



## Grain

Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,  
Wheat that in the dark earth many years has lain;  
Love lives again, that with the dead has been:  
Love is come again, like wheat that springs up green.  
—John Macleod Campbell Crum

## Fields

<sup>19</sup>When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” <sup>20</sup>After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup>Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” John 20:19-21

## Thoughts (excerpts), Rev. Nick Uthphall, Christian Community Church, Madison

I’m a Wisconsin boy, where we like to lay some claim to John Muir and Aldo Leopold and Gaylord Nelson. The last makes me feel a special stake in Earth Day, since it was when he was serving as one of our senators that Gaylord Nelson founded and initiated Earth Day. If you don’t know him, I’d like you to, and you can find a bit of the story at this website: <http://nelsonearthday.net/nelson/>. What started as a day for teach-ins has grown into what the organizing network has referred to as the world’s largest secular holiday, with over a billion participating annually (at least in a typical year).

It’s not just my Wisconsin roots and pride. Our possibilities in the church cheer, wave their arms, shout, sing, jump up and down for the propriety of being a voice in these teach-ins and not leaving it alone as a secular holiday, but recognizing it as an appropriate holy day.

Earth Day almost always falls during our liturgical season of Easter, as we celebrate the resurrected Jesus, who was born so that we could know God’s presence in our world and in our flesh, and who suffered the burdens and sorrows and pains of our world. This Jesus brings us to new life in Easter. That’s not disembodied life that only awaits its future consummation. It is the first fruits, the seed that rises as a green blade to bear fruit. In northern hemisphere where I live, this holy season arrives with the signs and symbols of spring, the flowers and the returned bird song. This is how we know the risen Jesus, and it is connected to creation and re-creation, to our Creator and this Earth.

We look to the remaining years before it is too late to stop a 2° Celsius temperature rise for our planet. We know that this commitment needs to happen now. We know that it takes all of us, across the globe, of all religions, of each area of our lives, adapting and mitigating and caring. We know it is urgent.

The impending impacts are so catastrophic and our window of action is getting so short. As people created by God and placed in relationships with all the rest of creation, all the threatened creatures, from the most vulnerable human populations to species endangered of extinction and ecosystems moving toward collapse, there’s a lot at stake. It’s important. It’s important within church because of life all around us. If Earth Day is a holiday, we need to treat every day as an Earth Day holy day.

Happy Monday! For Pastor Nick’s full reflection from Earth Day 2020, go [here](#).

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Nick