

January 23, 2022
Epiphany 3

Creation

Rev. Lori McPherson, Preaching

First Reading ~ *Ecclesiastes 43:4-14*

A person tending a furnace
works in burning heat,
but three times as hot is the sun
scorching the mountains;
it breathes out fiery vapors,
and its bright rays blind the eyes.
Great is the Divine One who made it;
at God's orders it hurries on its course.

It is the moon that marks the changing seasons,
governing the times, their everlasting sign.
From the moon comes the sign for festal days,
a light that wanes when it completes its course.
The new moon, as its name suggests,
renews itself;

how marvelous it is in this change,
a beacon to the hosts on high,
shining in the vault of the heavens!

The glory of the stars is the beauty of heaven,
a glittering array in the heights of God.
On the orders of the Holy One they stand in their
appointed places;
they never relax in their watches.
Look at the rainbow, and praise the One who
made it;
it is exceedingly beautiful in its brightness.
It encircles the sky with its glorious arc;
the hands of the Most High have stretched it out.

Second Reading ~ “*This World*” by Mary Oliver

I would like to write a poem about the world
that has in it nothing fancy.
But it seems impossible.
Whatever the subject, the morning sun
glimmers it.

The tulip feels the heat and flaps its petals open
and becomes a star.
The ants bore into the peony bud
and there is a dark
pinprick well of sweetness.

As for the stones on the beach, forget it.
Each one could be set in gold.
So I tried with my eyes shut,
but of course the birds were singing.
And the aspen trees were shaking the sweetest
music out of their leaves.

And that was followed by, guess what,
a momentous and beautiful silence
as comes to all of us, in little earfuls,
if we're not too hurried to hear it.
As for spiders, how the dew hangs in their webs
even if they say nothing, or seem to say nothing.

So fancy is the world, who knows,
maybe they sing.
So fancy is the world, who knows, maybe the
stars sing too,
and the ants,
and the peonies, and the warm stones,
so happy to be where they are,
on the beach, instead of being
locked up in gold.