

# Songs for Creation by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

*A Workshop for the 2023 Presbyterians for Earth Care Conference*

## God, You Made Your Good Creation

Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

attr. B. F. White;  
harm. Christopher Gage

1. God, you made your good cre - a - tion and you hold it in your care— From each  
2. Yet, O God, the earth is cry - ing, times are chang - ing, storms are strong. Now the  
3. God, you love this world we live in, so you sent your on - ly Son. "Here on

star - ry con - stel - la - tion to each for - est un - der - layer. Ti - ny  
co - ral reefs are dy - ing, floods are rag - ing, droughts are long. Though the  
earth as in your heav - en," God, we pray, "Your will be done." By your

crea - tures, moun - tain splen - dor, riv - ers, lakes and o - cean floors— You are  
cir - cum - stan - ces dif - fer, when the earth is in di - stress, See! The  
Spi - rit, may we lis - ten to the earth and to the poor; May we

lov - ing, kind and ten - der in your care for what is yours.  
poor are first to suf - fer from our greed and sel - fish - ness.  
care for all you've gi - ven till cre - a - tion is re - stored.

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This hymn was written for the World Day of Prayer for Care of Creation (September 1st) and inspired by "Laudato Si' (Praise Be to You): On Care for Our Common Home," 2015 Encyclical Letter of Pope Francis.

## At the Dawn of Your Creation

1. At the dawn of your cre - a - tion, God, you spoke: "Let there be light!"  
 2. By your word, you formed cre - a - tion: dry land, wa - ter, o - cean breeze.  
 3. When you made us as your child - ren, send - ing us through - out your lands,  
 4. At this joy - ful cel - e - bra - tion, may we hear your word a - new:

You di - vid - ed earth from heav - en, you cre - at - ed day and night.  
 Soon there burst forth veg - e - ta - tion: plants with fruit, ma - jes - tic trees,  
 you com - mand - ed, "Have do - min - ion, care for earth; it's in your hands."  
 may we care for your cre - a - tion, know - ing it's a trust from you.

You made sun - beams dance with shad - ows, you cre - at - ed en - er - gy!  
 rain and snow and chang - ing sea - sons, crea - tures fill - ing land and sea.  
 Yet we hurt this world you've giv - en; we harm earth and sky and sea.  
 Just as dai - ly there's a dawn - ing, bring - ing light to all we see,

Peace - ful even - ings, bright to - mor - rows, all be - gan with "Let there be!"  
 God, your ver - y good cre - a - tion all be - gan with "Let there be!"  
 We for - get it's your cre - a - tion, you, who once said, "Let there be!"  
 so we dai - ly hear your call - ing, you, who once said, "Let there be!"

WORDS: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, 2011 (Genesis 1-2; Psalm 8; Romans 8:18-25)  
 MUSIC: Ludwig van Beethoven, 1824; arr. by Edward Hodges, 1864.

HYMN TO JOY  
 87.87 D

\* This hymn was originally used for the dedication of the 180 solar panels on the sanctuary of Limestone Presbyterian Church in Wilmington, Delaware. The first line of the last verse's original wording reflected the solar dedication: "At this solar dedication, may we hear your word anew:"

# The Climate Is Changing

Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, 2021

*St. Denio*

arr. Caniadau y Cyssegr, 1839

1. The cli - mate is chang - ing! Cre - a - tion cries out!  
 2. We pray for the a - ni - mals here in our midst  
 3. We thank you for peo - ple who trea - sure the earth,  
 4. We thank you for lead - ers, cou - ra - geous and brave,  
 5. You love this good earth, and you sent us your Son!

Your peo - ple face flood - ing and fire and drought.  
 who can - not de - fend their own right to ex - ist.  
 whose faith has long taught them its beau - ty and worth.  
 who know that the earth is worth fight - ing to save.  
 May we love our neigh - bors— there's work to be done.

We see the great heat waves and storms at their worst.  
 We pray for the moun - tains and fo - rests and seas  
 We thank you as well for the chil - dren and youth  
 who care a - bout jus - tice and what they should do,  
 May we, by your Spi - rit, do all in our power

We pray for the poor, Lord— for they suf - fer first.  
 that bear the harsh foot - print of our hu - man greed.  
 who look to the fu - ture and speak out the truth.  
 who lis - ten to sci - ence and work hard for you.  
 to care for your earth in this cri - ti - cal hour.

