentle". When translating Galatians 5:22 the Revised Standard Version (RSV) of the Bible uses "gentle." The Today's English Version, i.e. Good News for Modern Man (TEV), uses "humble."

Additional words in Galatians 5 which can deepen our understanding of "humility" are "kindness" (the treatment of others as kin, brothers and sisters) and "joy" (a word in the Greek that has the same root as "love.")

¹²The words ruach (Hebrew) and pneuma (Greek) mean wind, breath, and Spirit.

If humility is the act of making others great, both human and non-human by the way, it means to treat "others" with celebration and gentleness, with the "sense of caresses," as William Barclay puts it.¹³

SELF-CONTROL - If there is one lifestyle of the Spirit that could be misinterpreted as a moralistic statement, it is this one. More than likely this is due to the fact that a person is often advised, "If you would have controlled yourself you would not have gotten yourself into this predicament," or words to that effect.

Self-control as a lifestyle of the Spirit must be understood as one being a steward of oneself.

This gift of the Spirit builds upon humility. In order to make others great we need to be someone. Self-care is not borne out of self-centeredness, but out of love of the neighbor. Personal choices are made regarding our own habits out of respect for the welfare of our sisters and brothers. (Note how Paul handles eating meat in I Corinthians 8:1-13.)

To practice self-control is to treat ourselves as God-created good, as worthy, not worthless. In addition, by Christ's alien righteousness, we are made good. We are to treat ourselves as we would treat all of creation, all that is redeemed, and all that hopes for redemption.

Self-control can be focused upon from three different perspectives: how we respond to others, how we deal with our "inner being," and how we deal with our bodies.

We respond to stimuli, both human and non-human, out of our own wills. We choose what the response will be. Psychologists may explain how we do this. It may even be helpful to know something about psychological systems. But the fact of the matter is that we have the ability to decide what the response will be.

Our "inner being" is another matter. Here we are in the area of the "secret" resources of ourselves which we sometimes do not understand ourselves. We sense those things that well up in us. They are not always discernible.

The care of our bodies is related to self-control. This subject is very popular today: fitness programs, wellness discussions, stress management, diet workshops, etc. The topic of chemical use, abuse, and misuse fits here, too.

There are many tapes, books, programs, clinics, and workshops available to deal with these areas of self-control. Anything you would like to change in your very being has an advisor of some type somewhere. What is the advice? The suggestions are usually that a change of heart (or attitude) is necessary.

¹³Barclay, William, A New Testament Wordbook, (New York: Harper and Brothers,?) pp. 103-104.

Paul is helpful in another passage with regard to self-control and our bodies. In this case he identifies the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit, I Corinthians 6:19-20. As total beings we are instruments of the Holy Spirit (one of Luther's favorite metaphors), and the Holy Spirit is in our very physical beings. Earlier in I Corinthians 3:16-17 the body in which the Holy Spirit dwells is the Church.

A life that is to deal gently and humbly with others cannot at the same time be void of self-control, the management of self. In Romans 12 Paul lays on us his expectations of the Christian person. There is no way one can fulfill such expectations without being able to handle oneself. The will to do this and the power to make this happen can only come from the Spirit of God.

PEACE/PATIENCE - There are conflicting views over what peace is and how peace is accomplished. Is peace a commodity achievable by the power of the sword or is it a condition achievable by the power of the cross of Christ? Is peace the end or the means to an end or both?

It is the understanding of the New Testament that peace is a result of the cross. From this historical event peace emerges, and toward the final days (the eschatological event) the Spirit directs peace.

What is peace? I prefer the Hebrew word "shalom." It means wholeness, health, restoration into community, and the presence of justice.

The Spirit's gift of peace is God leading us to restore that which is and has been alienated back into community.

Peace builds on the other gifts of the Spirit: humility, self-control, and patience. Peace seeks to make others great. Peace is something that evolves from within. Peace also benefits from patience. The Greek word for patience, "makrothumia," is translated by Chrysostom as the ability to take revenge against another, but utterly refusing to do so.¹⁴

Peace is not the opposite of war or the avoidance of conflict. Peace is involvement in bridging the gaps and mending breaches.

In addition to the fruits of the Spirit, another characteristic of the Christian life is the willingness to give oneself up for the sake of others. In the non-human world this is called the food chain. In the human world this is sacrifice. We are here for the mutual benefit of others.

In Ephesians we find these words:

"Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." (5:1-2)

The writer then proceeds to identify behaviors that do not contribute to

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 84.

mutuality: fornication, impurity, covetousness, filthiness, silly talk, and levity. The alternative is to walk as children of light "for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true" (5:9). The admonition follows that Christians look carefully at how they walk, be filled with the Spirit, and always give thanks.

As in the food chain the prey determines the destiny of the predator, so with a sacrificial style of life one is not consumed and overwhelmed by the other. Rather, one affects the destiny of the other.¹⁵

Another aspect of mutualism is the Spirit empowered act of forgiveness. First, forgiveness is the acceptance of another, not approval of the other's behavior. Implied in this is the expectation that behavior will change.

Second, forgiveness is restoring broken relationships, making friends out of enemies.

Third, forgiveness is the effort to make systems responsive to the organisms within them. The words we use here most often are justice and equity.

Fourth, forgiveness is openness to diversity. This will be addressed in the next chapter.

The Spirit works in many ways to make it possible for relationships to be created and mended. There is recognition that the world is very diverse. But working at it is by conversation.

In the multi-cultural/racial world mutualism is a desired outcome, an ideal. For people of diverse backgrounds, cultures, and characteristics to live in harmony is an ultimate goal.

To accomplish this three things must happen:

It must be desired.

It must be a part of the corporate plan.

There must be a process.

In the non-human world there are systems whereby mutualism occurs. From the perspective of the Christian community the Holy Spirit motivates mutualism. But what is inherent in the multi-cultural/racial world that can be identified as mutualism?

There are two things we can learn from the earlier discussion of mutualism. First, a person needs to have a sense of self-hood. One does not benefit another unless a person is somebody. Self-affirmation, self-respect, self-esteem, and self-worth are different words for the same thing.

Second, when a person encounters another, especially if they are different in any way, intimidation is a possible response. We can meet strength to strength, weakness to weakness, or strength to weakness. To be strong in

¹⁵Think what this means in terms of Holy Communion and Christ's presence.

oneself does not mean the other must be weak. This accomplishes nothing. If one is weak and permits the other to be strong this is intimidation. This is something we allow to happen to ourselves. Strength to strength is the winning role for each person.

Third, one does not deal with the two items above without conflict within oneself and conflict with another. Conflict is resolved when both or all parties are in a win/win posture.

Fourth, mutualism is achieved through communication, knowing how to share, being willing to share, and being open.

Since these four items are not built into everyone's nature, it is necessary to develop them as skills.

The nature of group life does not change because the colors and cultures of the people involved are different. One can argue that the mechanics of group life are used most efficiently.

There are many studies that show that in a group decision making process the greater the diversity, the better the decisions. It is my feeling that the sooner we are able to practice diversity with all of its implications as a Church and as a world community the more effective and life fulfilling systems will be.

Diversity is the nonrenewable resource of the non-human world. The loss of diversity is crucial to the habitat and the whole ecology.

Diversity in the human world is a resource that can be renewed. What enables that to happen is the new chances provided on a regular basis by the "accidents" of history to practice mutualism and the gift of forgiveness.

Mutualism exists in three ways:

- One species benefiting the other.

- One species giving up itself for another's well-being.

- One species acting to restore relationships between organisms.

Chapter IV

ANTS AND BATS

INCLUSIVITY

Over the years of advancement in technology it has become apparent that humans accomplish many things. Although other animals have been able to manipulate their environments, humans have done this in great detail, with great eloquence, and unfortunately, with great indifference and destruction.

There is always the debate about what distinguishes humans from other animals. Reason was an early suggestion. But we have learned that other animals think,

too. Then the thumb was suggested as something that can manipulate a tool. This, too, is not unique to humankind. Other creatures also fabricate tools.

I would like to suggest that the difference between humans and non-humans is the speed with which we can work and develop. While other creatures must adapt themselves to their environment, humans can adapt the environment to themselves. Adaptation in the non-human world is a slow process. The use of the mind in the human world enables adaptation of the environment to be a rapid process.

Can it be that the desire to do things rapidly and the ability to work quickly has contributed the most to the destruction of and indifference to the diversity of our world? A hurried style of life is not conducive to treating the human and non-human worlds with respect, responsibility, and reverence.

I appreciate the words of David Suzuki in the forward to a guidebook on outdoor education called Rediscovery - Ancient Pathways - New Directions. He states his case so clearly it is worth quoting fully here:

Like most of the people living in North America today, I am a non-native. My ancestors came to Canada from Japan at the turn of the century. . . .

North America, to the native people living here, is more than simply a place, a piece of turf. Land embodies culture, history, and the remains of distant ancestors. Land is the source of all life and the basis of identity. Land is sacred. An overriding sense in aboriginal perceptions is that of gratitude for nature's bounty and beauty. Gratitude - and respect.

Land in modern North America is currently regarded as a commodity, to be purchased, exploited for its resources, and sold for profit. Land, for most people, does not embody cultural history. Land is profane. Indeed, to refrain from exploiting an opportunity to log, mine, farm, or otherwise develop is an obscenity, a waste.

Our modern land ethic is causing a cataclysmic upheaval on this planet. Species of plants and animals are becoming extinct thousands of times faster than has ever occurred before; their habitats destroyed by human beings. Global deforestation is causing vast changes in the patterns of water availability, weather, climate, and soils. Human-caused desertification is accelerating. Massive global pollution is putting not only other life forms but even our own children's health at risk.

Twenty percent of the world's population - the industrialized countries - are now utilizing over eighty percent of the planet's exploited resources, and they continue to demand even more, in growing consumption and profits.

