



Tending to Creation

Activity for Sunday, September 13

coming to the water 

INVITATION:

For so many of us, our water arrives in our lives without much thought, at the turn of a faucet.

This week, take time to visit your local water source. This could look considerably different depending on where you live. It might mean walking by a river, paddling out on a lake, cycling on the bank of a canal, or walking out to your well. In Central Illinois, there is a good chance that your water comes from an aquifer. This is more difficult to visit!

If it rains during this week, collect some rainwater—the ultimate source of water that replenishes your aquifer—or search for any accessible springs associated with your aquifer. As much as possible, work your way back to a place where your water exists in nature. You may wish to consult a watershed map to follow your water back to its source.

Once you have found your water, take time to experience it with your senses: Listen to it, smell it, touch it, and observe how it interacts with plants and animals in its natural environment. If the water is potable right from the source, taste it, or bring along a water bottle with drinkable water from this source to taste. If possible, collect some water in a jar to bring back to the visual display in your congregation's worship area.

For reflection:

Consider the watershed that brought you this water.

- Where does it come from and where is it going?
- How many people's lives depend on the gift of this water?
- Is it used to sustain animals? Does it irrigate crops?

Give thanks to God for the life-sustaining gift of this water and for God's abundant provision in the life of your community.



WELCOME TO FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH
of Champaign-Urbana

Following Christ. Nurturing Community. Seeking Peace with Justice.



Celebration *of* Worship

September 6, 2026

*God’s Shalom for Our Common Home:
Returning to God’s Garden*

Centering chimes

Prelude

***Call to worship**

One: We come to worship, seeking God.

All: We come to pray, seeking guidance.

One: When wickedness abounds and hope feels out of reach,

All: We yearn for signs of God’s presence.

One: When the ways of the world lead to destruction, not shalom,

All: We long to know God’s will.

One: Together, let us turn and open ourselves to the healing embrace of our creator.

All: Together, let us seek God’s shalom.

***Gathering Hymn #788** “The Garden Needs Our Tending Now”

Welcome and Prayer

Hymn #806 “Called by Earth and Sky”

Children’s story and NEW children’s offering for the Tanzania College Scholarship Fund

Congregation sings as children come forward (Voices Together #512)

Scripture Isaiah 55:6-9; Matthew 6:7–13

Sermon

Tending to Creation Action & Prayer

***Response Hymn #653** “Nothing is Lost on the Breath of God”

Prayer

One: God who works salvation in the womb of the earth, you hold power over the waters.

The day and the night belong to you; you put the sun and the moon in place.

You laid the boundaries of the earth, created autumn, winter, spring, and summer.

All: We turn again toward you, knowing that your compassion is greater than our despair.

One: Even in our grief, we choose to seek you—God, whose mercy is wider than our ways.

**All: Teach us your harmonies and rhythms of covenant that we may rise as a choir
to join creation’s song of renewal.**

Congregational sharing and prayer (*text prayers to Pastor Michael*)

Gratitude for our Fall Sunday school teachers

Prayer & Offertory (Ushers will pass the offering plates)

Introduction of visitors

Work of the church (*please come forward to the mic to make your announcement*)

***Sending Hymn #828** “There’s a Wild Hope in the Wind”

***Benediction**

**Stand in body or in spirit. Children are invited to wave the worship ribbons during the hymns.*

Note: Because worship is participatory and not a performance, instead of applauding please show appreciation for preludes, offertories and special music in other ways, such as ASL, silent applause, saying “Amen” or thanking musicians later.

We welcome, without exclusion, all who seek God’s love and grace . . .

You are welcome here, inclusive of gender, race, country of origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, sexual identity, socioeconomic status, family status, past imprisonment, education, citizenship status and physical or mental abilities. We encourage you to share in the rituals, fellowship and ministry of this congregation.

Hearing devices (T-coil and over-ear) and large print hymnals are available from the greeters.
Childcare (birth – preschool) is provided in the nursery downstairs.