



**Matthew 25: 31-40
(NRSV)**

³¹“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ ⁴⁰And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’”

Connect Guide

Care For Our Common Home
Week of Sunday, April 28, 2024

Opening

- 1. Pray:** Creator God, thank you for the gift of today, for the sunshine, the air we breathe, the wind that blows in the trees, and for the gift of one another. Help us to make love the goal of our lives and the goal of our time together. May we be good stewards of your creation and of your children. Amen
- 2. Share:** What is your favorite way/place to enjoy God in nature?

Dive Into the Text

1. Who is the Son of Man that Jesus refers to and where does this term come from?
2. What makes some people worthy of entering into this new kingdom, according to the text?
3. What does it mean to care for the least of these? How often and how much does one need to do it to be seen as “blessed”?
4. In what ways to care for the least of these reveal the inner character of a person?

United Methodist Social Principles:

The Natural World

All creation is the Lord's, and we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it. Water, air, soil, minerals, energy resources, plants, animal life, and space are to be valued and conserved because they are God's creation and not solely because they are useful to human beings. God has granted us stewardship of creation. We should meet these stewardship duties through acts of loving care and respect. Economic, political, social, and technological developments have increased our human numbers, and lengthened and enriched our lives. However, these developments have led to regional defoliation, dramatic extinction of species, massive human suffering, overpopulation, and misuse and overconsumption of natural and nonrenewable resources, particularly by industrialized societies. This continued course of action jeopardizes the natural heritage that God has entrusted to all generations. Therefore, let us recognize the responsibility of the church and its members to place a high priority on changes in economic, political, social, and technological lifestyles to support a more ecologically equitable and sustainable world leading to a higher quality of life for all of God's creation.

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Go Deeper

Read the excerpt from the United Methodist Social Principles (left sidebar)

1. Share an example of your own experience of the degradation of the environment by human activity. How does it impact you personally?
2. What is the relationship between marginalized people (the least of these) and human destruction of natural resources?
3. In what ways can we care for the least of these by addressing harm to the natural world?
4. What are ways that we can work together as a church to better care for our common home, as we seek to make love of God and neighbor our goal?

Close in Prayer

Close your time in prayer together.