

WINDS OF THE SPIRIT

Nordland Lutheran Church | Paynesville, Minnesota | February 2023

For the Beauty of the Earth - Lent 2023

Ash Wednesday is February 22 this year. That means, Lent is soon upon us! This year's Lenten theme is 'For the Beauty of the Earth'. We will spend time reflecting on various aspects of the magnificence of nature, how God cultivates and encourages our spirit through creation, and how, as people of faith, can care for our home - earth.

Lenten devotionals will be available to pick up at church closer to Ash Wednesday. This devotional is entitled 'For the Beauty of the Earth' (hence our theme), written by Leah Schade. Here is one of her readings from her devotions:

Son of God, Child of Earth

'Son of Enos, son of Seth, son of Adam, son of God.' (Luke 3:38)

Jesus' origin story in Luke shows us that he is both the Son of God and a child of Earth. In Luke 3:23-38, Jesus' ancestors are traced all the way back to Adam. Adam was himself a child of Earth.

From the very soil, God created the first humans, fashioning them out of clay and breath. In fact, Adam's name is a Hebrew pun, a play on words. Adamah in Hebrew is the word for "soil." So Adam is literally an "Earthling."

Yes, the first humans and their progeny sinned and broke the covenant God made with them again and again. But the prophets knew that God was also working within this flawed humanity to bring about a

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). Through the generations, this promise sustained people in their most difficult times. Isaiah reminded the Israelites living in exile far away from their sacred land: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness- on them light has shined" (9:2).

The story of this light shining in darkness is what we tell as Christians. Christ came to redeem not just humanity, but the very Earth that gives rise to all life.

Spiritual practice:

Take a walk on an earthen place a forest path, a meadow, or just a patch of grass between the sidewalk and the street. Take off your shoes if you can (brrr!). Feel the ground beneath your feet. Give thanks to God for this Earth and all her children.

Thank you, Holy God, for the ground beneath our feet. Thank you for the rich soil with nutrients

to sustain life. Thank you for Adam and Eve, their children, and their children's children. Thank you for Jesus, Son of God, Child of Earth. Amen.

Lent Worship Schedule:

- Ash Wednesday - February 22, 7:00 p.m.
- Lent Wednesdays - March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 7:00 p.m.
- Soup and Sandwich Suppers, 6:15 p.m. weekly

