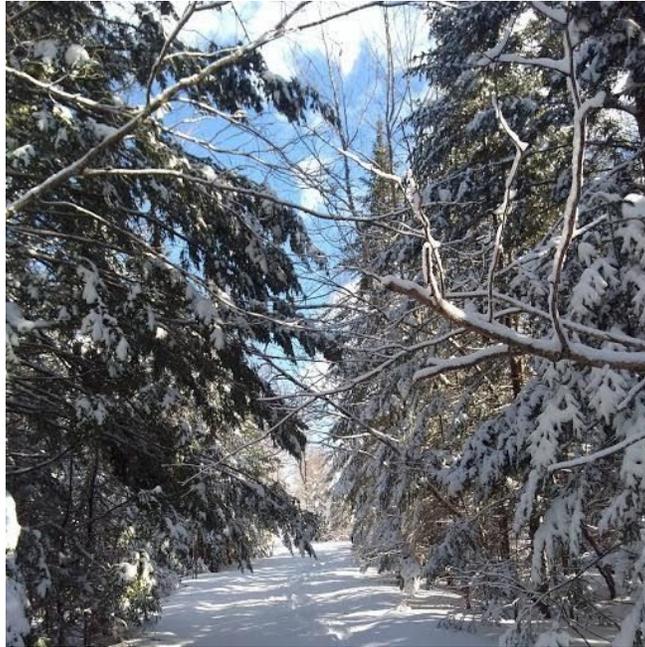


# World Too Beautiful



First and Third Wednesdays

5:45 pm

St. Luke's Episcopal Cathedral

Portland, Maine

# Winter 2021

The Cathedral of St. Luke sits on land our Wabanaki neighbors previously occupied for millennia. As descendants of European immigrants, we acknowledge that we continue to benefit from the exploitation and subjugation of those whom our forebears failed to understand and honor. That failure centuries ago is related to the crises of our times.

As we open ourselves to the Spirit's guidance this evening, we acknowledge the ongoing harm these past actions inflict on the Wabanaki people and mother Earth. By grace, we pledge to work harder at learning from our human and non-human neighbors in hope of healing and wholeness. Such work must involve our advocacy and action on behalf of the Wabanaki as well as the lands, waters, and non-human inhabitants of this beautiful place many call Maine.

If you are joining us from elsewhere in North America and would like to know the names of the indigenous peoples who first occupied the land where you live, please consult the map available [here](#). More about the Episcopal Church's repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery is available [here](#).

Welcome to *World Too Beautiful*. If you are joining us for the first time, we invite you to put your name and location in the chat box.

*Musical prelude*

## **Invocation**

*Leader:* Yours is the day, O God, yours also the night; you established the moon and the sun. You fixed all the boundaries of the earth; you made both summer and winter. *Psalm 74: 15,16*

## **Confession**

*Leader:* Let us confess our sins against God and one another.

*All:* Almighty God, Source of all that is, Giver of every good gift:

You create all people in your image and call us to love one another as you love us. We confess that we have failed to honor you in the great diversity of the human family. We have desired to live in freedom, while building walls between ourselves and others. We have longed to be known and accepted for who we are, while making judgements of others based on the color of skin, or the shape of features, or the varieties of human experience. We have tried to love our neighbors individually while yet benefitting from systems that hold those same neighbors in oppression. Forgive us, Holy God. Give us eyes to see you as you are revealed in all people. Strengthen us for the work of reconciliation rooted in love. Restore us in your image, to be beloved community, united in our diversity, even as you are one with Christ and the Spirit, Holy and undivided Trinity, now and for ever.

*Amen.*

*Leader:* Holy and undivided Trinity, wake us today to what we did not know yesterday. Walk with us as we strive to care for others and for the Earth. Open our eyes to the transformation that is always possible.

## **First Reading**

### **Contemplative Time**

*Please rest in communal silence for about 2 ½ minutes.  
This time is marked at the beginning and the end with a gong.  
Then we move into contemplative music while gazing on the array of  
winter scenery provided in photos.*

## **Second Reading**

### **Chant**

### **Spoken Reflection**

### **Contemplative silence**

*2 ½ minutes marked by the gong*

## **Invitation to Lighting of Candles & Prayer Time**

*Leader:*

Opening our hearts to receive the love of God and then shine it into the world, you are welcome to light a candle or candles. We use this time to include all of our prayers, for the world and the earth; the church; and all those on our hearts and minds. *Please pray out loud or in the quiet of your heart.*

*A musical interlude will conclude these prayers.*

*Leader:* Now together we pray:

*All:* Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,<sup>1</sup>  
Source of all that is and ever shall be,  
Your name be sung with joy!  
Your peace, your justice, your mercy come on earth.  
With the good we need for today, feed us.  
For the hurt we cause, forgive us.  
As we lose the way, restore us.  
When we are enslaved by evil, transform us,  
For you are the way and the truth, and the life, now and forever.  
Amen.