From an ecological perspective, Homo sapiens is a species temporarily out of biological control. We are now the most numerous and ubiquitous large mammal in the world. But armed with the muscle power of science and

technology, our impact on the planet is beyond anything ever experienced in the history of life on earth. We have initiated an "extinction spasm" that Harvard ecologist E. O. Wilson estimates now claims over seventeen thousand species a year. . . .

If our species' fecundity is not curbed, we will double our population within fifty years. . . .

Why are we destroying the very support systems for all life on Earth? Apart from our powerful urge for profit, it is our lack of sacred respect for the land and the other life forms sharing our habitat that exacerbates the problem. Today, over eighty percent of North Americans live in cities, man-made environments that have been created by us according to our ideas of beauty and utility. In the countryside, the fields, orchards, pastures, and even forest have been manicured and managed to meet human needs. This creates an illusion that we have the knowledge and the power to control nature. Indeed, in urban settings, "weeds," "pests," and "vermin" - animals and plants that defy human control - are seen as dangerous, dirty, and disgusting.

Essentially, nature has become alien, an enemy, and we live with a terrible delusion that somehow we are different, no longer subject to the same rules that govern all other life forms. We have lost all sense of belonging in nature and have become intoxicated with the short-term benefits of science and technology that have bludgeoned nature into apparent submission.

But in spite of all our great achievements in science and technology, we remain incredibly ignorant about the natural world. We have only identified 1.4 million of perhaps 30 million species in the world, and of those we do know, we have little knowledge about their basic biology.

In order to stop our blind rush down the present pathway, we have to undergo a profound change in attitude and perception. . . . We are members of an ecosystem in which stability and continuity are possible only when we stay in balance with other living creatures.

Clearly, we also need a renewed sense of earth as home; belonging to the land, connected to all other living things.¹⁶

The human brings "mind" into the ecosystem, and it is my conjecture that the mind is intended to be that talent that humanity introduces into the world, not simply for the benefit of humans, but for the benefit of all species.

I have defined inclusivity as the art of retaining, celebrating, and benefiting from diversity. It is to this end that the "mind" needs to be applied.

Humans have used the mind to make the world simpler and more convenient.

¹⁶Thom Henley, Rediscovery - Ancient Pathways - New Directions (Vancouver: Western Canada Wilderness Committee, 1989) pp. 11-14.

Watch the way things are marketed. The appeal is made to our ease. As the world becomes more convenient we are told we can do many more things. This convenience contributes to a more hurried pace.

Our technology has contributed more to the garbage heap. Look at what is in the land fills.

We also have created environments which are potentially pest free. It is uncomfortable to find a mouse or a bat or ants around the home. Thus, over the years we have developed chemicals to rid the house of various pests. When we do encounter them in the out-of-doors, we express fear and disgust and feel uneasy.

We need to examine how our attitudes have been shaped and how human creature-comforts have set the values by which we determine the survival of other creatures in this world.

We cannot dispose of the undesirable creatures. We need to assure their existence as much as we assure the existence of the human being. Though we will make judgments about what will survive, thrive, and be deprived, we need to keep at the forefront of our thinking that diversity is the key resource.

Recently, an agronomist was stating that because we have such effective pesticides, insecticides, and fungicides, we can produce some of the most luscious fruits in great quantities. At the same time these chemicals introduce poisons into the system that can have a destructive impact on the total ecosystem.

The question the agronomist raised was whether the consumer would be willing to purchase blemished fruit at the supermarket. He opined that to change present consumer attitudes would take a major educational task and would more than likely be an unsuccessful revolution.

Have you noticed what fruits we avoid and throw away?

Inclusivity is the art of retaining diversity, a major change for lifestyles.

Paul Ehrlich says several important things about the endangerment of the diversity of species:

First, the primary cause of the decay of organic diversity is not direct human exploitation or malevolence, but the habitat destruction that inevitably results from the expansion of human populations and human activities.

Second, many of the less cuddly, less spectacular organisms that Homo sapiens are wiping out, are more important to the human future than are most of the publicized endangered species. People need plants and insects more than they need leopards and whales (which is not to denigrate their value).

Third, other organisms have provided humanity with the very basis of civilization in the form of cars, domestic animals, a wide variety of industrial

products, and many important medicines. None-the-less, the most important anthropocentric reason for preserving diversity is the role that microorganisms, plants, and animals play in providing free ecosystem services without which society in its present form could not exist.

Fourth, the loss of genetically distinct populations within species is, at the moment, at least as important a problem as the loss of an entire species. Once a species is reduced to a remnant, its ability to benefit humanity ordinarily declines greatly, and its total extinction in the relatively near future becomes much more likely. By the time an organism is recognized as endangered it is often too late to save it.

Fifth, extrapolation of current trends in the reduction of diversity implies a denouement¹⁷ for civilization within the next 100 years comparable to a nuclear winter.

Sixth, arresting the loss of diversity will be extremely difficult. The traditional "just set aside a preserve" approach is almost certain to be inadequate because of factors such as runaway human population growth, acid rain, and climate change induced by human beings. A quasi-religious transformation leading to the appreciation of diversity for its own sake, apart from the obvious direct benefits to humanity, may be required to save other organisms and ourselves.¹⁸

Inclusivity is the art of celebrating diversity.

How do we choose to use our minds? Is our intelligence a gift for all or just for anthropocentric accomplishment? Would we dare commit our minds to developing and implementing ways to benefit all creation? This is what it means to practice inclusivity.¹⁹

¹⁷Definition: final disentanglement of intricacies.

¹⁸Paul Ehrlich, "The Loss of Diversity," Biodiversity, Wilson, Ed. (National Academic Press, 1988).

¹⁹Sin has not been mentioned. It belongs under several themes. But it fits appropriately here. In a way it is not difficult to mention humanity's behavior against the created order in terms of destruction and abuse. We can even tread a little heavily when we caution people about recreational activities where a person's fun is at the expense of the environment.

Do we dare discuss technology in the same breath as sin? We can, if one sees technology as contributing to human aggression upon itself. But when technology contributes to our well-being, our comfort, our ease, etc. is it possible for us to discuss sin in this context?

Luther said, "There are no sinless alternatives. . . . Sin boldly. But trust God's grace more boldly still."

(continued...)

It is within this context that I believe we need to envision the Church.

The Church is to be an inclusive community in its own right. At the same time the Church is to be an agent of inclusiveness in the world.

The Church is a community of people brought together, Luther says, by the Holy Spirit who calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies people. Unlike accidents in the natural world which is honed through the process of evolution, the Church is an intentional act of God honed by the Spirit of God.

However, the community of faith is not an exclusive community. It has a role in the whole ecosystem.²⁰

On Pentecost, the birthday of the Church, the Spirit appeared as fire, and the people gathered together were speaking in many foreign languages. In these languages the people proclaimed the mighty works of God. (Acts 2:1-47)

When Paul describes the Church as the Body of Christ in I Corinthians 12 it is intended to show the necessity of various roles within the gathered community.

Ephesians 4 is a fascinating text because it addresses the community of faith as individual believers in relationship with each other and then turns the Church out to the world where lies are taught and truth is substituted for lies.

Jesus calls His disciples. There is a reminder that though He will be absent from them, the Spirit will be sent to teach them and to bring to remembrance what they should know (John 14:15-31).

I Peter 2:1-10 and I Corinthians 3:16 identify the Church as the people of God in the world.

Romans 6:1-11 envisions the Church as the resurrected people who walk in the power of God in the world.

The metaphors of the Church only make sense in the context of an ecosystem. As disciples, people of God, resurrected persons, aware, relational, and the

(...continued)

One of the hard pills to swallow is human sinfulness. And probably the reason for it is that one of the symptoms of sin is human arrogance. By its very nature sin clouds our ability to see sin.

This is why it is so important that we realize that God is at work in our world relating to us and acting to overcome our own blind destructiveness. God has not abandoned us to our sinfulness. The Spirit of God prods and seeks to renew.

²⁰In environmental studies the word "endemic" is used for species isolated to an enclosed system, e.g. an island.

Body of Christ, the Church is another entity in the ecosystem. The peculiarity of the Church is that it recognizes the diversity, the complexity, and the conflict in this world.

As the human is one of many in the ecosystem and brings the special gift of "mind" to the system that can think through and contribute by maintaining diversity, so the Church is one of many systems which brings to the whole system the mind of God and the intentions of the Spirit.

The Church should be the entity in the ecosystem that embraces and affirms the world with all of its diverse characteristics, realizing the uniqueness of all.

The Gospel is to touch everyone. The response may not always be the same. If the Church neglects to minimize efforts to impact people on the one hand or to measure the effort in numbers of responses on the other, we have misinterpreted the mission of the Church and the power of the Word of God.

The Church's task is to be faithful in proclaiming the Gospel to the ends of the earth as it is empowered to speak as given utterance by the Spirit. The Church recognizes this role as unique and sometimes ambiguous.

The Church must move from seeing diversity as an enemy to diversity as a necessity.

How does the Church practice the art of retaining, celebrating, and benefiting from diversity of people, culture, and religious systems? The answer is not in watering down the Gospel nor putting down others. The answer is found in the sense of the Church's identity as the biblical report testifies. We are the disciples of Christ, the people of God, the Body of Christ, etc. We have integrity and at the conversation table of the world we dare to be our full persons as we recognize the gifts of all.

In the light of this, please read Romans 14:1-15:13 where Paul deals with handling diversity in the early Church. Note what makes people different. These differences may not be the same as they are today, but give attention to how Paul instructs us to handle the diversity. Refer to Romans 12:9-13, too.

Baptism is that event that brings us into this whole movement. It is the inclusive act. It is how a person enters the Church. By this act one also enters a special relationship with the world. Birth is how one enters the world's ecosystem. Baptism is entrance into the Church. However, as a member of the Church a person is incorporated in a unique way into the world. This uniqueness is found in the love commandment of Christ to His Church. World-loving is God's intention for the Church.

