Reverencing Earth

Gathering Prayer

Good and generous God, light up our eyes, speak through our tongues, whisper in our ears, touch us! Make us come alive to the beauty of your world and the beauty of ourselves which you have fashioned. Help us to reverence Earth as we respond to your call to protect and care for it. We praise you and thank you for your gracious gifts to us, in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

Psalm 104

Bless the Lord, my soul!
Lord God, how great you are,
Clothed in majesty and glory,
Wrapped in light as in a robe!

You stretch out the heavens like a tent.
Above the rains you build your dwelling.
You make the clouds your chariot.
You walk on the wings of the wind.
You make the winds your messengers
And flashing fire your servant.

From your dwelling you water the hills;
Earth drinks its fill of your gift.
You make the grass grow for the cattle
And the plants to serve my needs

That I may bring forth bread from the Earth
And wine to cheer my heart;
Oil, to make my face shine
And bread to strengthen my heart.

I will sing to the Lord all my life,
Make music to my God while I live.

May the glory of the Lord last forever!
May the Lord rejoice in all God's works!

Reading: From Helen Keller

"Most of us take life for granted. Only the deaf appreciate hearing; only the blind realize the manifold blessings that lie in sight. It is the same old story of not being grateful for what we have until we lose it; of not being conscious of health until we are ill. But I, who am blind, can give one hint to

those who see: use your eyes as if tomorrow you would be stricken.

And the same method can be applied to the other senses:
hear the music of voices, the song of the bird,
the mighty strains of an orchestra, as if you
would be stricken deaf tomorrow.

Touch each object you want to touch as if tomorrow
your tactile sense would fail.

Smell the perfume of flowers,
taste with relish each morsel as if tomorrow you could
never smell and taste again.
Make every sense glory in the facets of the pleasure and beauty which the world reveals. Thus, at last, you will really see, and a new world of beauty will open up before you."

Reflection / Sharing

*God's gift of Earth provides a banquet,
and so many people are starving.

**Normally*
we do not so much look at things
of Earth
as overlook them.

*Let us not look back in anger
nor forward in fear
but around in awareness
as we reverence Earth.

Closing Prayer

Loving God, thank you for all things:
this world of ours with its unending, unlimited beauty.
Thank you for the smallest details of our lives:
the lights and shadows, the rough and smooth, the pale and bright - all the ordinary things that we so often let go by unnoticed.
We praise you for all, in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen