Outdoor Worship Weekly Activity
For the Week of August 3rd

Week 2: Living in Relationship

We are part of a great, interconnected web of creation. This week, invite a friend—human or animal—to enjoy an outdoor space with you. Choose a place that you enjoy and where you are likely to see other people or animals enjoying their interactions as well. This could be as simple as sitting in a garden with a neighbor or taking your dog for a walk in the park.

Reflect or talk together about what plants, animals, and people you see around you that make this place particularly enjoyable or meaningful for you. Are there other natural elements that are special to you, such as rocks, sky, wind, or water? Note the relationships between them. Consider taking a picture of yourself and your friend in this place, giving thanks to God for all the creatures with whom you share this piece of creation.

Consider a trip this week to the Elkhart County Historical Museum to see the "Our Waters: Past, Present, and Future" exhibit, exploring especially how the Potawatomi peoples engaged the water and land. What stories, traditions, or experiences do they associate with elements of this landscape?

Give thanks to God for the rich history of relationship between humanity and this piece of earth.

East Goshen Mennonite Church
Outdoor Worship Service
August 2nd, 2026

Focus Statement: In God's shalom, we are called to turn to God's abundant provision to quench our thirst.

Opening Songs

***All Who Are Thirsty**, VT 49*

Verse: All who are thirsty, all who are weak,
come to the fountain. Dip your heart in the stream of life.
Let the pain and the sorrow be washed away in the waves of God's mercy, as deep cries out to deep. We sing . . .

Refrain: Come, Lord Jesus, come. Come, Lord Jesus, come. Come, Lord Jesus, come. Come, Lord Jesus, come.

Text: Brenton Brown (USA/South Africa) and Glenn Robertson (South Africa), © 1998 Vineyard Songs

***This Is God's Wondrous World**, VT 180*

Verse 1:
This is God's wondrous world,and to my list'ning ears
all nature sings, and round me rings the music of the spheres.
This is God's wondrous world; I rest me in the thought
of rocks and trees, of skies and seas, the wonders God has wrought.

Verse 2:
This is God's wondrous world; the birds their carols raise,
the morning light, the dark of night, declare their Maker's praise.
This is God's wondrous world; a wand'rer I may roam.
Whate'er my lot, it matters not, my heart is still at home.

Verse 3:
This is God's wondrous world; oh, let me ne'er forget
that though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the ruler yet.
This is God's wondrous world; the battle is not done.
Jesus who died shall be glorified, and earth and heav'n be one.

Text: Maltbie D. Babcock (USA), Thoughts for Every-Day Living, 1901, alt.

Call to Worship

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Singing

Come to the Water, *VT 35*

Alleluia, Alleluia,
Alleluia, Alleluia.

Verse 1:
Come to the water, living water, come to the water, come all singing,
come to the water, living water, come to the water, come all singing.

Verse 2:
Come with thanksgiving, glad thanksgiving,
come with thanksgiving, come all singing,
come with thanksgiving, glad thanksgiving,
come with thanksgiving, come all singing.

Verse 3:
Bring all your burdens, heavy treasures,
lay down your burdens, come all singing,
bring all your burdens, heavy treasures,
lay down your burdens,come all singing.

Verse 4:
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, come all singing, Alleluia, Alleluia,
sing Alleluia, Alleluia. Alleluia, Alleluia, Amen.

Text: Carol Ann Weaver (Canada) © 2018 Carol Ann Weaver

God of Wonders*, VT 178*

Verse 1:
Lord of all creation, of water, earth, and sky,
the heavens are your tabernacle. Glory to the Lord on high!

Refrain:
God of wonders beyond our galaxy, you are holy, holy.
The universe declares your majesty; you are holy, holy.
Lord of heaven and earth, Lord of heaven and earth.

Verse 2:
Early in the morning, I will celebrate the light.
When I stumble in the darkness I will call your name by night. *Refrain.*

August 2 Worship
Focus on Trees growing behind the Outdoor Sanctuary

White Oak (white flag)
Value: The white oak is an ecological keystone species. It supports hundreds of native insects and acts as a massive food source and habitat for wildlife including migrating song birds, and resident birds. The white oak are prolific acorn producers to sustain squirrels, turkey and deer. It has durable, rot-resistant wood, has commercial value and is an excellent environmental carbon magnet.
EGMC's former wood benches are made of White Oak.

Growth rate: slow to moderate, typically takes 15 to 30 years to develop, even slower with sandy dry soils. During the first years the tree directs its energy into establishing a deep taproot. Maximum growth is during ages 25 to 60, these years being the period of maximum diameter and height growth.

Height: 50 - 80 feet, Spread: 50-80 feet.

Soil: The white oak is highly adapted to the local climate and soils but will grow notably slower if planted in dry sandy soil .

Root type: taproot. Seedlings quickly develop a thick, deep-thrusting taproot that can reach up to 30 inches deep in the first year. This secures a consistent water supply before significant above-ground growth occurs.

Life span: 200-300 years

Maturation: White oaks generally reach full maturity around 75 years.

Black Oak: (black flag)
Value: Wildlife support, prolific acorn producers to sustain local animals like deer, squirrels, wild turkey and bird species. The black oak wood is used for construction, interior trim, veneer etc. and is an excellent environmental carbon magnet.

