

May 31, 2026

Genesis 1:1-2:4a

This Is Good

In the beginning, God created ... the heavens, the earth, the creatures of the land and sea, day and night, and then man and woman. After each phase of creation, we are told that God "saw that it was good."

Repeating the phrase "it was good" isn't some literary technique to make the story more poetic and profound. It is a theological statement of how carefully God thought through each phase of Creation, marking each finished phase as completed — and good. As God brought the ball of chaos into diverse, colorful life, God gave it a divine stamp of approval.

It's no wonder the early saints held God's act of creation in great reverence and awe — more so than we tend to do today.

St. Basil (329-379) wrote that he wanted "creation to penetrate you with so much admiration that wherever you go, the least plant may bring you clear remembrance of the Creator." While St. John Chrysostom (347-470) said, "From the creation, learn to admire the Lord!" And St. John of Damascus (675-749) simply and powerfully stated what was completely obvious to him: "The whole earth is a living icon of the face of God."

Let that last saintly observation linger in your heart for a bit. And as it does, ask yourself what your days would be like if you viewed all of Creation as a living icon of the face of God.

I can tell you that after lingering on St. John of Damascus' words, I went for my daily walk into the Vermont woods with fresh eyes. Every budding leaf, swaying grass blade and buzzing bee seemed different when viewing them as "a living icon of the face of God."

I began understanding more deeply God's assessment of each little thing created as being "good." But beyond the natural world, I continued my "it is good" quest to see all of Creation as the living icon of the face of God. And that meant looking into the eyes of each human I passed as I walked down the grocery store aisles getting my weekly shopping done. Rather than being focused on where I could find pinto beans, I focused on people. I noticed how some faces seemed tired, some seemed agitated, some seemed peaceful, others seemed radiant. Yet no matter what the expression, all the faces seen with my "it is good" lenses were all stunningly beautiful. It is amazing how different the world seems when seen as a living icon of the face of God.

In the beginning, God created ... you and me. May we remember that we each bear the imprint of the divine on our souls. And despite our flaws, God still deems that what has been made is indeed good.

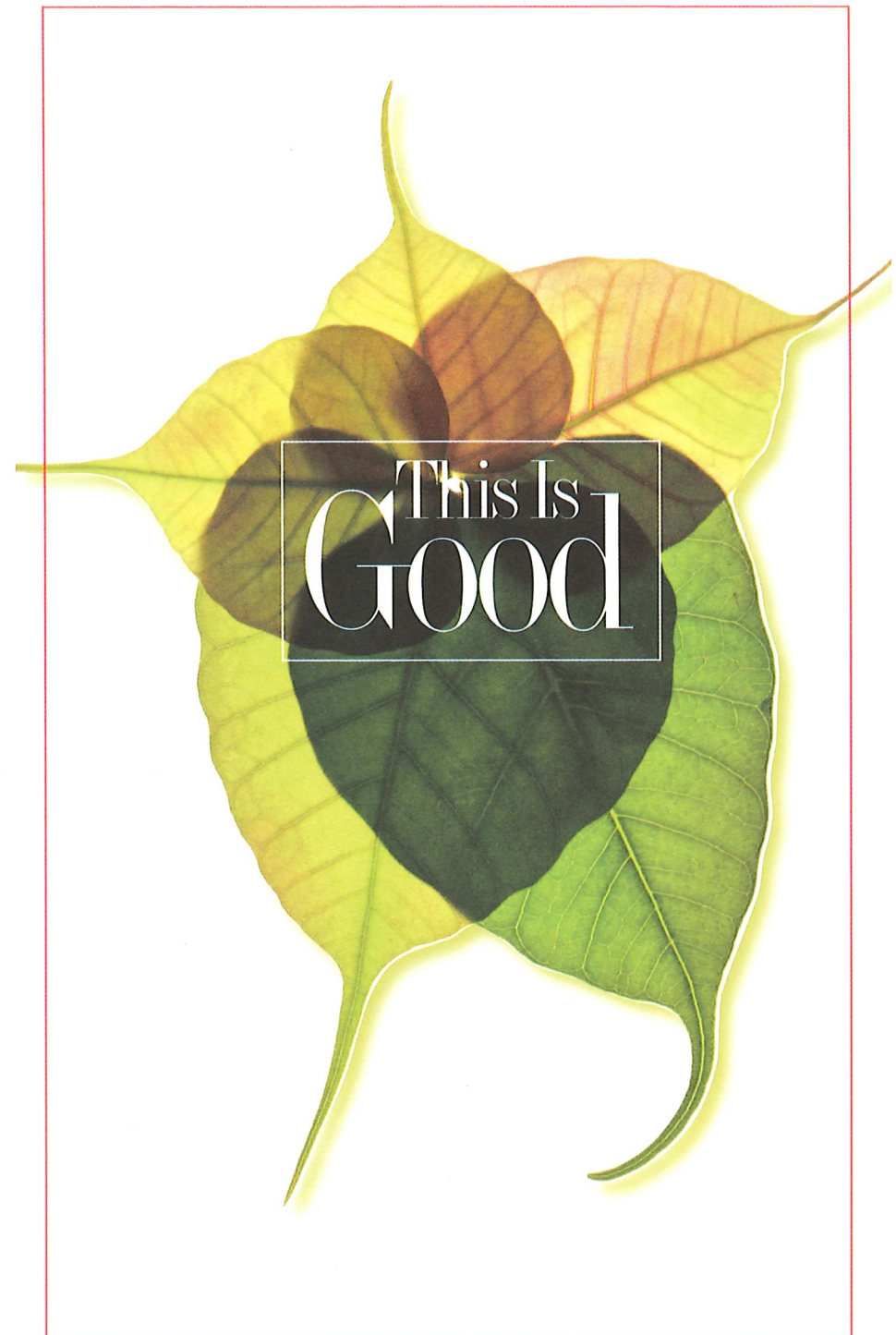
Creating God, Your handiwork is perfection. Forgive us for all the times that we have taken Your beauty for granted. Forgive us for the times we might have marred Your pristine canvas with the blotches of sin. May this day we begin to see everything in this world as a living icon of Your face. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's Sunday Bulletin.)