This love is best expressed in forgiveness. Earlier forgiveness was described in one way as openness to diversity. The gift of forgiveness allows others to be who they are. Forgiveness is not confined to mending broken relationships. It is behavior that draws people together with the right to be, accepting them with their characteristics, professions, and histories.

The unique aspect of the Church is that it is empowered and directed by the Spirit and has the capacity to keep current with what is unfolding in the world.

There are many issues when it comes to inclusivity, among them racism and sexism.

I have called the practice of inclusivity an "art." To my way of thinking the ability and skill to be inclusive depends upon two things. First, we must lay aside our preconceived notions about others. We know we do this with stereotyping. A person is a person, unique and special. We each have a name, a birth date, our own unique characteristics.

Secondly, we must recognize that our attitudes and behavior are shaped by a system, and the system itself is so designed to be exclusive and elitist. Racism and sexism have a grip on us and affect our thinking and acting, our deciding and our providing. One feels almost powerless over the condition.

We would like to think we can be above it, unaffected by it, not twisted and demented by it. But this is not true. We are by nature and culture (inborn and educated) racists and sexists and unclean.

There are things with which we are uncomfortable and things which we despise. Ants and bats and things like that fall into this category for many people. However, such debilitating attitudes extend to people. There are people whose characteristics, features, cultures, histories, and/or professions we find objectionable.

There is a tendency in the Christian religious system for Christians to elicit biblical support for one's biases toward others. We know we are not to despise and reject others, but if we can find the remotest support in the Bible, we feel justified in our rejection and our right to render judgment.

The Gospel of Jesus makes the point very clearly in the familiar words of John 3:16-17, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believes in him will not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." I am always impressed, honestly depressed, by Christians who can by divine right write off people and have no sense of the struggle of reconciling the world. They see their mission entirely different than how John 3 sees the mission of Jesus. It may be painful, but the Spirit of God calls and strengthens us to live in the agony of the cross of reconciliation.

Racism and sexism are not only in us, they are institutionalized in our systems. Examples of this are legion.

If diversity is to be retained, celebrated, and beneficial then inclusivity needs to be a conscious effort of the mind in all we do.

Chapter V

ECOLOGY OF THE SPIRIT

SPIRITUALITY

"Spirituality" has such a wide spectrum of meanings. We use it in the Church to distinguish between the things of God (spiritual) and the things of the flesh (carnal). It is used in a philosophical sense in making a distinction between concrete reality (material) and unseen "reality" (spiritual).

Spirituality is a style of life that can be a talent or a skill that one develops with which a person acts in a sensitive, caring, and gentle manner with all of life. Many people who espouse non-Christian religious beliefs are often described as spiritual people because of their reverence for life.

It is important that we realize that in the Christian tradition the word "spiritual" is used for the faith relationship between God and human beings.

When reflecting on the ecosystem the Christian community recognizes the system's spiritual dimensions. Some expect the scientific community to do this. But this is the unique function of the Church. The world community has the task to name every creature (Genesis 3:9), but it is the unique task of the Church to name the work of God in the world.

It is the Christian who says, "God!" It is the Christian who identifies the activity of God. It is the Christian who utters the word Spirit. It is not based on any scientific capacity. It is contingent on an act of faith.

Thus, we look at our world as a geosphere, a hydrosphere, an atmosphere, a biosphere, a noosphere (sphere of the mind), and a pneumasphere (sphere of the Spirit).

You can read many writers in the area of ecology today and though they do not speak from a Christian perspective in most instances they do speak in terms of reverence for the world. Stephanie Mills says, "Work . . . to create a culture reverent enough to see harmony with nature."²¹

This world is a divine sphere. This is the substance in many religious systems. Note particularly the Native Americans. We call this pantheism and animism.

The Psalmist views the world as a divine sphere (104:1-4):

"Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, thou art very great!
Though art clothed with honor and majesty,
who coverest thyself with light as with a garment,

²¹Mills, Stephanie, Whatever Happened to Ecology? (San Francisco: Sierra club Books, 1989) p. 2.

who hast stretched out the heavens like a tent,
who hast laid the beams of thy chambers on the waters,
who makest the cloud thy chariot,
who rides on the wings of the wind,
who makest the winds thy messengers,
fire and flame thy ministers."

The world is God's sphere of action. Is the interaction only within the context of humans and only those humans that identify with a particular religious system?

We live in the sphere of the Spirit and must be as sensitive to it as we are to one another and to the non-human world.

Ecologists talk about listening to the Earth. Is the Earth also a voice of God?

From an ecological perspective one can say that reverence may be spiritual, and spirituality is the practice of the divine presence.

For Christians, spirituality is more than this. The heart of spirituality is faith.

Faith has four characteristics. They are not mutually exclusive. However, there is a tendency for people to emphasize one or two of these characteristics over against the others. These characteristics interact with each other though they may appear as building blocks as presented in this paper.

First, faith is intellectual assent. It is a way of thinking. It means that something cannot be proved, but we rely on it as fact.

When we say we believe in God or things about God, it is a "leap of faith," as Kierkegaard would say. It is an assent to something that is as true for you as the very chair, bed, table, or floor that holds you up right now. But we cannot prove it.

Faith as intellectual assent belongs to all the disciplines of learning and inquiry.

Faith as intellectual assent is often what people mean by faith. Faith in Jesus Christ is treating Jesus Christ as an object, as a thing, rather than a person.

Doubt belongs to this component of faith. It appears within a continuum of critical analysis at the one extent and skepticism of the source of information at the other end. Doubt is legitimate. We might call it the "struggle of ownership."

Second, faith is a word we use for a type of relationship, a relationship of trust and obedience between two or more entities. It is like the word "love."

One has faith in another. We trust the other party to be competent, faithful, supportive, etc. When we turn our lives over to another, we entrust

ourselves to that person.

A good example of this is the relationship, we might have with medical doctors. We put our faith in them. We obey them. We trust what they diagnose and prognoses, how they medicate, etc. is correct.

To have faith in Jesus Christ means to entrust ourselves to Him, to put our lives in His hands. "Take my life and let it be . . ."

When Scripture talks about faith it means trust in and obedience to God. "If you love me you will keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth . . ." (14:15-17). (Note: In John, love (or faith), obedience, and then revelation occur in that order.)

Faith in Jesus Christ is not a natural response. How can one entrust oneself to another in this manner? "I believe I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ or come to Him." Here is Luther again. Who makes this faith possible? Who motivates, empowers? The Holy Spirit, that's who!

Third, faith is a response to an encounter with Jesus Christ. Note the story of the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob (John 4:7 ff). Through a chance and unlikely meeting with Jesus the woman believes.

In a way this definition of faith is similar to the first definition insofar as today we encounter Jesus Christ in the proclamation of the word because He is the Word of God. In John 4 He says, "I am the living water," an eternal stream, a water for all time and timelessness.

By the way, Jesus meets the woman. She does not meet Him. Our encounter with Jesus Christ is at His initiative, not ours. Faith is a response to the person of Christ. It is His doing. He starts it. Luther again, "The Holy Spirit calls me . . ."

Fourth, faith is the very presence of the risen Christ in our lives. "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). "If Christ is in you . . ." (Romans 8:10).

In Romans 8:10-11 Paul presents the idea that the risen Christ in our lives is the same as the Holy Spirit in our lives.

What is important to note is that faith is an embodiment of Christ in one's life. Paul even talks about the human body as being God's temple in which the Spirit dwells (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

The power of God is in fact the power of Him who is both Creator and Redeemer of the world. It is this very power that empowers faith in us. We can also speak of faith as Christ Himself entering our very being.

With faith as a result of God's activity in our lives we realize that faith cannot be contained in our very beings. We become media, channels for the Holy Spirit. One of these channels is the expression of our love. As we say

words and do deeds, as we speak and act in love, as we minister to the needs of the world with bread from earth and bread from heaven, as we are agents of restoration and healing, so the Spirit is shared.

The faithful are not the exclusive channels of the Holy Spirit. However, the faithful are a definite, intentional, and self-conscious channel.

At the heart of spirituality in the Christian Church is the understanding that we live in a faith relationship with God which is an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ Himself enabled by the Holy Spirit. From this we develop a larger sensitivity to all of life.

Spirituality is living in time and no time (the meaning of eternity). The God in whom we believe encompasses all of life. Our experiences occur in a linear fashion. But for God all that happens is. This is a philosophical notion, but it helps to remind us that spirituality is living in the mind of God.

Spirituality is an affirmation of the resurrection. We live as resurrected people. We are people with a promise. This simply means that the future is now. Look around you. The material has not vanished. You are not in another world. You are here. But we treat life and the objects of life with the sense of newness.

Spirituality is practiced in several ways: devotion, retreat, and simple and tender life styles. However practiced, spirituality celebrates and affirms the divine presence.

There is one act of spirituality that Christians practice and that commingles all the spheres. It celebrates the physical world, the dimensions of the mental world, and the depth of the spirit world. It is Holy Communion. We recognize the gifts, the gift of giving, the benefiting, and the sacrifice.

One way to define spirituality which I would like to try on the reader is this: openness to conversion. Conversions are eye opening experiences that clarify our understandings and direct our lives. They happen in many ways and for many reasons. And they occur as often as we are willing to risk them. (This is discussed in the introduction to this paper.)

I see this as a work of the Spirit.

When spirituality is practiced, the Spirit cannot be set in stone, one's feelings cannot be predetermined, nor can the impression be given that there is only one experience of the Spirit. The Spirit ruminates in our lives stirring up what is possible. The Spirit is unpredictable, moving and generating activity. As we live in this relationship with the Spirit, events do not fall into a pattern or system.

To risk conversion is to risk having our minds and life styles changed. A spiritual person, it would seem to me, is a God-trusting person who takes the chance of being made new for the situation one encounters in an unfolding world.

