

In Christ, God shared our agony over evil and broke the back of its power by bearing the worst it could do. We acknowledge we share in the interdependence that binds together all God's creation. Yet God gives us power to rule and tame, to order and reshape the world. We hold the earth in trust for future generations of living things. The Lord forbids us to plunder, foul, and destroy the earth. The Lord expects us to produce, to consume, to reproduce in ways that make earth's goodness available to all people and reflect God's love for all creatures. We believe that God is the Maker and ruler of all and that we are to live in freedom and responsibility bound to God's purposes. Amen.

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

#### HYMN #272

"God of the Sparrow"  
(The Presbyterian Hymnal)

#### BENEDICTION

May the Spirit move us to protect ALL that God has made.

**May our Creator show us the way to live more gently, and restore our home.**

Cherish all creatures of earth, sea, and sky

**We will work to make a healthy space for all, until our Risen Savior returns and makes all things new.**

**And let God again say: "It is Very Good!"**

#### POSTLUDE

"Open My Eyes That I May See" Arr. Linda Rickenbacker

† † † † †

#### To Our Visitors

We welcome you to worship today. If you are visiting with us please feel free to speak to the pastor or one of our greeters if you have questions or want more information about Bethpage.

Bethpage is a church committed to children and families and their needs. We have a nursery and childcare for infants through kindergarten. Feel free to keep your child in worship through the Time With the Children if that works for your family. Jaymie Barrier our children's caregiver will take your cell phone number and will text you if your child needs you during worship.



6020 Mooresville Road • Kannapolis NC 28081

704-933-2209

website: [www.bethpagechurch.org](http://www.bethpagechurch.org)

e-mail: [info@bethpagechurch.org](mailto:info@bethpagechurch.org)

Rev. Valerie Hicks

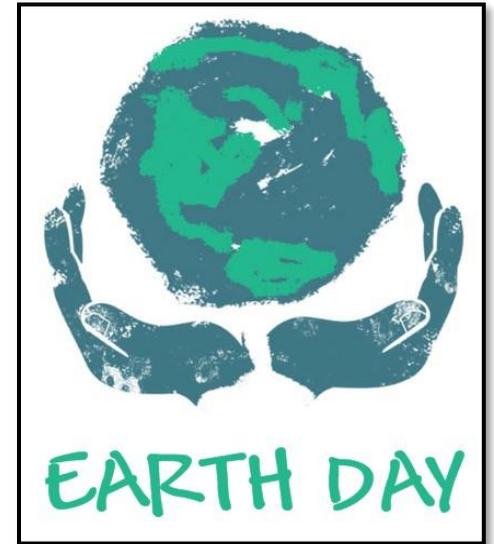
704-712-7533 • [valeriedehicks@gmail.com](mailto:valeriedehicks@gmail.com)

## Welcome to Bethpage Presbyterian Church!

*"A family of faith in Jesus  
Christ, yesterday, today,  
and tomorrow."*

April 23, 2023

10:00 AM



#### PRELUDE

"This is My Father's World"

Arr. Bill Wolaver

#### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

In the beginning, the Spirit of God moved over the waters,

**and God said "Unbind creation and let her out!" and God declared it to be Good.**

God said, "let there be light" and called the light "Day" and the darkness "Night."

**God spoke the word to call the land from the water, pulling the New River down to the depths and raising the Blue Ridge above the waters, and in God's eyes they were Good.**

God's word called to life the sweet potato and the milking cow, the robin and the earthworm,

**the honey bee and the red wolf, the microbe and the trout, and God's heart saw them to be Good.**

Then God spoke a final time, making creatures who carry the divine image: us.

**Forming humans by holy word, male and female together, to tend and steward all that God had made.**

(continued →)

And God saw that it was all Very Good.

**And God declared that it is all Very Good.**

On the seventh day, God rested.

**And on this seventh day, we come to worship and remember our role as partners in creation.**

***HYMN #2037***

*"I Sing Praises to Your Name"*  
(Sing the Faith Hymnal)

***OPENING PRAYER***

***HYMN #267***

*"All Things Bright and Beautiful"*  
(verses 1, 2, & 4, The Presbyterian Hymnal)

***OLD TESTAMENT READING***

Psalm 148 (Pew Bible, p. 582)

***TIME WITH CHILDREN***

***ANTHEM***

*"Look At the World"*

***EARTH DAY LITANY***

Lord, we pray for this world you have made. We ask your blessing on earth, wind, and water. Preserve this sweet place in its course through the cosmos.

**Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Lord, we pray for the community of living creatures. Guide us in our works and ways, that every being may praise you with its life and serve you all of its days.

**Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Lord, we pray for our human family. You named us stewards of this Earth, and we want to tend it and care for it. Teach us to live in harmony together, so we can live in harmony with Earth.

**Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Lord, again and again we seek what is good and do what is bad. We stand in the rubble of many bad choices. We have been forgetful and willful tenants since you first put us in the Garden. Give us strength and courage to change our ways, so this Earth may flourish under our care.

**Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

*(continued →)*

Lord, at the end of all things you will bring us into your household, to make community with you forever. Fill us with your Spirit now, in our days on this Earth, so we may be fit and ready for the new heaven and the new Earth you promise.

**Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Lord, you have called us to be stewards of this wonderful Earth. Guide our effort: refresh the ground and the sea, let the air be soft and sweet. Teach us to care for your Earth, as you care for us. We ask this in Jesus's name. Amen.

***RESPONSE OF PRAISE*** *"Glory To God Whose Goodness Shines on Me"*

***READING***

*"Old Turtle"*

By Douglas Wood

***GIVING GOD OUR OFFERING***

Offertory

*"Arise My Soul Arise"*

Doxology (*sung*)

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Prayer of Dedication

**Thank you, God, for the opportunity to share in your creative and restorative work among people. Because you have blessed us, we have much to give. These offerings express our gratitude and our aspiration to be more fully your own. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.**

***HYMN***

*"In the Bulb There Is a Flower"*

***NEW TESTAMENT READING***

Colossians 1:15-17 (Pew Bible, p. 200)

***MEDITATION*** (in pictures)

Joe & Patsy Howard, photographers

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH***

*from A Declaration of Faith*

**We affirm that the universe exists by the power of God's Word and Spirit. God still works through the processes that shape and change the earth and the living things upon it. There is no event from which God is absent and his ultimate purpose in all events is just and loving. The Creator works in all things toward the new creation that is promised in Christ. Evil is whatever works against the loving purpose of God for human beings and all creation. Natural forces may have evil effects. Sinful human choices produce evil results. Evil may become institutionalized in our social structures.** *(continued →)*