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## O God, You Made the Trees

TERRA BEATA 6.6.8.6 D ("This is My Father's World")

O God, you made the trees! The oak and Douglas fir,  
the maple, beech, and sweetgum reach their branches heavenward.  
The willow, growing wide — the redwood, tall and strong —  
and cedar trees! Yes, all of these sing out creation's song.

You made each living thing to give and to receive.  
As roots grow down into the ground, they twist and interweave.  
A canopy of green restores and cools the air.  
Great branches shade the earth you made, and dance — as if in prayer.

How often we forget the forests and their worth!  
We lay cement on places meant to be the lungs of earth.  
For profit and for gain, we build and build some more;  
We cut down woods in neighborhoods of people who are poor.

O God, you made the trees — the apple and the pine.  
You made them all and still you call: "Take care of what is mine!"  
May we receive your gift and give ourselves anew  
to do our best, as we've been blessed, to care for trees for you.

Tune: Traditional English melody

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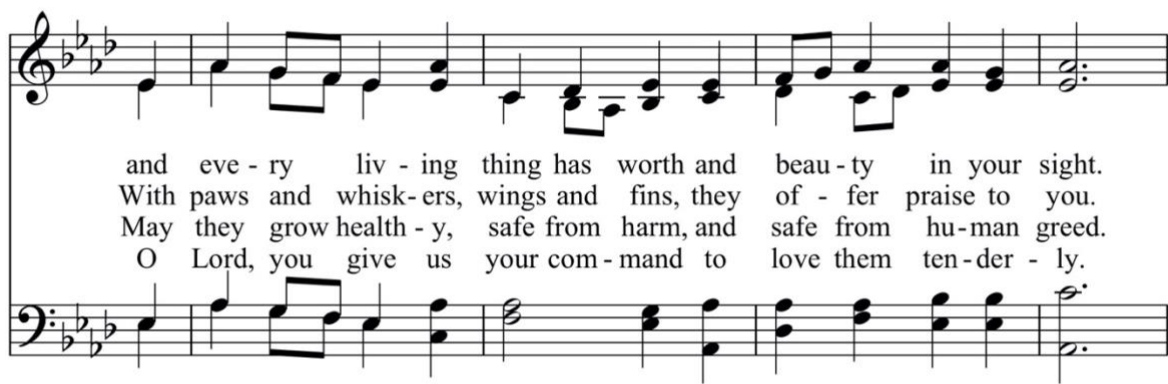
"O God, You Made the Trees" was written for Presbyterians for Earth Care's collection of online articles about trees.



