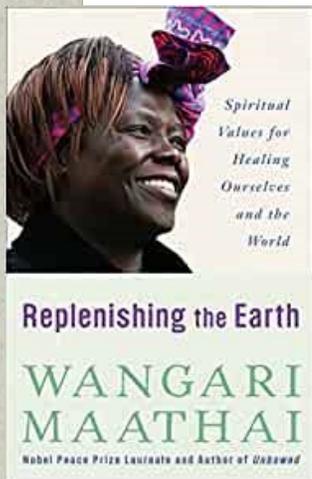


Lenten Devotions  
**Created for Community**  
In Community With Creation  
-Rev. Noni Strand, Lutherans Restoring Creation

**Genesis 1:31a**

<sup>31</sup> *God saw everything that God had made, and indeed, it was very good.*



In her book, *Replenishing the Earth: Spiritual Values for Healing Ourselves and the World*, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Wangari Maathai writes, “When I am asked about the Genesis creation story, in a light touch, I relate how God, in his infinite wisdom, waited until Friday to make human beings, and then rested on Saturday (the Sabbath). If we’d come into existence on Monday, we would have been dead by Tuesday, because there would have been nothing to sustain us!...It’s a sobering thought that if the human species were to become extinct, no species I know of would die out because we were not there to sustain them. Yet if some of them became extinct, human beings would also die out. That should encourage us to have respect for the other forms of life and indeed for all of creation. We should demonstrate our gratitude for the way they sustain us.”

Maathai offers rich food for thought as we continue in the Lenten season in community with Creation. We are reminded of the deep interdependence we share with all of God’s created goodness and our own power to heal or destroy, to tend or tear down, to contribute to life or to death. We are reminded of our call to gratitude for the plants that nourish us and produce the oxygen we breathe, the soil of our own beginnings which nurtures life, the creatures upon whom we are dependent for our very existence.

The cross of Ash Wednesday still adorns our foreheads with the reminder that we are dust and to dust we shall return. When we shift our perspective to understand that we are a part of Earth and all Creation, rather than apart from Earth as a resource to be used, how we live in community changes. Loving our neighbor then includes the non-human beings and created goodness of God and expands our capacity for wholeness.

Lent is a time of repentance, reconciliation, and renewal in our relationship as a part of all Creation. Lent is an invitation to reflect on our abuse of land, water, air, and other species in order to repent, to turn around and change our actions. It is a time to seek reconciliation that is grounded in action on behalf of the poor, the hungry, and those most affected by the effects of climate change, natural disasters, and the pandemic. It is our opportunity to renew our quest for understanding the choices we can make, as individuals and as human communities, to create healing and restoration.

# Lenten Devotions

## Created for Community

### In Community With Creation

-Rev. Noni Strand, Lutherans Restoring Creation

We can't do this alone. You and others in your faith communities can work together with networks of folks committed to healing and hope. Ministries like [Lutherans Restoring Creation](https://lutheransrestoringcreation.org/) invite participation on the Synod and National level. And international efforts, such as [the Earth Charter](https://earthcharter.org/read-the-earth-charter/), invite participation on global scale. Working together, we live as community with Creation. Working together, Maathai reflects, we join "a global consensus among religious and spiritual traditions that Earth matters, that what we do during our time on this planet is important, and that we cannot exist in the world as though the coming generations of humans and animals are not entitled to live in it."

**Gracious Creator,**  
***you fashioned us in your image in the midst of a world beyond our knowledge and understanding. Continue to weave us together in community with all created things, and deepen our awareness of the ways you connect us as a part of Earth and all Creation. In Jesus' name we pray.***  
**Amen.**

<https://lutheransrestoringcreation.org/>

<https://earthcharter.org/read-the-earth-charter/>

