



Many Lives, One Earth

A service of prayer and gratitude for our earth

P: God of heavens and earth, we praise you for the magnificence of creation. We marvel at both its grandeur and the intricacies of its smallest microscopic life forms. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to exist with your creation. May we realise our importance in the grander scheme of things, not as superior to the rest of creation but as equals. We ask you to instil in us a proper reverence for all that you have made - a genuine respect for all environments and all creatures. Help us to work towards building a world of harmony and peace for all.

Opening Hymn

Morning has broken
like the first morning,
blackbird has spoken
like the first bird.
Praise for the singing!
Praise for the morning!
Praise for them, springing
fresh from the Word!

Sweet the rain's new fall
sunlit from heaven,
like the first dewfall
on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness
of the wet garden,
sprung in completeness
where God's feet pass.

Mine is the sunlight!
Mine is the morning
born of the one light
Eden saw play!
Praise with elation,
praise every morning,
God's recreation
of the new day!

Author: Eleanor Farjeon, Tune: BUNESSAN

Kauma

P. †Glory be to the Father our Creator, to the Son our Redeemer and to the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us.

C. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

P. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory, Hosanna in the highest.

C. Blessed is He that has come and is to come again in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

P. Holy art thou, O God.

C. Holy art thou, Almighty Lord.

P. Holy art thou, Immortal Lord.

C. O Lord, the Messiah who was crucified for us † have mercy on us.

(To be repeated thrice)

P. O Lord, have mercy on us.

C. O Lord, have mercy on us and bless us.

P. O Lord, accept our prayers and worship and have mercy on us.

C. Glory be to you, O God.

P. Glory be to you, O Creator.

C. Glory be to you, O King the Messiah; who has mercy on us sinners. Bless us, O Lord.

(Let us say together the prayer that Jesus taught us)

***All: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth as it is done in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, Forever. Amen.***

(Cong to be seated)

1st Lesson: **Isaiah 65:17-25**

2nd Lesson: **Revelation 21:1-8**

L: Something about the Sky

The sky speaks without words,
Messages that warm my heart.
It never ceases to amaze me,
Like a timeless work of art.

How it stretches far and wide,
With neither beginning nor end.
A fingerprint of the Creator,
Far more than I can comprehend.

It assures me of His blessings,
In its marvelous way of adorning
Each day with the sunrise -
That they're new every morning.

Happy times are understood
By the radiant hues in the sky.
Rain drops from darker shades convey
That sometimes it's okay to cry.

Now and then in broad daylight,
The beauty a rainbow will afford,
Affirms how great it is I'm loved,
By He who always keeps His word...

The One who sets the stars in space
And calls them each by name;
The One who set me here by design
And upholds me just the same.

What more is needed to show
The sovereignty of the Most High?
I find enough each time I spare
A lingering gaze at the sky.

Abimbola T. Alabi

Meditation: The Beauty of Nature

How many are your works O Lord! In wisdom, you made them all. Psalm 104:24

Psalm 104 shows appreciation for every aspect of nature, even creatures like wild goats, lions, and the 'leviathan' (the whale or sea monster or dinosaur). The Israelites as herders and farmers, had no romantic idealization of the outdoor. Nobody who herds sheep thinks of them as soft and fluffy pets. But to the poet who wrote Psalm 104, creatures that are no 'use' to anyone still have intrinsic worth – especially to God. The author saw how the world fits together, everything in its proper sphere. At night, while the animals hunt; at daybreak humans go out to work. The rain falls, nourishing

crops for people and grass for cattle, but also watering the forest to provide a place for birds to nest.

The intertwining of nature is not, for the psalmist, like a complex machine, dangerously sensitive. Things fit together because an intimate, personal God watches over them. Animals eat their food 'at the proper time'. Every breath of life depends on his will. So do the weather, the winds and clouds, the water supply, the very stability of the earth. The Psalmist does not just marvel over the complexity and beauty of nature; in it he sees the work of God. Modern people are often preoccupied with the fear of overcrowding and poisoning nature. The Psalms show no such fear, for overcrowding and pollution were not major problems in that preindustrial civilization. Yet interestingly enough, this Psalm ends with the wish that God would clean up the earth – cleanse it of sinners, who mar its perfection by their rejection of God's will. The beauty of the earth made by God, calls out for purity – purity of the heart.

How does nature affect you? How do you affect it?

(Cong to stand)

Psalm 104

P: ¹Praise the LORD, my soul.

LORD my God, you are very great;
you are clothed with splendour and majesty.

