

LITURGY FOR EARTH WEEK 2021
MORNING PRAYER

RESTORING OUR WORLD,
OUR COMMON HOME



SUNDAY APRIL 25, 2021

RESTORING OUR WORLD, OUR COMMON HOME

Opening Prayer *(said in unison)*

Gracious God, open our eyes that we may see the abundance of your creative love in all that surrounds and sustains us. Enable us to become people of hope and life, who plant the seeds of your earthly garden for the benefit of all. Help us to be gardeners and caregivers for the earth that is home for all life. Fill us with your gentle love, that we may walk tenderly on the earth, cooperating with your intention of abundant love and life. *Amen.*

Hymn 187 Baptist Hymnal 1991: In the Garden

I come to the garden alone,
While the dew is still on the roses,
And the voice I hear falling on my ear,
The Son of God discloses...

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own,
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known!

He speaks and the sound of His voice,
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing,
And the melody that he gave to me,
Within my heart is ringing . . .

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own,
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known!

And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known!

Words and Music by C. Austin Miles, 1912

Ecological Confession of Sin (Lutheran):

Note: For “Forest Sunday” in Season of Creation

Officiant: In the name of the great Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer of the earth and its inhabitants.

People: Amen.

Officiant: We gather today to celebrate God’s goodness in creation, to acknowledge our complicity in harming it and to seek to the grace and compassion to heal it, together with God and one another.

(Silence for reflection.)

Officiant: Merciful Creator,

All: We confess to you our blindness to your presence in creation, and our disregard for the creatures of this planet, including trees. Our human hearts are set on personal gain and material wealth, and our drive for more has caused great damage. Forgive us our sins against your beloved creatures and empower us to walk humbly with you and with one another. Reconnect us with the web of creation and lead us to the community you envision for us, the creatures of your beloved Planet Earth. Amen.

Officiant: God our Creator is merciful, and forgives our sins, for the sake of the one who became flesh and dwelt among us (cross), Jesus Christ our Lord. God gives us new hearts to bear Christ’s love to all inhabitants of the earth, and to advocate for their protection and well-being.

People: Amen.

Invitatory and Psalter:

Officiant: Lord, open our lips.

People: And our mouths shall proclaim your praise.

All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.

Amen. Alleluia!

Officiant: The earth is the Lord's for he made it. Come let us
adore him.

The Psalm: 96 (*said in unison*)

- 1 Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.
- 2 Sing to the LORD, praise his name;
proclaim his salvation day after day.
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous deeds among all peoples.
- 4 For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;
he is to be feared above all gods.
- 5 For all the gods of the nations are idols,
but the LORD made the heavens.
- 6 Splendor and majesty are before him;
strength and glory are in his sanctuary.
- 7 Ascribe to the LORD, O families of nations,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
- 8 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
bring an offering and come into his courts.
- 9 Worship the LORD with the splendor of his holiness;
tremble before him, all the earth.

- 10 Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns."
The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity.
- 11 Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;
let the sea resound, and all that is in it;
- 12 Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them.
Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy;
- 13 They will sing before the LORD, for he comes,
he comes to judge the earth.
He will judge the world in righteousness and
the peoples in his truth.

New International Version

**The First Reading:
Is the Poem**

“The Peace of Wild Things”
by Wendell Berry



When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,

I go and lie down where the wood drake rests in his
beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.

I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief.

I come into the presence of still water,
and I feel above me the day-blind stars waiting with their light.

For a time I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

Creation's and Human's Relation with the Creator

God Created the Universe:

"He spreads out the northern skies over empty space; he suspends the earth over nothing. He wraps up the waters in his clouds, yet the clouds do not burst under their weight. He covers the face of the full moon, spreading his clouds over it. The pillars of the heavens quake, aghast at his rebuke. By his power he churned up the sea.... By his breath the skies become fair.... And these are but the outer fringe of his works; how faint the whisper we hear of him! How then can we understand the thunder of his power?" (Job 26:7-9, 11-14)

God Sustains the Creation:

"He makes springs pour water into the ravines; it flows between the mountains. They give water to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. The birds of the air nest by the waters; they sing among the branches. He waters the mountains from his upper chambers; the earth is satisfied by the fruit of his work. He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate-bringing forth food from the earth." (Psalm 104:10-14)

God's Promise to the Animals:

"The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah 11:6-9)

Command to Care for Creation:

"You shall not pollute the land in which you live.... You shall not defile the land in which you live, in which I also dwell; for I the LORD dwell among the Israelites." (Numbers 35:33-34)

Hymn 664: "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need"

My shepherd will supply my need,
Jehovah is his name.
In pastures fresh he makes me feed
beside the living stream.
He brings my wandering spirit back
when I forsake his ways
and leads me for his mercy's sake
in paths of truth and grace.

