

WONDER - SAUNTER - CELEBRATE
A Service of Worship

(to be read silently)

The day set aside in the Lutheran Church to commemorate St. Francis of Assisi is October 4. Though this day has past, some of his thoughts and his style of life are at the heart of the "hoped-for" experiences of people who visit and use the Outdoor Ministries Center.

First, some background on St. Francis:

"The one saint whom all succeeding generations have agreed in canonizing' was born in 1182, the son of a wealthy cloth merchant. Francis assisted his father in business until the age of 20 when, during a border dispute, he was taken prisoner. Upon his return to Assisi, he became seriously ill and dissatisfied with worldly life. After inner struggle, he decided to devote himself to prayer and the service of the poor. On February 24, 1209, he heard a reading of the Gospel appointed for St. Matthias's Day (Matthew 10:7-19) and interpreted the bidding as a personal call to leave everything. He gathered followers and drew up a simple rule of life. Francis traveled widely, preaching. He died on October 3, 1226. Francis's generosity, simple and unaffected faith, passionate devotion to God and man, his love of nature, and his deep humility have made him one of the most cherished saints in the history of the church." (From The Church Year, Calendar and Lectionary, Contemporary Worship 6, prepared by the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship)

Kenneth Scott Latourette, in A History of Christianity, adds to our understanding of Francis. "Closely related to the poetic strain Francis (several of his writings will be used in the service below) was a love for all creation and a joy in it. One of the stories which his early disciples cherished was that of a sermon which he preached to the birds, exhorting them to praise and love their Creator. They also declared that once when Francis was preaching, the swallows made so much noise that he could not be heard and that on his charging them to be quiet until he had finished, they meekly subsided. At another time he made nests for turtle doves that they might lay eggs and rear their young under the protection of the brethren. This love of nature seems to have increased with the years and never to have been more keen than in his last months when his body was racked by pain.

"The preaching of Francis and his associates was unstudied and direct. It stressed the adoration of God, repentance, generosity, and the forgiveness of wrongs done to one by others. It made much of love for one's neighbours and one's enemies, humility, and abstention from vices, including especially the vices of the flesh. It advocated fasting and encouraged the confession of one's sins to a priest."

The words of T.S. Eliot can describe St. Francis: "A condition of complete simplicity costing not less than everything."

The Outdoor Ministries Center is the property of the Illinois Synod and is to be used for the celebration of God by all of God's creatures. So we stand with the rest of creation singing God's praise. This means an awareness of the created world around us. It is a place to take time, saunter if you would, to look, to discover, to reflect on exterior and interior worlds. We can together grow in faith and in our knowledge of Jesus Christ. We can practice love within the Christian community. We can arrive at new decisions regarding our life plan. In

the simplicity of this place we can take time to listen to God speak.

You are invited today to set your thoughts upon God as you experience His presence in this place. Wonder. Saunter. Celebrate.

THE PRAISE OF GOD WITH ALL CREATION

OPENING SONG "All Creatures of Our God and King"

All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voice and with us sing Alleluia, alleluia!
Thou burning sun with golden beam,
Thou silver moon with softer gleam:

Refrain O praise him, O praise him,
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Thou rushing wind that art so strong,
Ye clouds that sail in heaven along, O praise him, alleluia!
Thou rising morn, in praise rejoice,
Ye lights of evening, find a voice:

Thou flowing water, pure and clear,
Make music for thy Lord to hear, Alleluia, alleluia!
Thou fire so masterful and bright,
That givest man both warmth and light:

Dear mother earth, who day by day
Unfoldest blessings on our way, O praise him, alleluia!
The flowers and fruits that in thee grow,
Let them his glory also show:

And all ye men of tender heart,
Forgiving others, take your part, O sing ye, alleluia!
Ye who long pain and sorrow bear,
Praise God and on him cast your care:

And thou, most kind and gentle death,
Waiting to hush our latest breath, O praise him, alleluia!
Thou leadest home the child of God,
And Christ our Lord the way hath trod:

Let all things their Creator bless,
And worship him in humbleness, O praise him, alleluia!
Praise, praise the father, praise the Son,
And praise the Spirit, Three in one:

INVOCATION

Leader: In the Name of God, the Creator, Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit, the Sanctified, who has brought us together, all of us and all creation around us, to praise His Name.

People: Amen. Amen. Amen.

OPENING VERSICLES

All: How wonderful is Your creation, O God!

Leader: We stand in awe before the vastness of the universe,

People: Whose magnitude and wonder grow in people's minds with every new scientific insight.

Leader: We stand in awe before the miracle of man,

People: Whose staggering achievements are but the meager scratchings of the fullest potential you intended for him.

Leader: We stand in awe before the mystery of creation itself,

People: Which causes people to ask: "How did it all start? Why are we here?"

Leader: We stand in awe before the orderliness of life,

People: As seen in the natural laws governing atoms and humans, the remotest stars and the smallest blades of grass.

Leader: We stand in awe before the unity of spirit,

People: Which we cannot always prove with facts, but which we often can feel with faith and unshakeable certainty.

All: Keep us sensitive to the needs of others. Help us to know Your will for us and for all creation. Guide us, our Father.

SONG

"Wonder-ful World"

Refrain Take care to wonder at the world through which you wander,
Never hurry by an open door.
For you live in a universe full of miracles galore!

Look for God in small things; drops of rain or a grain of sand. Praise him whenever you find Him in anything small.

Look for God in bright things; Someone's eyes or the skies at noon.

Look for God in black things; Storms at dusk or a brother's skin.

Look for God in weak things; Newborn deer or a fearful child.

Look for God in wet things; Dewy grass or a glass of wine.