In the non-human world organisms interact with each other and adapt to one another. Is this true of the interaction between the Spirit and the human world? Do both the Spirit and humans benefit from each other?
As the word "Spirit" is the ecological word for God so "spirituality" is the ecological word for faith.

To practice spirituality is to live ecologically with all of life,
to dare to live within a world we see and do not see
 to be engaged by the Spirit,
 to intentionally embrace and be embraced by the Spirit of God,
 to embrace the human and non-human world and be embraced by it,
 to live for the benefit of others.

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THE SPIRIT OF GOD

List of Characters: Narrator - Tin Man - Dorothy - Lion - Scarecrow - Wicked Witch - Preacher *Glenda*

Props: Flash light that can look like a flame or a candle

Narrator: One Pentecost Sunday morning a young girl named Dorothy was sitting in church with her family listening to the pastor's sermon. The pastor talked about how the Spirit of God rushed into a room filled with people. It sounded like a wind. Fires also appeared on people's heads, and people were able to speak in many languages telling about the many, wonderful and mighty things God has done. As she was listening, Dorothy began to daydream, and she soon fell asleep. The WIND started to blow very hard,

(Audience makes noise of the wind.)

and Dorothy was lifted up by a tornado. She was hurled around and then landed on the ground. She did not know where she was because she could recognize nothing around her. A strange person walked up to her.

START SKIT

Dorothy: Who are you? (Acting somewhat confused)

Glenda: I'm Glenda the good witch.

Dorothy: Why are you here? (Still confused)

Glenda: I want you to discover the Spirit of God, I want you to discover the Spirit for yourself.

Dorothy: (Thoughtfully) I remember hearing something about the Spirit of God recently. . . OK, how will I know the Spirit?

Glenda: I'll give you this flame, and there will be a wind. Follow the wind as it blows.

Dorothy: Follow the wind as it blows?

Glenda: Let the wind direct you. Follow it. Discover the Spirit for yourself.

(Audience makes noise of the wind.)

Dorothy: Follow the wind as it blows? Follow the wind as it blows. (start looking around) Follow the wind as it blows - Follow, Follow, Follow, Follow the wind as it blows - Follow the wind as it blows through the tree and shakes your knees and makes you sneeze. Follow, Follow, Follow, Follow THE WIND AS IT BLOWS.

(Dorothy finds the scarecrow who is getting set up.)

Narrator: Dorothy started on her journey to find the Spirit. She kept the flame in her hand. Soon she came up to a fellow who seemed to be having a little trouble.

START SKIT

Dorothy: Are you the Spirit?

Scarecrow: No, I'm a scarecrow (slapping himself)

Dorothy: A scarecrow?

Scarecrow: Yes, by the way, why can I understand you? Do you speak scarecrowian?

(Dorothy shrugs as if to say, "I don't know.")

Dorothy: Well, why are you slapping yourself like that?

Scarecrow: (Slapping ants) I hate these ants. They're always crawling all over me! They drive me crazy! I wish I could get rid of them all. Ooooh, (jumping around) that one tickles.

Dorothy: Ants are very irritating, but they are also very important. I read once that one type of ants even protect trees in tropical rain forests. They pollinate flowers and distribute seeds.

Scarecrow: To me they're gross! I just want to get rid of them!

Dorothy: Maybe we need to learn how to live with them not against them.
(Pause) I am searching for the Spirit. Would you like to help me find the Spirit?

Scarecrow: Sure let's go!

Together: We're off to see the Spirit, the wonderful Spirit of God.

(Audience makes noise of the wind.)

Narrator: So off they skip singing happily. Yet they were unsure of what they were looking for. Then they saw a figure standing near the road.

START SKIT

Dorothy: Hello, are you the Spirit?

Tin Man: No! Get away from me!

Scarecrow: What's wrong with him?

Tin Man: What's wrong with me? You want to know what's wrong with me?
I'll tell you what's wrong with me. As you can probably see, I look different from most people, and because of it people don't like me. They treat me as if I were a bat. I come into their presence and they look like they feel weird. I decided that if people aren't going to love me, I'm not going to love them either.

Dorothy: That's awful. You should still try to love people!

Tin Man: I used to have a loving heart, but since I wasn't loved, I found it much easier to hate. . . Hey how come we speak the same language?

(Dorothy and the Scarecrow shrug their shoulders as if to say,

"We don't know.)

Dorothy: We're on our way to find the Spirit. Do you want to go with us?

Tin Man: Well, OK. I'll go.

All: We're off to see the Spirit, the wonderful Spirit of God.

(Audience makes noise of the wind.)

Narrator: Down the road they walked. Soon they see a lion.

START SKIT

Dorothy: Hello, sir. Are you the Spirit?

Lion: No, I'm the Lion. (Acting intimidated) Put 'em up. Put 'em up. Don't talk like that to me, it scares me. I'll fight you with one paw behind my back - standing on one foot - all three together if you want. - Grrrr. Besides, hows come we can understand each other?

(All but the Lion shrug their shoulders as if to say, "We don't know.)

Dorothy: Why are you so scared? Why don't you come with us and talk to the Spirit about it.

Lion: No way - No way - No how - I get even more scared talking to people than listening, don't ya know.

Dorothy: Why are you so scared?

Lion: I'll tell ya. I used to speak like a king, but once I was rejected like so many kinds of critters. Stomped on like a cock-a-roach. Since then, I've been so scared, I can't even talk to myself. Ugh!

All: Please come with us. We will support you while you are talking with him. Maybe he can help you.

Lion: OK, but I ain't promising nuthin'.

All: We're off to see the Spirit, the wonderful Spirit of God. . . .

(Audience makes noise of the wind.)

Narrator: So they all went off together. Then suddenly a wicked witch appeared in front of the group.

Dorothy: Are you the Spirit?

Witch: No. You have the Spirit right there with you. (The witch points at the light.) Haven't you noticed that when the wind blows, the flame doesn't flicker? I want the power of it. I will use it to shed a light on me so people will do what I want them to!

Dorothy: You can't have it because its just not for people like you, but for everyone and everything.

Narrator: Dorothy woke up just as the preacher was reading Acts 2 for the second time

✓ Preacher: Reading from Acts 2, verses 1-4

LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY
Fall Retreat

October 18-20, 1991
Glen Helen Outdoor Education Center
Yellow Springs, Ohio

"Ants and Bats and Things Like That"
Ecology of the Spirit

	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
M O R N I N G		8:30 Breakfast 9:30 Possible Morn- ing Exercise Devotions Bible Study/ Learning Experience - "Diversity - Gifts of the Spirit" Bible Study/ Learning Experience - "Mutualism - Fruits of the Spirit"	8:30 Breakfast 9:30 Closing Worship - "The Prac- tice of Spi- rituality" 10:45 Picture Taking 11:30 Departure
A F T E R N O O N		12:00 Lunch 1:00 Unfinished Business Time for . . . 5:30 Supper	
E V E N I N G	8:00 Registration Upon Arrival Activities 9:30 Get Acquainted Create Groups Group Building Contracting Introduce Theme Devotions Snacks?	6:30 LSM Business Meeting 7:30 Devotions - "Speaking Froggish" 7:45 Social Activity Snacks?	

FRIDAY

Details

UPON ARRIVAL

Draw Pictures of Selves Each person draw a picture of themselves and Paper give to leader. No one else is to see it. Crayons

Recruit Devotional Skit Volunteers

Review skit and let volunteers work it up in their own fashion. Copy of Skit "Spirit of God"

GET ACQUAINTED

Pass a Clap

Stand in circle.

Mask Passing

Form a circle and demonstrate an unusual expression on your face. "Pass" that expression to the person next to you, who tries to imitate the expression and transform it into a new one. That person passes the new expression on to the next one, continuing until everyone in the circle has had a turn.

Group Mill

1. Greet People
2. Learn Names
3. Find person with whom not acquainted.
 - a. Sit down with them.
 - b. "How well do you see that person?"

Play "Five Changes"
(Characteristics)

1. Sit back to back with your partner.
2. Without looking at each other take two minutes to change five things about your appearance.
3. When time is up partners turn to each other and are given a few minutes to identify the changes. Be sure not to unchange the changes that were made.
4. Now, part two.
 - a. Turn around back-to-back again.
 - b. Make an additional five changes.
 - c. Turn back and try to identify these changes.

Thank partner and tidy up.

Play "Line-Up" (History)

1. Instruct the group to line up according to the place of their birth, the town, or county, or state, or country.
2. They are to line up alphabetically. Make an A point and a Z point.
3. This is done without talking.

Make small groups by combining letters of alphabet.
Ask people to:

1. Give the name of their birth places
2. Learn the names of others in the group.
3. Tell something meaningful about their birthplace.

Thank the members of the group. Be sure to know each of the person's names.

When You Grow Up . . .
(Profession)

Ask, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Imagine how you would act this out. On "Go" move around the group and find people who are acting the same way you are or similarly.

Cluster
together

When everyone clustered let the groups talk about what they want to be and their names, where they are from, etc.

CREATE GROUPS

Mask Making

1. Each person make mask of self upon arrival.
2. Collect masks and redistribute them so each person has a different mask.
3. Persons find mask maker and learns about that person so they can "wear" the new mask.
4. Things to learn about the other person:
 - a. Name and home community
 - b. Family history
 - c. What they want to be
 - d. Nationality/ethnic group/culture
 - e. What kind of meaning does d above have for them.

Make Groups

Groups of seven and eight people.

GROUP BUILDING

In the Group

1. Learn names
2. Each person sits in the center of the group, puts on the mask and tells about "themselves."

Trust
Fall/Lift
Turn

A person volunteers to close eyes and fall backwards into the waiting arms of the group. In one smooth movement the volunteer is lifted skyward so that all arms of the group are fully extended. The group rotates the volunteer three times around and returns them gently to the ground feet first.

