

Sustainable September

2018



SUSTAINABLE SEPTEMBER 2018

This year we present a mix of Bible studies, reflections and worship services that reflect the elements of God's creation and the justice we are called to create in response to God's own love. Often this is called 'ecojustice'. The "eco" prefix derives from the Greek word *oikos* for "house". This root is part of the etymology of 'economy' and 'ecology', but also, significantly, 'ecumenism'. Linguistically the word links environmental and social justice issues, which are mistakenly viewed as separate spheres of activity. In God's economy of salvation human and creation justice are one – creation awaits our revelation as sons and daughters of God.

Christian ecojustice is the unfoldment of Mission which challenges our destruction of Creation and the misuse of economic and political power which result in poor people having to suffer the effects of environmental damage. We hope the reflections and readings here, drawn from past years and our partners, inspire you in this mission within your churches, agencies, homes and daily life.

Anglican EcoCare Commission

"Renewing the face of the earth, then, is an enterprise not of imposing some private human vision on a passive nature but of living in such a way as to bring more clearly to light the interconnectedness of all things and their dependence on what we cannot finally master or understand."

~ Rowan Williams

Anglican
EcoCare
Diocese of Perth



WEEK ONE – THE EARTH

Read Genesis 4 verses 8-14

Eve gives birth to Cain who is expected to follow the commission and 'till/serve' the ground. After his offering is rejected by God, he invites his brother Abel out into the field, the place he is supposed to tend and grow food. By murdering his brother, he violates this place, the very ground from which humans are taken.

The intimate relationship between the ground and human beings is reflected in the verses that follow (4.10-12). The ground now becomes the agency that mediates the cry for justice. Abel's blood cries out 'from the ground', which 'opened its mouth to receive that blood'. Earth, like a sympathetic parent, embraces the blood of her child.

Cain, however, has to face the curse. This time it is Cain who gets the cursed. Cain protests in the striking words:

**Today you have driven me from the face of the ground
and I am driven from your face. (4.14)**

Significantly, Cain recognises that to be driven from the face of the ground, the sources of his origin and livelihood, means also to be hidden from the face of God. The two belong together. Here God is not in some distant heaven, but with humans as they care for Earth. It is this plea that leads God to provide a mark to protect Cain wherever he wanders.

Discuss: Do you think Earth continues to mediate cries for justice because of what humans have done on Earth and to Earth? What cries for justice might we hear?

Read Psalm 139.7-12

Cain complains that he is forced to flee from the presence of God by leaving the face of the ground. The Psalmist cries in response:

Where can I go from your spirit?

Where can I flee from your presence? (Ps. 139.7)

The Spirit of God that gives life to all creation fills all of creation. So no matter where the Psalmist may think of fleeing, God's presence is there. God fills the sky and the sea, the land and the distant dawn. God's light is present in the deepest dark.

This is the Spirit that moved deep in the womb of Earth to create the psalmist as an embryo (Ps 139. 13-15).

Discuss: Does the Psalmist's experience of God's spirit in all of creation, including Earth, suggest that we should also try to experience God's presence in the creation around us? Share your experiences of God's presence in creation.

Connecting with Christ

In Romans 5.12-17 Paul argues that the sin of the first human brings death. All humanity participates in this death because we all sin. Christ, however, brings the free gift of life to overcome death, the power that alienates us from God. All humanity participates in this life through faith in Christ. The question we ask here is whether the 'curse' on creation in Genesis 3 is included in the death that Christ overcomes. (Compare Gal. 3.10-14)

Does Christ free creation from the curse?

The passion narrative of Christ is also associated with the very ground of Earth. Jesus announces that the Son of Man will reside for three days and three nights in 'the heart of the earth' (Matthew 12.38-40). That journey deep into Earth will culminate in his resurrection. In a sense, Jesus return home to Earth is like a return to his mother (as in Gen. 3.19), to be born again from Earth in the resurrection?

Discuss: Is the Earth—including the land, the soil and the ground—given new life through Christ? If so, how are we, as both creatures of God and as proclaimers of Christ's Kingdom, to participate in this gift of new life?

PRAYER

Christ, you who have returned from the depths of Earth
and you know the pain of the curse on the cross,
make us sensitive to the curses on creation
and fill us with your risen power
to become your partners in healing creation. Amen

Reflection - Geothermal Energy

Geothermal energy is the heat from the Earth. It's clean and sustainable. Resources of geothermal energy range from the shallow ground to hot water and hot rock found a few miles beneath the Earth's surface, and down even deeper to the extremely high temperatures of molten rock called magma.

Almost everywhere, the shallow ground or upper 10 feet of the Earth's surface maintains a nearly constant temperature between 10° and 16°C. Geothermal heat pumps can tap into this resource to heat and cool buildings. A geothermal heat pump system consists of a heat pump, an air delivery system (ductwork), and a heat exchanger—a system of pipes buried in the shallow ground near the building. In the winter, the heat pump removes heat from the heat exchanger and pumps it into the indoor air delivery system. In the summer, the process is reversed, and the heat pump moves heat from the indoor air into the heat exchanger. The heat removed from the indoor air during the summer can also be used to provide a free source of hot water.

