

# Ecumenical Prayer Service Season of Creation

## Opening prayer:

*Begin your service by lighting a candle, and setting the space with other natural items that represent the agriculture or wilderness of your local ecology, we open by praying:*

We gather in the name of the Triune God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of the Earth and all its creatures!

Praise be to the Holy Trinity! God is sound and life, Creator of the Universe, Source of all life, whom the angels sing; wondrous Light of all mysteries known or unknown to humankind, and life that lives in all.

(Hildegard of Bingen, 13th Century)

## Opening Sequence:

One We gather in the image of the Creator

**Many Who is a community of love.**

One We gather in the name of the Redeemer

**Many Who reconciles all of creation.**

One We gather in the presence of the Life Giver

**Many Who inspires new life and renews it.**

## Song

### Psalm 104

One Bless the Lord, O my Soul!

**Many All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.**

One You have made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting. You make darkness, and it is night, when all the animals of the forest come creeping out.

**Many All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.**

One The lions roar for their prey and seek their food from God; 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.

**Many All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.**

One From your lofty abode you water the mountains; You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills, giving drink to every wild animal;

**Many All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things**

One You cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for people to use, to bring forth food from the Earth, wine to gladden the human heart, oil to make the face shine, and bread to strengthen the human heart.

**Many All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.**

One The Earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.

**Many All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.**

**All May the glory of the Lord endure forever!**

**Confession** (based on Leviticus 25:1-25)

We praise you God, for the Earth that sustains life. Through the planetary cycles of days and seasons, renewal and growth, you open your hand to give all creatures our food in the proper time. In your Wisdom you gave a Sabbath for the land to rest. But these days our living pushes the planet beyond its limits. Our demand for growth, and an endless cycle of production and consumption are exhausting our world. The forests are leached, the topsoil erodes, the fields fail, the deserts advance, the seas acidify, the storms intensify. Humans and animals are forced to flee in search of security. We have not allowed the land to observe a Sabbath, and the Earth is struggling to renew. And so we confess. God of mercy and justice,

One You tell us the land must rest, free from the burden of production.

**Many We confess our demand that the Earth produce beyond its limits, and our bondage to desire more.**

One You call us to pause from sowing, pruning, and reaping in ways that destroy the soil.

**Many We confess our vicious consumption of food and energy.**

One You assure us that we can be filled from the yield of the land.

**Many We confess our lack of trust that we can thrive within the Earth's limits.**

One You affirm that our security is found in enough.

**Many We confess our lack of courage to resist the myth of endless growth.**

One You tell us that the land must not be sold permanently, because the land is Yours, and everything in it.

**Many We confess to thinking of creation as given, instead of a gift.**

One You call us to leave enough fruit on the vine and in the fields to feed our neighbours, animals, and replenish the Earth.

**Many We confess our failure to share what we receive from the Earth.**

One You call us to fairness and justice.

**Many We confess our lack of faith, not loving you with our whole heart and strength and mind, or our human and non-human neighbours as ourselves.**

One Turn us from fear and mistrust,

**Many And free us to imagine a life reconciled to the Earth and all creatures, through the Good News of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray.**

One The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God (Romans 8:26-27).

**Many Amen.**

(adapted from the Lutheran World Federation)

## **Scripture of Reality**

Let our pictures be the Scripture that we “read”. As we see in pictures some of the reality of life, the beauty and destruction. Let these pictures penetrate your heart. Pay attention to the Spirit and how your soul is stirred.

## **Profession of faith**

One We belong to the Creator in whose image we are all made.

**Many In God we are breathing, in God we are living, in God we share the life of all creation.**

One We belong to Jesus Christ, the true icon of God and of humanity.

**Many In him God is breathing, in him God is living, through him we are reconciled.**

One We belong to the Holy Spirit, who gives us new life and strengthens our faith.

**Many In the Spirit love is breathing, in the Spirit truth is living, the breath of God always moves us.**

One We belong to the Holy Trinity, who is one in all and Three-in-One.

**Many In God we are all made, in Christ we are all saved, in the Spirit we are all united.**

(Per Harling)

## Prayers

One We pray in thanksgiving for Mother Earth in whom all life is rooted, Brother Sun whose energy radiates life, Sister Water who nurtures and revives us, and co-creatures with whom we live, and for whom we are called to till and keep this garden.

**Many enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.**

One 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. Creative Spirit,

**Many enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.**

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. Creative Spirit,

**Many enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.**

One 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. Creative Spirit,

**Many enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.**

One In the wake of the COVID-19 global pandemic, hear our cries of compassion, and heal our world and all creatures. Inspire our hearts with a holy imagination, to rise, freed from the demands to produce and consume to imagine a just, sustainable way of living, where all have enough, and all may be restored.

**Many enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.**

One During this season of Creation, grant us courage to observe a Sabbath for our planet. Strengthen us with the faith to trust in your providence. Inspire us with the creativity to share what we have been given. Teach us to be satisfied with enough. And as we proclaim a Jubilee for the Earth, send Your Holy Spirit to renew the face of the ground.

**Many enlighten our hearts and remain with your world.**

One We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace. Creative Spirit,

**Many enlighten our hearts and remain with your world. Amen.**

(adapted from A prayer for the Earth, Pope Francis, Laudato Si)



### **Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in Heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name,  
your kingdom come,  
your 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 yours is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.



### **Benediction**

May God who established the dance of creation,  
Who marvelled at the lilies of the field,  
Who transforms chaos to order,  
Lead us to transform our lives and the Church  
To reflect God's glory in creation.

(CTBI Eco-Congregation Programme)

Season of Creation (Adapted)

