

From the porch of my farmhouse I can look out on a tiny but beautiful microcosm of the created world. I see incredibly old ash trees, four lilac bushes in full bloom, several apple trees and a pear tree—so far without a partridge in it.

I see an adult woodchuck go ambling through the grass. He knows I'm there, and humans are not to be trusted, so he's very careful. I stay as still as I can, and I see a tiny baby woodchuck bound over to meet him, nearly bumping into him in his excitement. I notice another one over by the barn, and another intrepid baby stick its brown nose out.

Turkeys are in the back of the "back 40" eating my ticks. Go turkeys! There are 4 maybe, 5. The males are doing their thing—strutting around and showing off their feathers while the females ignore them and continue to feed.

Meanwhile the birds sing, a jay screeches as only a jay can, and I notice a cowbird near the feeder. One of the biggest ravens I've seen is perched on a branch of the ash tree—so big that at first I mistake it for a hawk.

I love our bit of land. The dandelions make a sea of yellow in the grass, and buttercups have just started to spring up. Our quince bushes have just finished blooming – and now they offer shelter to so many tiny birds.

It's as if the Genesis story has come alive in my own backyard.

"And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky." And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And God saw that it was good."

Listen to words of Genesis. We are seeing creation birthed and the word used isn't "perfect", it's "good." Somewhere along the way in our Christian tradition, we got the message—both written and implied-- that everything God created had to be perfect-- including us!

Well, as tempting as it may be to hold onto this way of thinking, perhaps God is inviting us to look deeper. We then see that God never really speaks of perfection – we do. We got it from the Greeks—who are all about perfection.

I look out on my backyard and I definitely don't see perfection—but I do see *so much good*. The turkeys are dwelling with the woodchuck family, who are listening to the birds... But I know that there are many people who think dandelions are to be poisoned, turkeys are a menace and woodchucks need to be—put down.

But I love them all – they are all created by God, and as such have as much right to my 3 acres as I do. You see—aren't we all just tenants on this earth? It belongs to God.

God made a world full of things that are good. We might not see them that way, but God does.

There's nothing funnier than watching the baby woodchucks bound through the short grass. I think it's up to ME to look out for the holes they might make. It's part of learning to share this world with everything God has made.

Every thing. And every one.

The Creator of our world, the Human Being who died for everyone, everywhere for all time, and the Spirit that continues to inspire us, breathe on us, move us—the God who is three in one and one in three—wants us to see the planet as good, all that is created as good, and all the people as good.

We are brothers and sisters with all of humankind. When someone is killed, we are all hurt. When one is diminished, it diminishes all of us. When justice is not served for some of us, it is served for none of us. We are one world, committed to each other's welfare.

“Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?” We heard this last week. And we all replied: “I will, with God's help.” *BCP p.305*

We may be finding it hard to live into this truth. But don't give up.

If we don't learn to live in harmony with all that God has made, there will forever be discord.

Are we waiting for a time when we can stand up-- like the disciples of old—for what we believe in? You know what? It's here. This is the time to make Jesus' love for all of creation— every single bit of it--- heard.

Let us pray:

Creator God, you have created good. Yet, so often, we do not see good. In our well-intended desire to see the ideal, to see perfect justice, to see perfect love, to see perfect Christianity and perfect people, perfect equity in this world, to see a perfect plan at work in our lives, we often are disheartened and uninspired, and find it hard to try for the good.

Give us courage to accept, and even celebrate imperfection, and to see in the middle of the imperfect, the opportunities you place before us to co-create: to have and do and be and see good.

*Amen.**

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