



**Minster Bethel
Congregational Church
(MBCC)**

14/06/2020

The Garden of Eden

May God's blessing surround you each day.

As we trust in and walk in his way;

May His presence within,

Guard and keep us from sin;

Go in peace, go in joy, go in love.



Then the Lord God placed the man in the garden of Eden to **cultivate it and to guard it.** **Genesis 2:15**

Good morning and welcome to this 12th unprecedented church service.

I've chosen the hymn this morning 'For the beauty of the earth'

For the beauty of the earth, For the beauty of the skies, For the love which from our birth Over and around us lies, Lord of all, to thee we raise This our grateful hymn of praise.	For each perfect gift of thine, To our race so freely given, Graces human and divine, Flowers of earth and buds of heaven, Lord of all, to thee we raise This our grateful hymn of praise.
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For the beauty of each hour Of the day and of the night, Hill and vale, and tree and flower, Sun and moon and stars of light, Lord of all, to thee we raise This our grateful hymn of praise.	For thy Church which evermore Lifteth holy hands above, Offering up on every shore Her pure sacrifice of love, Lord of all, to thee we raise This our grateful hymn of praise.
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For the joy of human love,
Brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth, and friends above,
Pleasures pure and undefiled,
Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our grateful hymn of praise.

Our reading/story today is taken from Genesis 2;

AND IT WAS VERY GOOD

How strange this rain falling after so many gorgeous weeks of sunshine, but I am sure that many of you with gardens have been praying for some rain. The rain has made everything so fresh and vibrant. This is how I imagine the Garden of Eden after God's amazing creation.

However in Genesis 2 verse 5 we read "Now no shrub had yet appeared on the earth and no plant had yet sprung up, for the Lord God had not sent rain on the earth" Even in the garden of Eden the water was needed the rain hadn't arrived. As I walk around this beautiful island I wonder if Eden started as a desert a barren land awaiting for the streams to water the earth.



So, the original earth had no rain. Which also means no clouds, no storms, no lightning.

Also "there was no man to work the ground" (Gen 2:5). (Gen 2:7) the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. Man was "formed" from the dust of the earth. The word "formed" describes the work of an artist. Like a potter shaping us from clay.

"Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed" (Gen 2:8). The image of God the potter making and molding man is replaced by the image of God the gardener planting a garden. The Garden is a sign of God's great generosity – He made the Garden solely for man's comfort and enjoyment.

The LORD God "planted" a Garden. I know some of us are exceptional gardeners some of us enjoy gardening and some like me think the growing flowers are weeds and pull them out as I leave the weeds to grow!! However, most of us have a plan for our gardens just as God had.

God shaped, formed, and planted the Garden of Eden with man in mind. It was a place of beauty – all kinds of trees grew out of the ground; trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food (Gen 2:9). It was a place of meaningful work – Adam was to work the garden and take care of it (Gen 2:15). It was a place of responsibility – Adam was required to obey God (Gen 2:16-17). It was a place for invention and imagination – Adam was to name the animals (Gen 2:19-20). Everything that man needed to live life to the full was in that Garden.

As I stated previously I often walk around this beautiful island, with its fantastic coastlines and its wonderful natural beauty and I think of the many amazing gifts we have been given and I pray that I never take these gifts freely given for granted.

Let us Pray:

Dear Father, Thank you for allowing us to benefit from the beauty of all that your hand has created. Thank you for all the beautiful and fragrant plants, and for the power and wonder of each season and the rains that keep your earth reproducing. Amen