

“This is My Father’s World”

The mockingbird is singing its heart out in the morning sunshine. Glistening earthworms wriggle through every clump of weed roots I pull. The squirrel we call Prayer Guy folds his paws across his chest and waits trustingly for a peanut.

Don’t they know that the human race is being assaulted by the novel coronavirus?

No, they don’t.

Some of us didn’t know when all the majestic chestnuts began dying out in the mountains of Appalachia. We barely knew or cared when the white-nosed bat was threatened with extinction due to disease. But all creation is in this together. As biological entities, we are no different from the chestnut or the white-nosed bat. We are vulnerable.

In times like these, we recognize that a boundary has been crossed. A virus that should have stayed in animals has crossed over into a ready host organism that has no defenses.

As the world’s human population has grown, other boundaries are being crossed. Rain forests bulldozed. Grassy meadows paved over with asphalt. We humans have boundary issues ourselves, to the detriment of the planet. This rampant virus, to me, is a wakeup call to take the condition of the earth more seriously.

People pray that God will stop the coronavirus, as if it’s a test of faith to insist that God can. In a way, that’s like praying that no longer would earthworms wriggle, mockingbirds sing, or squirrels eat peanuts.

To me, a better prayer is that God would open our eyes to the right way to restore boundaries in nature, to live together in God’s creation. The best scientific minds are racing now to make a vaccine. Factories are racing to save lives. Smart geeks are pressing 3-D printers into service to create protective equipment for medical professionals.

Men and women with God’s creative and compassionate abilities must discover ways to respect the boundaries of nature. The health of our planet home demands that we learn to live safely together.

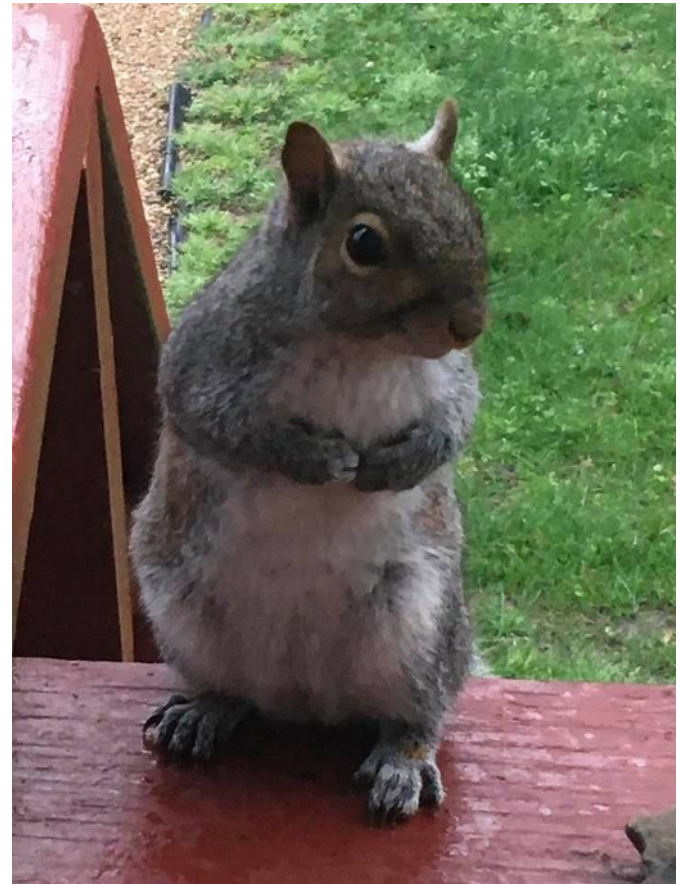
But for today, the yellow buttons of dandelion and buttercup are popping up on cue. The timing of this pandemic just when spring is unfolding feels like a gift to lift our hearts. Our God is faithful and will be faithful.

As we step outside today and catch the exuberant notes of the mockingbird's song, maybe we can sing too:

“This is my father’s world, the birds their carols raise.  
The morning light, the lily white declare their maker’s praise.

This is my Father’s world, I rest me in the thought  
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas, His hands the wonders wrought.

This is my Father’s world, He shines in all that’s fair  
In the rustling grass I hear him pass. He speak to me everywhere.”



[\(Click here to listen to the mockingbird song\)](#)