When I walk through the shades of death
thy presence is my stay.
One word of thy supporting breath
drives all my fears away.
Thy hand in sight of all my foes
doth still my table spread;
my cup with blessings overflows,
thy oil anoints my head.

The sure provisions of my God
attend me all my days;
oh may thy house be mine abode
and all my work be praise.
There would I find a settled rest,
while others go and come;
no more a stranger or a guest,
but like a child at home.

The Gospel

Lectionary for the Fourth Sunday in Easter, Year B. Parishes may use any Gospel reading appropriate for your congregants and the day.

The Good Shepherd

A Reading from John 10: 11–18

Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people

All: Thanks be to God

The Sermon: (optional)

Earth Creed *(said in unison)*

We have come to renew our covenant with God and with one another in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

We have come to help protect God's creation.

We have come as followers of Jesus to commit ourselves anew to one another and to heal injustice and poverty.

We have come to stand together against all threats to life. We have come to discover some new beauty every day in God's creation: the sunrise and sunset, birds, flowers and trees, rainbows in the sky, the stars, the many forms of life in the forest.

We have come to listen to the "music of the universe"- water flowing over rocks, the wind, trees bending in the wind, raindrops pattering the roof.

We will remember always that God speaks to us through the beauty of his creation, and we will try our best to answer God's call to reverence all that he has created.

The Prayers

Officiant: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Officiant: Let us pray.

All: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

“Laudato Si, Prayer for Our Common Home”

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.

Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor,

help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives,

that we may protect the world and not prey on it,

that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,

to be filled with awe and contemplation,

to recognize that we are profoundly united

with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day.

Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle

for justice, love and peace.

Hymn #122 Methodist Hymnal—1989

God of the Sparrow, Text-Jaroslay Vaida, Music-Carl Schalk

God of the sparrow
God of the whale
God of the swirling stars
How does the creature say Awe
How does the creature say Praise

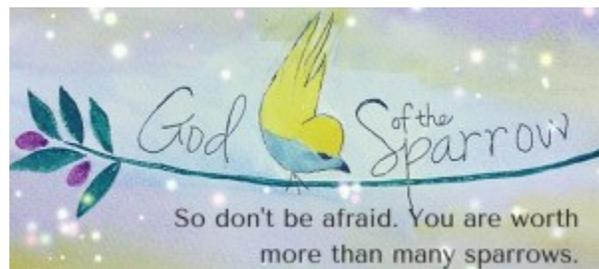
God of the earthquake
God of the storm
God of the trumpet blast
How does the creature cry Woe
How does the creature cry Save

God of the rainbow
God of the cross
God of the empty grave
How does the creature say Grace
How does the creature say Thanks

God of the hungry
God of the sick
God of the prodigal
How does the creature say Care
How does the creature say Life

God of the neighbor
God of the foe
God of the pruning hook
How does the creature say Love
How does the creature say Peace

God of the ages
God near at hand
God of the loving heart
How do your children say Joy
How do your children say Home



Indigenous Liturgy

Rev. Tweedy Sombrero, Navarrete, Dine, United Methodist pastor

Leader: Thank you, Lord, for the people gathering around us today. Let us take this time to give thanks for these things of the earth that give us the means of life.

People: Thank you for the plants, animals, and birds that we use as food and medicine.

Leader: Thank you for the natural world in which we find the means to be clothed and housed.

People: Thank you, Lord, for the ability to use these gifts of the natural world.

Leader: Help us to see our place among these gifts not to squander them or think of them as means for selfish gain.

People: May we respect the life of all you have made.

All: may our Spirit be strengthened by using only what we need and may we use our strength to help those who need us.

Confession

Leader: Giver of life, in the midst of a plundered earth we groan with creation:

People: Have mercy on us.

Leader: Giver of life, in the midst of poisoned waters we groan with creation:

People: Have mercy on us.

Leader: Giver of life, in the midst of polluted air we groan with creation:

People: Have mercy on us.