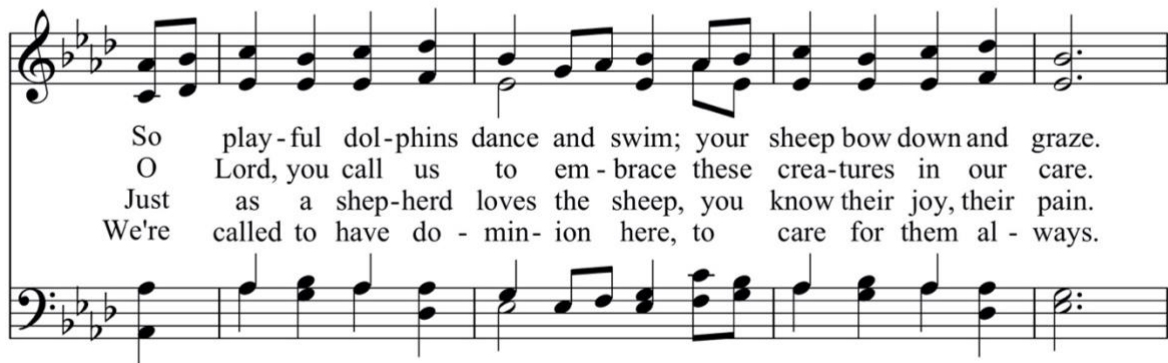
# O God, Your Creatures Fill the Earth



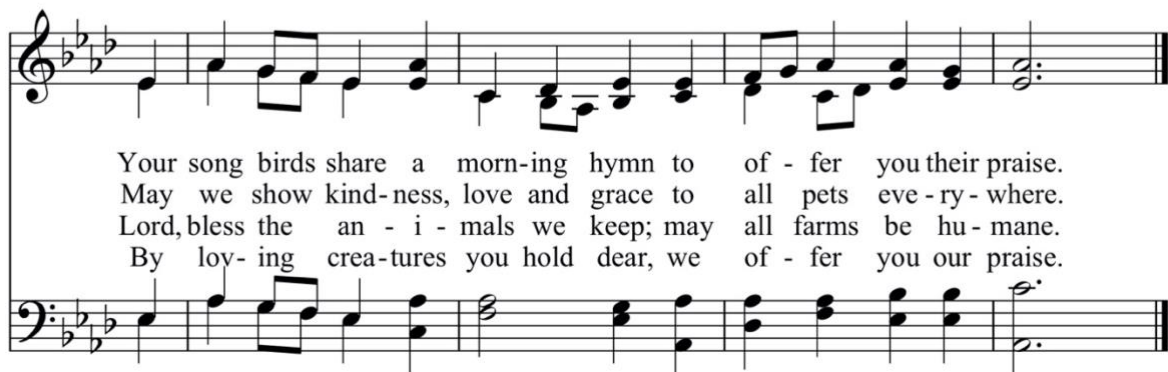
1. O God, your crea-tures fill the earth with won - der and de - light,  
 2. You made the pets we wel-come in; they're won-drous bless-ings, too.  
 3. You made the crea-tures on each farm; you know the things they need.  
 4. Your crea- tures live in eve - ry land; they fill the sky and sea.



and eve - ry liv - ing thing has worth and beau - ty in your sight.  
 With paws and whisk-ers, wings and fins, they of - fer praise to you.  
 May they grow health - y, safe from harm, and safe from hu-man greed.  
 O Lord, you give us your com - mand to love them ten - der - ly.



So play - ful dol-phins dance and swim; your sheep bow down and graze.  
 O Lord, you call us to em - brace these crea-tures in our care.  
 Just as a shep-herd loves the sheep, you know their joy, their pain.  
 We're called to have do - min - ion here, to care for them al - ways.



Your song birds share a morn-ing hymn to of - fer you their praise.  
 May we show kind-ness, love and grace to all pets eve - ry - where.  
 Lord, bless the an - i - mals we keep; may all farms be hu - mane.  
 By loy - ing crea-tures you hold dear, we of - fer you our praise.

WORDS: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, 2011  
 MUSIC: *Gesangbuch der H. W. k. Hofkappelle*, 1784, alt.

ELLACOMBE  
 CMD

A hymn for the blessing of animals service that was requested by the Humane Society in the United States.

## Creator, We Thank You for All You Have Made

ST. DENIO 11.11.11.11 ("Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise")

Creator, we thank you for all you have made:  
 For trees by the sidewalk that give us cool shade,  
 For grass-covered ball fields, for flowers downtown,  
 For wide autumn leaves that turn crispy and brown.

God, thank you for gardens on back corner-lots,  
 For insects that hide out in old flower pots,  
 For lions and polar bears living in zoos,  
 For high mountain trails that have beautiful views.

God, thank you for rainfall that ends a long drought,  
 For cracks in the sidewalk where little weeds sprout,  
 For birds that build nests in the tops of the trees,  
 For hot summer days when we feel a cool breeze.

O God, we give thanks for the places we go,  
 For cool mountain lakes and for trails in the snow,  
 For each city park and for each county fair,  
 For gifts of creation we see everywhere.

Biblical References: Genesis 1; Psalms 8, 24, 95, 104, 148

Tune: Traditional Welsh hymn, in John Robert's *Caniadau y Cyssegr (Songs of the Sanctuary)*, 1839

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## O God of Life, Your Waters Flow

SWEET HOUR OF PRAYER 8.8.8.8 D ("Sweet Hour of Prayer")

O God of life, your waters flow  
 And make all life on earth to grow.  
 Your springs rise up and rains fall down  
 On fertile field and sandy ground.

### ***Refrain:***

**May we be wise to know the worth  
 Of clean, clear rivers, sky and earth.  
 May all your children take a stand,  
 Protecting water, tending land.**

Yet greed can rise up to destroy  
 The things you give us to enjoy.  
 This world too often won't respect  
 The things you call us to protect.

