

Queensland Churches Environmental Network

Season of Creation Prayer Service



Lychee Tree Lawn

Mount Coot-tha Botanical Gardens

Wednesday 6th September 2023



**Let Justice
and Peace Flow**
Season of Creation 2023

A Mighty River
Amos 5: 24



Welcome

“Listen carefully, I am about to do a new thing, now it will spring forth; will you not be aware of it? I will even put a road in the wilderness, rivers in the desert.”

(Isaiah 43: 19)

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

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 Prayer

Blessed are you, Creator of all
to you be praise and glory forever
as your dawn renews the face of the Earth
bringing light and life to all creation
bring hope to your people.

May we rejoice in this day you have made
open our eyes to behold your presence
and strengthen our hands to work for justice for all of
creation,
that the world may rejoice together and give you praise.

(Adapted from Lancelot Andrewes, 1626)

Greeting - A Four Direction Prayer

Let us turn our hearts to the West
From there the Thunders bring us cleansing rain
Creator God, heal us and our relatives

Let us turn our hearts to the North
Winter comes to us from there and calls us to rest
Creator God, restore our strength



Let us turn our hearts to the East
The morning Sun begins each day there
Creator God awaken us and help us to walk with a renewed life

Let us turn our hearts to the South
Where the warm winds come from to give us comfort and joy
Creator God soothe our aching souls

Let us turn our hearts to the Sky
From there our Creator sees all around us
Creator God help us to trust you to lead us

Let us turn our hearts to the Earth
From there quiet wisdom comes to teach us
Creator God hear us as we pray

(Adapted from Diocese of Western North Carolina - Anglican Indigenous Ministries)

Psalmody- Psalm 85

We are presently more aware than ever of the link between fossil fuels, and violence and war. Let us pray and proclaim with the Psalmist:

Lord, you poured out blessings on your land!
You restored the fortunes of Israel.
You forgave the guilt of your people—
yes, you covered all their sins.

May love and truth meet together
Let justice and mercy kiss

You held back your fury.
You kept back your blazing anger.
Now restore us again, O God of our salvation.
Put aside your anger against us once more.
Will you be angry with us always?
Will you prolong your wrath to all generations?
Won't you revive us again,



so your people can rejoice in you?

May love and truth meet together

Let justice and mercy kiss

Show us your unfailing love, O Lord,
and grant us your salvation.

I listen carefully to what God the Lord is saying,
for he speaks peace to his faithful people.

But let them not return to their foolish ways.

Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him,
so our land will be filled with his glory.

Unfailing love and truth have met together.

Justice and peace have kissed!

May love and truth meet together

Let justice and peace kiss

Truth springs up from the Earth,
and righteousness smiles down from heaven.

Yes, the Lord pours down his blessings.

Our land will yield its bountiful harvest.

Righteousness goes as a herald before him,
preparing the way for his steps.

May love and truth meet together

Let justice and peace kiss

(Adapted from the New Living Translation)

Litany of repentance

God of light, life and love,

God of land, and sea, and sky,

Who called creation into existence and wove it into a rich tapestry, a fine
mat, a web of life

Your Spirit hovered over the face of the primordial waters,
And was breathed into humankind after You made us
equally in Your image.



Your Word was made flesh and embodied Your divine love as it took root and bore fruit in us, restoring our relationship with You.

Yet we have not honoured this relationship with You and the rest of Your Creation.

We have disrespected the web of life

We have devalued the fine ecological mat that You wove with so much love

We have uprooted Your tree of life and sold it as logs.

We have forgotten that we sweat and cry saltwater and have polluted Your oceans and rivers... oceans that cry for Justice and rivers that call to righteousness.

Instead of everything that has breath praising You, all creation groans in pain as trees and phytoplankton choke on carbon belched from our desire for more, and our care for less.

All around we see the consequences of our ecological sin as we extract and exploit, as we defile and pillage our sister and brother creation:

Heatwaves and wildfires

Bitter winters

Droughts and floods

Rising sea levels and rising ocean temperatures

More extreme cyclones, typhoons and hurricanes

Yet we are blind

Creation roars in pain

Yet we are deaf

You call us in Christ, to speak truth to power and peace to this planet, our common home

Yet we are silent.

God of hope and healing

May your Rivers of Righteousness

Wash away our apathy, our greed and selfishness and reveal the deep relationships You created for us with all creation.



Nourish us with the water of life that restores, turning deserts of despair into oases of hope.

May the waves of Your embrace
Transform us back into guardians of Your creation.
May the currents of Your justice
Carry us to Your lagoon of peace
Where all creation may enjoy
Life in abundance

We pray in the name of the one who came so that the whole cosmos
may have everlasting life,
Jesus the Christ,
Amen.

(Rev. James Shri Bhagwan, General Secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches)

Repentance

In God there is forgiveness.

**Loving and all-seeing God,
forgive us where we have failed to support one another
and to be what we claim to be.
Forgive us where we have failed to serve you;
and where our thoughts and actions have been
contrary to yours we ask your pardon.**

God forgives us; be at peace.

[Silence]

Rejoice and be glad,
for Christ is resurrection,
reconciliation for all the human race
And for the whole of creation.
Amen.

(Adapted from the New Zealand Prayer Book - Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia)



Reading of Scripture

First Reading - Amos 5: 21-24

Justice, allied with peace, calls us to repent of our ecological sins and to change our attitudes and actions. Righteousness demands that we live in peace, not conflict with our human neighbours, and building right relationships with all of creation. We are invited to join the river of justice and peace on behalf of all creation and to converge our individual identities, of name, family or faith community, in this greater movement for justice, just like tributaries come together to form a mighty river. Let us hear the words of prophet Amos:

“I can’t stand your religious meetings.

