



## GATHER

### Thanksgiving for Baptism

*At the font or body of water.*

Water! Water! We praise you, O God, for water -- the local bodies of water, the rain that nourishes animals and plants, the water for drinking and bathing. We praise you, O God, for water:

**We praise you, O God, for water!**

We praise you, O God, for our water stories -- a flood that cleansed the earth, the sea that drowned the enemy, a river that can heal leprosy. We praise you, O God, for water:

**We praise you, O God, for water!**

We remember the waters of Jesus – baptized in the Jordan River, calming the Sea of Galilee, drinking from Jacob’s Well, washing the disciples’ feet, on the cross thirsting for us.

O God, for water:

**We praise you, O God, for water!**

We praise you, O God, for our own baptism. Breathe into this water, wash away our sin, and birth us new into your peace and joy.

We praise you, O God, for water:

**We praise you, O God, for water!**

O God, you are the Ocean, the source of all life. O God, you are the River, saving us from death. O God, you are the Stream, restoring our community’s strength. We praise you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, today, tomorrow, forever. Amen, and Amen:

**Amen, and Amen!**

## OR

### Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation. **Amen.**

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin both individual and communal.

*(silence for reflection)*

God, creator of the universe.

**We confess the ways that we have not loved our neighbor as ourselves.**

**We confess the ways we have not seen your creation as our neighbor to learn from and care for.**

**We confess the lie of scarcity that tells us we must cling to our privilege and possessions because if there is justice for our neighbor, we will not have enough. We confess all that we have done and all that we have left undone that brings harm to your creation, our neighbor.**

**We confess the ways we have ignored the groaning of the earth, the realities of a changing climate, and the ways we have turned our backs so we may remain comfortable.**

**We confess the ways we have jumped to conclusions about who you are and limited the beauty and scope of your mystery.**

**We confess the ways we contribute to systems that choke out your abundant life and your breath of salvation.**

**We confess our sin, hear us O God, forgive us, change us, stir your Spirit in us to call us out of our sin and into your justice seeking love.**

God, who suffered for us just as we are, loves us even when we were dead in sin, and makes us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of  
✠ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Creator God, strengthen us with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in our hearts through faith. Amen.

## **AND/OR**

### **Land Acknowledgement**

*See information in notes at the end of this document.*

### **Greeting**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

### **Prayer of the Day**

Let us Pray.

Creative Father, Nurturing Mother, through the Son and Holy Spirit you created all that is seen, and unseen. On the first day you saw all creation as very good. Open our eyes and hearts to care for what you have entrusted to us. Your love sustains us and renews us, through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Amen.**

**WORD**

**Children's Sermon**

- Teach about how caring for creation is a way of loving God and neighbor
- EMPOWER them as those who are called to care for creation even now -- do not have to wait until they are adults (just like all of our baptismal identity begins at the font and not when we reach a certain age)
- Encourage them to find God in nature, find new ways to be kinder to the earth, etc. Give them a way to share these things with the congregation -- a bulletin board where they can post stories/photos?
- Children's Books on Caring for Creation will soon be added to our page on the Synod website.

**First Reading**

**Job 12:7-10**

- 7** But ask the animals, and they will teach you;  
the birds of the air, and they will tell you;
- 8** ask the plants of the earth,<sup>[a]</sup> and they will teach you;  
and the fish of the sea will declare to you.
- 9** Who among all these does not know  
that the hand of the Lord has done this?
- 10** In the Lord's hand is the life of every living thing  
and the breath of every human being.

**Psalm 95:1-7**

- 1** O come, let us sing to the Lord;  
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
- 2** Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;  
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!
- 3** For the Lord is a great God,  
and a great King above all gods.
- 4** In his hand are the depths of the earth;  
the heights of the mountains are his also.
- 5** The sea is his, for he made it,  
and the dry land, which his hands have formed.
- 6** O come, let us worship and bow down,  
let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!
- 7** For he is our God,  
and we are the people of his pasture,  
and the sheep of his hand.

**Second Reading**

**1 Corinthians 13:4-8a**

4 Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant 5 or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6 it does not rejoice in

wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. 7It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

8Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end.

## **Gospel**

**Mark 12:28-31**

28 One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, 'Which commandment is the first of all?'

29 Jesus answered, 'The first is, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; 30 you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." 31 The second is this, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these.'

**Sermon** -- Recorded sermon option will be available in April 2021

## **Prayers of Intercession** *(The Episcopal Church, Materials for Honoring God in Creation)*

Let us pray for the revealing of the reign of God in the world, now and always.

In the beginning,

**God was.**

Here and now,

**God is.**

In the future,

**God will be.**

Creator of earth, sea, and sky, kindle the fire of your Spirit within us that we may be bold to heal and defend the earth, and pour your blessing upon all who work for the good of the planet.

God, Giver of life,

**Hear our prayer.**

Breath of life, receive our thanks for the beauty of our local habitat and all who dwell in it, and grant us the wisdom and will to conserve it.

Giver of life,

**Hear our prayer.**

Source of life, heal and redeem the wounds of your creation, and visit the places and people who suffer from our indifference, neglect, and greed.

God, Giver of life,

**Hear our prayer.**

Lover of all you have made, we thank you for the wondrous diversity of your creatures, and we pray for their well-being.

God, Giver of life,

**Hear our prayer.**

Author of the book of nature, receive our gratitude for places of restoration and healing, and continue to bless those places that feed our lives and spirits.

God, Giver of life,

**Hear our prayer.**

Wise Creator, whose works are full of mystery, give us wonder and appreciation for your creatures with whom we find ourselves in conflict.

God, Giver of life,

**Hear our prayer.**

Giver of all good gifts, awaken us daily to our dependence upon your bounty, and make us always thankful for the abundance of your blessings.

