

Climate Hope Sunday Worship Resources

Below are liturgical resources offered to accompany a worship service in which congregants are invited to take the Vote for Climate Hope Pledge.

Call to Worship

Leader: Let us behold the wonders of creation. Let us marvel at the infinite artistry of nature.

People: Let our senses take it all in: each tree, each flower, each blade of grass.

Leader: All around us are gifts that have been bestowed upon us by God.

People: Today, we renew our spirits and fill our hearts with gratitude.

Leader: With thanksgiving, we sustain ourselves for ministries of love, care, and justice.

People: As a community of faith and hope, we gather and we rejoice!

A Prayer and a Reading

A Prayer by Howard Thurman

I am surrounded by the love of God. The earth beneath my feet is the great womb that nourishes me. I prayerfully acknowledge all my life, my very body depends upon creation. There is at work in the soil a mystery by which the death of seed is reborn a thousand-fold in newness of life. The magic of wind, sun and rain creates; a climate that nourishes every living thing. It is law and more than law; it is order, and more than order – there is a brooding tenderness out of which it all comes. In the contemplation of the earth, I know that I am surrounded by the love of God. Amen.

“God Bless the Grass” by Malvina Reynolds

Note: The lyrics to this song that was performed by Pete Seeger and others can be adapted into a reading.

God bless the grass that grows through the crack.
They roll the concrete over it to try and keep it back.
The concrete gets tired of what it has to do,

It breaks and it buckles and the grass grows through,
And God bless the grass.

God bless the truth that fights toward the sun,
They roll the lies over it and think that it is done.
It moves through the ground and reaches for the air,
And after a while it is growing everywhere,
And God bless the grass.

God bless the grass that grows through cement.
It's green and it's tender and it's easily bent.
But after a while it lifts up its head,
For the grass is living and the stone is dead,
And God bless the grass.

God bless the grass that's gentle and low,
It's roots they are deep and its will is to grow.
And God bless the truth, the friend of the poor,
And the wild grass growing at the poor man's door,
And God bless the grass.

First Scripture Reading

Isaiah 40: 28-31 (NRSVUE)

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. God does not faint or grow weary; God's understanding is unsearchable. God gives power to the faint and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted, but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

Second Scripture Reading

Hebrews 6: 18-20 (The Message)

We who have run for our very lives to God have every reason to grab the promised hope with both hands and never let go. It's an unbreakable spiritual lifeline, reaching past all appearances right to the very presence of God where Jesus, running on ahead of us, has taken up his permanent post as high priest for us, in the order of Melchizedek.

Sermon Seeds: Lifelines of Hope

The scripture from Hebrews 6 can prompt reflection on how churches can be places where lifelines of hope are grabbed and extended. What are examples of this that you have witnessed in the life of your congregation? Lifelines of hope can be extended both within and beyond the walls of the church. In facing the crises of climate and inequality, churches can be places that generate and share hope. We can do this by following Jesus who has run before us. We can do this by turning love into action. Through the Vote for Climate Hope campaign, we can help make hope contagious. This is an opportunity for us to work together for something truly meaningful and inspiring. As the UCC climate activist and scholar David Orr has noted, “Hope is a verb with its sleeves rolled up.”

Suggested Hymns from the New Century Hymnal

28 For the Beauty of the Earth

403 My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

408 All My Hope on God Is Founded

563 We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky

569 Touch the Earth Lightly