8 1/2" x 11" UCC SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE

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Bismarck-Mandan Area
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



1200 E Highland Acres Rd, Bismarck, ND 58501

701-223-2915 www.uccbismarck.org

May 31, 2026 at 10 AM Worship

First Sunday after Pentecost

Pastor: Rev. Gretchen Deeg | Liturgist: Shaylee, Addison & Jovi Weil

Music: Boram Chern | Video: Wilhelm Eisenbraun

*Rise in body or in spirit.



WELCOME TO WORSHIP!

*NO MATTER

Sing! 35

No matter who, no matter what

No matter where you are on the journey of life;

You're welcome, welcome in this place.

Accepted and welcomed by God's grace.

*CALL TO WORSHIP & OPENING PRAYER

All: We gather in the presence of God!

*HYMN Let Me Enter God's Own Dwelling NCH 67 v. 1-4

SCRIPTURE 2 Corinthians 13:11-13

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Children are invited to remain in worship Sunday School will resume in the fall.

GRADUATE RECOGNITION

Eden Kraft, Annie Gagner, Shaylee Weil, Ireland Williams

OFFERING

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, our heavenly host;

Creator, Savior, Holy Ghost. Amen.

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of Creation, you call us to reflect your goodness, yet we confess that we fall short. Where you speak light, we cling to shadows. Where you send us to make disciples, we hesitate, doubt, or turn inward. Where you invite us into community, we choose our own way instead of the ways of peace. Forgive us. Renew us. Wash us in your grace, that we may rise to walk in newness of life. In Christ's name we pray! Amen.

*GLORIA

Glory be to the Creator, and to the Christ, and to the Holy Ghost:
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.

SCRIPTURE Genesis 1:1-2:4 & Matthew 28:16-20

SERMON

HYMN Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love NCH 498 v. 1-3

BAPTISM Ireland Williams
We covenant with you. We rejoice in the hope and love which you represent. We unite with you to labor and pray for your spiritual growth, that you may know and trust the goodness of God. On behalf of the whole church of Jesus Christ, we welcome you.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*HYMN Wonder of Wonders, Here Revealed NCH 328

*CARRY GOD'S LOVE

Permission to stream the music in this service obtained from [ONE LICENSE](https://www.onelicense.com), License #732302-A.



Thank You for Worshiping with Us!

Your offerings are essential for the ongoing ministry of this congregation. Donations can be made using this QR code, online at www.uccbismarck.org/donate, mailed to the church, or placed in the offering box.