Growth rate: slow to moderate growth, under 6 inches annually as the tree directs its energy into establishing a deep taproot.
Ages 25 to 65 are the period of maximum diameter and height growth. The black oak is highly adapted to our climate but will grow notably slower if planted in dry .

Height: 50-80 feet tall and a spread of 40-60 feet

Soil: capable of growing on dry, poor nutrient sandy south-facing slopes-thought it grows larger on fertile loam soils.

Root type: Seedlings quickly develop a thick, deep-thrusting taproot that can reach up to 30 inches deep in the first year. This secures a consistent water supply before significant above-ground growth occurs.

Life span: 150 -200 years, maturation: 75-100 years.

Reflection Notes:

Participants

Worship Leader	Joyce Driver
Music Team	Sheila Graber, Bruce Schlabach, Brody Thomas
Scripture Reading	Fred Driver
Children's Time	Jeff Kauffman and Nina Longenecker Fox
Message	Naomi Yoder-Hess
Congregational Prayer	Ellis Shetler
Tech Team	Grace Carpenter, Silas Immanuael, Sam Woelk, Tom Yoder
Ushers	Matt Overman, Arlen Welty, Cheryl Hochstetler Shirk
Planners	Joyce Driver, Jeff Kauffman, Caleb Longenecker-Fox

Bridge:
Hallelujah to the Lord of heaven and earth.
Hallelujah to the Lord of heaven and earth.
Hallelujah to the Lord of heaven and earth.

Text: Marc Byrd (USA) and Steve Hindalong (USA) © 2000 New Spring Publishing; Never Say Never Songs (admin. New Spring Publishing/Storm Boy Music); Meaux Mercy (admin. Capitol CMG Publishing)

Scripture Readings Isaiah 55:1-2, Matthew 7:7-12

Children's Time

***Let the Children Come to Me**, VT 511*

"Let the children come to me;
let the children come.
Never hinder them; never stop them.
Oh, let the children come." *Repeated.*

Text: James V. Marchionda (USA) © 1982 World Library Publications

Message "All You Who are Thirsty, Come to the Waters"

Response

***Confession and Assurance,** Based on Psalm 36:3–9*

Leader: Source of nourishment and life:
All: We come to you in a spirit of humility,
aware of the many ways
in which we have failed to act wisely or do good.
(Pause for reflection)

Leader: Our world seems committed to a path of destruction:
perpetual economic growth
that depends on resource use and extraction
without respect for the limits of our shared planet,
or the inherent value of your creation.
All: We have bought into a myth of scarcity,
taken more than our fair share,
competed over your gifts,
and accepted a global reality
where many of your children are hungry
and thirsty.
(Pause for reflection)

Reading continues on the next page.

Leader: We know in our hearts that this is not your way,
and yet we struggle to find a better path.

But God of abundance, your love is limitless.
All: Your mercy reaches out to the universe,
Your faithfulness to the skies.
Your righteousness is like the highest mountains;
Your justice is like the deepest oceans.
(Pause for reflection)

Leader: Yet in your greatness, you still care for the "least of these:"
the most vulnerable among us,
the tiniest of creatures,
the living systems that our economy
would count as insignificant.
All: You provide enough for all of us to flourish.
(Pause for reflection)

Leader: We cannot manufacture this kind of love.
We cannot buy this kind of satisfaction.
All: Let us invest in your dream for the earth,
labor for your kin-dom.
We hunger and thirst for your justice
as we come to your table—a communion feast for all creatures.

Congregational Prayer

Song and Offering

O Healing River, *VT 706*

Verse 1:
O healing river, *(O healing river,) send down your waters,
send down your waters upon this land.
O healing river, send down your waters,
and wash the blood from off the sand.

Verse 2:
This land is parching, this land is burning,
no seed is growing, in the barren ground.
O healing river, send down your waters,
O healing river, send your waters down.

Verse 3:
Let the seed of freedom awake and flourish,
let the deep roots nourish, let the tall stalks rise.
O healing river, send down your waters,
O healing river, from out of the skies.

**An echo can be sung after each phrase*
Text: Frances Minkoff (USA), © 1964 (renewed) Appleseed Music, Inc.

Announcements

Sending Song

Rain Down*, VT* 703

Refrain:
Rain down, rain down, rain down your love on your people.
Rain down, rain down, rain down your love, God of life.

Verse 1:
Faithful and true is the Word of our God.
All of God's works are so worthy of trust.
God's mercy falls on the just and the right;
full of God's love is the earth. *Refrain.*

Verse 2:
We who revere and find hope in our God
live in the kindness and joy of God's wing.
God will protect us from darkness and death;
God will not leave us to starve. *Refrain.*

Verse 3:
God of creation, we long for your truth;
you are the water of life that we thirst.
Grant that your love and your peace touch our hearts,
all of our hope lies in you. *Refrain.*

Text: Jaime Cortez (USA), 1991, © 1992 Jaime Cortez (published by OCP Publications)

Benediction

Leader: Abundant life is all around and within us.
As we go,
may God, the wellspring of that life,
nourish and sustain all of us
who inhabit this common home.
All: May we embrace God's shalom in all its fullness
for the sake of this earth, our common home. Amen.