I’m fed up with your conferences and conventions.

I want nothing to do with your religion projects,
your pretentious slogans and goals.

I’m sick of your fund-raising schemes,
your public relations and image making.

I’ve had all I can take of your noisy ego-music.

When was the last time you sang to me?

Do you know what I want?

I want justice—oceans of it.

I want fairness—rivers of it.

That’s what I want. That’s all I want.”

(The Message Translation)

Second Reading - John 7:37-39

On this Earth, our common home, the Word was made flesh and went forth with the life-giving waters proclaiming peace and justice for all creation. Let us hear the Word of the Lord:

“On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” By this Jesus meant the Spirit, whom those who believed



in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.”

The Affirmation of Faith

You, O God, are supreme and holy.
You create our world and give us life.
Your purpose overarches everything we do.
You have always been with us.
You are God.
You, O God, are infinitely generous,
good beyond all measure.
You came to us before we came to you.
You have revealed and proved
your love for us in Jesus Christ,
God made flesh,
who lived and died and rose again.
You are with us now.
You are God.
You, O God, are Holy Spirit.
You empower us to be your gospel in the world.
You reconcile and heal; you overcome death.
You are our God. We worship you.

(Adapted from the New Zealand Prayer Book)

Intercessory Prayers

Creator and Redeemer, as we approach you in prayer, make us walk in beauty and balance. Make us open our hearts and minds.

Make us speak the truth.

We pray for your community, the Church, the Body of Christ. We pray for all our relatives in the circle of life throughout all Creation, for those chosen to be our leaders and teachers.

In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

We call upon the Earth, our planet home, with its beautiful depths, soaring heights and deep waters, its vitality and abundance of life, and together we ask:



That it may teach us and show us the way.

We call upon the mountains and deserts, the high green valleys and meadows filled with wild flowers, the snows, the summits of intense silence, and we ask:

That they may teach us and show us the way.

We call upon the land which grows our food, the nurturing soil, the fertile fields, the abundant gardens and orchards, and we ask:

That they may teach us and show us the way.

We call upon the forests, the great trees reaching strongly to the sky with earth in their roots and the heavens in their branches, the fir and the pine and the cedar and we ask:

That they may teach us and show us the way.

We call upon the creatures of the fields and forests and the seas, our brothers and sisters the wolves and deer, the eagle and dove, the great whales and the dolphin. We ask:

That they may teach us and show us the way.

We call upon all those who have lived on this earth, our ancestors and our friends, who dreamed the best for future generations, and upon whose lives our lives are built, and with thanksgiving, we call upon them too ...

That they may teach us and show us the way.

We call upon the nations of the world to hear the cry of those who have suffered loss of homes, lives and hope because of climate change. May they hear the cry of those whose schools, churches, hospitals, roads and infrastructure have been damaged. We pray for justice and for peace:

That they may teach us and show us the way.

We pray for all victims of war and violence. We pray for countries where the greed for oil and gas are leading to war. We hold in our hearts those



areas where fossil fuel projects have destabilised communities and human rights abuses have occurred.

We pray for areas where climate change has led to drought and conflict over water and resources is taking place. May we respond to the cry of the Earth and those living in poverty, as peacemakers who challenge the violence that threatens us all. We ask:

That they may teach us and show us the way.

Creator, you made the world and declared it to be good: the beauty of the trees, the softness of the air, the fragrance of the grass speaks to us; the summit of the mountains, the thunder of the sky, the rhythm of the lakes speak to us; the faintness of the stars, the freshness of the morning, the dewdrops on the flower speak to us.

But above all, our heart soars, for you speak to us in Jesus the Christ, in whose name we offer these prayers.

Amen.

(Adapted from Prayers of the People, the Church of the Four Winds, Portland Oregon.)

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray with the Lord's Prayer that Jesus has taught us.

[Pray the traditional version of the Lord's Prayer or the following version by Jim Cotter adapted in the New Zealand Prayer Book]:

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,

Source of all that is and that shall be,

Father and Mother of us all,

Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echoes through the universe!

The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!

Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!

Your communion of peace and freedom sustain our hope
and come on Earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.

In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.

In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.



From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever.
Amen.

Sharing of peace

The peace of God be with you all.

In God's justice is our peace.

Brothers and sisters,

Christ calls us to live in unity with each other and with the
whole of Creation

We seek to live in the Spirit of Christ.

Blessing of water

Blessed are you, Creator God,
who in Christ, the living water of salvation,
blessed and transformed us.

Grant that when we are sprinkled with this water
we will be refreshed by the power
of the Holy Spirit.

May we draw water from the springs of salvation.
and continue to walk together in the new life we received at
Baptism.

The sprinkling of the congregation

Christ is the living water
cleansing, refreshing, making all things new.
Christ is the living bread;
food for the hungry,
strength for the pilgrim and the labourer.



Benediction

May we be blessed to open our hearts to receive “the living waters of God’s justice and peace” within us:

Amen.

May we be blessed to share “the living waters of God’s justice and peace” with our suffering brothers and sisters and all creatures around us:

Amen.

May we be blessed to walk together with all people of good will so that the many streams of “the living waters of God’s justice and peace” may become a mighty river all over the Earth:

Amen.

And may God bless us on this journey, + the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

(Fr Joshtrom Kureethadam, Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development)