### ***Refrain***

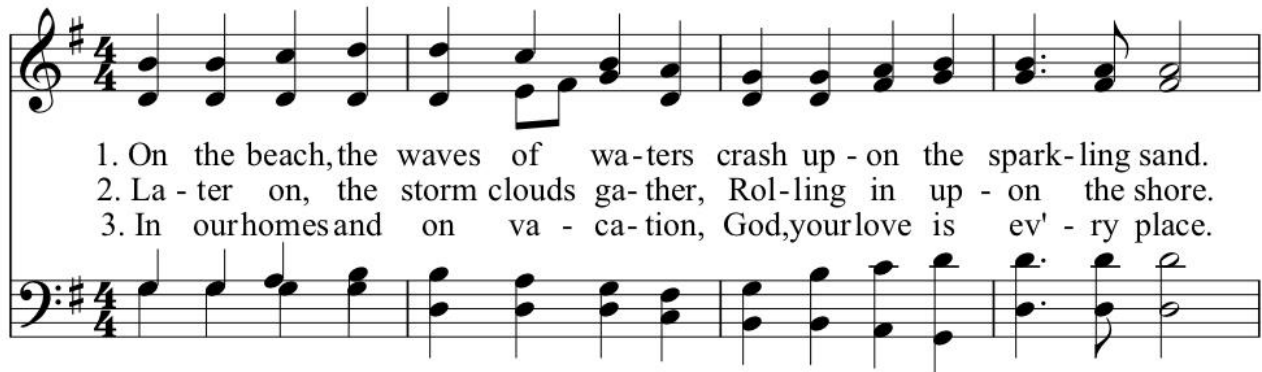
May justice roll like waters down  
 And streams of righteousness abound.  
 May we push on and never cease  
 To stand for justice, truth and peace.

### ***Refrain***

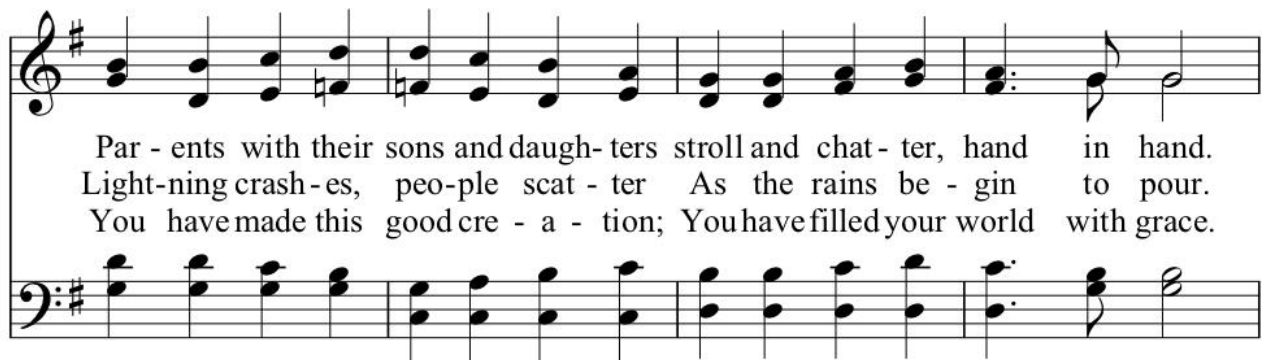
Tune: William B. Bradbury, 1861 ("Sweet Hour of Prayer")  
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# On the Beach, the Waves of Waters



