

Season of Creation 2024 Resources

Each year, from September 1 to October 4 (St. Francis Day), Christians throughout the world gather to honor, celebrate and commit ourselves to protecting and restoring our common home. As followers of Christ, we share a common call to care for all living beings—grasses and trees, animals and birds, fish and insects, microbes and bacteria—with whom we share these God-given gifts of water and air, soil and fire. Our well-being is interwoven with the wellbeing of the Earth. Today, we invite you to consider how you and your community might participate in this global observance. For more information about the history and theology for the Season of Creation, check out these links:

[Season of Creation \(Episcopal - 2023\)*](#)

[Season of Creation \(Ecumenical - 2023\)*](#)

** These links will be updated once the new material is posted. For now, they can be used to see what has been done in the past year.*

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

As Anglicans, all we do is rooted in our relationship with God, our Creator. Whether through common prayer in worship or individual spiritual practice, our decisions to act begin in prayer.

Worship and Prayer (Community)

Season of Creation liturgical resources are available to help plan Sunday services.

This website, [Season of Creation \(Episcopal - 2023\)](#), provides a comprehensive list of approved resources for the Season of Creation at [New Creation Liturgies](#).

Materials include:

An Introduction, Lectionary (Year A), Holy Eucharist (recommended prayers) Collects & Prayers, Litanies & Penitential Orders, Songs of Praise & Canticles Readings (to use in place of second reading), Quotes on Creation, Prayers of the People, Music for Creation, Books & Curriculum, Endnotes

Note: Unfortunately, updates for 2024 may not be ready until early August, as individual diocesan bishops must approve the content.

Include recommended intercessory prayers for the Prayers of the People (see [New Creation Liturgies](#) for suggestions).

Appendix A offers general resources for creation liturgies from the [The Book of Occasional Services 2022](#) (pp. 283 - 303).

Plan a Holy Hike or an outdoor service to honor a special place.

[The Book of Occasional Services 2022](#) has a wide range of resources to choose from. Adapting one of the Rogation Day liturgies (pp. 113-125) can be especially helpful here. Here's a couple of suggestions from [the World Council of Churches](#).

Offer a service for Blessing of the Animals on or around St. Francis Day (October 4).

The Book of Occasional Services 2022 includes readings, prayers, litanies, canticles and blessings appropriate for use on St. Francis Day (pp. 126 - 140).

While it is a wonderful experience to have the animals in the church during a regular Sunday service, offering an abbreviated form of this liturgy at another time allows for members of the broader community to participate. See Appendix B for a sample.

Worship and Prayer (Individual)

Spend time outside each day, perhaps with a brief morning and evening walk. There are any number of spiritual and mindfulness practices you can do as you take your walk:

- Unplug from your phone and earbuds. Listen to the sounds around you, such as the wind in the trees, birds singing, children playing, to the sound of your own breathing.
- Notice the colors above, around and below you: the sky and clouds, the grass or concrete under your feet, the leaves and bark of trees. What colors pull your attention?
- Pay attention to the movement of your body and the steps that you take. Be in the moment of what your body is doing and where you are.
- Pray with your eyes wide open, giving gratitude to God for what you see and hear and how you feel.
- Walking is a mindfulness practice. An excellent book is *How to Walk* by Thich Nhat Hanh (2015, Parallax Press).

Visit a park or open space area and take time to listen and watch to see who and what are there. If possible, take along a friend or family member.

- An internet search of your area will show many different parks and open space areas you can visit. Typically their website will give you a map of hiking trails (including distances), types of habitats, and names of species of animals. The State of Colorado has a website for exploring parks, <https://cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/parks>
- Many parks have bird checklists that you can have to record your sightings. Pick up or borrow a set of binoculars and a field guide (e.g., *Birds of Colorado Field Guide*, 2021, Adventure Publications), and see what birds you can identify. An excellent free app for identifying birds by sight and their songs is called *Merlin* by The Cornell Lab, <https://merlin.allaboutbirds.org/>
- In addition to the birds, pay attention to what else you see that you've never seen before. Look up and around. What are the sights, sounds, colors, and smells that are revealed to you? Marvel in the diversity and beauty of grasses, herbs, and flowers, or in the variation in rock formations. Look down. How many tiny plants and creatures do you see? Share what you've observed with your friend or family member.