CONTRACTING

Discuss rules
Review schedule
Discuss concerns
Check expectations

Newsprint
Magic Marker
Tape

INTRODUCE THEME

Ecology is the study of relationships.
"Eco" means "home." These are relationships between:
people.
human and non-human worlds
all of the above and God

Ecology deals with the interaction at all levels.

I would like to introduce you to two definitions for two familiar words:

1. The ecological word for God -
"Spirit" (defined as God-near and God-at-work)
2. The ecological word for faith -
"spirituality"

We will be looking at three things in the natural and church community:

1. Diversity - a gift of the Spirit
2. Mutualism - a fruit of the Spirit
3. Spirituality

DEVOTIONS

Song - "Spirit"
 Skit - "The Spirit of God"
 Brief Discussion
 Prayer and Lord's Prayer
 Song - "Spirit of the Living God"
 Song - "In My Life Lord, Be Glorified"

Copy of
 "Spirit"
 Song
 Copy of
 Skit

SATURDAY**POSSIBLE MORNING
EXERCISE**

Do the "Trust Lift" outside.
 1. When lifting up the volunteer he/she opens eyes and swings out arms while being spun around.
 2. When being let down to the ground the volunteer crosses arms across chest and closes eyes.

DEVOTIONS

Song - "Psalm 104"
 Read "The Creation" from God's Trombones
 by James Weldon Johnson
 Prayers
 Each person work on Psalm 104 Sheet

Song Sheet for
 "Psalm 104"
God's Trombones
 Work Sheet
 Pencils

**BIBLE STUDY
"DIVERSITY -
GIFT OF THE
SPIRIT"**

Description: A study of diversity as a gift of God. Diversity has three facets: characteristics, history, and profession.

"Invent an
 Animal"

1. Allow each group to select a vegetable that has been painted.
2. Participants use various materials to create an animal and camouflage it.
3. Make sure groups are in different locations when they prepare and hide their "animal."
4. Bring group back together.

Painted White
 Potatoes
 String Beans
 Carrots
 Popsicle sticks
 Cotton
 Glue
 Toothpicks
 Clay
 Tempera paint
 Paint brushes

Large Group

1. Review the activities from the previous night that focused on:
 - a. Characteristics (Five Changes)
 - b. History (Birth Place)
 - c. Profession (What you going to be . .)
2. We will be looking at these facets in several fun ways and then asking a question about them.

Animal Hunt
in Small
Groups
(History)

Send groups off for a period of time to find the camouflaged animals.

Discussion
upon Return

1. What was done to camouflage the creations?
 2. What were success and failures?
 3. Did they give the animals names?
 4. What is the process called which makes it possible for a creature to survive in its environment and ultimately procreate? (Adaptation)
 5. One could call this a history.
 6. Are people familiar with various types of adaptation? Discuss.
- See "Adaptation Artistry"

Hike

Go to a place where groups can create there own "Mystery.Guess" game. (Characteristics)

Give each group paper and pencil and ask them to create a series of clues for things they find or might find in the general area that are familiar to them. An example is:

Paper
Pencils

Clues:

1. There are more than a thousand different species of me.
2. I am found on every continent.
3. When I wake up in the morning, I stretch, I yawn, and I wash myself just like humans.
4. Some of my kind milk aphids like cows, others grow fungus on leaf cutting for food.
5. I am incredibly strong and can carry an object ten times my body weight.
6. I leave a scent trail for others of my kind to follow.

Answer: Ant

Each group try some of their clues.

Discuss
Characteris-
tics

Discuss the various types of characteristics found in the non-human world. Are there any similarities in the human world?

Play "Camera
Kids"

1. Organize into dyads.
2. Instruct how to be and operate a "camera."
3. The "photographer" is to find several examples of decomposition and take pictures of them with the "camera." (Limit to three snap shots.)
4. The person being led must keep eyes closed.
5. Allow time for people to develop their own picture. They show no one. Keep everyone in the dark.
6. Collect and distribute them around the group challenging the participants to

Paper
Pencils or
Charcoal

find the "picture" they took.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| Discussion | 1. The role of decomposition.
2. Introduce the word "niche" or profession. |
| Review
Diversity | 1. The three facets: characteristics, history, profession.
2. Diversity as our most important resource. |
| Bible Study | A. Open this portion with, "Diversity is a gift of the Spirit. All that makes up someone or something is made possible by God."
B. Distribute the following study sheet to Small Groups: |

DIVERSITY - A GIFT OF THE SPIRIT

- I. Read I Corinthians 12:1, 4-31a and then make the following observations:
 - A. Note the types of professions Paul mentions (vss. 4-11, 27-30).
 - B. Next note the various parts of the body mentioned (vss. 14-24a).
 - C. What is Paul illustrating with the body talk? (Vss. 12-13)
 - D. How do the various parts of the body function together? (Vss. 24b-26)
 - E. Finally note what Paul identifies as the source of what a person can do and what Paul calls them. (Vs. 1)
- II. Paul talks about various "professions" as gifts of the Spirit.
 - A. How do people in the group understand this idea?
 - B. Given that "profession" is only one of three facets of diversity is it possible to say
 1. That a person's "history" and "characteristics" are also gifts of the Spirit? and
 2. "Diversity" itself is a gift of the Spirit?
- III. If time, the group may want to check this idea out by looking at three characters from the Bible:
 - A. Moses - Exodus 2:23-4:17
 - B. Jeremiah - Jeremiah 1:1-10
 - C. Mary, the Mother of Jesus - Luke 1:26-56

Study Sheet
Pencils
Bibles

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Large Group
Discussion | 1. Share ideas and findings.
2. Emphasize: When diversity in all its aspects is seen as a gift of the spirit we are able to affirm ourselves and the positive contributions we make to our world. |
|---------------------------|--|

**BIBLE STUDY -
"MUTUALISM -
FRUIT OF THE**

Description: A Bible study to introduce mutualism

SPIRIT"

Play Games as a Large Group	1. Yurt Circle 2. The Clock	
Play Games in Small Groups	1. Four Pointer 2. Toboggan 3. Shed the Snake	
Other Possibilities	1. Balance Broom 2. Fox Tail 3. Volley-Bird	Brooms Fox Tail Volley-Bird
Discussion in Small Groups on Cooperation and Competition	Reflect on your small group. 1. What are some examples of cooperation and competition in your experience together? 2. How did people function in the group?	
Discussion of "Mutualism"	1. When does it mean cooperation? 2. When does it mean competition?	
Bible Study	Read Romans 12:1-8 1. What does vs. 3 mean to the group? a. What happens to us when we think we are better than others? b. If we are not better than others does that mean all are the same? 2. What do vss. 6-8 mean? a. To do the best you can with your gifts? b. To use them for the good of everyone?	Bibles
Mini-lecture and Discussion	1. In the natural world mutualism has two aspects. a. First, it is cooperative. (Note the background paper for examples.) b. Second, it is competitive. One species depends upon another to survive. - In many instances the prey seeks to avoid being captured. (Give some examples of how species avoid being caught or make it very difficult.) - In a sense the predator/prey relationship becomes a "game" in a sense that the "loser" determines the fate of the "winner." (See background paper) 2. Ask the participants to compare this natural phenomena to the way humans cooperate and compete. (Several questions to challenge the mind:) a. Do we always live cooperatively as human beings? b. Is our competition meant for the "winner" to determine the fate of the "loser?" Or the other way around?	
Description	To learn that in nature a process called	

for "Fruit of the Spirit" pollination must take place for fruit to occur. In the human world Paul describes love, joy, peace, etc. as fruits of the Spirit.

Tree Fruit
Hunt in Small
Groups

1. First, discuss what a fruit is.
 - a. Essentially it is a seed.
 - b. Some seeds are edible.
 - c. Note particularly the popular fruits.
2. Disburse the group to find as many fruits/seeds as possible.
 - a. Give each group a container.
 - b. Set a time limit.
3. Upon return -
 - a. Each team counts the number of fruits they found.
 - b. Sort out seeds so that all common seeds are piled together.
 - c. Try to -
 - Identify each seed.
 - Recognize their value.
4. Stories about figs and wasps and ants.

Plastic Bags

Package of Figs

Discussion

1. What does wind have to do with fruit? (One of the agents of pollination)
2. Presentation on ruach and pneuma.

What Bible
Say about
Good Fruit

1. Read Matthew 7:15-20 and 12:33-37 and answer the above question.
2. Has anyone seen any tree that has borne bad fruit? good fruit?
3. What does "fruit" mean in these passages? (Deeds)

Bibles

What Paul
Says about
Fruits -
Deeds

1. Read Galatians 5:22-23
2. What are they? (Define as best as possible.) These are expressions of mutualism.

a. Love	f. Goodness
b. Joy	g. Faithfulness
c. Peace	h. Humility
d. Patience	i. Self-control
e. Kindness	

Discuss How
Jesus
Expresses and
Reflects
These Fruits

- Note particularly:
1. Humility - Philippians 2:5-11
 2. Self-control - Matthew 4:21-28
 3. Peace - Ephesians 2:14-18

16

Discuss What
the Spirit
Has to Do
with These
Fruits

1. Read John 3:1-15
2. What happened when you were baptized? (Let people tell stories.)
3. Note vss. 3 and 5 and ask again what happened in baptism.
4. What does it mean to be "born of the water and the Spirit?" (Being empowered to express and reflect Jesus Christ?)

DEVOTIONS

"Speaking Froggish"
(Line up leaders in afternoon.)

Bulletin

SUNDAY

MORNING

WORSHIP -
"THE PRACTICE
OF SPIRITUAL-
ITY"

Description: This explores several facets of spirituality: faith, the other, eterni-ty, the world in all its depth, and the freedom to change.

Liturgical
Format for
Eucharist

1. Introduction - See below
2. Entrance Hymn - "Rejoice, in the Lord Always"
3. Psalm - "Search Me, O God, and Know My Heart"
4. Song of Praise
5. Presentations on Spirituality - See below
6. The Halleluya
7. The Words of Institution and Lord's Prayer
8. Hymn - "In the Water and the Word"
9. Distribution of Sacrament
10. Hymn - "God Send us Power"
11. Prayers
12. Benediction - "Send Me, Jesus"

Song Sheet

Work Sheets

Bread
Wine
Chalice
Paton

Introduction
to Worship

Ask participants if they have ever heard the word "spirituality."