Leader: Giver of life, in the midst of mountains of waste we groan with creation:

People: Have mercy on us.

Leader: Giver of life, in the midst of the world at war, and because of the Church's sinful participation in the Doctrine of Discovery and Manifest Destiny, we groan with creation;

People: Have mercy on us.

Leader: Giver of life, we who are made in the image of God have gone astray. Attitudes of conquest and greed harm us all. Creation groans with us.

People: Have mercy on us.

The Assurance

Leader: Thank you, Lord, for all that you have given us. Thank you for the beauty of the universe that you created: the trees, the sky, the mountains, the rain.

All things hold beauty in themselves and all are related and touch each universe of the earth. You created the rhythm and pattern of the universe in a harmony of movement, sight, and sound.

Help us to appreciate your creation and to live with our eyes, ears, and hearts open to your message. **Amen.**

Benediction

Leader: God is before us.

People: God is behind us.

Leader: God is above us.

People: God is below us.

Leader: God's words shall come from our mouths.

People: For we are all God's essence, a sign of God's love.

Leader: All is finished in beauty.

All: All is finished in beauty.

Hymn WLP 812: "I, the Lord of Sea and Sky"

I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard My people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin, My hand will save.
I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear My light to them? Whom shall I send?

Chorus

Here I am Lord, Is it I, Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me.
I will hold Your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them, they turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak My word to them
Whom shall I send?

Chorus

Here I am Lord, Is it I, Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me.
I will hold Your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of wind and flame
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them, my hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide,
Till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give My life to them,
Whom shall I send?

Chorus

Here I am Lord, Is it I, Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me.
I will hold Your people in my heart.

Prayer ~ Benedictine Group, St. Andrew's Newcastle

Intercessor:

May God bless you with enough discomfort with easy answers, half-truths and expedient words, so that you may seek truth boldly and be a faithful steward and defender of Creation.

May God bless you with just enough anger over injustice, lies and exploitation so that you do not tire in working for peace, justice among all people and the healing of our planet through inspired leadership.

May God bless you with the gift of tears to shed with those who suffer from drought, forced migration and the loss of all they cherish, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and act to transform their pain.

May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you really can make a difference for God's Creation, so that you truly are able, with His grace, to do what others claim cannot be done. **Amen**

Closing Hymn 597: "O Day of Peace"

Tune: "Jerusalem"

O Day of peace that dimly shines
through all our hopes and prayers and dreams,
guide us to justice, truth and love
delivered from our selfish schemes.

May swords of hate fall from our hands,
our hearts for envy find release,
till by God's grace our warring world
shall see Christ's promised reign of peace.

Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb
nor shall the fierce devour the small;
as beasts and cattle calmly graze,
a little child shall lead them all.
Then enemies shall learn to love,
all creatures find their true accord;
the hope of peace shall be fulfilled,
for all the earth shall know the Lord.

Conclusion:

Officiant: Let us bless the Lord and all of God's creation.

Thanks be to God.

Closing Prayer *(said in unison)*

You asked for my hands that you might use them for your purpose, I gave them for a moment, then withdrew them, for the work was hard.

You asked for my mouth to speak out against injustice. I gave you a whisper that I might not be accused.

You asked for my life that you might work through me. I gave a small part that I might not get too involved.

Lord, forgive my calculated efforts to serve you only when it is convenient for me to do so, only in those places where it is safe to do so, and only in those who make it easy to do so.

Lord, forgive me, renew me, heal me, nurture me, empower me, send me out as an instrument of your peace and justice that I might take seriously the meaning of servant-leadership.

Amen.

(Joe Seramane, Christian Aid Lifelines, South Africa)

Service Notes and Options:

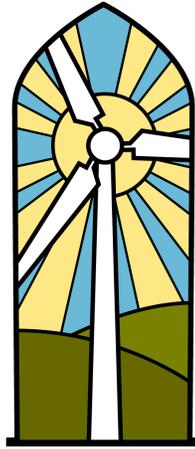
Please use this document as a resource for prayers, hymns, and readings for any kind of Earth Week, Creation Care or Climate Justice service or as part of a Eucharist service. Eucharistic Prayer C from the BCP is recommended.



<https://www.episcopalmaine.org/ministry/advocacy-social-justice/climate-justice>

Earth Week 2021 Liturgy Created By:

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<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/creation-care/>