CANTICLE OF THE SUN

St. Francis of Assisi

Voice 1: This is the praise of created things, which he made when the Lord certified him his kingdom.

Voice 2: Be thou praised, my Lord, with all thy creatures, above all Brother Sun, who gives the day and lightens us therewith. And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendour, of Thee, most high, he bears similitudes.

Voice 3: Be Thou praised, my Lord, of Sister Moon and the stars, in the heaven hast Thou formed them, clear and precious and comely.

- Voice 4: Be Thou praised, my Lord, of Brother Wind, and of the air, and the cloud, and of fair and all weather, by the which Thou givest to Thy creatures sustenance.
- Voice 5: Be Thou praised, my Lord, of Sister Water, who is very serviceable unto us, and humble and precious and clean.
- Voice 6: Be Thou praised, my Lord, of our Brother Fire, by which Thou hast lightened the night, and he is beautiful and joyful and robust and strong.
- Voice 7: Be Thou praised, my Lord, of our Sister, Mother Earth, which sustains and hath us in rule, and produces divers fruit with colored flowers and herbs.
- Voice 1: Praise ye and bless my Lord, and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.

(THE PRAISE OF GOD WITH OUR SENSES
(An experience)

THE PRAISE OF GOD WITH PROCLAMATION AND AFFIRMATION

LESSON

Galatians 5:16-25

PSALM

104

Refrain I will sing all my life to the Lord;
I will sing to Him as long as I live;
When my song His presence enters, I'll rejoice in the Lord;
Bless the Lord, my soul, praise the Lord.

O Lord, our God, how great you are indeed,
You're clothed with majesty and power.
You hide yourself behind your robe of light
Call all you make your messengers. So . . .

The earth you 'stablished firmly on its base,
You shape the world, cause chaos cease.
You call it good and grant all things their worth,
You set its bounds, give things their place. So . . .

Water for the trees, and the trees for the nest,
and a place for the birds to sing their songs.

Water in the valley between the hills
for the beasts of the wild to quench their thirst.

Water from heav'n to make plants grow
for the cattle in the field and for man to toil.

Water for the vine, and the vine for the grape,
and the grape for the wine to make us glad.

Water from the earth for the olive tree
for the oil that makes our faces shine.

Water for the wheat that gives us flour
for the bread we make to give us strength. So . . .

You made the moon to mark the year in months
The sun to set the time of day,
The night so animals can stalk their prey,
And light so men can toil and play! So . . .

Lord, you've made so many things, wisdom you have shown;
Countless creatures, large and small, land and ocean roam.
Ships set sail upon the seas, fish do play therein;
And the monsters frolic there, for your sport intend. So . . .

Creatures all rely on you, sustenance to give!
What is needed You provide, so that all can live.
When you hold Your breath from them, all things fail and die,
When you breathe, life You restore, give the earth new life. So . . .

All glory be to God forever.
May He find joy in all His works.
The earth does tremble when He looks at it;
By His touch the mountains pour out smoke. So . . .

GOSPEL

Matthew 6:19-34

SONG

"Angels Praise Him" (based on Psalm 148)

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Angels praise him
Heavens praise him
Waters praise him
Hallelujah!
Power of the Lord
All praise him for evermore. | 2. Sun praise him,
Moon praise him,
Stars praise him
Hallelujah!
Showers praise him,
Dews praise him, for evermore. |
| 3. Winds praise him
Fire praise him
Heat praise him
Hallelujah!
Winter praise him,
Summer praise him for evermore. | 4. Nights praise him,
Days praise him,
Light praise him,
Darkness praise him,
Lightnings praise him,
Clouds praise him, for evermore. |
| 5. Earth praise him,
Mountains praise him
Hills praise him,
Hallelujah!
Green things praise him
Wells praise him, for evermore. | 6. Seas praise him,
Floods praise him,
Creatures of the Waters praise him,
Birds, beasts, and cattle
Praise him, for evermore. |
| 7. Nations praise him,
Churches praise him,
Saints praise him,
Hallelujah | All his people
Join to praise him,
Forevermore. |

HOMILY

CREED

I believe that God has created me and all that exists. He has given me and still preserves my body and soul with all their powers. He provides me with goods and clothing, home and family, daily work, and all I need from day to day. God also protects me in time of danger and guards me from every evil. All this he does out of fatherly and divine goodness and mercy, though I do not deserve it.

Therefore I surely ought to thank and praise, serve and obey him.

SONG

"O Master Let Me Walk With Thee"

O Master, let me walk with thee
In lowly paths of service free;
Tell me thy secret; help me bear
The strain of toil, the fret of care.

Help me the slow of heart to move
By some clear, winning word of love;
Teach me the wayward feet to stay,
And guide them in the homeward way.

Teach me thy patience; still with thee
In closer, dearer company,
In work that keeps faith sweet and strong,
In trust that triumphs over wrong;

In hope that sends a shining ray
Far down the future's broadening way,
In peace that only thou canst give;
With thee, O Master, let me live.

THE PRAISE OF GOD WITH GIFTS AND PRAYERS

OFFERING

PRAYER by St. Francis of Assisi (See front page)

PRAYERS BY THE COMMUNITY AND LORD'S PRAYER

CLOSING SONG

"Beautiful Savior"

Beautiful Savior, King of Creation, Son of God and Son of Man!
Truly I'd love thee, Truly I'd serve thee, Light of my soul, my joy, my crown.

Fair are the meadows, Fair are the woodlands, robed in flowers of blooming spring;
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer, He makes our sorrowing spirit sing.

Fair is the sunshine, Fair is the moonlight, Bright the sparkling stars on high!
Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer, Than all the angels in the sky.

Beautiful Savior, Lord of the Nations, Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, praise, adoration, Now and forever more be thine.

BENEDICTION