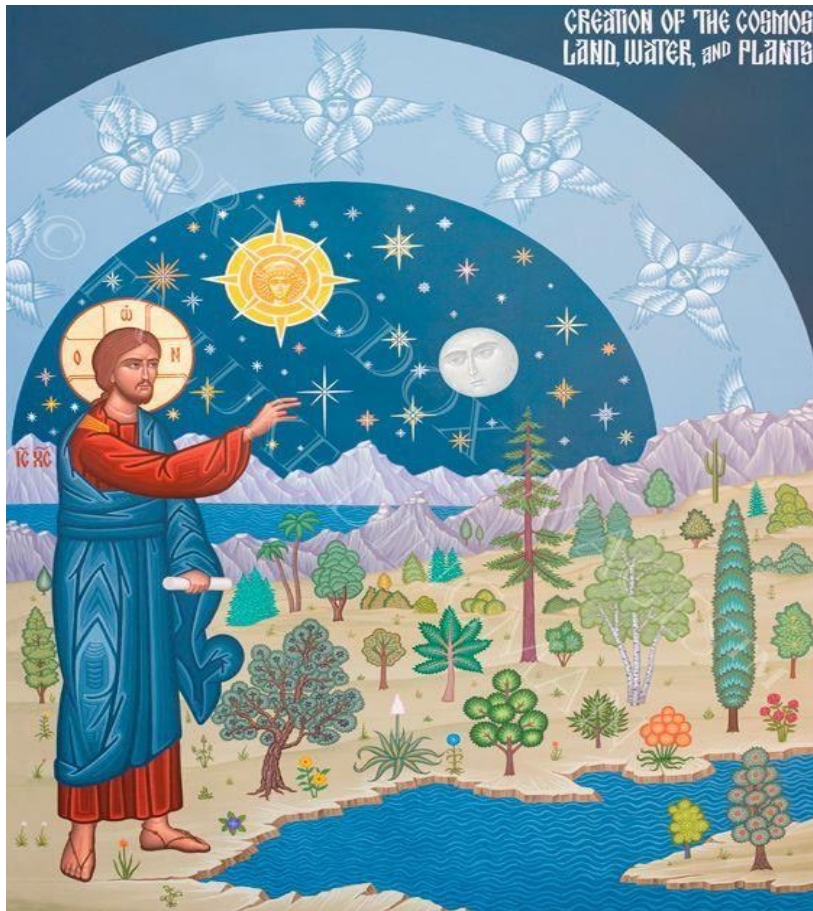


The Congregational Church of South Hero, U.C.C.



Creation in Christ September 6, 2026

9:30 AM

Rev. Dr. Michael W. Galica

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

A few things about our church...

- ❖ A **restroom** is in the back area of the church by the closets. Additional restrooms and a **changing table** are available downstairs.
- ❖ A **supervised nursery** is downstairs for children ages 5 and under.
- ❖ **Bold type** in the bulletin indicates a response by all.
- ❖ An * (**asterisk**) notes a time it is appropriate to stand in body or spirit, as you are able.
- ❖ Hymns marked **NCH** are in the **black New Century Hymnal**.
Hymns marked **W&R** are in the **green Worship & Rejoice** hymnal.

Preparing for Worship

Prelude

Ring the Church Bell

Welcome & Announcements

Since the seventh century, September 1 has symbolized the day of the creation of the world in the Byzantine tradition and has been the opening feast of its liturgical year (known as the Feast of the Indiction), in a parallel with the feast of Rosh Hashanah marking the Jewish New Year. Creation in Christ celebrates the ongoing creation of the world in and through Christ, who sustains, unites, and holds all created things. We hear today of the triune God who creates all things: sun and moon, shining stars, sea monsters, creeping things and flying birds—and, yes, even human beings. God-in-Christ still takes care of all things and invites us to join in as caretakers of God's good creation.

Gathered as One

Invocation

Pastor Mike

God who made and sustains all things, loving and redeeming the world through your Son Jesus Christ the eternal Word, give us the grace to worship you and bring all people to see your glory, that all things may be restored and come to fulfilment in Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, for you are one God, now and for ever,

Amen.

Introit

Call to Worship

Gretchen Patterson

In the beginning God created heaven and earth;
and saw that they were good.

Wisdom was firmly set from everlasting, delighting the Most High day by day,
ever at play in God's presence;
and God saw that She was good.

In the beginning was the Word who was with God, and who was God;
and God saw that He was good.

So come and worship the God in whom we live, move, and have our being,
because God is good. Amen!

Creator, we disfigure your world. Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Giver of life, we too often choose death. Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Assurance of Pardon and Grace **Pastor Mike**
 God the Creator brings you new life, forgives and redeems you. Take hold of
 this forgiveness and live your life in the Spirit of Jesus.
Amen.

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Proclaiming God's Word

Time with Young People

Pastor Mike

Prayer for Illumination

Gretchen Patterson

Hebrew Scripture

Genesis 1:1-2:3

Pew Bible p 1-2

Psalm

Psalm 148:1–14 (CEB)

Read by All

Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from heaven! Praise God on the heights!

Praise God, all of you who are God's messengers!

Praise God, all of you who comprise God's heavenly forces!

Sun and moon, praise God! All of you bright stars, praise God!

You highest heaven, praise God!

Do the same, you waters that are above the sky!

Let all of these praise the LORD's name

because God gave the command and they were created!

God set them in place always and forever.

God made a law that will not be broken.

Praise the LORD from the earth,

you sea monsters and all you ocean depths!

Do the same, fire and hail, snow and smoke,

stormy wind that does what God says!

Do the same, you mountains, every single hill,

fruit trees, and every single cedar!

