

SCRIPTURE READING

1 John 3:16-24

SERMON

**Problem Solving**

Rev. Ashley Grant

PASTORAL PRAYERS, INTERSESSIONS & THE LORD'S PRAYER

***Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the Glory forever. Amen.***

\*HYMN

God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens

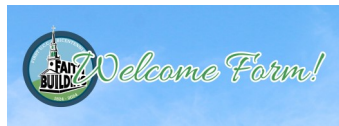
NCH 556

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Liturgy based on or inspired by resources from Plastic Jesus: Real Faith in a Synthetic World, through the United Church of Christ's Creation Justice Ministry.

<https://www.creationjustice.org/earth-day-library>



GET CONNECTED!

We are delighted that you are visiting us today and hope that you feel at home. Please scan the QR code to let us know who you are so that we can better serve you and answer any questions you may have.

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**Intercessions:** Each Sunday during the Prayers of the People, we pray for those who are sick or hospitalized and those grieving the death of a loved one. You are invited to state the name of a friend or loved one who is in special need of God's healing and comfort.

Ministers - All Members of First Church  
The Reverend Adam E. Eckhart, Senior Pastor  
The Reverend M. Ashley Grant, Associate Pastor  
Kelsey DeCarlo, Minister of Faith Formation  
Nicole Moore, Office Administrator  
Salvador "Sal" Ochoa, Sexton  
April Preiss, Moderator  
Jamie Rude and Alison Gottsegen, Members at Large

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First Church is a Still-Speaking and Open & Affirming Congregation.

THE FIRST UNITED  
CHURCH OF CHRIST  
CONGREGATIONAL - MILFORD, CT



***Our Open and Affirming Congregation consists of people united in fulfilling Christ's command to love one another and welcome people of diverse backgrounds and identities: no exclusions.***  
***First Church Milford is dedicated to proclaiming and sharing God's love through service and outreach; care for children, youth, and people of all ages; and engaging worship and music ministries.***

***If you are a guest, please fill out a visitor card and place it in the offering plate.***

**Sunday, April 21, 2024**  
**10:00 AM Worship**  
**Earth Sunday**

\*for all that are able, please stand

NCH = New Century Hymnal (black-covered)

EARTH DAY MEDITATION: Imagine what's in God's hands!

*God's got the whole world in his hands.*  
*God's got the wind and rain in her hands.*  
*God's got the little tiny baby in their hands.*  
*God's got you and me brother in his hands.*  
*God's got you and me sister in her hands.*  
*God's got the whole world in their hands.*

PRELUDE Jim Haddon, organ

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Kelsey DeCarlo  
Faith Formation Minister

\*CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive) Justin

Leader: We, who too often lose our way, gather today to say, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;

**People: for God founded it on the seas and established it on the waters."**

Leader: And yet those same waters are polluted, and the Lord's good creation is overused, misused, and abused.

**People: We pause to ask ourselves what it would be like to see creation liberated, experiencing freedom and glory.**

Leader: Along with all creation we wait for the glory of God to be revealed and we commit to playing our part, as the children of God.

**People: May we find liberation from our plastic addiction and healing for our land and water. Amen.**

\*HYMN Praise to the Living God NCH 8

\*CALL TO CONFESSION Kelly Miller

\*CONFESSION (unison)

**Creation is waiting for us, to open our eyes to the devastation in our world. Creation is waiting for us, to put the needs of the most vulnerable above the greed of the powerful. Creation is waiting for us, to move from doing what is easy to doing what is necessary and right. Creation is waiting for us, to prioritize the needs of community over the convenience of self. Creation is waiting for us, to remove pollution from our seas, land, air, bodies and hearts. In all these things and more, creation waits for us to assume our roles as its servants and protectors. Forgive us, God, and help us to answer creation's call. Amen.**

\*ASSURANCE

\*GLORIA PATRI

***Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost!***  
***As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be:***  
***World without end! Amen, Amen!***

SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM

Introduction Rev. Ashley Grant and Karen Davoli

Camille Joy Anzolletti

Questions for the Candidate

\*Congregational Assent and Affirmation of Faith

Deacon: Do you, who witness and celebrate the sacrament, promise your love, support and care to the one about to be baptized, as she lives and grows in Christ?

**All: We promise our love, support and care.**

Deacon: Let us unite with the Church in all times and places by confessing our faith in God the Trinity.

Do you believe in God the Source, the fountain of life?

**All: I believe in God.**

Deacon: Do you believe in Christ the Servant, embodied in Jesus of Nazareth and in the church?

**All: I believe in Jesus Christ.**

Deacon: Do you believe in the Spirit the Guide, the liberating wellspring of life?

**All: I believe in the Holy Spirit.**

Blessing of the Water

Act of Baptism

Prayer

CHILDREN'S STORY Planting Tomorrow  
(After the message, children are invited to leave for Sunday School.)

\*GREETING OUR NEIGHBORS

OFFERING OUR TITHES AND GIFTS

Invitation

Offertory God is Always Near Indonesian folk melody  
arr. Helen Kemp; Adult Choir

\*Doxology

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,***

***Praise God, all creatures here below.***

***Praise God above, ye heavenly host.***

***Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost! Amen.***

\*Prayer of Dedication

**God, you meet our needs and transform us for service. Accept these gifts as signs of our gratitude and our commitment to Christ's ministry. Amen.**

HYMN (seated)

Touch the Earth Lightly

NCH 569 (vs 1, 3 & 4)