1. Let them give their definitions.
2. Help the participants understand that "spirituality" is living in a sensitive relationship with God and God's world.
3. Ask the participants to think about a person who is not present.
 - a. Each participant close her/his eyes.
 - b. Ask the individuals to become relaxed and sense themselves, their bodies, their breathing, their names.
 - c. Invite them to think of someone who is not present and pay attention to that person for a few moments or minutes.
 - d. When they are ready the participants can open their eyes.
4. Discuss the experience.
 - a. Who was the person in mind?
 - b. What was the person doing?
5. In the Hebrew world people believed that remembering a person brought that person into one's presence. (Recall the Words of Institution where Jesus says, "Do this in remembrance of me.")
6. Spirituality is more than remembering.

Work Sheets

Group I

for Five
Small Groups

- I. Where spirituality begins
 - A. Read Romans 8:9-11
 - B. How does this passage describe "spirituality?"
 - C. This passage does not use the word "faith." However, how might a person describe what faith is in this passage? (Christ in you)
 - (D. Faith in Jesus Christ is intimacy with Jesus Christ.)

Group II

- II. Spirituality as an experience of others.
 - A. Read Psalm 133
 - B. Question: Who are the kindred?
 1. Prepare an inclusive list.
 2. Are members of the group your brothers and sisters? In what way?
 - C. What "vision" of inclusivity is found in spirituality?

Group III

- III. Spirituality is experiencing time and eternity (no time)
 - A. Imagine the history of the location where you are.
 1. Each person sit quietly and image what has happened in this physical place.
 - a. Good and bad
 - b. Human and non-human
 2. The images might be more fictional than factual, but that is OK.
 3. Ask participants to relate their stories.
 - B. Ask people to respond to this quote: "Places seem to remember what has happened to them. Creation is never free of its history, and that history is healed through the power of Jesus' resurrection."
 - C. Talk about the difference between time and eternity.
 1. Time is easy to understand
 2. No-time (eternity) is difficult to conceive.
 - D. Read II Corinthians 5:1-5
 1. Paul talks about living in tents.
 - a. What is the function of a tent?
 - b. Is a tent only a temporary shelter?
 - c. How many tents does Paul mention in this text? (A this-world and the next-world tent)
 2. Paul anticipates eternity. What is it?
 - E. Spirituality is sensing the here and now and the then and there.
 1. Has anyone in the group had the "feeling" of eternity?
 2. There may be some interesting stor-

ies.

Group IV

IV. Spirituality is openness to change (conversion)

- A. Go around the group and ask if the members have noticed anything about different about themselves and each other having been together for a period of time.
- B. "Conversion" is a word we use for change. How do people feel about this word?
- C. Read II Corinthians 3:17-18.
 1. Note in this passage that the Spirit set us free to be in a state of openness.
 2. Openness is for what reason?
(change)

Group V

V. Spirituality is focusing on all of life's systems, spheres, processes.

- A. Read I Corinthians 11:23-26
 1. Reflect on all the "sphere"s that are represented in some way in the sacrament.
 2. List the spheres and try to connect the elements of the sacrament with each one.
 - a. Land sphere - (vessels)
 - b. Water sphere - (liquid, wine)
 - c. Air sphere - (that which keeps us alive)
 - d. Life sphere - (bread)
 - e. Mind sphere - (the words, the focus of attention)
 - f. Spirit sphere - (the presence of Jesus Christ)
- B. When we participate in the sacrament it causes us to look beyond the objects and deeply into what is happening. What is happening?
 1. Review the cycles of how bread and wine come to be from grain to grape.
 2. Note that the grain that gives flour gives itself up for us, and the grape does the same.

Summary

Spirituality is the ecological word for faith:

1. It is the practice of living in faith with God and interdependence with the world.
2. It is daring to include all others.
3. Recognizing the depth of the eternal in the temporal.
4. Being open to change.
5. Living within all the spheres of life,

the very processes of the created order. This brings us to Holy Communion.

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revised: 10/ 7/97

THE SPIRIT OF GOD

List of Characters: Narrator - Tin Man - Dorothy - Lion - Scarecrow - Wicked Witch - Preacher

Props: Flash light that can look like a flame or a candle

Narrator: One Pentecost Sunday morning a young girl named Dorothy was sitting in church with her family listening to the pastor's sermon. The pastor talked about how the Spirit of God rushed into a room filled with people. It sounded like a wind. Fires also appeared on people's heads, and people were able to speak in many languages telling about the many, wonderful and mighty things God has done. As she was listening, Dorothy began to daydream, and she soon fell asleep. The WIND started to blow very hard,
(Audience makes noise of the wind.)
and Dorothy was lifted up by a tornado. She was hurled around and then landed on the ground. She did not know where she was because she could recognize nothing around her. A strange person walked up to her.

START SKIT

Dorothy: Who are you? (Acting somewhat confused)
Glenda: I'm Glenda the good witch.
Dorothy: Why are you here? (Still confused)
Glenda: I want you to discover the Spirit of God, I want you to discover the Spirit for yourself.
Dorothy: (Thoughtfully) I remember hearing something about the Spirit of God recently. . . OK, how will I know the Spirit?
Glenda: I'll give you this flame, and there will be a wind. Follow the wind as it blows.
Dorothy: Follow the wind as it blows?
Glenda: Let the wind direct you. Follow it. Discover the Spirit for yourself.
(Audience makes noise of the wind.)
Dorothy: Follow the wind as it blows? Follow the wind as it blows. (start looking around) Follow the wind as it blows - Follow, Follow, Follow, Follow the wind as it blows - Follow the wind as it blows through the tree and shakes you knees and makes you sneeze. Follow, Follow, Follow, Follow THE WIND AS IT BLOWS.
(Dorothy finds the scarecrow who is getting set up.)

Narrator: Dorothy started on her journey to find the Spirit. She kept the flame in her hand. Soon she came up to a fellow who seemed to be having a little trouble.

START SKIT

Dorothy: Are you the Spirit?
Scarecrow: No, I'm a scarecrow (slapping himself)
Dorothy: A scarecrow?
Scarecrow: Yes, by the way, why can I understand you? Do you speak scarecrowian?
(Dorothy shrugs as if to say, "I don't know.")
Dorothy: Well, why are you slapping yourself like that?
Scarecrow: (Slapping ants) I hate these ants. They're always crawling all over me! They drive me crazy! I wish I could get rid of them

all. Ooooh, (jumping around) that one tickles.

Dorothy: Ants are very irritating, but they are also very important. I read once that one type of ants even protect trees in tropical rain forests. They pollinate flowers and distribute seeds.
Scarecrow: To me they're gross! I just want to get rid of them!
Dorothy: Maybe we need to learn how to live with them not against them.
(Pause) I am searching for the Spirit. Would you like to help me find the Spirit?
Scarecrow: Sure let's go!
Together: We're off to see the Spirit, the wonderful Spirit of God.
(Audience makes noise of the wind.)

Narrator: So off they skip singing happily. Yet they were unsure of what they were looking for. Then they saw a figure standing near the road.

START SKIT

Dorothy: Hello, are you the Spirit?
Tin Man: No! Get away from me!
Scarecrow: What's wrong with him?
Tin Man: What's wrong with me? You want to know what's wrong with me? I'll tell you what's wrong with me. As you can probably see, I look different from most people, and because of it people don't like me. They treat me as if I were a bat. I come into their presence and they look like they feel weird. I decided that if people aren't going to love me, I'm not going to love them either.
Dorothy: That's awful. You should still try to love people!
Tin Man: I used to have a loving heart, but since I wasn't loved, I found it much easier to hate. . . Hey how come we speak the same language?

(Dorothy and the Scarecrow shrug their shoulders as if to say,
"We don't know.")

Dorothy: We're on our way to find the Spirit. Do you want to go with us?
Tin Man: Well, OK. I'll go.
All: We're off to see the Spirit, the wonderful Spirit of God.
(Audience makes noise of the wind.)

Narrator: Down the road they walked. Soon they see a lion.

START SKIT

Dorothy: Hello, sir. Are you the Spirit?
Lion: No, I'm the Lion. (Acting intimidated) Put 'em up. Put 'em up. Don't talk like that to me, it scares me. I'll fight you with one paw behind my back - standing on one foot - all three together if you want. - Grrrr. Besides, hows come we can understand each other?

(All but the Lion shrug their shoulders as if to say, "We don't know.")

Dorothy: Why are you so scared? Why don't you come with us and talk to the Spirit about it.
Lion: No way - No way - No how - I get even more scared talking to people than listening, don't ya know.
Dorothy: Why are you so scared?

Lion: I'll tell ya. I used to speak like a king, but once I was rejected like so many kinds of critters. Stomped on like a cock-a-roach. Since then, I've been so scared, I can't even talk to myself. Ugh!

All: Please come with us. We will support you while you are talking with him. Maybe he can help you.

Lion: OK, but I ain't promising nuthin'.

All: We're off to see the Spirit, the wonderful Spirit of God. . . .
(Audience makes noise of the wind.)

Narrator: So they all went off together. Then suddenly a wicked witch appeared in front of the group.

Dorothy: Are you the Spirit?

Witch: No. You have the Spirit right there with you. (The witch points at the light.) Haven't you noticed that when the wind blows, the flame doesn't flicker? I want the power of it. I will use it to shed a light on me so people will do what I want them to!

Dorothy: You can't have it because its just not for people like you, but for everyone and everything.