Read poems or essays related to the natural world. The section on Formation includes a wide range of possibilities.

- Many poems have been written about the natural world. A number of verses in the Book of Psalms speak about creation and God as Creator. For example, read and reflect upon Psalm 104. What verse or verses speak to you about God, the Creator, and creation? What about creation speaks to you about God? What do you want to say to God about creation?
- An internet search for poems about nature easily brings up a number of websites, such as:
 - 53 Famous Nature Poems, including those written by Emily Dickenson, Robert Frost, William Wordsworth, and others: <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poems/famous/nature/>
 - 20 of the Best Nature Poems for Kids, including those written by Sara Coleridge, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Christina Rossetti, and others: <https://www.palebluemarbles.com/nature-poems-for-kids-earth-day/>
 - Contemporary authors of nature poems include Wendell Berry, Mary Oliver, Thomas Troeger, Camille Dungy, and A.R. Ammons. For more recent writings by eco-poets, check out the Poetry Foundation's collection on *Poetry and the Environment: Recent poetic approaches to nature and the environment* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/collections/146462/poetry-and-the-environment>
 - Thomas Troeger has a lovely collection of poems in his book *Above the Moon Earth Rises: Hymn texts, anthems, and poems for a new creation* (2002, Oxford University Press)
- Classic yet timely collections of essays about nature include the *A Sand County Almanac*, by Aldo Leopold (first published in 1949) and *Nature as Measure*, by Wes Jackson (published 2011). There are many others.
- Brief daily reflections from books such as *Becoming Rooted: One Hundred Days of Reconnecting with Sacred Earth*, by Randy Woodley or essays from *Rooted and Rising: Voices of Courage in a Time of Climate Crisis*, co-edited by Margaret Bullit-Jonas and Leah D. Schade

Keep a journal of what you notice outside, including what gives you joy and what makes you sad.

Set aside time each day to read and reflect on one of the books suggested below. You can also include your thoughts in a journal.

FORMATION

Communities and Individuals

Studies and Guides for Discussion

- [“Responding to Climate Change: A guide to personal reflection and group discussion”](#) (From Christian Century)
This guide covers three areas for consideration: God’s Vision for our Planet, Facing and Mourning Reality, Advocacy and Action.
- [Creation Care and StorySharing](#): Learn to share your story of love for God’s creation and to listen for the stories of others with this Episcopal Creation Care StorySharing Resource.
- *A Life of Grace for the Whole World: A Study Course on the House of Bishops’ Pastoral Teaching on the Environment* provides a curriculum with books for adults, youth and discussion leaders.
<https://www.amazon.com/Life-Grace-Whole-World-Adult/dp/0819233781>
- [Sacred Ground](#)
This 11-part film-and readings-based dialogue series on race is grounded in faith. Small groups are invited to walk through chapters of America’s history of race and racism, while weaving in threads of family story, economic class, and political and regional identity. Participating in these dialogue circles help to explain some of the challenges we face in addressing creation care.

Books to read and/or discuss

- *Dakota: A Spiritual Geography*, by Kathleen Norris
This book describes the relationship between and spirituality, as experienced by someone who lives on the plains of South Dakota.
- *Braiding Sweetgrass*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer
Kimmerer writes about the natural world from the three different dimensions: as a botanist who uses scientific tools; as a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation who embraces the understanding that plants and animals are our oldest teachers, and as an indigenous woman who shares stories of the natural world from her own and other traditions.
- *Saving Us: A Climate Scientist’s Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World*, by Katherine Hayhoe
United Nations Champion of the Earth, climate scientist, and evangelical Christian Katharine Hayhoe changes the debate on how we can save our future in this nationally bestselling “optimistic view on why collective action is still possible—and how it can be realized” (The New York Times).
- *Church of the Wild: How Nature Invites Us in the Sacred*, by Victoria Looz
With an ecospiritual lens on biblical narratives and a fresh look at a community larger than our own species, Church of the Wild uncovers the wild roots of faith and helps us deepen our commitment to a suffering earth by falling in love with it—and calling it church.
- *Earth, Our Original Monastery*, by Christine Valters Paintner