Sponsor a Sunday

June 7, 28, July 5, & 19 are available. If you would like to sponsor a future Sunday, contact the church office at 223-2915 or visit uccbismarck.org/donate. Sponsorships are \$500.

Diaper Drive

We're partnering with Missouri Slope United Way to collect diapers and wipes for families in need. Donations can be placed in the tote in the welcome area from June 1-12.



Rhubarb Ready to Pick

The rhubarb plant in the boulevard is big, beautiful, and waiting for you to pick some, take it home, and cook with it or freeze it.



Summer Service Opportunities

Contact the Church Office or Sign Up at the Bulletin Board

Feed hungry families at the largest daily meal in Bismack!



Bismarck UCC is sponsoring and serving the Banquet at the Dream Center on **June 3**. We need 1-3 more volunteers to make it happen! The food preparation shift is from 1-4pm and the serving shift is from 4:30-7:30pm.

Offer a Warm Welcome at Capitol City Pride!

Bring your smile to the Bismarck UCC booth at Capitol City Pride on **June 13**. 2-hour shifts are available from 11am – 4pm. We'll have facepainting, bracelet making, and more at our UCC booth.

Have a blast with the kids at Vacation Bible School!



Be a teacher, a craft leader, a story time reader, or a snack expert at this year's True North Vacation Bible School from Aug. 9-12, 5:30-7:30pm at Lutheran Church of the Cross.

Party Plan the Highland Acres Block Party!

This is your official invitation to join the Block Party planning team! Mark your calendars for this year's party on **August 12** and check out the queen size quilt in the fellowship hall available at this year's Block Party quilt raffle. Contact the church office if you'd like to be a party planner.

THIS WEEK'S OPPORTUNITIES: May 31 - June 7

Sunday:	11 AM Fellowship 11 AM Christian Education (in-person & online) 12 Noon Online Fellowship
Tuesday:	1 PM Quilting/Knitting
Wednesday:	1 PM Serve the Banquet 2 PM Hay Creek Lodge Ministries
Thursday:	Placerville UCC Family Camp Departure 6 PM Bible Study (in-person & online)
Friday:	9 AM Bible Study (in-person & online)
Sunday:	10 AM Sunday Worship 11 AM Fellowship 12 Noon Online Fellowship Placerville UCC Family Camp Return

What's with the bags?

Stewardship is selling bags for \$10. For every bag purchased, one will be donated to Ministry on the Margins. A great way to give and receive at the same time!

MAKE YOUR VOTING PLAN

- Election Day: June 9, 2026
- Plan how you'll vote: by mail, early in-person, or in person on Election Day.
- Have your North Dakota ID ready.
- Research your candidates and ballot measures on VOTE411.org.



OUR PRAYER LIST

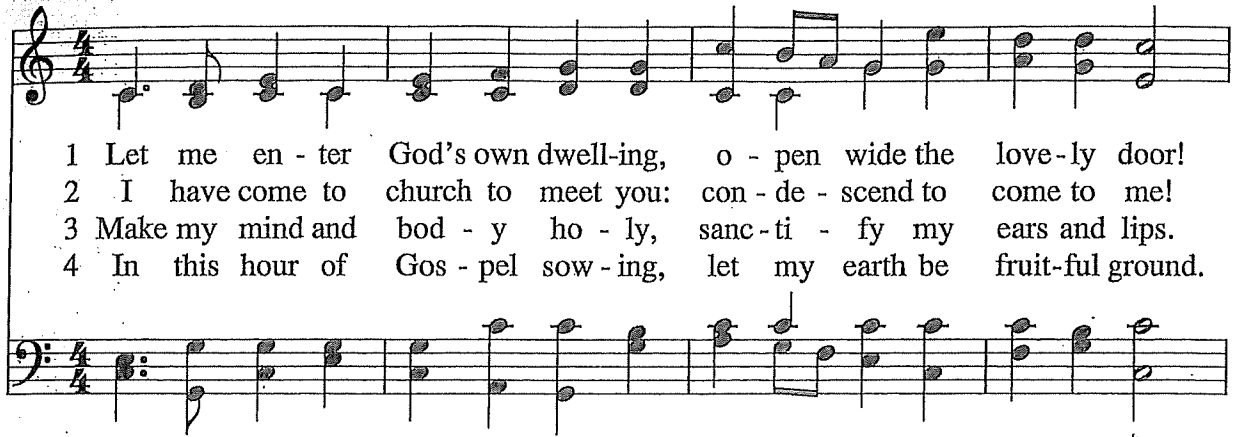
Louise Zuern, Family of Sharon Vanorny (Hannah's mother), Gayle Klopp, Ivan Sadlier (Autum's uncle), Lacy Peters (Dawn Archer's cousin), Jody Miller, Kayla Bruning, Bella Bruning, Gellsia (Oliver Gagner's daughter), Sandy Kirby (Autum's Sister), Matthew Nitschke, Sheyla Munoz (Autum's sister-in-law), Tasha Hausauer (John Sauter's cousin), Hayes & Cooper (Brandon & Tasha Domagala's sons), Amanda Wilson, Frank Picard, Carla Christenson (Monica Klein's mother), Pam Crawford, Fredrick Krause (Kerri Kraft's grandfather), Colby (Janice & Gary Sather's son), Robyn Richter (Kyle Eisenbraun's aunt), Doretta Reule, Howard Etson, Camille Grothier, East Timor, Refugees