God, Giver of life,

**Hear our prayer.**

Divine Physician, heal our communities, especially those where neglect, greed, or violence inflict suffering upon people and other creatures.

God, Giver of life,

**Hear our prayer.**

Comforter of all the earth, sustain the people of this congregation who desire or need your presence and help [especially...].

God, Giver of life,

**Hear our prayer.**

Eternal God, the light of all who know you, come and fill our hearts with your love. Help us speak when many keep silent, help us stand for what is right when many sit in indifference. Increase our faith and charity, until your kingdom comes and heaven and earth rejoice in everlasting glory; through your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

**MEAL**

**Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**Offering**

*Consider taking up an offering for a green initiative in your congregation, community, synod, churchwide, global, etc.*

**Communion** *(Used by permission from the Wild Church Minonite Congregation, Fresno California.)*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Christ, through whom all things were made, hosts us at this meal. Once he compared his body to bread and his blood to wine, and gave us these elements to remember his life, death and resurrection. Jesus went to the greatest lengths of love in life and on the cross to reconcile *all* things back to God, and to renew us and the whole world as a New Creation!

On the night before he died, Jesus took bread, food of the poor, the work of the field and hearth. He gave thanks, broke it and shared it with his friends saying, "Take and eat, this is my body, given for you, do this to remember me." Then he took the cup, fruit of the land, gave thanks and gave it to his friends saying, "This is my blood, which is shed for you. When you do this, do it in memory of me."

**Creator, send your Spirit on these gifts so that we know Jesus in them and are gathered together with everyone who shares this sacred meal of justice, reconciliation and New Creation.**

Whenever we eat this, we remember and embody the New Creation through Christ's life, death, and resurrection – and God sends us from here in love to be part of healing the world.

**Lord's Prayer**

Beloved: This is the body and blood of Christ, broken and shed so *all* may be whole.

**Distribution of Communion**

**Blessing After Communion** *(From Eco-congregation)*

May God who established the dance of creation,

Who marvelled at the lilies of the field.

Who transforms chaos to order,

Who comes to us in earthly elements of bread and wine,

Lead us to transform our lives and the Church

To reflect God's glory in creation.

**We were made for this! Amen!**

## SENDING

**Dismissal** (*Sam Hamilton-Poore, The Earth Gospel: A Guide To Prayer for God's Creation. Upper Room Book, 2008*)

May the spirit of life move you from apathy to action, from observing to doing, from despair to Hope. May the spirit of life bless you for both the pain and the joy of change, the change the world needs, the change for which you pray and the change you are becoming through ✠ Jesus Christ. Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve God's creation.

**Thanks be to God!**

## WORSHIP NOTES/IDEAS

- **Land Acknowledgement**
  - This is not intended to be something that is done as a passive piece in the liturgy. We recommend that the worship team take the time to follow a process as outlined in these (or similar) websites and then to share the information with the congregation that all might share the fuller understanding of this piece of the liturgy.
  - <https://dofdmennon.org/land-acknowledgement/>
  - <https://nativegov.org/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment/>
  
- **Visual/hands on ideas for setting space or engaging**
  - For congregations using projectors or online worship, consider using local images from creation
  - Invite artists (either in the congregation or locally) to display works around your worship space that celebrate creation
  - Worship outdoors!
  - Center around water -- Storied waters from the beginning of creation, baptism, etc.
  - Try paperless worship
  - After the sermon, time could be given for everyone to fill out a small index card saying what action they will take to be better stewards of the Earth. They could be taken home or put in the offering basket and blessed at the altar -- stewardship of creation goes in the same basket with stewardship of finances.
  - Consider a blessing for your congregation's "Green Team" on this day.
  - Enjoy an outdoors picnic after worship, giving a special time of thanksgiving for your church grounds.

- Liturgical dance could be incorporated

### **Music suggestions**

- ELW
  - 307 Light Shone in Darkness
  - 447 O Blessed Spring
  - 555 Oh, Sing to God Above!
  - 556 Morning Has Broken
  - 679 For the Fruit of All Creation
  - 680 We Plow the Fields and Scatter
  - 684 Creating God, Your Fingers Trace
  - 690 We Raise Our Hands to You, O Lord
  - 726 Light Dawns on a Weary World
  - 731 Earth and All Stars!
  - 733 Great Is Thy Faithfulness
  - 736 God the Sculptor of the Mountains
  - 739 Touch the Earth Lightly
  - 740 God of the Sparrow
  - 771 God, who Stretched the Spangled Heavens
  - 824 This is My Father's World
  - 835 All Creatures, Worship God Most High!
  - 837 Many and Great, O God
  - 838 Beautiful Savior
  - 856 How Great Thou Art
  - 879 For the Beauty of the Earth
  - 881 Let All Things Now Living
- THIS FAR BY FAITH
  - 47 All Earth is Hopeful
  - 252 His Eye is On the Sparrow
  - 222 God the Sculptor of the Mountains
  - 276 Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow
  - 226 You Are the Seed
  - 230 I, the Lord of Sea and Sky
  - 283 Great is Thy Faithfulness
- CAMP
  - All God's Critters
  - I Want to Praise You Lord
  - Hippo Song (children's message?)
  - You Are the Light of the World (new verses for creation)
  - Waves of Mercy (?)
  - Prepare the Way
  - Sanctuary
  - Dance with Me
  - They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love
  - All Creatures of Our God and King



- Fairest Lord Jesus
- Peace Like a River
- Bullfrogs & Butterflies
- Butterfly Song
- Sheep Song
- Pass It On
- This Pretty Planet
- CONTEMPORARY/OTHER
  - So Will I - Hillsong
  - Seasons - Hillsong
  - God of Wonders - Third Day
  - The Earth Shall Know