In *Earth, Our Original Monastery*, Christine Valters Paintner shares how living contemplatively with an appreciation for the natural world can make you more aware of the presence of God in every aspect of your life. She explores monks, mystics, and saints who have experienced the goodness of the Divine in nature and invites you to find solace and spiritual revelation in the wonder of God's creation.

- *Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest*, by Suzanne Simard
Simard, a forest ecologist, weaves the story of her own life with that of her scientific discoveries that show how forests are a complicated, interdependent circle of life and how trees communicate and cooperate with one another.
- *The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes Us Happier, Healthier, and More Creative*, by Florence Williams. Williams, a journalist, investigates the science behind nature's positive effects on the human brain. Delving into brand new research, she uncovers the powers of the natural world to improve our health, promote reflection and innovations, and strengthen our relationships.
- *Sacred Nature: Restoring Our Ancient Bond with the Natural World*, by Karen Armstrong. In this short but deeply powerful book, Armstrong "re-sacralizes" nature for modern times by describing nature's central place in spirituality across the centuries and encourages readers to rediscover nature's potency and to reconnect to something greater than ourselves.
- *Soil: The Story of a Black Mother's Garden*, by Camille T. Dungy
In this book of essays, interspersed with occasional poems, Dungy describes her seven year experience of transforming her suburban yard in Ft. Collins from a green lawn with a few overgrown flower beds and a lot of landscaping rock into a place for a wide diversity of plants and people to grow and thrive.
- *The Solace of Open Spaces*, by Gretel Erlich
Erlich offers us a series of essays that describe her personal relationship with the "planet of Wyoming" that she calls home. She includes observations of the beauty and the harshness of this land and some of the other people who have made this place a home.
- *Becoming Wild: How Animal Cultures Raise Families, Create Beauty, and Achieve Peace*, by Carl Safina. Some believe that culture is strictly a human phenomenon, but this book reveals cultures of other-than-human beings (i.e., sperm whales, scarlet macaws, and chimpanzees) in some of Earth's remaining wild places.
- *How Can I Care for Creation?* by Stephanie McDyre Johnson
This is a short guide that provides readers with the tools to inspire and empower them to make care of God's earth central to their lives.
- *The Story of More: How We Got to Climate Change and Where to Go from Here*, by Hope Jahren

In four concise sections—Life, Food, Energy and Earth—Jahren “illuminates the links between our human habits and our imperiled planet.” The Appendix is titled “The Story of Less,” and gives practical reasons and ways for individuals to make a difference.

Watch a movie or video and talk about it.

- *The Letter, a Message for Our Earth*, is an excellent video based on the encyclical letter, *Laudato Si*, written in 2015 by Pope Francis. It is available to view for free at <https://www.theletterfilm.org/>
- [Water Bear](#)
This website offers a wide variety of documentary films, organized into the areas of Animals, Climate Action, People and Planet and ranging in length from a few minutes to nearly 2 hours. Sign up is free.
- *My Octopus Teacher* is an Oscar winning documentary available on Netflix.
- *The Elephant Whisperers* is an Oscar nominated short documentary on a couple in India who devote their lives to saving orphaned elephants.
- [How Trees Talk to Each Other](#)
Botanist Suzanne Simard offers this 18 minute Ted Talk.
- [Ted Talks](#)
Browse the wide variety of Ted Talks about climate change or look for more specific topics like Agriculture, Energy or Biodiversity.

Plan intergenerational activities for both adults and young people.