Do the same, you animals—wild or tame—

you creatures that creep along and you birds that fly!

Do the same, you rulers of the earth and every single person,

you heirs and every single ruler on earth!

Do the same, you young men—young women too!—

you who are old together with you who are young!

Let all of these praise the LORD's name

because only God's name is high over all.

Only God's majesty is over earth and heaven.

God raised the strength of God people,

the praise of all God's faithful ones—

that's the Israelites, the people who are close to God.

Praise the LORD!

Epistle

Acts 17:22a,24–28

Pew Bible p 902

Response

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Anthem “Sonata in F minor” *by Georg Phillip Telemann*

Aleks Lee, bassoon; Mary Jane Wirsing, piano

Gospel

John 1:1–5

Pew Bible p 862

Response

This is the good news.

Thanks be to God.

Message

“Creating and Sustaining”

Pastor Mike

*Sermon Hymn “Of the Parent's Heart Begotten” NCH #118, v.1,2,5

Joys and Concerns

Prayers of the People

Pastor Mike

Here, in the company of Your people, O Most High, we give thanks for Creation and our part within it. for nature which surrounds us, for the insect and animal life which sustains us, for the flora and fauna which delights us, for the rugged beauty of Creation which humbles us, we give thanks. As we gaze with awe at Your works, we marvel at the part we play; You’ve made us little less than gods, entrusting us with great responsibilities, and we give You thanks. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Yet even as we thank you, even as we gaze in wonder at Your works, we bring our concern for the despoilation and degradation of Creation, and shudder at the dreadful consequences.

We yearn for a cooler climate, for icier poles, and lower sea levels, yet know we’ve missed our chance to reverse the damage. We pray for those who study how to make mitigations and live with a changed climate, and pray for the strength to make the changes we need so all can live well.

God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for those who've died, this summer, from heat and its consequences; for those on the move to escape the droughts and wars caused by climate change, and for those whose homelands will soon disappear under the waves. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Give Your wisdom, O Most High, to those who dare to lead and make difficult decisions. Give Your wisdom, too, Dear Lord, to us as we seek to live differently and more sustainably. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for those known to us who are in any kind of need; we pray too for those known only to You; and we pray for ourselves... God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Hear our prayers, we ask, in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

Responding to God's Work

Invitation to Generosity

Pastor Mike

Called to be partners with God in the renewal and restoration of the whole earth, come and offer gifts of life and blessing to God. Come, offer yourselves to the work of God in a broken and disrupted world.

Offertory "For the Beauty of the Earth"

Cathy Rude, piano; Mary Jane Wirsing, organ

by Conrad Kocher, arr. James Pethel & Stan Pethel

***Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God all creatures here below.

Praise God above ye heavenly hosts.

CREATOR, CHRIST and Holy Ghost.

(sing the ending you are more comfortable with)

Praise FATHER, SON and Holy Ghost. Amen

***Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication**

All things come from You, O Most High, and of Your own do we give You. Help us to use all Your great gifts with skill and responsibility, that, at the end, we may be reconciled with You and all Creation.

Amen.

Gathering at God's Table

Welcome to the Table of the Lord. In this church all persons who are open to the Holy Spirit, who seek to grow in Christian love, and who choose to serve in the name of Jesus are welcome to participate.

Our bread is gluten-free; our cup is grape juice.

Great Thanksgiving

Pastor Mike

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to God.

Let us give thanks to God Most High.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Communion Prayer & Words of Institution

Pastor Mike

Creator of all, we give you thanks. Out of the earth you formed us. Into dust you breathed your Spirit, transforming dust into life, substance of the earth into your tabernacle. You gave us stewardship of the earth, and over all things living, you entrusted the whole world to our care.

We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, your Son, Jesus took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to the disciples saying: "This is my body which is broken for you. Do this to remember me."

In the same way, Jesus also took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it, to remember me."

By eating this bread and drinking this cup, we proclaim Christ's death, celebrate Christ's resurrection, and await Christ's coming again.

Empower our celebration with your Holy Spirit, feed us with your life, fire us with your love, confront us with your justice, and make us one in the body of Christ, who taught us to pray...

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven: hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,

and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever. Amen

Distribution

We receive Holy Communion by intinction. As you come forward at the instruction of a deacon, receive the bread from the pastor. Continue to the deacon on the side you are seated and dip the bread in the cup. If you consume the bread before you dip, please ask the pastor for another. Return to your seat via the side aisles. If you would like to partake of Holy Communion and are unable to come forward, let the deacon know and the bread and cup will be brought to you.

Prayer after Communion

Pastor Mike

We thank you, God, that you have fed us from your own table. You satisfy our deepest thirst and our greatest hunger. Send us out to participate in your work of the healing of creation. Amen.

Sent Forth in God's Name

***Sending Hymn**

"Earth and All Stars"

W&R #642

***Benediction**

Pastor Mike

Go now, from this sacred gathering, and bear God's renewal and restoration. Live according to God's holy will as a good steward of creation. Walk in the path of God's righteousness, justice, and love. Journey with humanity and creation toward attaining life in its fullness. In the name of God, our Creator and Parent, In the name of Christ, God's Son, our Liberator, In the name of the Spirit Sustainer.

Amen.

***Dismissal**

Go in peace to love and serve God.

Thanks be to God!

Today's liturgy is adapted from a number of sources from around the world, acknowledging and celebrating the diversity of all of God's creation: The Christian Conference of Asia; the Anglican Church of Southern Africa; the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia; the Church of South India; and the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom.

Thank you to our pastor, Mike; thank you to Gretchen Patterson for reading and to our musicians today: Mary Jane Wirsing, Cathy Rude and Aleks Lee.