C: ² The LORD wraps himself in light as with a garment;
he stretches out the heavens like a tent
and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters.
He makes the clouds his chariot
and rides on the wings of the wind.

P: ⁴ He makes winds his messengers,
flames of fire his servants.
He set the earth on its foundations;
it can never be moved.

C: ⁶ You covered it with the watery depths as with a garment;
the waters stood above the mountains.
But at your rebuke the waters fled,
at the sound of your thunder they took to flight;
they flowed over the mountains,
they went down into the valleys,
to the place you assigned for them.
You set a boundary they cannot cross;
never again will they cover the earth.

To be sung

**All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.**

P: ¹⁰ 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.

C: ¹² The birds of the sky nest by the waters;

they sing among the branches.
He waters the mountains from his upper chambers;
the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work.

P: ¹⁴ He makes grass grow for the cattle,
and plants for people to cultivate—
bringing forth food from the earth:
wine that gladdens human hearts,
oil to make their faces shine,
and bread that sustains their hearts.

C: ¹⁶ The trees of the LORD are well watered,
the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.
There the birds make their nests;
the stork has its home in the junipers.
The high mountains belong to the wild goats;
the crags are a refuge for the hyrax.

To be sung

**Each little flow'r that opens,
each little bird that sings,
He made their glowing colors,
He made their tiny wings.**

P: ¹⁹ He made the moon to mark the seasons,
and the sun knows when to go down.
You bring darkness, it becomes night,
and all the beasts of the forest prowl.
The lions roar for their prey
and seek their food from God.

C: ²² The sun rises, and they steal away;
they return and lie down in their dens.
Then people go out to their work,
to their labor until evening.

P: ²⁴ How many are your works, LORD!
In wisdom you made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
There is the sea, vast and spacious,
teeming with creatures beyond number—
living things both large and small.
There the ships go to and fro,
and Leviathan, which you formed to frolic there.

C: ²⁷ All creatures look to you
to give them their food at the proper time.
When you give it to them,
they gather it up;
when you open your hand,
they are satisfied with good things.
When you hide your face,
they are terrified;
when you take away their breath,
they die and return to the dust.
When you send your Spirit,

they are created,
and you renew the face of the ground.

To be sung

**The cold wind in the winter,
the pleasant summer sun,
the ripe fruits in the garden:
He made them every one**

P: ³¹ May the glory of the LORD endure forever;
may the LORD rejoice in his works—
he who looks at the earth, and it trembles,
who touches the mountains, and they smoke.

C: ³³ I will sing to the LORD all my life;
I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.
May my meditation be pleasing to him,
as I rejoice in the LORD.
But may sinners vanish from the earth
and the wicked be no more.
Praise the LORD, my soul.
Praise the LORD.^[b]

To be sung

**He gave us eyes to see them,
and lips that we might tell
how great is God Almighty,
who has made all things well.**

**All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.**

Cecil Francesc Alexander

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Kyrie Elieson, Kyrie Elieson, Kyrie Elieson

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy

P: Creator God, we acknowledge that as your handiwork, we stand alongside all that you have made. Trees and rivers, mountains and valleys, soaring birds and scuttling creatures, all are held within your care.

C: May we grow in our love and appreciation for the fabulous variety around us; and may our awe and wonder draw us closer to the natural world, and to you. As we reflect on creation, help us to take in its true significance. This is your work in which you have invested deeply of yourself. It is the costly outpouring of your creativity. Help us to take moments of our day to listen to the rustling of the breeze among the trees, to watch the race between the clouds and the sun, to smell the fresh earth after rainfall and to feel the

magnanimity each element of creation shows to the other. All this we ask in your precious name, Amen.

Kyrie Elieson, Kyrie Elieson, Kyrie Elieson
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy

Intercessory Prayers

L: We come together today with heads bowed in your presence, dear Creator to lift you in praise of the exemplary environment that we live in. We submit into your care the repercussions of our neglect and ignorance when it comes to caring for your creation. Help us to understand the gravity of the situation, where wars are destroying, ozone layers are depleting, water bodies are drying, and precious organisms of the ecosystem are dying. Transform us from a consumerist society that focuses merely on taking and using and help us concentrate on giving back and restoring instead. When we feel out of balance, we ask that you direct our attention to the delicate balance that exists within your world, a safe space for each creature and being that occupies it. May we model our hearts, minds and souls on the earth you have so carefully made for us, a sanctuary of acknowledgement and reverence.