- Plan a walk in a park or a hike that introduces people of all ages to the natural environment. Be sure to check the seven Leave No Trace guidelines if you are going into an uncultivated area, such as a state park or national forest.
- Attend the *Care of Creation Family Camp* at Cathedral Ridge Camp & Retreat Center, scheduled for June 20-23, 2024. Bring family and friends and be inspired by the wonder of awe of nature in the Colorado mountains! Registration is now open: <https://cathedralridge.org/familycamps>

Learn about the ways you can reduce your impact on the environment.

- [Carbon Tracker](#)
Learn about this international initiative to help companies reduce their carbon emissions.

ACTION

(Individuals and community)

Research who else in your community shares your concern about caring for creation.

[Sustain Our Island Home](#)

Actively participate with other Episcopalians in tracking and reducing the carbon in our environment. By signing up, your efforts will be tracked within your parish and our diocese - get others to join in as well and boost our totals!

Check out this [Playbook for Protecting the Planet](#) - six videos to give you ideas for what you can do.

Plant a garden. If you have questions about gardening in your area, check with your county extension agent through [Colorado State University](#).

Interested in developing a Community Garden? Before you start digging, find out how other Episcopalians have been successful at the [Good News Gardens](#) website and join in their network of Good News gardeners.

Some communities (especially in urban areas) have organizations that will gather compost and hard to recycle items. Paying for these services (or helping others to do so) supports them and reduces waste in the landfill and allows for more materials to be recycled.

Organize or participate in a clean-up project in your community.

Hold a public movie night.

Over the past 50 years, [Bullfrog Films](#) has gathered a remarkable collection of documentaries and is a leading source for educational films, especially in the areas of environmental issues and social justice. They have recently launched a new initiative, [Bullfrog Communities](#), to make it easy for individuals to host a film screening that will generate discussion and action in your area - and you can charge admission!

Participate in a [Leave No Trace](#) training for how to be a good steward outdoors. It's important for everyone who spends time outside to learn and practice the [Seven Principles](#) of how to minimize our impact on natural areas so that plants, animals, and other people can enjoy them.

Explore how your church can reduce its energy use and water consumption.

Sponsor a public forum to hear from candidates about their views on the particular issues that impact care of creation in your city or town.

Volunteer to restore and preserve creation

- [Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado](#) schedules work days each weekend from May through September in locations around the state. Trail building is a primary activity (usually two days), as well as some habitat restoration.
- [Colorado Parks and Wildlife](#) has a variety of opportunities to learn more about the natural areas in our state and to support their work throughout the year. These positions may include naturalists, visitor services and park maintenance.

CELEBRATION

Community

Sponsor a community meal, and invite everyone to bring something to share. This could be food of course, but it could also be a song, a story, a poem, a piece of craft or artwork or a useful item to give away. Sharing something of ourselves is what brings us together as a community.

A rogation or harvest procession through the neighborhood.

See the resources on Rogation processions and use it to stop and ask your neighbors if they have a garden.

A harvest festival

Use this time to celebrate the bounty of the growing season. Rather than confusing this with a farmer's market, set up a table of garden produce to give away, along with other fall treats.

Blessing of the Animals outdoors, at a time other than Sunday worship. This allows folks beyond the congregation to participate. This could be held in a park or other location outside the church. A sample order of service is included in Appendix B.

In addition to these, consider these opportunities for celebration:

The winter and summer solstices (December and June)

The spring and fall equinoxes (March and September)

What about setting aside time to study and celebrate natural elements, such as water, soil, air, fish, birds, plants, trees, insects and other animals? This could be an opportunity to learn more about each, celebrate the contributions that make to our lives, and discern actions we might take to protect them.

Appendices

Appendix A: Liturgical Materials Honoring God in Creation

Source: Book of Occasional Services 2022, pp. 283-303

Propers for Honoring God in Creation

1. God, the source and destiny of the cosmos

Author of creation:

In wisdom you brought forth all that is, to participate in your divine being,
and to change, adapt, and grow in freedom.