*Contact the church office to be added to our weekly prayer list.

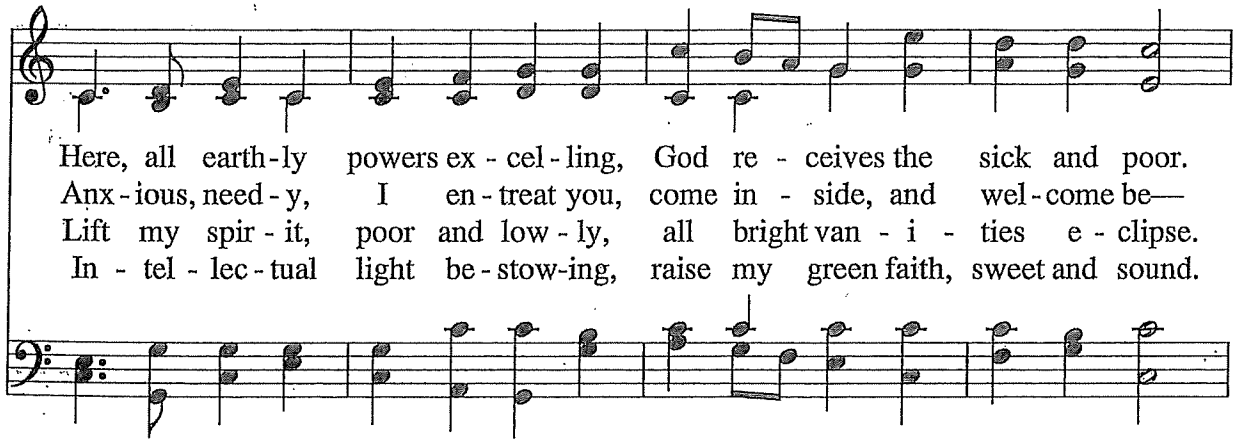
Let Me Enter God's Own Dwelling

Benjamin Schmolck, 1732

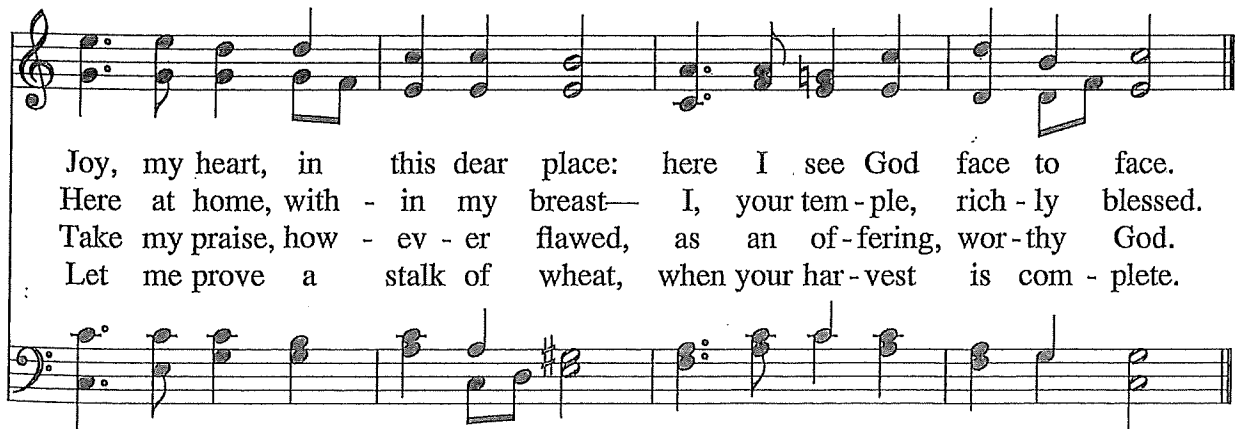
Transl. Madeleine Forell Marshall, 1993



1 Let me en - ter God's own dwell - ing, o - pen wide the love - ly door!
 2 I have come to church to meet you: con - de - scend to come to me!
 3 Make my mind and bod - y ho - ly, sanc - ti - fy my ears and lips.
 4 In this hour of Gos - pel sow - ing, let my earth be fruit - ful ground.



Here, all earth - ly powers ex - cel - ling, God re - ceives the sick and poor.
 Anx - ious, need - y, I en - treat you, come in - side, and wel - come be—
 Lift my spir - it, poor and low - ly, all bright van - i - ties e - clipse.
 In - tel - lec - tual light be - stow - ing, raise my green faith, sweet and sound.



Joy, my heart, in this dear place: here I see God face to face.
 Here at home, with - in my breast— I, your tem - ple, rich - ly blessed.
 Take my praise, how - ev - er flawed, as an of - fering, wor - thy God.
 Let me prove a stalk of wheat, when your har - vest is com - plete.

5 Re - in - force me, weak and fail - ing,
 mak - ing sure your pre - cious word—
 (Thieves and e - vil un - a - vail - ing)—
 lives with - in my heart se - cured.
 Shin - ing word, my star - ry guide,
 plant - ed for me, deep in - side.

6 Let me hear when you com - mand me,
 let me leap to do your will.
 When I wan - der, rep - ri - mand me,
 com - fort me when I lie ill.
 In the hour of si - lent dread,
 feed me with your heav - en - ly bread.

Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love

John 13:1-20; Gal. 5:13-14

Tom Colvin, 1969; rev. 1994

Refrain
Unison

Je - su, Je - su, fill us with your love, show

us how to serve the neigh-bors we have from you.