To be sung

**I sing the mighty power of God
that made the mountains rise,
that spread the flowing seas abroad
and built the lofty skies.
We sing the wisdom that ordained
the sun to rule the day;
the moon shines full at his command,
and all the stars obey.**

L: We ask for your guidance O Lord, in the decisions and deliberations of our new government. Help them formulate policies that work in favour of those that need it the most. May their leadership be of sound mind and judgement so that we can ensure preservation and safe keeping of our Mother Earth, keeping global warming and diminishing resources at bay.

We pray for those that work to conserve our wildlife and natural environment. Bless their effort and contribution and enrich their lives with goodness and mercy.

Help us as a church community to be responsible and environmentally conscious. May we not use more than is necessary and be kind in giving to those who do not have enough. Fill our hearts with kindness. When our cups overflow, teach us to share with those around us. Help us to blend the force in the centre of nature and that which is at the foundation of our faith – love in action.

To be sung

**I sing the goodness of the Lord
that filled the earth with food;
he formed the creatures with his word
and then pronounced them good.
Lord, how your wonders are displayed,
where'er we turn our eyes,
if we survey the ground we tread
or gaze upon the skies.**

Gospel Reading

P: †Peace be with you all.

C: May the Lord make us all worthy to listen to His Word.

P: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, which proclaims life and salvation to the world as recorded by **John 3:16-21**

C: Blessed is He that has come and will come again. Praise to the Father who sent him for our Salvation. May His blessings be ever upon us.

P: In the days of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, the Word of life, God incarnate of the blessed Virgin Mary, it happened in this way.

C: So, we believe and affirm.

(After reading the Gospel, the priest says, †**'Peace be with you all'**)

C: We thank you, Lord, that you have given us your gospel which is indeed the light of the world, that we may be drawn closer to you through the living words from your gospel which we have now heard.

The Nicene Creed

P: We believe in the one true God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

C: We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all world; Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made, who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man. He was crucified † also for us in the days of Pontius Pilate; suffered and died and was buried. The third day He rose again, by His Father's holy will, ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father. He will come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead and of His kingdom there will be no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets and the apostles. We believe in one Holy Catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and look forward to the resurrection of the dead, and the new life of the world to come. Amen.

Birthday, Wedding Anniversary & Thanksgiving

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder,
Consider all the worlds thy hands have made;
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed:

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee:
How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee:
How great thou art! How great thou art!*

When through the woods and forest glades I wander
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees,
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur,
And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze:

And when I think how God, his Son not sparing,
Sent him to die, I scarce can take it in;
That on the cross, my burdens gladly bearing,
He bled and died to take away my sin:

When Christ shall come with shouts of acclamation,
To take me home, what joy will fill my heart!
Then I will bow in humble adoration,
And there proclaim, my God, how great thou art!
Author: Karl Bober, Translator: Stuart Hine

Announcements

Offertory

This is my Father's world,
And to my listening ears
All nature sings, and round me rings
The music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world:
I rest me in the thought
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas—
His hand the wonders wrought.

This is my Father's world:
The birds their carols raise,
The morning light, the lily white,
Declare their Maker's praise.
This is my Father's world:
He shines in all that's fair;
In the rustling grass I hear Him pass,
He speaks to me everywhere.

This is my Father's world:
O let me ne'er forget
That though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the Ruler yet.
This is my Father's world:
Why should my heart be sad?
The Lord is King: let the heavens ring!
God reigns; let earth be glad!
Author: Maltbie D. Babcock, Tune: TERRA BEATA

Message

Closing Prayer

P: As we breathe the very air which sustains us,
we remember your love, Oh God, which gives us life.

C: Fill us with your compassion for Creation.
Empty us of apathy, selfishness and fear,

of all pessimism and hesitation.
Breathe into us solidarity with all who suffer
because of environmental irresponsibility.
Move us into action to save our earth
and to build your sustainable Kingdom.
Amen.

Benediction

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it,
the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it on the seas
and established it on the waters. *Psalms 24*

May you be filled with the wonder of all creation
May you be environmental stewards of our world.
May you go in peace in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Doxology and Kiss of Peace

For the beauty of the earth
For the glory of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies.

*Lord of all, to Thee we raise,
This our hymn of grateful praise.*

For the joy of human love,
 Brother, sister, parent, child,
 Friends on earth and friends above,
 For all gentle thoughts and mild.

Words: Folliot S. Pierpoint, in *Lyra Eucharistica*, by Orby Shipley, second edition,
Music: Dix, Conrad Kocher

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