Narrator: Dorothy woke up just as the preacher was reading Acts 2 for the second time

Preacher: Reading from Acts 2, verses 1-4 -

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DIVERSITY - A GIFT OF THE SPIRIT

I. Read I Corinthians 12:1, 4-31a and then make the following observations:

- A. Note the types of professions Paul mentions (vss. 4-11, 27-30).
- B. Next note the various parts of the body mentioned (vss. 14-24a).
- C. What is Paul illustrating with the body talk? (Vss. 12-13)
- D. How do the various parts of the body function together? (Vss. 24b-26)
- E. Finally note what Paul identifies as the source of what a person can do and what Paul calls them. (Vs. 1)

II. Paul talks about various "professions" as gifts of the Spirit.

- A. How do people in the group understand this idea?
- B. Given that "profession" is only one of three facets of diversity is it possible to say -
 - 1. That a person's "history" and "characteristics" are also gifts of the Spirit? and
 - 2. "Diversity" itself is a gift of the Spirit?

III. If time, the group may want to check this idea out by looking at three characters from the Bible:

- A. Moses - Exodus 2:23-4:17
- B. Jeremiah - Jeremiah 1:1-10
- C. Mary, the Mother of Jesus - Luke 1:26-56

Group I

Where spirituality begins

- A. Read Romans 8:9-11
- B. How does this passage describe "spirituality?"
- C. This passage does not use the word "faith." However, how might a person describe what faith is in this passage?

Group II

Spirituality as an experience of others.

- A. Read Psalm 133
- B. Question: Who are the kindred?
 - 1. Prepare an inclusive list.
 - 2. Are members of the group your brothers and sisters? In what way?
- C. What "vision" of inclusivity is found in spirituality?

Group III

Spirituality is experiencing time and eternity (no time)

A. Imagine the history of the location where you are.

1. Each person sit quietly and image what has happened in this physical place.
 - a. Good and bad
 - b. Human and non-human
2. The images might be more fictional than factual, but that is OK.
3. Ask participants to relate their stories.

B. Ask people to respond to this quote:

"Places seem to remember what has happened to them. Creation is never free of its history, and that history is healed through the power of Jesus' resurrection."

C. Talk about the difference between time and eternity.

1. Time is easy to understand
2. No-time (eternity) is difficult to conceive.

D. Read II Corinthians 5:1-5

1. Paul talks about living in tents.
 - a. What is the function of a tent?
 - b. Is a tent only a temporary shelter?
 - c. How many tents does Paul mention in this text? (A this-world and the next-world tent)
2. Paul anticipates eternity. What is it?

E. Spirituality is sensing the here and now and the then and there.

1. Has anyone in the group had the "feeling" of eternity?
2. There may be some interesting stories.

Group IV

Spirituality is openness to change (conversion)

- A. Go around the group and ask if the members have noticed anything about different about themselves and each other having been together for a period of time.
- B. "Conversion" is a word we use for change. How do people feel about this word?
- C. Read II Corinthians 3:17-18.
 1. Note in this passage that the Spirit set us free to be in a state of openness.
 2. Openness is for what reason?

Group V

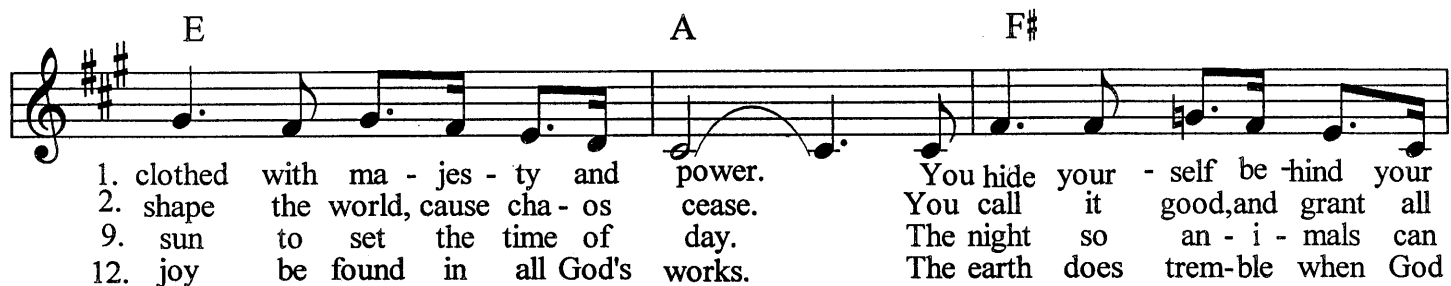
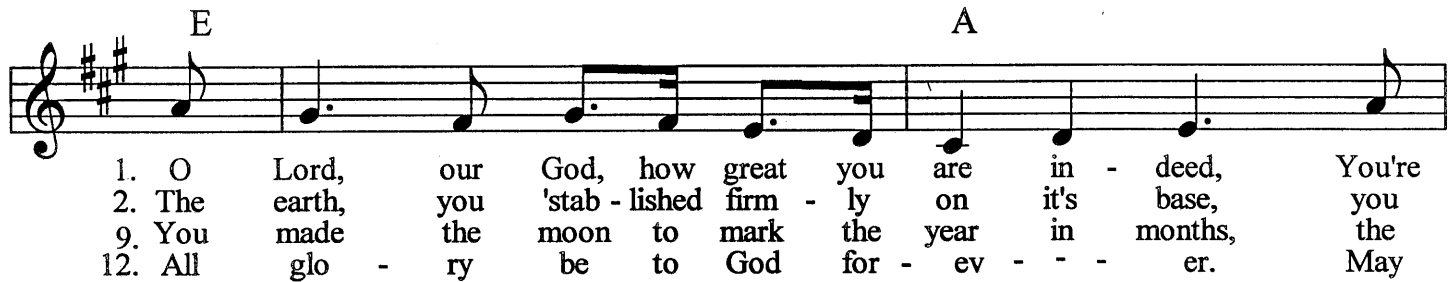
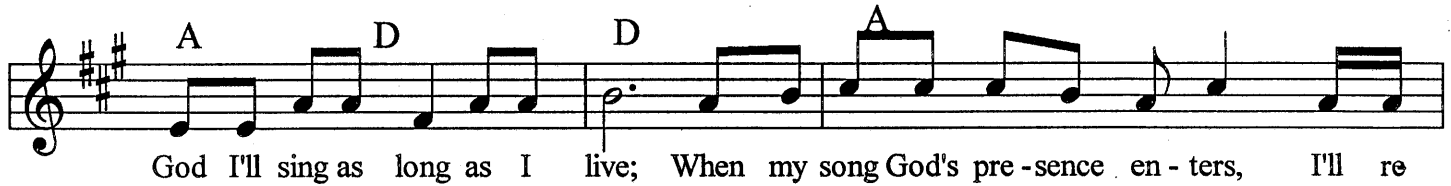
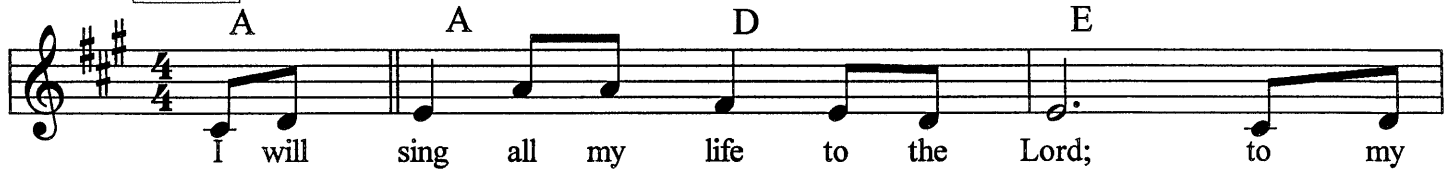
Spirituality is focusing on all of life's systems, spheres, processes.

- A. Read I Corinthians 11:23-26
 1. Reflect on all the "sphere"s that are represented in some way in the sacrament.
 2. List the spheres and try to connect the elements of the sacrament with each one.
 - a. Land sphere - _____
 - b. Water sphere - _____
 - c. Air sphere - _____
 - d. Life sphere - _____
 - e. Mind sphere - _____
 - f. Spirit sphere - _____
- B. When we participate in the sacrament it causes us to look beyond the objects and deeply into what is happening. What is happening?
 1. Review the cycles of how bread and wine come to be from grain to grape.
 2. Note that the grain that gives flour gives itself up for us, and the grape does the same.

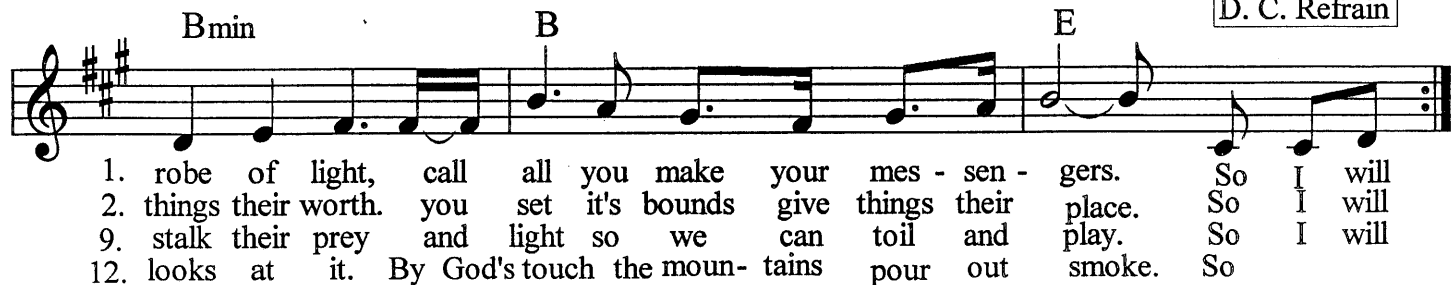
Psalm 104

Word Adaption & Music by J. E. Swanson

Refrain



D. C. Refrain



A D

3. Wa - ter for the trees and the trees for the nests and a
 4. Wa - ter in the val - ley be - tween the hills for the
 5. Wa - ter from heav'n to make plants grow, for the
 6. Wa - ter for the vine, and the vine for the grape and the
 7. Wa - ter from the earth for the o - live tree, for the
 8. Wa - ter for the wheat that gives us flour, for the

E A

3. place for the birds to sing their song.
 4. beasts of the wild to quench their thirst.
 5. cattle in the field and for us to toil.
 6. grape for the wine to make us glad.
 7. oil that makes our fa - ces shine.
 8. bread we bake to give us strength. D.C.

