



# GRACE NOTES

## FROM THE RECTOR.....

“The compassion of the Lord is for every living thing” (Sirach 18:13)

According to the creation stories in Genesis, God first pours out Spirit on the waters, heralding and facilitating the stirring of life and becomes incarnate as the very life and breath of the Creation. On and *through* the forming Earth, creation continues: “Let the earth put forth vegetation”; “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures”; “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind” (Gen 1:11, 20, and 24).

The Earth co-creates with God. God calls forth life from the substance of the Earth, with human life as part of this: “Then the LORD God formed *a human* from the dust of the *ground*... So out of the *ground* the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air.”

The Hebrew word for ground is *adamah*, and also means earth, soil, and land. Genesis says that life came out of the *adamah*, from the Earth itself, and all living creatures share not only the same Creator but the same matter, the same essence.

When we look at the Hebrew there is something else quite striking. The Hebrew word that we translate in English as “man” or “human” is *adam*. That’s where the name Adam comes from. It is the word for humankind. So, using a bit of the Hebrew, Genesis 2:7 says, “Then the LORD God formed *adam* (human or humankind) from the dust of the *adamah* (earth or ground).”

In Genesis you can see the interrelationship between the Earth and all life. In the case of humankind, the Hebrew name for human, *adam*, even connects etymologically to the Earth, *adamah*. As Scripture affirms, and our own Prayer Book echoes, we come from the Earth and return to the Earth in death.

Humans are completely embedded in this world. Whether we recognize it or not, we belong wholly within the unity and processes of the whole creation, interdependent and intimately related.

What is more, this Earth and all that it holds speak to us of who God is and what God desires for us. It mediates the divine. It communicates God’s nature and draws us into deeper relationship with God. Through the Creation we see who God is and God reveals God’s self to us (Romans 1:20)

God actually loves us through the Creation. And we are called to love it in return, act toward it as God acts toward us, in blessing and in love. God’s hope, God’s dream, God’s redeeming love, is for us all (Revelation 21:1; Isaiah 49:6; Isaiah 65:17). God’s desire is for the restoration and reconciliation of all creation (Colossians 1:20). The whole created order glorifies God together, each in our own way and according to our own gifts (Psalm 148).

From the first pages of Genesis through the Book of Revelation, God invites us to care for our relationships – with each other, both near and far, and with the rest of Creation. Let us continually be mindful of this, looking for ways to better cultivate and respect our relationship with God and our sacred connection with the whole of God’s Creation.

Faithfully,

Chris +



All Laundry Love Committee members invite parishioners to see the Laundry Love Mission in action at our next event on October 26<sup>th</sup> from 3-5pm at Super Laundromat, 80 Summer St., New Bedford.

New volunteers are needed to better serve our Laundry Love guests. Donations of supplies and money are always welcome. Direct any donations to the church office. Hold your heads high for supporting our community in such a wonderful manner.

### BOOK DISCUSSION: A YEAR OF BIBLICAL WOMANHOOD

Meeting at 4 pm on the second Sunday of the month at Diana Ukleja's home, 204 Maple Street in New Bedford, to discuss one chapter each month. For October 11<sup>th</sup>, "Gentleness"; for November 8<sup>th</sup>, "Domesticity"; for December 13<sup>th</sup>, "Obedience" – not feeling too sanguine about that last one! The author, Rachel Held Evans,

tried to follow some of the practices laid out in the Bible, usually in the Old Testament, for a month at a time. Her book details her experiences. Please contact Diana for further information ... or just come! Phone 508-415-8920, email [diana.ukleja@gmail.com](mailto:diana.ukleja@gmail.com).

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