



A Liturgy for Repentance, Thanksgiving, and Action

As weather, time, and space allow, we encourage you to hold this vigil outside to experience the fullness of our connection with all of God's creation. Candles and other sources of light and heat could be set around the space for a worshipful ambiance.

WELCOME

You may open with the following invitation, or with a Land Acknowledgement, crafted to suit your own context.

From the [2023 Social Message on Earth's Climate Crisis](#) – Our Church believes that as God's people we are called to confess:

- Our failure to consider the interests of future generations.
- Our disregard for the victims of environmental injustice.
- Our insufficient concern for the welfare of other species facing extinction.
- Our personal complicity through high-carbon lifestyles.
- Our dismissive disdain for those with whom we disagree.

Today, we gather in solidarity with people around the world to confess these and other sins of disregard for God's creation, to hear God's words of forgiveness and invitation, and to remember the beauty and hope of God's new creation in Christ.

OPENING SONG – such as:

God the Sculptor of the Mountains (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 736)

Before the Waters Nourished Earth (All Creation Sings 1049)

[The Whole World is Waiting](#) (The Many featuring Flamy Grant and Kate Hurley)

Additional hymn options can be found in the “Creation” or “Stewardship” headings in ACS and the “Creation” heading in ELW.

PRAYER – *from Archbishop Desmond Tutu (All Creation Sings pg. 48)*

Creator God, you have called us to be keepers of your earth. Through greed we have established an economy that destroys the web of life. We have changed our climate and we drown in despair. Let oceans of justice flow. May we learn to sustain and renew the life of our Mother Earth. We stand with indigenous people worldwide who are demanding restoration of their ancestral lands. We pray for our leaders, custodians of Mother Earth, that they may negotiate with wisdom and fairness. May they act with compassion and courage; and lead us into the path of justice for the sake of our children and our children’s children. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE

The Revised Common Lectionary for April 21, 2024 provides beautiful choices for Good Shepherd Sunday, giving space for reflection on how God in Christ gives us the kind of care and stewardship we strive to offer creation. Other options for scripture can be found [here from our friends at Lutherans Restoring Creation](#).

A brief homily and/or silent time of reflection may be added here.

LAMENT, CONFESSION, AND WORDS OF HOPE – *Adapted from “Prayer of Lament” in All Creation Sings*

Gracious God, by day and night we pour out our prayers to you. We are crying out for justice, yearning for what is right, and longing for your peace. We confess that we have not stewarded your creation as you have called us. We long for a reconciled relationship with the earth, with one another, and with you.

We see your creation destroyed by carelessness and greed, by us as individuals, by society and by powerful nations and industries.

We confess we have ignored the cries of indigenous people and communities of color as they have more profoundly experienced the dangers of climate change exacerbated by racism.

Give us courage to change our own patterns of destruction and to speak out in ways that bring forth change in the systems that hold us bound.

Create new hearts in us, that we care for one another, all creatures, and the earth herself.

Help us to follow in the way of you, the Good Shepherd, to seek what has been lost and to reconcile all creation to yourself.

Spirit of life, keep us working and praying for the day when your justice will roll down like waters, and your righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Replenish our strength and stir up hope as we look for signs of your coming reign.

And fill us with the peace that passes understanding – the deep peace of Jesus Christ our Savior, in whose holy name we pray. Amen.

Beloved of God, you have been called by the Good Shepherd as stewards of this earth. In Christ's mercy + your sins are forgiven, and you are invited in that forgiven freedom to continue in the work of care for all of God's creation.

Amen.

As an added sign of repentance, forgiveness and hope, you might offer seeds of [native plants](#) to those present to plant in their home gardens or in a church or community garden, to show God's continued abundance and flourishing, and our renewed care and commitment to stewardship.

CLOSING SONG – such as:

Earth and All Stars (ELW 731)

Earth is Full of Wit and Wisdom (ACS 1064)

[The Shelter of the Sky](#) (Carrie Newcomer)

Additional hymn options can be found in the "Creation" or "Stewardship" headings in ACS and the "Creation" heading in ELW.

BLESSING AND SENDING - Adapted from All Creation Sings

As we are sent out into the world, we are invited to lift our voices in advocacy for God's creation. Please follow [link or QR code] to this call to action from LAMPa/ELCA Advocacy. [Available after April 1]

You may also make hard copy letters available. Please contact LAMPa staff if you need help formatting.

God, the Source of Glory;
God, the Word of life;
God, the Spirit of truth
+ bless you now and forever.
Amen.

Go in peace. Care for creation.
Thanks be to God.

Other Resources for Worship from Sundays and Seasons (vol. 2024 and online in "Seasonal Rites for Easter"):

- Prayer of Confession for Creation Care in both Spanish and English.
- "Celebrating Good Shepherd Sunday and Earth Day." *This service was written to juxtapose the texts for Easter 4 (Good Shepherd Sunday) with Earth Day.*

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