



## DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS

Carstairs-Bancroft United Church

April 12, 2024



Photo: Our Daily Bread

# SINGING MEADOWS

*The valleys are mantled with grain; they shout for joy and sing.*

Psalm 65:13

### READ Psalm 65:8-13

I've often affectionately joked with my mother-in-law about her ability to talk to her dogs. She responds to their barks with loving understanding. Perhaps now she and dog owners everywhere will also listen for their canine pals to laugh. Scientists have discovered that many animals, including dogs, cows, foxes, seals, and parakeets, all have "vocal play signals"-otherwise known as laughter. Identifying these accompanying sounds helps distinguish an animal's play behaviors from what might otherwise look like fighting to a human observer.

That animals express laughter and joy gives us a delightful glimmer of what it might look like for other parts of creation to praise God in their own way. As King David looked over his surroundings, it seemed to him "the hills [were] clothed with gladness" and the meadows and valleys were "[shouting] for joy" (Psalm 65:12-13). David recognized that God had cared for and enriched the land, providing both beauty and sustenance.

Even though our physical surroundings don't "sing" in a literal way, they bear witness to God's active work in His creation and, in turn, invite us to give praise to Him with our voices. May we-as part of the "whole earth"-be "filled with awe at [His] wonders" and respond to Him with "songs of joy" (v. 8). We can trust that He'll hear and understand them.

By **Kirsten Holmberg**

### PRAY & REFLECT

**Thank You, God, for Your continued work in creation. Amen**

How do your physical surroundings encourage you to praise God? Where have you seen His handiwork elsewhere?

### SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

God's handiwork is evident throughout all creation: in the beauty of a flower, a sunset, a soaring eagle, a newborn baby. Similar to David's declaration in Psalm 65:8 that "the whole earth is filled with awe at your wonders," Job said, "Ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you . . . Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this?" (Job 12:7-9). Psalm 19:1 says that "the heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands." God's creation and creatures may not literally "sing" His praises, but they inspire those with eyes to do so-and be amazed. "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord," declares the psalmist (150:6), for the Creator of the world loves and cares for us. – By **Alyson Kieda**

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