

LIFE Meeting

Natural Revelation

May 12, 2017

1. Opening Prayer

Nathan

2. Creation Skit/Reading

3. Large Group: Witness Talks

Kylee, Brennon, Alison, Kaden

4. Small Group: Finding God in Nature

5. Large Group: Discussion and Reflection

6. Closing Prayer

Grant

Love you all! Thanks for your work this year. Have a fantastic summer!

Start with lights off

Narrator: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. **Light a candle.** God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

Then God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so. **Spray people with water.** God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

Then God said, “Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear”; and it was so. **Waves crashing sound cue.** God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the waters He called seas; and God saw that it was good. Then God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them”; **throw leaves at people?** and it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good. There was evening and there was morning, a third day.

Then God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth”; and it was so. **Turn on Christmas lights or lamps around the room.** God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also. God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good. There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

Then God said, “Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens.” **Play birds chirping/singing** God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; and God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” There was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind”; and it was so. **Someone gets on all fours and acts like a cow. “Moo”** God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good.

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. **Pull out a big mirror idk?** God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” Then God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to everything that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food”; and it was so. God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Sit in silence for a bit- listen to animal/bird sounds

Turn on lights

Opening Prayer

Mr. Blue Sky - Electric Light Orchestra

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GswbT5zfmRE>

Sun is shinin' in the sky
There ain't a cloud in sight
It's stopped rainin' everybody's in a play
And don't you know
It's a beautiful new day, hey hey
Runnin' down the avenue
See how the sun shines brightly in the city
On the streets where once was pity
Mister blue sky is living here today, hey hey
Mister blue sky please tell us why
You had to hide away for so long (so long)
Where did we go wrong?
Mister blue sky please tell us why
You had to hide away for so long (so long)
Where did we go wrong?
Hey you with the pretty face
Welcome to the human race
A celebration, mister blue sky's up there
waitin'
And today is the day we've waited for
Oh mister blue sky please tell us why
You had to hide away for so long (so long)
Where did we go wrong?
Hey there mister blue
We're so pleased to be with you
Look around see what you do
Everybody smiles at you
Hey there mister blue
We're so pleased to be with you
Look around see what you do
Everybody smiles at you
Mister blue sky, mister blue sky
Mister blue sky
Mister blue, you did it right
But soon comes mister night creepin' over
Now his hand is on your shoulder
Never mind I'll remember you this
I'll remember you this way
Mister blue sky please tell us why
You had to hide away for so long (so long)
Where did we go wrong?
Hey there mister blue
We're so pleased to be with you
Look around see what you do

Everybody smiles at you
Mister blue sky

In the beginning God created...everything. Of all his creations nature seems the most prominent in not only beauty but also in its conduciveness to natural revelation. John Muir said that "Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves". Although natural revelation is not strictly restricted to nature more often than not we find ourselves marveling in the awe of it. Next, is a poem by Bill Hoeneveld:

As silver rays of moonlight, glisten off the lake,
A purple haze is all around, that nature decides to make.
Such beauty in a barren scene God's wondrous hand provides,
Appreciate the Earth we have, the wind, the rain, the tides.
Cold crisp air and frosty ground, with rocks as old as time,
Are scattered with perfection, such beauty is sublime.
Celestial light from the moon, and all the stars above,
Shine so silently without fuss, as God's eternal love

This poem does a wonderful job of communicating the extent of where and to what level we can realize God's love and similar ideals in nature. Disclaimer: in order for us, and generations to come, to be able to appreciate nature we need to fight to preserve and protect it. While we are here on this earth, in times when we are overwhelmed the structure and mechanicality of society, it is important for us to be able to step back from it all, take a stroll through the woods, a walk on the shore, or a hike through the mountains, and, with a silent, clear, and open mind, revel in God's work.

God In Nature Reflections

God in Winter (Kylee)

I absolutely love the winter. God is so present in everything in nature if you only look. Specifically, in winter, I see God in the snow. I mean just look at each snowflake, no two are alike. He made each snowflake unique and beautiful like each one of us. He also made the snow pure white to reflect the sun, just as we should reflect God's light into the world. The snow also brings joy into the world when we don't have to go to school, and it brings fun to all the children, including me. God is also very present in the spirit of giving that accompanies Christmas. Not to mention Christmas reminds us each year that God came into the world just to save us.

God in Fall (Brennon)

I see God in Nature when I go Hunting and fishing. The best time i see God is in september during deer season when im setting in the tree stand before morning light waiting for the sun to rise listening to the owls hoot and the turkeys gobble as the owls go to bed and the turkeys wake up. Or when there is no sound and there is a peaceful silence with a slight breeze of the wind going through the trees to rustling the leaves. Another great time is when it's mid august u wake up early to go fishing and walk outside to hear the peaceful quiet of crickets in the darkness and on the the way the nice dark ness of trees on either side of the dirt road. When we finally get on the lake and you see the glossy water reflecting the almost fire like glow of the sun on the lake changing it from a dark blue to a warm and beautiful fire red and orange. Through all this i see God in the way that he created all this and that its beauty is unmatched

God in Summer (Alison)

I see God in a lot of different aspects of my life in the summertime. I feel His presence when I walk outside of school on the last day of finals and am relieved of all my stress. I see God in the beautiful days spent outside by the pool or at the park. I see him in late summer nights sent with friends. I see him in relaxing days when I am at home doing nothing. I see him in road trips to see my family. I feel God's presence in my joys, in nature, and just all around me.