You make holy the matter and energy of the universe that it may delight you and
give you praise.

We thank you for gathering all creation into your heart by the energy of your
Spirit and bringing it through death to resurrection glory; through the One in
whom all things have their being, Jesus Christ, your Wisdom and your Word.

Amen.

Isaiah 40:21–28a

Psalm 136:1–9, 25–26

Revelation 22:1–5

John 3:16–17

2. God of order and dynamic change

Mysterious God, whose imagination and desire embrace all:

We seek to discern you in the interplay of forces,
in the order and the chaos of the universe,
and in the complexities of every living system.

Give us grace to honor your goodness
in what we know and in what we do not know,
in the world's harmonies and turbulence,
and in its promise and change.

For you are in, through, and beyond all that is:
one God, made known to us in Jesus Christ,
through the Holy Spirit, our inspiration and guide. *Amen.*

Job 37:1–7

Psalm 102:25–28

Revelation 21:3–5a

Luke 13:6–9

3. The justice of God and the dignity of all creatures

Holy God, your mercy is over all your works,
and in the web of life each creature has its role and place.

We praise you for ocelot and owl,
cactus and kelp, lichen and whale;
we honor you for whirlwind and lava,
tide and topsoil, cliff and marsh.

Give us hearts and minds eager to care for your planet,
humility to recognize all creatures as your beloved ones,
justice to share the resources of the earth with all its inhabitants,
and love not limited by our ignorance.

This we pray in the name of Jesus, who unifies what is far off and what is near,
and in whom, by grace and the working of your Holy Spirit,
all things hold together. *Amen.*

Jonah 3:4–10

Psalm 145:8–10, 16–18

Ephesians 1:8b–10

Luke 10:25–37

4. The kinship and unity of all creation in Christ

God, maker of marvels,
you weave the planet and all its creatures
together in kinship;
your unifying love is revealed
in the interdependence of relationships
in the complex world that you have made.
Save us from the illusion
that humankind is separate and alone,
and join us in communion
with all inhabitants of the universe;
through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer,
who topples the dividing walls
by the power of your Holy Spirit,
and who lives and reigns with you, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Genesis 9:8–16

Psalm 36:5–10

Colossians 1:15–20

John 1:1–5

5. Reading God's goodness in the diversity of life

Gracious God, you reveal your goodness
in the beauty and diversity of creation;
in the circle dance of earth and air and water;
in a universe rich in processes that support growth and coherence,
distinctiveness and community;
and above all in the gift of Jesus Christ,

who emptied himself to serve your world.
And so we offer thanks and praise to you, one God in three persons:
the Author and Source of all, Christ the Incarnate Word, and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Genesis 1:11–12, 20–22

Psalm 104:25–32

Revelation 5:11–14

Matthew 13:31–32

6. Called to be God's partners in the care of the planet

Bountiful God, you call us to labor with you in tending the earth:
Where we lack love, open our hearts to the world;
where we waste, give us discipline to conserve;
where we neglect, awaken our minds and wills to insight and care.
May we with all your creatures honor and serve you in all things
for you live and reign with Christ, Redeemer of all, and with your Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Ezekiel 47:6–12