1 Knelt at the feet of his friends, si - lent - ly wash - ing their
 2 Neigh-bors are rich and poor, var - ied in col - or and
 3 These are the ones we should serve, these are the ones we should
 4 Lov - ing puts us on our knees, show - ing our faith by our
 5 Kneel at the feet of our friends, si - lent - ly wash - ing their

feet, Je - su, you act - ed as ser - vant to them.
 race, neigh-bors are near and far a - way.
 love; all these are neigh-bors to us and you.
 deeds, serv - ing the neigh-bors we have from you.
 feet, this is the way we should live with you.

This African folk melody was presented to the Church at Chereponi, Northern Ghana, by Ghanaian musicologist, A. A. Mensah, when United Church of Christ missionaries, Al and Sue Krass were serving there. Like Tom Colvin, a Scottish missionary in neighboring Tamale, Al Krass was encouraging the making of hymns to indigenous melodies. Tom Colvin wrote these words to this adapted form of the melody in dedication to the Church at Chereponi.

Tune: CHEREPONI Irr. with refrain
 Ghanaian folk song; adapt. Tom Colvin, 1969
 Arr. Jane Marshall, 1982

Wonder of Wonders, Here Revealed

Jane Parker Huber, 1980

1 Won - der of won - ders, here re - vealed;
 2 Here in this sac - ra - ment we see
 3 This child of God, though young or old,
 4 Now we our vow of faith re - new,

God's cov - e - nant with us is sealed.
 God's grace un - bound, for all, for me!
 we wel - come now in - to Christ's fold,
 stretch wide our sights to glob - al view,

And long be - fore we know or pray,
 May we re - spond with joy - ful praise
 To know with us God's lov - ing care;
 And claim with Chris - tians far and near

God's love en - folds us ev - ery day.
 in lov - ing ser - vice all our days.
 here all our joys and sor - rows share.
 a larg - er fam - i - ly held dear.