



Earth Sabbath Celebration

SUMMER SOLSTICE, June 26, 2011, 7 pm, Community UCC, Raleigh

COMMUNITY BUILDING –

Welcome and greet each other

Make wreathes for each other in pairs and place on each other's heads?

Come together in circle and select bows/greens to hold during the service

Share names and faith affiliations (optional)

EARTH SABBATH CELEBRATION

(Kathy)

Welcome including explanation of NCIPL ESC and brief mention of other programs available at no charge to faith communities!

OPENING CHANT Psalm 19: 1-6

Standing in two groups facing each other, genders mixed
(Majestically East and West groups call out to each other)

East: The heavens are telling the glory of God;
And the firmament proclaims God's handiwork.

West: Day to day pours forth speech,
And night to night declares knowledge.

East: There is no speech, nor are there words;
Their voice is not heard;

West: Yet their voice goes out through all the earth,
And their words to the end of the world.

Men: In the heavens God has set a tent for the sun,
Which comes out like a bridegroom for his wedding
canopy,
And like a strong man, runs its course with joy.

Women: Its rising is from the end of the heavens,
And its circuit to the end of them;
And nothing is hid from its heat.

West: The heavens are telling the glory of God;
And the firmament proclaims God's handiwork.

East: Day to day pours forth speech,
And night to night declares knowledge.

West: There is no speech, nor are there words;
Their voice is not heard;

East: Yet their voice goes out through all the earth,
And their words to the end of the world.

ALL: Their voice goes out through all the earth,

All may be seated

Reader 1

CANTICLE OF THE SUN

Most High, all-powerful, all-good Lord,
All praise is Yours, all glory, all honor and all blessings.
To you alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no mortal lips are worthy to pronounce Your Name.
Praised be You my Lord with all Your creatures,
especially Sir Brother Sun,
Who is the day through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor.
Of You Most High, he bears the likeness.

**ALL: He is beautiful and radiant with great splendor.
Of You Most High, he bears the likeness.**

St. Francis of Assisi

Musical Interlude SINGING TOGETHER – Morning Has Broken v 1,3 as Call and Response

Linda

The Sun by Mary Oliver

Have you ever seen
anything
in your life
more wonderful

than the way the sun,
every evening,
relaxed and easy,
floats toward the horizon

and into the clouds or the hills,
or the rumpled sea,
and is gone--

and how it slides again

out of the blackness,
every morning,
on the other side of the world,
like a red flower
streaming upward on its heavenly oils,
say, on a morning in early summer,
at its perfect imperial distance--
and have you ever felt for anything
such wild love--
do you think there is anywhere, in any language,
a word billowing enough
for the pleasure