## **Welcome and brief announcements**

*When the service concludes, you are most welcome to linger for a few minutes while we informally greet and check in with each other. If you need to leave, however, go in peace knowing that we are glad you're with us.*

*If you'd like your name added to our email list, would be interested in serving as a reader or reflector, please send a private message to [eprior@cathedralofstluke.org](mailto:eprior@cathedralofstluke.org) or [ecparsons33@hotmail.com](mailto:ecparsons33@hotmail.com)*

## **The Blessing**

*Leader:* May the grace of the love of the stars be ours  
May the grace of the love of the winds be ours  
May the grace of the love of the waters be ours  
In the name of the Word of all life.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the New Zealand Prayer Book by the Rev. Stephen Blackmer, Church of the Woods

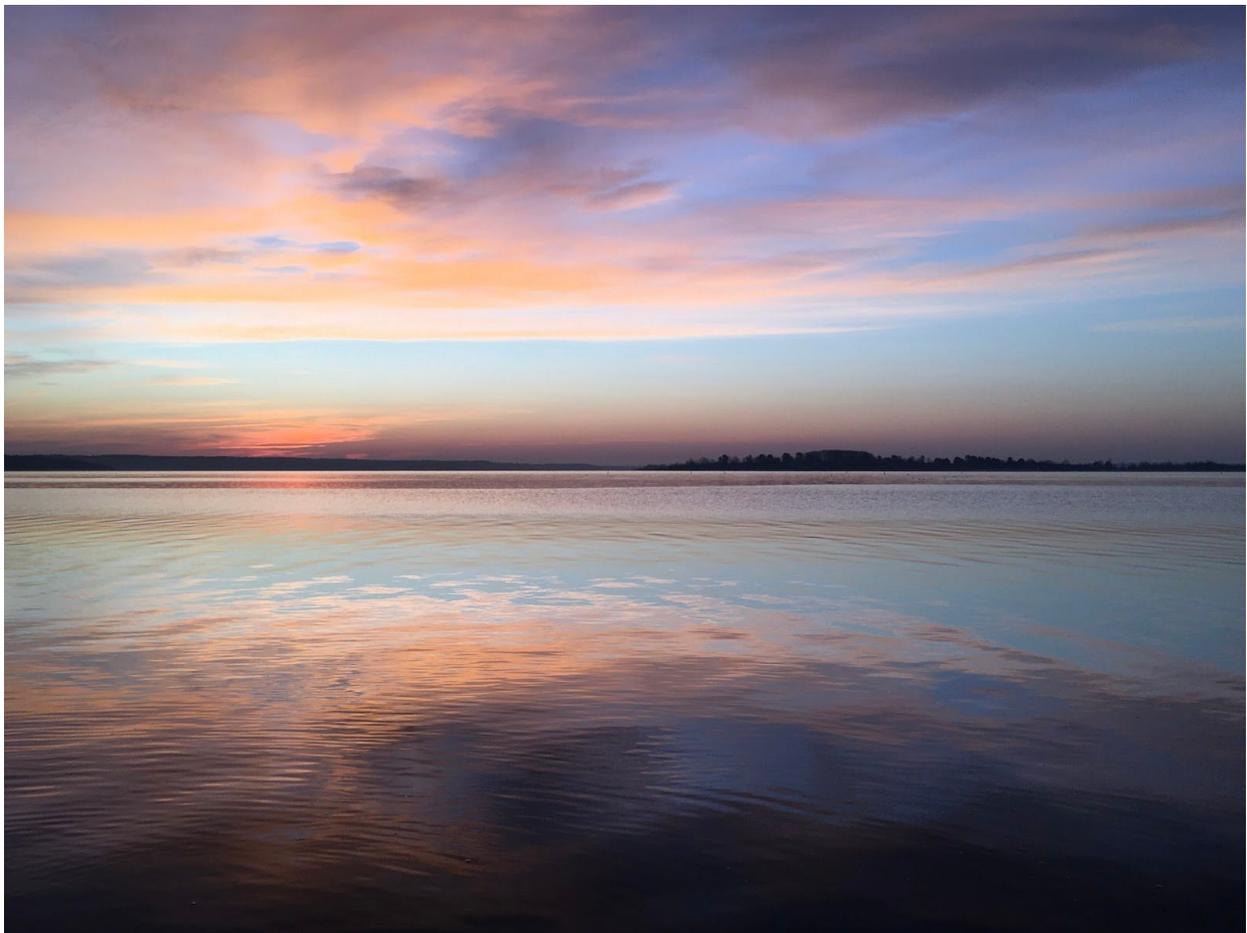
## Chant

## Dismissal

*Leader:* Let us go into the world rejoicing in the power of the Spirit!

*All:* Thanks be to God!

## Musical postlude



# God's World

O world, I cannot hold thee close enough!  
Thy winds, they wide grey skies!  
Thy mists, that roll and rise!  
Thy woods, this autumn day, that ache and sag  
And all but cry with color! That gaunt crag  
To crush! To lift the lean of that black bluff!  
World, World, I cannot get thee close enough!  
Long have I known a glory in it all,  
But never knew I this;  
Here such a passion is  
As stretcheth me apart. Lord, I do fear  
Thou'st made the world too beautiful this year;  
My soul is all but out of me, let fall,  
No burning leaf; prithee, let no bird call.

- Edna St. Vincent Millay

World Too Beautiful is a collaboration between St. Luke's Cathedral and the Episcopal Diocese of Maine.

*Clergy:* The Rev. Eleanor Prior

*Music Director:* Kevin Reams

*Planning Team:* Sarah Braik, Sukie Curtis, Sara Lennon, Elizabeth Parsons, Marby Payson, Barbara Ryland, Charles Skold