Dear Friend
Many thanks to Judith for this week's service.

I hope storm Eunice hasn't left you with too much devastation. Somehow our first hymn seems very appropriate. William Whiting's 'Eternal Father, strong to save', sung to Melita, with lyrics to join in, courtesy of Chet Valley churches:
https://youtu.be/5dVGZFlfGOs

and of course, sung by a select group of choristers at the memorial service for Prince Philip:
https://youtu.be/79oJWx3lxlU

In the virtual service Judith quotes Isaac Watts' poem, 'I sing the almighty power of God', here it is sung (rather grandly) to Ellacombe by First-Plymouth church, Lincoln, Nebraska:
https://youtu.be/B6lFXCK6V5E

Inspired by Handel's Messiah, Haydn based his oratorio 'The Creation' on passages from Genesis, Milton's Paradise Lost and other sources. Here are some excerpts performed by the energetic Boston-based Handel and Haydn Society with some beautiful images:
https://youtu.be/NtdwGB62rok

Finally, a splendid worship song from Martin, 'King of Kings' (Acoustic) - Hillsong Worship. Another new hymn from Hillsong:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tl7ckz0iPoU

Enjoy!
Chris

Service sheet for 20.2.22
The 2nd Sunday before Lent

May we never feel forsaken, O Lord, whether in the quietness of our resting, in the storms of the day, in the cares of the world or in the journey of life.
(Søren Kierkegaard 1813-1855)

CONFESSION
Creator of our common home, you fill the earth, sea and sky with life. Forgive us our neglect of your creation, the choking waste of our pollution, the damage done by careless habits, and our indifference to future generations. Help us to amend our lives and to live well and gently on the earth. *(Steven Croft)*

When deeds of iniquity overwhelm us, you forgive our transgressions. (Psalm 65:3)

COLLECT
Almighty God, you have created the heavens and the earth and made us in your own image: teach us to discern your hand in all your works and your likeness in all your children; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things, now and for ever. Amen.

READINGS
Genesis 2:4b-9,15-end; Luke 8:22-25; Revelation 4

REFLECTION
There's no doubting the fact that our world is a magnificent creation. We are bombarded with facts, figures, radio and television programmes to remind us, and we have equally persistent reminders of our duty and responsibility to keep it magnificent. It's nothing new: our readings today give different perspectives on the same theme, with the additional reminder that God alone is the creator of all this wonder. One alternative reading for today is Psalm 65, often sung at Harvest Festival, with emphasis on its idyllic ending; 'the valleys also shall stand so thick with corn that they shall laugh and sing.' Earlier in the psalm is a description of God's power in establishing the mountains and the seas, and his mastery over the earth which is echoed in the passage from Luke's gospel where Jesus rebukes the 'wind and the raging waves', to produce calm. 'Where is your faith?' he asks his disciples, who have been brought up with the scriptures, and understand God's part in the creation of the world they inhabit. They know the Sea of Galilee – some of them have made their living from it. They have experienced bad weather in the past– they know this world - but when the storm hits and fear strikes them, their instinct is to turn to Jesus. When he stills the storm and calms their fears, they ask each other, 'Who then is this..?' - a dawning realisation that God is with them in the boat. It's when we read passages such as the fourth chapter of the book of Revelation that we learn that God in majesty is 'worthy to receive glory and honour and power.' His glory is beyond human understanding, yet he is our loving heavenly Father, our Creator.

PRAYERS
God of my salvation, when my soul is a parched land, summon me to drink deep from your living waters. When the floods rise up to my neck, rescue me from sinking in the mire. When the storms rage around me, anchor me to the rock of your enduring love, and at all times, keep before my sight those brothers and sisters for whom flood and drought and storm are very real. Help me to live simply so that others may simply live. Amen. (Rachel Parkinson)
We pray for our world, and especially for all who live in poverty or fear; for the peoples of Ukraine, Afghanistan and Ethiopia; for those who feel that violence is the only way to achieve their aim; pour your love into their hearts , we pray.
Bless all who are sick and suffering in any way. We spend quiet moments thinking of those in our own minds at this time…….
We thank you for the blessings of the world you have made. Help us to treasure this gift, treating it as something very precious.

We say THE LORD'S PRAYER

We share THE GRACE

I sing the almighty power of God,
That made the mountains rise,
That spread the flowing seas abroad,
And built the lofty skies. *(Isaac Watts)*