that fills you,
as the sun
reaches out,
as it warms you

as you stand there,
empty-handed--
or have you too
turned from this world--

or have you too
gone crazy
for power,
for things?

~~~~~

## **Preparing for Movement**

*(Kathy)*

### **Reading: Words by Gerard Manley Hopkins**

Today and every day we are the meeting place of heaven and earth, soul and body, breath and blood.

And we celebrate you, Great Spirit, with every part of our being at the beginning of this season.

You, Great Spirit, are Eternal, while remaining within the passage of time, measuring our span in numbers.

Teach us to take joy in the earth and the heavens.  
Let us rejoice in our mortality and its loves  
and sing aloud when we reach out for the stars.

Let us dance when we turn our face toward the sun,  
for by that we prove we are God's children.

**ALL: Let us dance when we turn our face toward the sun!**

## MOVEMENT

### Reading from Congregation of Abraxax (adapted)

(Reader 2)

Ancient sun, eternally young,  
giver of life and source of energy,  
In coal and oil, in plant and wind and tide,  
in spiritual light and human embrace,  
You kindle the heavens, you shine within us  
(for we are suns with hearts afire-  
we light the world as you light the sky  
and find clouds within whose shadows are dark);  
We give thanks for your rays, and clouds your rays draw up,  
for the sky route you travel faithfully as we traverse the globe,  
For our journeys of earth which draw us together,  
for our journeys of dreams which sustain us when apart.  
Ancient of Days, you rule the nations,  
our birth and death: our journeys you have wrought.  
Loam we become for your fertile spirit.  
Your cosmic light penetrates our depths;  
In your majesty we are bound to one another.  
We gather this morning (*evening*) as did people of old  
With joys and woes, varied gifts and diverse needs.  
We offer these in thanksgiving for life  
and share them through your generations on earth.  
Congregation of Abraxas

(Linda)

**TIME FOR SHARING:** Invite people to share favorite memories of summer, special feelings about the sun, solstice, even worries or care about the sun

### Musical interlude to end time of sharing

#### Readings Various

(Reader 3)

Holy are you, O God, who from your burning heart drew forth a fiery ball and flung it into space. Your laughter shook the empty cosmos and echoed again and again until the darkness of space resounded with your love and with fire. You drew forth that same fire and seeded it like yeast in each atom, plant, and animal, each bird, fish, man, and woman. And you gave us a special star, our sun, aflame with life and energy to make our planet green and bright, illumined with your love and passion. As we celebrate this day, open our eyes to the countless wonders and to the sparks of fire-life that you have planted in each of us. Send forth your Holy Spirit to ripen our hearts as the sun ripens the grain; to sweep us off our feet and dance us through our days. May this day be aglow with sun-fire and God-light as we once again begin this season of revelation.

**ALL: All of Creation celebrates with abandoned joy the glory of the sun and its lingering light. The days will only grow shorter now.**

(Reader 4)

So I commend the enjoyment of life, because nothing is better for a man under the sun than to eat and drink and be glad. Then joy will accompany him in his work all the days of the life God has given him under the sun. (Ecclesiastes 8:15)

**ALL: Life is sweet, and it pleases the eyes to see the sun.**

*(Reader 5)*

Great Spirit of the Universe who made this day to shine with the brightness of your light,  
set us aflame with the fire of your love  
and bring us to the radiance of eternal light.  
Father of Fire, Mother of Mystery,  
teach us the lesson of the Summer  
as all comes to the height of life,  
Reveal to us the message of the sun,  
whose energy, whose color, whose transformative power  
are like none other in the whole of Creation.

**ALL: No creature, no least being but catches fire from him, Amen.**

## **REFLECTIONS ON THE STEADFAST SUN**

*(Reader 6)*

As surely as the setting sun rises again after the long night,

**Whatever is lost will return to us,  
What we sow will be what we reap,  
We will return to the earth just as we were made, bearing witness to the transformative  
resurrection that carries us from darkness into the light.**

We join in the age-old hymn of praise for the One who completes the circular motion of all things.

Let all that is and all that becomes adore the Lord.

**Let Creation join to laud the Creator  
Though the ages evermore  
Evermore and evermore.**

*4<sup>th</sup> century*

*(Linda)*

**Dawn** By Thomas Berry

Look up at the sky--  
The heavens so blue, the sun so radiant,  
The clouds so playful, the soaring raptors,  
The meadows in bloom, the woodland creatures,  
The rivers singing their way to the sea,  
Wolf song on the land, whale song in the sea,  
Celebration everywhere, wild, riotous,

Immense as a monsoon lifting an ocean of joy  
And spilling it down over the Appalachian landscape,  
Drenching us all with a deluge of delight  
As we open our arms and rush toward each other,  
You and I and all of us,  
Moved by that vast compassionate Presence  
that brings all things together in intimate celebration,  
celebration that's the universe itself.

## **INVITATION TO WALKING MEDITATION**

Contemplate light, energy, warmth, and completeness – for yourself and for others. Listening to “And the Earth Spins” by Paul Winter <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1fX848hWCc>

*(Kathy & Linda)*

### **Sound Bath with Tibetan Singing Bowls**

#### **WELCOMING THE SUN INTO OUR LIVES**

As we reach the thin space between spring and summer,  
Between sun and moon  
We open our hearts,  
We fling wide our arms,  
To be embraced by the warmth and glory of the sun,  
Knowing that in due time we will bow to the receding light  
And open our arms to darkness once again.

Thus, O Lord, you come into our lives,  
In the blaze of splendor, the certainty of Your presence,  
In the times of aridity and isolation, even to the point of despair.  
Throughout this journeying,  
From the zenith of midday to the depths of midnight  
And back to blinding noontide, we grow towards You,  
The true light, that shines like the sun beyond darkness, forever.  
*Ishpriya R.S.C.J. (adapted)*

*(Kathy)*

Let us declare with singleness of heart our desire to fill our lives and each other's lives with light and warmth, faithfulness and beauty:

**ALL: I welcome the sun into my life  
and give thanks to God for its daily bounty;  
for its warmth to bless me,  
for its strength to empower me,  
for its light to illuminate my way.  
I do this in the knowledge  
that its light is also the light  
of wonder and holy wisdom,  
blessings I make welcome  
in the pattern of my days.**

*John Matthews*

From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets,  
**the name of the LORD is to be praised.** (Psalm 113)

## **MUSICAL INTERLUDE**

*Reader 7*

Remember, remember the circle of the sky  
The stars and the brown eagle  
The supernatural winds  
Breathing night and day  
From the four directions.

Remember, remember the great life of the sun  
Breathing on the earth  
It lies upon the earth  
To bring out life upon the earth  
Life covering the earth.

Remember, remember the sacredness of things  
Running streams and dwellings  
The young within the nest  
A hearth for sacred fire  
The holy flame of fire

*Pawnee/Osage/Omaha Indian Song*

*(Linda)*

### **BLESSING**

Adapted from the words of our sister Hildegard of Bingen:

Good people, most royal greening verdancy, rooted in the sun,  
You shine with radiant light.

In this circle of earthly existence you shine so finely  
it surpasses understanding.

Creator hugs you. You are encircled by the arms of the mystery of Creator.

*(Kathy)*

### **MUSIC / CHANT/ SONG**

Chant commissioning with group sung response

**Sharing of Earth's Gifts in simple food and drink – THANK YOU, Linda!**