God in Spring (Kaden)

In spring I see God in various places all around me. First, I see God through nature. I see him through the leaves, the grass, the flowers, and the animals. As everything regrows I see him behind it all. Second, I see God in people, people are filled with joy as the season moves along. Everyone brings out the best in themselves , and it is noticed by others around them. Lastly, God is seen through signs given to us. As Jesus rises on Easter, everything around us rises in spring.

Where do you see God's love in nature?

Where do you see God's Strength in nature?

Where do you see God's intelligence in nature?

Where do you see God's creativity in nature?

Where do you see God's kindness in nature?	Where do you see God's Wisdom?
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Small Group

Prayer

Loving Father and Creator of all we come to you today deeply grateful for your creation. As we look around us we are amazed at the greatness and majesty of all that you have made. Nature around us speaks of your greatness - the vast expanse of the sky, the mountains, trees, lakes and streams speak of your great design. You have given us such beauty in the colors of the rainbow, the beauty of flowers and fields. Words cannot adequately express the magnificence of all you have created. We join in praise with the writer of the psalms when he says, "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth." May we show our love and reverence to you, our Lord, by caring for all that you have created. We humbly give you praise and thanks. As your people let us joyfully proclaim: May the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be glorified in all places through the immaculate Virgin Mary amen.

Opening Questions

1. Where do you see God...
 - In nature? Vacations? Retreats? Food?
 - In your friends, family, pets, or strangers you meet?
 - In art? Music?
2. How does seeing God in these things change your perspective?
3. Have you ever had a moment or event that confirmed your belief in God?

4. Do you ever take time to see the natural beauty around you? What kind of things do you do when you spend time in nature?

Next we are going to do a natural revelation nature walk. You are going to be given these journal booklets with different questions to ponder or write about. Take your time and try to do this activity by yourself or find somewhere quiet where you won't be distracted. Think about where you see God in nature and how it makes you feel or what it makes you think about.

Discussion questions after walk

1. What were some of your thoughts while on the walk?
2. Where are some places you've been that are beautiful?
3. Where is somewhere you want to go? Why?
4. Where is a place you experience God?
5. How can you help someone else experience God more?
6. What has been your favorite LIFE memory this year?
7. What is something you've learned from LIFE that you can pass on?
8. What are your final thoughts?

Closing Prayer for Small Groups

God of the universe, We thank You for Your many good gifts - For the beauty of Creation and its rich and varied fruits, For clean water and fresh air, for food and shelter, animals and plants. Forgive us for the times we have taken the earth's resources for granted And wasted what You have given us. Transform our hearts and minds So that we would learn to care and share, To touch the earth with gentleness and with love, Respecting all living things. We pray for all those who suffer as a result of our waste, greed and indifference, And we pray that the day would come when everyone has enough food and clean water. Help us to respect the rights of all people and all species and help us to willingly share your gifts today and always. As your people let us joyfully proclaim: may the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary, Amen.

Closing Prayer

Revolution by the Beatles

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJQtozWKCyg>

You say you want a revolution
Well, you know
We all want to change the world
You tell me that it's evolution
Well, you know
We all want to change the world

You'd better free your mind instead

But if you go carrying pictures of
Chairman Mao
You ain't going to make it with anyone
anyhow

But when you talk about destruction
Don't you know that you can count me
out

Don't you know know it's gonna be
alright
Alright, alright

Don't you know it's gonna be alright
Alright, alright

Alright, alright
Alright, alright
Alright, alright
Alright, alright

You say you got a real solution
Well, you know
We'd all love to see the plan
You ask me for a contribution
Well, you know
We're all doing what we can

But if you want money for people with
minds that hate
All I can tell you is brother you have to
wait
Don't you know it's gonna be alright
Alright, alright, al...

You say you'll change the constitution
Well, you know
We all want to change your head
You tell me it's the institution
Well, you know

Where do you see God? Maybe it is in nature, with all of God's creation. Or maybe it is with family and friends. Or maybe it's in different charitable acts and volunteer work. The point is that tonight we explored God in a lot of different ways just like we did this past LIFE year. I pray that all of us can use these different experiences to bring good into a world that has a lot of sin in it. I pray that no matter how bad things may seem we realize we always have God and that there is never any reason for us to lose faith in Him. And finally I pray for all of us here tonight, that we can all continue to be enthusiastic about our love for God and our desire to lead others in the right direction. No matter how small or insignificant you might feel at times, you always have the power to start your own revolution and help turn others to God. Thank you everyone for an amazing LIFE year. As your people let us joyfully proclaim, May the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary.