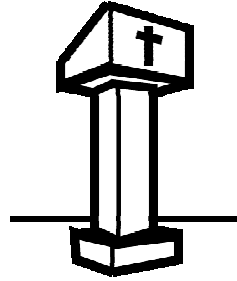


**Sermon Synopsis –  
Earth Sunday Sermon  
April 25, 2010  
by The Rev. Peter Champion**



Today we gather for our second Earth Sunday celebration. It is a joy for me to acknowledge the creativity and passion of our congregation as evidenced in your contributions of art and spoken word this morning. I look forward to more Earth Sunday celebrations in the years to come, and to having even more of you share your offerings with us as we celebrate the marvelous creation of God.

In our reading from Proverbs this morning, someone is speaking to us. *“The LORD created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts long ago.”* (Proverbs 8:22) Who is it that is speaking? It is Wisdom (*Sophia* in Greek, and sometimes called Holy Wisdom or *Hagia Sophia*) an important figure in the Proverbs. Since the Greek word for wisdom is feminine, many through the ages have seen her as an expression of the divine feminine. From the earliest times of the Church, Wisdom has been seen as prefiguring the divine *logos* or Word, whom we call Jesus. As our reading describes Wisdom as active and present in the creation of the cosmos, so John’s Gospel reminds us that Christ was present before creation and was actively involved in creation.

This passage reminds us that the creation in which we live was designed with divine wisdom and that, as stewards of creation we are called to honor that wisdom. Unfortunately, the church has often done a very poor job of honoring creation. There is a long history of separating the material and the spiritual—with the spiritual being good and the material being bad. Think of the many ways people have mortified their bodies, thinking that would bring them closer to God. I’m afraid we’ve done the same to our world.

Thinking about the way we’ve treated creation in the context of our draft vision statement, I think that the phrase *“living God’s word to change the world”* has much to say about how we are called to act. If God’s wisdom was active in creation, are we not called to honor that creation as part of living God’s word? And are we not called, then, to change the world by working to truly care for and restore creation?

As we wrestle with our vision statement, I invite us—individually and as a community of faith—to pray, to read and meditate on God’s word, and to discern how God is calling us to make a difference in the care of creation. The change will begin within us as people and as a congregation, but can and should grow to encompass our local communities and the entire world. On this Earth Sunday, may we so live God’s word that we love and care for the creation God has entrusted to our care.