

GOD'S GOOD EARTH

A service of worship in preparation for
the COP26 Climate Change Conference

Wild Goose Resource Group

WGRG Liturgy Booklet no.14

CONGREGATIONAL VERSION

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GOD'S GOOD EARTH

Congregational version

GATHERING & WELCOME

OPENING RESPONSES *(standing)*

Leader: Believing that God made and loves the world,
ALL: we gather.

Leader: That it may be restored to fulfil God's purposes,
ALL: we pray.

Leader: To seek a wisdom deeper than our own,
ALL: we listen.

Leader: To honour God who gave us a voice,
ALL: we worship.

A song of praise may be sung

PRAYER *(seated)*

Leader: God,
God the Maker,
maker of colour, sound, texture, movement,
and the ceaseless beauty in living things,
ALL: we bless you.

Leader: God,
 God the Maker,
 maker of granite and mustard seed,
 of grey cloud and starlight,
 of earthquake and heartbeat,

***ALL:* we bless you.**

Leader: God,
 God the Maker,
 maker of all that is unseen,
 of all that has been,
 of all that words could never capture,

***ALL:* we bless you.**

Leader: God,
 God our Maker,
 we, the children of your love,
 the beneficiaries of your kindness,
 the guardians of your creation, bless you.

***ALL:* We bless you for your making,
 your trusting,
 your loving,
 your never-ending goodness.
 Amen.**

REFLECTIONS

There follows either a reflection on the Three Biblical Insights given below or a meditation entitled ON THE EIGHTH DAY.

A) THREE BIBLICAL INSIGHTS

Leader: Here are three sets of readings,
 representative of biblical witness,
 which offer a window into the relationship
 between humanity and God's creation.

(optional) Before and after the readings we sing these words:
**This is God's world given on loan;
no other earth shall be our home;
so let us bless, honour and tend
what God in love created.**

1. CREATION IS A SOURCE OF WONDER

Reader 1: Who supported the sea at its birth,
when it burst in flood from the womb –
when I established its bounds,
set its barred doors in place and said,
'Thus far shall you come and no further'?

Have you gone down to the springs of the sea
or walked in the unfathomable deep?
Have you comprehended
the vast expanse of the world?

Whose womb gave birth to the ice,
and who was the mother of the hoar-frost
which lays a stony cover over the waters?

from Job 38

Reader 2: Look at the birds in the sky ...
consider the lilies in the field ... *Matthew 6:26-28*

Song: THIS IS GOD'S WORLD

2. CREATION WORSHIPS ITS MAKER

Reader 3: The meadows are clothed with sheep
and the valleys decked with grain,
so that with shouts of joy they break into song.

Psalms 65:13

Reader 2: Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad;
let the sea resound and everything in it.
Let the fields exult and all that is in them;
let all the trees of the forest shout for joy
before the Lord.

Psalm 96:11-12

Reader 3: Praise the Lord from the earth,
you sea monsters and ocean depths ...
all mountains and hills,
all fruit trees and cedars,
wild animals and all cattle,
creeping things and winged birds.

Psalm 148:7-10

Reader 1: The whole created universe in all its parts
groans as if in the pangs of childbirth.

Romans 8:22

Song: THIS IS GOD'S WORLD

3. HUMANITY IS CHARGED WITH RESPONSIBILITY

Reader 3: The Lord took the man and put him
in the garden of Eden
to be the guardian and servant of the earth.

Genesis 2:15

Reader 1: For six years you may sow your fields
and prune your vineyards and gather the harvest,
but in the seventh year
the land is to have a sabbatical rest,
a sabbath to the Lord.

No land may be sold outright,
because the land is mine,
and you come to it as aliens and tenants of mine.

Leviticus 25:3-4 & 23

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Reader 3: Your wrongdoing has upset nature's order,
and your sins have kept away her bounty.
Jeremiah 5:25

Reader 1: The earth lurches like a drunkard;
the sins of its inhabitants weigh heavy on it,
and it falls, to rise no more.
Isaiah 24:20

Reader 2: The wages you never paid to the men
who mowed your fields are crying aloud against you,
and the outcry of the reapers has reached
the ears of the Lord of Hosts.
James 5:4

Song: THIS IS GOD'S WORLD

OPENING THE WORD *which may take a number of forms*

A song may be sung

RESPONSE

Leader: What, at this moment, does God require of us?

PRAYER *from the United Nations Sabbath Programme:*

Leader: Eternal God,
give us hearts to understand
never to take from creation's beauty
more than we can give,

never to destroy wantonly
for the furtherance of greed,
never to deny to give our hands
for the building of earth's beauty,
never to take from her what we cannot use.

ALL:

**Give us hearts to understand
that to destroy earth's music
is to create confusion,
that to wreck her appearance
is to blind us to beauty,
that to callously pollute her fragrance
is to make a house of stench,
and that as we care for her,
she will care for us.
Amen.**

for the COP26 Conference:

Leader:

Loving Creator,
at this moment in earth's history
when humanity must take account of earth's destiny,
give to those leaders who gather in Glasgow
a sense of urgency,
a perception of necessity
and the wisdom and will
to secure the health and wellbeing of the world
at whatever the cost to wealth,
political advantage or prestige.

ALL:

**And give to us all a vision
of a world restored to full health
that is worthy of all those yet to be born
and worth all the work, sacrifice and commitment
which is ours to offer.
Amen.**

AFFIRMATION *(standing)*

Leader: We believe that this is God's world
and all that lives on it;
ALL: we believe that living gratefully
and giving generously are marks of faith.

Leader: We believe that all of humanity
should have equal access to the earth's resources,
ALL: and that every individual must now act
to preserve this world
so that the children of tomorrow
will not be burdened
by the mistakes of today.

Leader: And so we commit ourselves
ALL: to think globally,
to trade fairly,
to live responsibly,
and to love this world as God loves it,
who in Christ became one with creation.
Amen.

Closing Song

DISMISSAL

Leader: Now go in peace
to enjoy the earth,
and care for creation
in partnership with God,
who in Christ
has honoured and blessed us.
Amen.