

**GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH
SUNDAY, AUGUST 08, 2021**



Sermon Notes:

*I see trees of green, red roses too
I see them bloom for me and you*

*And I think to myself
What a wonderful world*

*I see skies of blue and clouds of white
The bright blessed day, the dark sacred night*

*And I think to myself
What a wonderful world*

Perhaps you recognize the words of Louis Armstrong's beloved song, "What a Wonderful World." It seemed like the perfect way to start a sermon on today's topic, "God delights in creation!"

When I think of delight, I think of things like holding a newborn baby (especially your own child or grandchild), a child while eating their first birthday cake, the look in their eyes of opening a longed for gift, or a child discovering something new and wonderful in nature. The Port Polson Player's current play, "The Last Romance", portrays the delight of falling in love later in life. This morning we all feel delight in the glorious gift of rain.

If we feel delight in things like these, how much more must God experience delight as the maker of all things, from the tiny amoebas and planktons to the gigantic galaxies of space.

Let's look at how today's scriptures express God's delight in creation.

When we read the verses of our first lesson, Isaiah 55:10-13, preachers often focus on the efficacy of God's Word; but it sounds different as we look at it through today's theme. Hear the wonder and joy of God in these verses:

For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

(We had a brief musical interlude as Angela and Pastor sang a line from the chorus of a hymn in the Methodist hymnal and Mesa and Pastor sang a phrase from a camp song based on this verse.)

In Psalm 65 we read:

⁵Awesome things will you show us in your righteousness, O God of our salvation, O hope of all the ends of the earth and of the oceans far away. ⁶You make firm the mountains by your power; you are girded about with might. ⁷You still the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the clamor of the peoples. ⁸Those who dwell at the ends of the earth will tremble at your marvelous signs; you make the dawn and the dusk to sing for joy. ⁹You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you make it very plenteous;

From the abundance of stars in the sky to the number of snowflakes in that pristine winter blanket covering the ground to the abundance of flowers in this spring, we join God in delighting in the abundance of creation.

In Genesis 1 we read how God spends each day creating, and at the end of the day sees everything that was made and calls it good. Each and every day. God rejoices in the goodness of the skies above, the earth below, the plants, the animals, the people.

In our second lesson from 2 Corinthians we read about God's delight in the new creation—the new creation we as God's children have as we come into relationship with Jesus Christ: *If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!* God delights in our renewal; God delights in relationship with us. God delights in human endeavors. They don't all work out; some of the things we do are not-so-good—yet God promises us forgiveness and restoration and calls us to try, try, try again.

In the Gospel: Jesus uses the birds and the lilies to teach us a lesson about trust:

“Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them”

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.”

Psalm 104 is another place we catch a glimpse of God’s delight in creation:

⁴O LORD, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. ²⁵Yonder is the sea, great and wide, creeping things innumerable are there, living things both small and great. ²⁶There go the ships, and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it.

Another translation of “Leviathan” is sea monster, which some think might be whales. “To sport in” is also translated “to play in it”—to take delight in. If you’ve ever watched the antics of a pod of whales putting on a show of aerial maneuvers in the wild you’ve experiences that joy. And who doesn’t love watching young animals play, whether kittens, puppies, colts or calves. Play brings delight!

²⁷These all look to you to give them their food in due season; ²⁸when you give to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled with good things. ²⁹When you hide your face, they are dismayed; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. ³⁰When you send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground. ³¹May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works—

God truly delights in creation, and when we delight in the natural world, we share in and reflect God’s joy.

I conclude with the rest of the words to the song:

*The colors of the rainbow so pretty in the sky
Are also on the faces of people going by*

*I see friends shaking hands, saying "How do you do?"
They're really saying, I love you*

*I hear babies crying, I watch -them- them grow
They'll learn much more than I'll never know*

*And I think to myself
What a wonderful world*

*Yes, I think to myself
What a wonderful world*

Amen.