

Summer Moment



When I ask members of McClure congregation where they feel the presence of God most clearly, I often hear things such as “when I am surrounded by creation”, or “when I hear the birds,” or “when I smell the earth after a rain”. So often when we experience the wonders of creation, we see evidence of God’s creative energy. This “Summer Moment” involves walking in nature and noticing the marvels of God’s world.

This Summer Moment has four steps: caring conversation, bible reading, activity and ritual.

1. **Caring conversation:** Pick a nice day to go for a walk together. It doesn’t have to be a sunny day, it can also be a rainy day – just get outside together. Make sure to take the essentials: sunscreen, bug spray, sunglasses (umbrella), water bottle, snacks and **don’t forget your phone** – or at least the camera part of your phone. Before you start your walk have a conversation using one or more of the following questions:
 - a) We know where we are beginning our walk and we know where we are going to end our walk. What do you think we will see as we walk?
 - b) Tell about your favorite part about walking to school or work.
 - c) Share – as a parent or grandparent what it felt like to see your child take their first steps. Or what it feels like to hold your child’s hand when you go for a walk.
 - d) Talk about where you find God’s presence in creation.

2. Bible reading:

Our Bible begins with two creation stories Genesis 1:1-2:4 and Genesis 2:5-25. There is another version of the creation story in John 1:1-5.

Throughout the Bible we hear many speak of the wonder and beauty of creation and how creation helps them know God. One example can be found in Psalm 104 (one of my favorites)

“Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, you are very great. You are clothed with honor and majesty, wrapped in light as with a garment. You stretch out the heavens like a tent, you set the beams of your chambers on the waters, you make the clouds your chariot, you ride on the wings of the wind, you make the winds your messengers, fire and flame your ministers.”
(NRSV)

God is present to us in the mystery and beauty of creation today as well, we just need to open our senses to know God is with us.

3. Activity: (chose one or more)

- a) As you walk, take pictures of creation that help you think of God and God’s presence. Take a picture of something that *smells* good, *feels* lovely, *looks* beautiful, *sounds* sweet and *tastes* good.
- b) Take some selfies of you and your family beside things that make you think of God’s presence.
- c) Create a little prayer station in the back yard. Incorporate some rocks, plants, earth, and perhaps a shallow dish of water for the bees. Add a solar light so you can see the prayer station from you windows.

4. Ritual:

Look through the pictures that you took during your walk. Chose a favorite picture and make it the family screen saver or wallpaper for the coming month. Send one of the pictures to a faraway friend or family person and let them know how much you love them.

And or you can offer this prayer:

Creating God, we thank you for the beauty that surrounds us which reminds us of you and your love for us. We pray for the plants, the animals and our families. Amen.