Psalm 33:3–9, 13–15

Romans 8:18–23

Mark 16:14–15

Prayers of the People Celebrating God in Creation, Form 1

Deacon or other Leader

Blessed God, whose love calls the whole creation into covenant with you, and who puts
in our hands responsibility for the care of the earth and its creatures:
We pray for all to whom you have given life and being, saying:
Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the well-being of the earth; for its resources of water, air, light, and soil, that they
may be tended for the good of all creatures, we pray:
Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the waters of the earth; for their careful use and conservation, that we may have the
will and the ability to keep them clean and pure, we pray:
Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the mineral and energy resources of the planet, that we may learn sustainable
consumption and sound care of the environment from which they come, we pray:
Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the animals of the earth, wild and domestic, large and very small, that they may
know the harmony of relationship that sustains all life, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the creatures of the earth who do us harm and those whose place in your creation we do not understand or welcome, that we may see them as beloved creatures of God, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For all who shape public policies affecting the planet and its creatures [especially and our local leaders and], that they may consider wisely the well-being of all who come after us, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For all those engaged in conservation, in agriculture and ranching, in aquaculture and fishing, in mining and industry, and in forestry and timber harvesting, that the health, fruitfulness, and beauty of the natural world may be sustained alongside human activity, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the creatures and the human beings of your world who are ill, or in danger, pain, or special need [especially], and for all who suffer from the unjust, violent, or wasteful use of the earth's resources or their devastation by war, that all may one day live in communities of justice and peace, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the gifts of science and technology and for those who practice these skills, that they may be wise, visionary, and compassionate in their work, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the creatures and the people of the earth whose lives and deaths have contributed to the fruitful abundance of this planet [giving thanks especially for], we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

The Presider concludes the Prayers with this or another suitable collect

Gracious God: Grant that your people may have in them the same mind that was in Christ Jesus, and guide us into harmony of relationship through loving-kindness and the wise use of all that you have given; for you are drawing all things into communion with you and with each other by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayers of the People Celebrating God in Creation, Form 2

During the silence after each bidding, the people offer their own prayers, either silently or aloud.

Intercessor

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

Intercessor and People

In the beginning,

God was.

Here and now,

God is.
In the future,
God will be.

Intercessor

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.

Silence

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.

Silence

God, 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.

Silence

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.

Silence

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.

Silence

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.

Silence

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.

Silence

God, Giver of life,
Hear our prayer.

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

Silence

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].

Silence

God, Giver of life,

Hear our prayer.

Rock and refuge of all your creatures, receive into everlasting mercy all those who have died [especially].

Silence

God, Giver of life,

Hear our prayer.

The Presider concludes the prayers with one of the following collects

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.

Source: Anne Kelsey

or this

Holy God, you alone are unutterable,

from the time you created all things that can be spoken of. You alone are unknowable,

from the time you created all things that can be known. All things cry out about you:

those that speak,

and those that cannot speak.

All things honor you: those that think,

and those that cannot think.

For there is one longing, one groaning,

which all things have for you.

All things that comprehend your plan pray to you

and offer you a silent hymn.

In you, the One, all things abide,

and all things endlessly run to you who are the end of all. Amen.

Source: Gregory of Nazianzus

or this

[*Gichi Manidoo,*] Great Spirit God,

we give you thanks for another day on this earth.
We give you thanks for this day
to enjoy the compassionate goodness of you, our Creator.
We acknowledge with one mind
our respect and gratefulness to all the sacred cycle of life.
Bind us together in the circle of compassion
to embrace all living creatures and one another. Amen.

*Source: Native American/Alaska Native
and Native Hawaiian Liturgies, prepared for the
76th General Convention of the Episcopal
Church, Anaheim, California, July 2009*

Prayers of the People Celebrating God in Creation, Form 3 (on the theme of water)

The silence after each bidding may be followed by an appropriate response, such as "Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer."

In the beginning, the Spirit of God hovered over the waters. The water that God called into being is at the heart of all that lives. Mindful of the many ways water affects our lives, let us pray for our waters and for the life of the world around us.

Silence

I ask your prayers for all people of faith, and for the transformations in their lives that are marked by the sacredness of water: at the Red Sea, in the Jordan River, in ritual baths, in the washing of feet, and in Holy Baptism.

Silence

I ask your prayers for the leaders of nations, corporations, and communities around the world, that they may exercise wise stewardship over the waters of their lands, so that all people may have clean water to drink and may live free from waterborne diseases.

Silence

I ask your prayers for the wisdom to shape creative solutions to conflicts over water in the dry places of our planet, and for justice and peace in desert lands.

Silence

I ask your prayers for all the waters of the earth: for oceans and seas, for rivers and streams, for lakes and ponds, for watersheds, marshes, and swamps, for the waters beneath the ground; and for all creatures that live in the waters of the earth.

