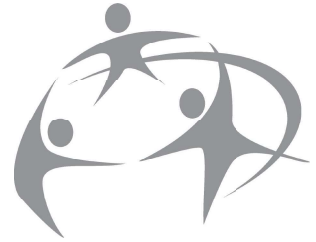


Week Two: *A Garden in Eden*



Scripture Text: Genesis 2:4-19

Focus Statement

God formed a man and animals from the dust. God planted a garden home for them. God put the man in the garden to care for it and brought animals to him for naming.

Song Suggestions

HWB 50	<i>Praise the Lord, Sing Hallelujah</i>	STJ 52	<i>Jesus, Help Us Live in Peace</i>
HWB 76	Je Louerai l'Éternel ("Praise, I Will Praise You, Lord")	STJ 81	<i>Take, O Take Me as I Am</i>
HWB 156	<i>All Things Bright and Beautiful</i>	STS 18	Erfreue dich ("Be Joyful")
HWB 299	<i>New Earth, Heavens New</i>	STS 49	<i>I Will Come to You in the Silence</i>
HWB 325	<i>Creating God, Your Fingers Trace</i>	STS 115	<i>Beauty for Brokenness</i>

GATHERING

Call to Worship

Leader: Gardening God,

Side 1: who plants us into families and church homes,

ALL: *give us joy in our work of serving and observing our world*

Side 2: that, as a church in this place of worship,

we may see your kingdom come,

your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

ALL: *In the name of Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit we pray. Amen.*

Theme Psalm

PRAYING

Prayer of Confession

Holy God,

In your presence we know ourselves to be named good, beloved, and friend.

In your presence we are known fully and loved deeply.

We confess our tendency to turn and name others

as strangers or aliens,

enemy or terrorist,

removing the possibility of interaction,

the opportunity of relationship.

Forgive us our neglect

and launch us into your work of healing relationships.

God of hope, even though we keep closing our eyes,

keep opening them up to possibility, to renaming

and reimagining the garden we inhabit.

In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Holy God,
who has named us “beloved children of God,”
we gather in this place named (*name of your church*) by those who have gone before us—
this place where we have prayed so often and so hard,
this place where you have heard us time after time.
We thank you for your presence,
so evident through the giftedness of our Sunday school teachers, deacons, and elders,
through the dependability of those who turn on lights and vacuum carpets,
through those who show up and pay attention.

We thank you for the way the Bible, the story of your word, names us, calling us to new ways of thinking,
acting, and understanding.

We gather before you to name those whom we know and love who are ill, for those for whom grief is fresh,
for those who struggle with addictions.

We gather before you to name our communities and neighborhoods and cities and ask that you bless them,
heal their brokenness, and encourage their energy for change.

We gather before you to name our world, its countries and citizens. Bless them, bring peace where there is
conflict, hope where there is despair, and food where there is hunger.

We gather all our prayers together, the spoken and unspoken, and pray the prayer that you taught us:
Our Father . . .

LISTENING

Children’s Worship

Sermon Seeds

Genesis 2 invites humans to “till and keep” the garden (v. 15). Bible scholar Ellen Davis points out that these two words are not agricultural terms but worship terms. A closer reading would translate them as “serve and observe.” What would it mean to serve the garden? What would that look like? How do we share power with other parts of creation? Names identify and describe people and things. Asking someone’s name is the first thing we do when building a relationship. What was behind God asking Adam to name the animals? If by naming the animals we are partnering with God in creation, how do we continue to be cocreators with God? What is the significance of names? What names/labels do we put on people, and how can we change inappropriate or hurtful labels that have been placed on us or we have placed on others? Why do we end our prayers “In the name of Jesus”?

RESPONDING

Benediction

May the Lord, who has named you, bless you,
reminding you who you are, a beloved child of God.
May Jesus, who walks alongside, bless us,
calling us from fear to peace.
May the Spirit, who energizes, bless us,
opening us to possibilities of faith, hope, and love.
Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.