

We are grateful to be here today in the Delaware River watershed, with which we share a diversity of plants and creatures including; daffodils, dandelions, fountain grass, aster, switchgrass, brown snakes, peregrine falcons, sharp shinned hawks, red shouldered hawks, squirrels, robins, cardinals, blue jays, and Great Spangled fritillaries (butterfly) . We acknowledge that this land is the traditional territory of the Lenape peoples. May we nurture our relationship with all our neighbors, and our shared responsibilities to this watershed where we gather today.

Thank you, good God, for all the gifts I have already received from your creation this day. Because the creation is yours and you love it, help me to love it more dearly.

My sweet little sisters, birds of the sky, you are bound to heaven, to God, your Creator. In every beat of your wings and every note of your songs, praise God. God has given you the greatest of gifts, the freedom of the air. You neither sow nor reap, yet God provides for you the most delicious food, rivers and lakes to quench your thirst, mountains and valleys for your home, tall trees to build your nests, and the most beautiful clothing: a change of feathers with every season. You and your kind were preserved in Noah's Ark. Clearly our Creator loves you dearly, since God gives you gifts so abundantly. So please beware, my little sisters, of the sin of ingratitude, and always sing praise to God. St. Francis of Assisi

With all that has wings-with birds and bugs, with bats and bees and butterflies-we lift our praise above, Lord God. Michael Kwatera

*Creator God,
Out of chaos you brought order.
Out of nothingness you brought life.
In the middle of all life stands the tree.*

*Trees provide the air that nurtures all your creation.
Birds make them their homes.
Cats climb them for protection.
Trees recycle life that has come before.*

*Bless the trees of this world, loving God.
Remind us to serve as their caregivers and protectors.
Give them long limbs and long life.
The gift of their breath is as special to us as the breath of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Creative God, thank you for all that is delightful and beautiful in nature. Thank you in particular for squirrels, who dart about with purpose, for wildflowers, which carpet and cover the fields and meadows with beauty. Thank you for all your blessings, but today, especially, for these two.

People from a planet without flowers would think we must be mad with joy the whole time to have such things about us. Iris Murdoch