Silence

I ask your prayers for all who travel or work at sea or on inland waterways.

Silence

I ask your prayers for all afflicted with too much water in flood or tsunami, storm or ice; and for those people and creatures who suffer as glaciers and ice floes melt and shrink.

Silence

I ask your prayers for all who have died and for all who mourn, that their tears of grief may be turned to wellsprings of joy.

Silence

Collect

Blessed God, fountain of life:

Grant that we may see all water as holy,
and so protect and preserve the waters of the earth
and the life they sustain.

In the name of Christ, the living water, we pray. Amen.

A Confession of Sin against God's Creation

The Deacon or Presider may introduce the Confession with these words

Let us confess our sin against God and God's creation.

Silence may be kept.

Minister and People

Holy and merciful God,
we confess that we have failed to honor you
by rightly claiming our kinship with all your creatures.
We have walked heavily on your earth,
overused and wasted its resources,
taken for granted its beauty and abundance,
and treated its inhabitants unjustly,
holding future generations hostage to our greed.
Have mercy on us and forgive us our sin.
Renew in us the resolve to keep
and conserve your earth as you desire and intend,
with grateful and compassionate hearts,
through your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

or this

Merciful and sustaining God, we have sinned against you.

We confess our lack of gratitude
for the beauty and bounty of your creation:
teach us to see that your earth sustains us and all that lives.

We confess that we have misused your earth:

grant us amendment of life.

We confess that we have been intemperate in our appetites:
strengthen us in self-control.

We confess that we have taken the abundance of your world for granted:
make us urgent now for its protection.

Forgive and renew us now through our Savior Jesus Christ,

by the power of the Holy Spirit,
with whom you live and reign, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

or this

God of compassion, have mercy upon us.

Heal our relationship with all creation. Forgive us for our mistreatment and neglect of the creatures who share the earth with us. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent for what we have done to harm them, and for what we have not done to help them. Fill us with your Spirit, that we may care for one another and for all creatures, according to your will and in the fullness of your love; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

The Priest alone says

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. Amen.

If no Priest is present, the Presider says the following

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. Amen.

A Litany for the Planet

The Deacon or other Leader may select apt portions of this litany, and add local examples to any category, as well as special concerns and occasions for prayer where appropriate.

With all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Creator, saying,
"Creator, have mercy."

On your earth, the garden of life,
Creator, have mercy.

On soil, that it may be fruitful in all seasons,
Creator, have mercy.

On rocks and minerals that form the foundations for life,
Creator, have mercy.

On volcanoes and lava flows that reveal the power of earth's core,
Creator, have mercy.

On hills and great mountains; on cliffs, caves, and valleys,
Creator, have mercy.

On deserts and their hardy creatures,
Creator, have mercy.

On your waters, which sustain a diverse community of life,
Creator, have mercy.

On coral reefs, and on the animals, plants, and fish that inhabit them,
Creator, have mercy.

On ocean deeps, teeming with life; and on the open seas and all that travel upon them,
Creator, have mercy.

On rivers, bringing water to thirsty places,
Creator, have mercy.

On lakes and streams, home to a diversity of life,
Creator, have mercy.

On ponds and marshes, cradles of life,
Creator, have mercy.

On wetlands and estuaries, on rocky coasts and beaches,
Creator, have mercy.

On islands and atolls, oases and all harsh outposts of life,
Creator, have mercy.

On glaciers and ice fields, holding the delicate balance of waters,
Creator, have mercy.

On storms, floods, and tempests, and all fearsome forces of weather,
Creator, have mercy.

On rains that water the earth, causing plants to sprout and grow,
Creator, have mercy.

On snow and hail, sleet and winter cold, and on the dormant things that wait for spring,
Creator, have mercy.

On mists and fog silently watering the ground,
Creator, have mercy.

* * *

On the atmosphere of your planet earth, that it may sustain all that breathes,
Creator, have mercy.