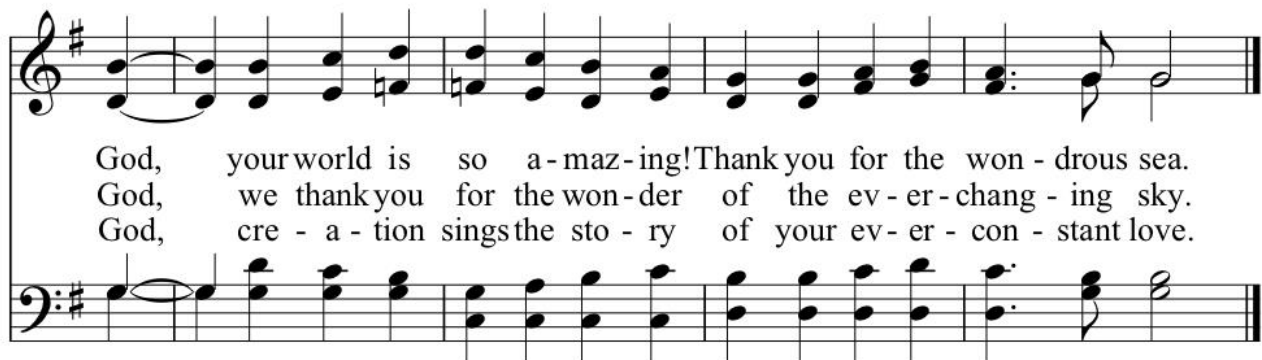
1. On the beach, the waves of wa-ters crash up - on the spark-ling sand.  
 2. La - ter on, the storm clouds ga-ther, Rol-ling in up - on the shore.  
 3. In our homes and on va - ca-tion, God, your love is ev' - ry place.



Par - ents with their sons and daugh- ters stroll and chat - ter, hand in hand.  
 Light-ning crash-es, peo-ple scat - ter As the rains be - gin to pour.  
 You have made this good cre - a - tion; You have filled your world with grace.



Sev'-ral peo-ple, watch- ing gaz- ing, spot some dol-phins swim- ming free.  
 There is mu- sic in the thun- der! Soon the storms will pass on by.  
 Sea and land re - flect your glo - ry; Beau-ty lights your sky a - bove.



God, your world is so a - maz - ing! Thank you for the won - drous sea.  
 God, we thank you for the won - der of the ev - er - chang - ing sky.  
 God, cre - a - tion sings the sto - ry of your ev - er - con - stant love.

WORDS: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, 2007  
 MUSIC: Ludwig van Beethoven, 1824; arr. by Edward Hodges, 1864

HYMN TO JOY  
 87.87 D



# O God, Creator of All Things

1. O God, Cre - a - tor of all things, the earth be-longs to you. In  
 2. You move, O Lord, in might - y wind; your riv - ers ev - er run. The  
 3. We thank you, Lord, for neigh - bors' lands that grow or - gan - ic food, for  
 4. You give us minds to use for you and hands to lift in prayer; you

love you place it in our hands and give us work to do. "Take  
 earth con-tains great heat with - in; there's pow - er in the sun. Cre -  
 co - op stores and pro - duce stands that seek the com-mon good, for  
 make us strong, cre - a - tive, too, for your cre - a - tion's care. As

care of what is mine," you say. "Build up and don't de - stroy." When  
 - a - tion holds great en - er - gy that's plen - ti - ful and clean. May  
 bik - ing trails that clear the air, and trees that clean it, too, for  
 we re - cy - cle and con - serve and ad - vo - cate and pray, may

we find cour-age to o - bey, your earth is filled with joy.  
 we find in your gifts the key to keep cre - a - tion green.  
 gar - den plots that neigh - bors share, for all who work for you.  
 all we do show thanks and love for what you give this day.

WORDS: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, 2012 (Genesis 1)  
 MUSIC: Trad. English melody; arr. by Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

FOREST GREEN  
 CMD

## The Earth Is the Lord's

1. "The earth is the Lord's and the ful - ness there - of."  
 2. Your rain - for - ests nur - ture the world that we share.  
 3. Too of - ten, O God, we a - buse your good earth.  
 4. May we be good stew - ards of all that you give,

Cre - a - tion re - minds us, O God, of your love.  
 Your wet - lands give an - i - mals shel - ter and care.  
 We fail to re - mem - ber its beau - ty and worth.  
 pro - tect - ing cre - a - tion wher - ev - er we live.

By grace we are learn - ing, as year leads to year,  
 Your cor - al reefs cra - dle the life of the sea.  
 We take from cre - a - tion much more than we need,  
 May we be a church that re - news and re - stores

we're called to be stew - ards, your care - tak - ers here.  
 You've shown us, in love, what your good world can be.  
 We threat - en your world through in - dif - ference and greed.  
 and lov - ing - ly cares for this earth that is yours.

WORDS: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, 2001

MUSIC: Welsh melody from John Roberts's *Canaidau y Cyssegr*, 1839

ST. DENIO

11 11.11 11