A E A D A E A C#

10. Lord, you make so man - y things, wis - dom you have shown
 11. Crea - tures all re - ly on you, sus - ten - ance to give,

F#min C#7 F#min B E

10. Count - less crea - tures large and small, land and o - cean roam.
 11. What is need - ed you pro - vide, so that all can live.

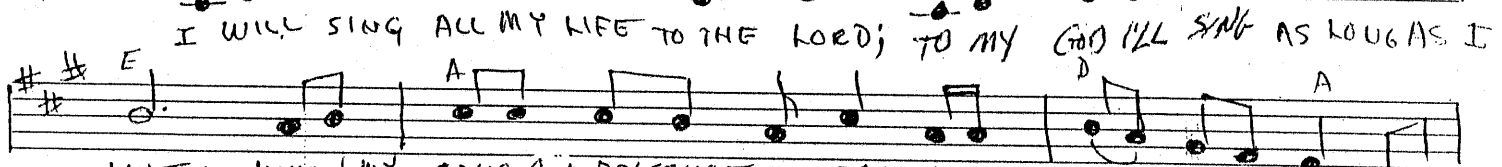
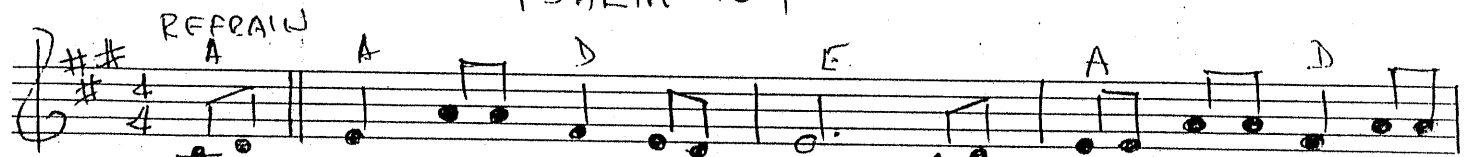
A E A D A E F C F7

10. Ships set sail up - on the sea, fish do play there in,
 11. When you hold your breath from them, all things fail and die;

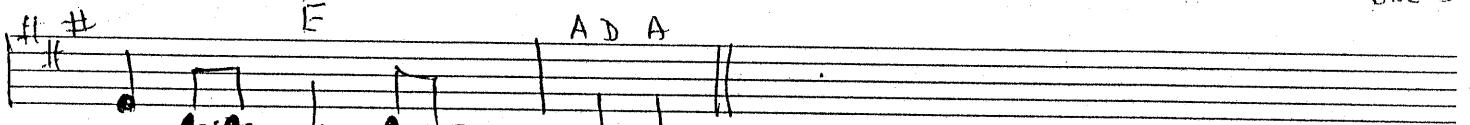
F#min C#7 F#min B E

10. And the mon - sters fro - lic there for your sport in - tends. So Refrain
 11. When you breathe life you re - store, give the earth new life. So Refrain

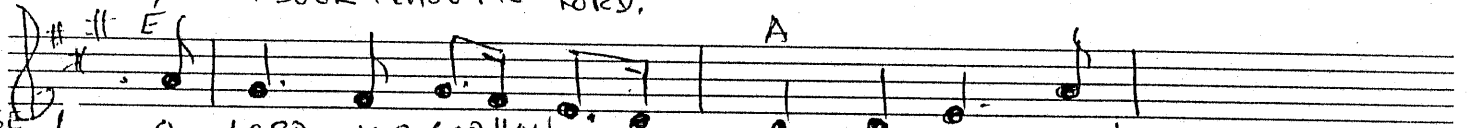
PSALM 104



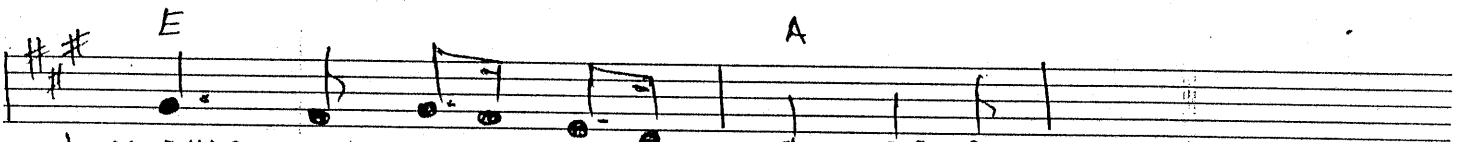
I WILL SING ALL MY LIFE TO THE LORD; TO MY GOD I'LL SING AS LONG AS I LIVE; WHEN MY SONG GOES, PRESENCE ENTERS, I'LL REJOICE IN THE LORD BLESS THE



LORD, O MY SOUL PRAISE THE LORD.

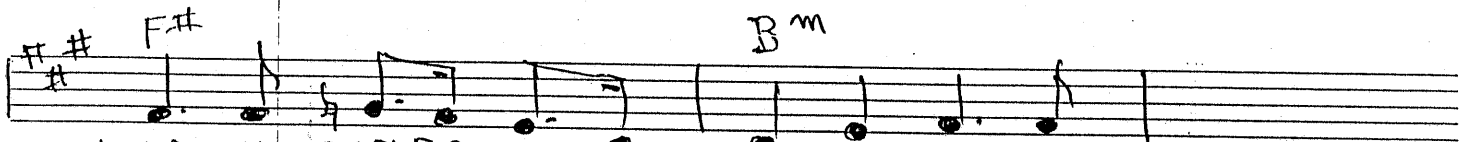


VERSE 1 O LORD, OUR GOD HOW GREAT YOU ARE IN-DEED YOU'RE
2 THE EARTH, YOU' STABLISHED FIRMLY ON IT'S BASE, YOU
9. YOU MADE THE MOON TO MARK THE YEAR IN MONTHS, THE
12. ALL GLO- RY BE TO GOD FOR- EV- ER. MAY



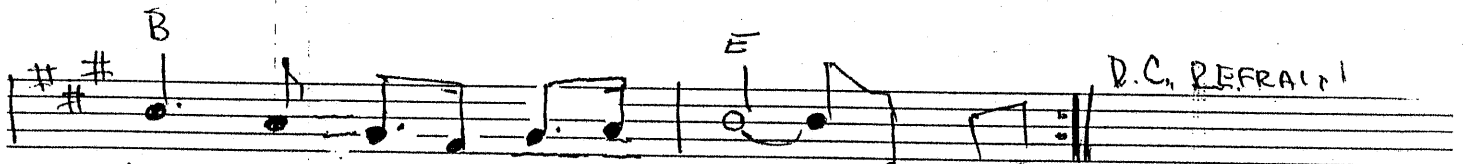
1 CLOTHED WITH MAJES-TY AND POWER YOU
2 SHAPE THE WORLD CAUSE CHA-OS CEASE YOU

4 SON TO SET THE TIME OF DAY. THE
12 JOY BE FOUND IN ALL GOD'S WORKS. THE



1 HIDE YOURSELF BEHIND YOUR ROBE OF LIGHT CALL
2 CALL IT GOOD, AND GRANT ALL THINGS THEIR WORTH YOU

9 NIGHT SO ANIMALS CAN STALK THEIR PREY AND
12 EARTH DOES TREMBLE WHEN GOD LOOKS AT IT BY GOD'S



D.C. REFRAIN

1 ALL YOU MAKE YOUR MESSEN-GERS. SO I WILL.
2 SET ITS BOUNDS GIVE THINGS THEIR PLACE SO I WILL
9 LIGHT SO WE CAN TOIL AND PLAY SO I WILL
12 TOUCH THE MOUNTAINS POUR OUT SMOKE, SO I WILL

3. WATER FOR THE TREES AND THE TREES FOR THE NESTS AND A
 4. WATER IN THE VALLEY BE- TWEEN THE HILLS FOR THE
 5. WATER FROM HEAVEN TO — MAKE PLANTS GROW FOR THE
 6. WATER FOR THE VINE AND THE VINE FOR THE GRAPE AND THE
 7. WATER FROM THE EARTH FOR THE O-LIVE TREE FOR THE
 8. WATER FOR THE WHEAT THAT GIVES US FLOUR FOR THE

3. PLACE FOR THE BIRDS TO SING THEIR SONG
 4. BEASTS OF THE WILD TO QUENCH THEIR THIRST
 5. CATTLE IN THE FIELD AND FOR US TO TOIL
 6. GRAPE FOR THE WINE TO MAKE US GLAD
 7. OIL THAT MAKES OUR FACES — SHINE
 8. BREAD WE BAKE TO GIVE US STRENGTH D.C.

10. LORD YOU'VE MADE SO MANY THINGS WISDOM YOU HAVE SHOWN
 11. CREATURES ALL RE-LY ON YOU, SUSTENANCE TO GIVE
 10. COUNT-LESS CREATURES LARGE AND SMALL LAND AND OCEAN ROAM
 11. WHAT IS NEEDED YOU PRO-VIDE, SO THAT ALL CAN LIVE
 10. SHIPS SET SAIL UP- ON THE SEA FISH DO PLAY THERE - IN
 11. WHEN YOU HOLD YOUR BREATH FROM THEM, ALL THINGS FAIL AND DIE
 10. AND THE MONSTERS FROLIC THERE FOR YOUR SPORT IN - TENDS, SO RE-
 11. WHEN YOU BREATHE LIFE YOU RESTORE GIVE THE EARTH NEW- LIFE. SO RE-