On winds that carry seeds and spores; on breezes that warm and cool the earth,
Creator, have mercy.

On lightnings and fires that cleanse and destroy, and on all that lies in their path,
Creator, have mercy.

* * *

On all the ecosystems of your earth and their intricate communities,
Creator, have mercy.

On forests of many kinds, on trees and shrubs and vines,
Creator, have mercy.

On grasslands, tundras, and plains, and on their varied plants,
Creator, have mercy.

On ferns and fungi, on spore-bearing and seed-bearing plants,
Creator, have mercy.

On microorganisms of endless variety, the complex and the simple,
Creator, have mercy.

On reptiles and amphibians, on _____ and _____ [local examples],
Creator, have mercy.

On four-legged creatures, on _____ and _____ [local examples],
Creator, have mercy.

On two-legged and winged creatures, on _____ and _____ [local examples],
Creator, have mercy.

On many-legged creatures, on insects, on _____ and _____ [local examples],
Creator, have mercy.

On mysterious creatures and places unknown to humankind,
Creator, have mercy.

On the human family across the globe, of many colors and communities, in kinship with all creation,
Creator, have mercy.

* * *

For a city, town or village

On all who live and work and play in this city and this neighborhood,
Creator, have mercy.

On those who work around us, whose labor builds up our community and our world;
on _____ and _____ [local work examples],
Creator, have mercy.

On the businesses and industries of this city, that they may profit the whole community;
on _____ and _____ [local examples],
Creator, have mercy.

On the parks and green spaces of this city; on those who maintain them and those who enjoy them,
Creator, have mercy.

On the plants and animals of our ecosystem; on _____ and _____ [local examples],
Creator, have mercy.

On those who produce food and energy for this city's people and pets,
Creator, have mercy.

On schools and all places of learning; on all who care for and teach children and adults,
Creator, have mercy.

On the poor and homeless residents of this city, that there may be shelter and
sustenance for them,
Creator, have mercy.

On visitors and immigrants; on all who offer welcome and shelter here,
Creator, have mercy.

On all places of reverence and prayer; on all who honor you and on those who do not
yet know you,
Creator, have mercy.

On our ancestors and on those who will come after us,
Creator, have mercy.

* * *

In time of widespread disease

On those stricken with _____, and those who suffer from any disease,
Creator, have mercy.

On those who care for loved ones who are ill,
Creator, have mercy.

On doctors and nurses and all who render help and healing skill,
Creator, have mercy.

On scientists and researchers, and all who search for treatments and cures,
Creator, have mercy.

On all who work for public health, safety, and well-being,
Creator, have mercy.

On all who are fearful for their health and life, and on those who are alone and in great
need,
Creator, have mercy.

On those who are dying and those who have died, and on all who mourn,
Creator, have mercy.

Appendix B: A Service for the Blessing of Animals

Leader: Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

People: **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.**

Prayer of St. Francis (together)

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Genesis 1:20-25

And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky." So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day. And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

Prayer for All Creatures

Leader Jesus Christ, we gather with all your creatures in this circle of life.

People Grant us your peace, O Lord.

Leader We ask your blessing on the creatures present here and on all creatures, near and far.

People Grant us your peace, O Lord.

Leader We ask you blessing on those who help us to care for our animals, keeping them strong and healthy.

(Here the congregation may name veterinarians or others who contribute to pet care.)

People Grant them your peace, O Lord.

Leader We also remember today those animals who have blessed our lives with their love and affection in years past, including:

(Here the congregation names pets who have died.)

People Grant us your peace, O Lord.

Leader In the name of God, who creates all life,

In the name of Jesus Christ, who redeems all life,

and the name of the Spirit, who renews all life,

People Grant us your peace, O Lord.

Blessing of the Animals

Gracious God, we give you thanks for _____, and we ask your blessing upon him/her during the coming year. Keep him/her safe from all danger and help us to provide for his/her needs.. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Leader: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**