Discuss:

- In what ways can you think of the Earth as a source of energy?
- What propelled you to work or study today?
- Did you drive a car? Take a bus? Ride a bicycle? Walk? Where did the energy come from?

If your vehicle was powered by petrol, how did it get to you? Who created it, extracted it, refined it, transported it, stored it, served it? How can we know that all the people involved in these processes were employed fairly, and paid properly for their goods and services? Or is there a chance that our purchase of this product involves some element of enslavement?

Are there other concerns about the way we “harvest” and use fossil fuels? What do we do with the by-products? Can we be confident that the supply of fossil fuels is inexhaustible and reliable? How would it change our lives if fossil fuels became more scarce/expensive than we could afford?

If your vehicle was powered by human power, where did your energy come from? Directly from fruits and vegetables? Or indirectly, via meat or perhaps processed food-products?

Who created it, nourished it, harvested it, processed it, transported it, stored it, served it? How can we know that all the people involved in these processes were employed fairly, and paid properly for their goods and services? Or is there a chance that our purchase of this product involves some element of enslavement?

Do you have any concerns about the journey your nourishment has taken? Can you think of alternative sources? Can we be confident that the supply of our food is inexhaustible and reliable? How would it change our lives if supermarket food became suddenly unavailable?

- Why would God care about where we get our energy?
- How might idolatry be an issue? Pride?
- How can we demonstrate good management of the Earth's resources?
- What changes is God challenging you to make to the way you live and work?

WEEK TWO – THE WATERS

Using Amos as a starting point

'Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream'
(Amos 5:24)

Water was (and is) scarce in the lands of the Bible and polluted or salty water was a problematic issue, hence the need for an ever-flowing stream. Consequently, to the Bible writers generally the case for clean, accessible water was so obvious that it hardly needed stating.

Amos 5:24 starts with 'But' because justice is contrasted with the behaviour of those to whom Amos is prophesying. Compare this justice vision to the vision of water flowing from the temple of God to bring 'fruit for food' and 'leaves for healing' (Ezekiel 47:12 and the preceding verses Ezekiel 47:1-12).

We often use water unthinkingly. Water is still not used justly. Consider areas of the world where water is a cause of conflict (between Israel and Palestine over the Jordan, between India and Bangladesh over the Ganges, between various central Asian countries where great inland lakes are drying up, and in the upper Amazon).

Reflection:

How many of the world's poorest people have access to the clean drinkable water supplies which we take for granted?

This is not just a matter of wells and pipelines but also of the need to reduce the pollution of sources. And where there are projects to dam rivers (for example, in South East Asia, in China and in the Congo basin) there are environmental and other challenges. Yet it rarely makes economic sense to ship water over large distances. Some parts of the world simply get too little rain to support a population which now depends on that rain whilst others still have plenty.

Climate change might affect all this in all sorts of ways. Many climate scientists predict more extreme weather events. It is possible that future generations will see higher sea levels (as the ice caps melt) but perhaps also less, or at least less predictable, rain.

Against all these factors, what might be a just distribution of the world's water resources?

What might an ever-flowing stream be like for the world's poorest peoples?

Using the woman at the well as a starting point

The woman said to Jesus, 'Sir, give me this water, so that I might never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.' (John 4.15)

The woman is puzzled (John 4.11) by the notion of water which neither runs out nor has to be drawn from a well. What must it have been like for women in many places in the world to spend a significant part of their waking hours collecting water from distant wells? What about those who still do it today?

What might such women make of the endless supplies of drinkable running water from the tap with which we are familiar?

What action are we called to take so that people in today's world may indeed 'never be thirsty' literally as well as metaphorically?

Other Biblical Resources

There are numerous potential Biblical starting points for reflection on water. Significant examples include:

- Land dividing water in the creation story (Genesis 1:2 and 6-9; Psalm 24:2; Psalm 136:6)
- The great flood (Genesis 6-9)
- Purification uses of water (Leviticus 14:8, 2 Kings 5:1-19, Matthew 27:24, Mark 7.3) including foot washing (Luke 7:44; John 13:1-20) and the pool of Siloam (John 5:2-18)

- Water offered to a guest (Job 22:7 and Matthew 10:42) and the woman at the well (John 4:7-42)
- Baptism imagery from all four gospels (Matthew 3, Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:15-22 and John 1:19-28)
- Eschatological rivers (Ezekiel 47:1-12, Amos 5:24 and Revelation 21:6 and 22:1).

AN ORDER OF SERVICE FOR CREATION

Call to worship

Leader: Dear brothers and sisters, as many rivers merge together into the sea, we have come together to worship our God, the fountain of living water.

As we worship God in spirit and in truth, let our hearts overflow with praise,
let us be cleansed by the waters of God's grace and forgiveness.

Let us be refreshed and restored by Jesus Christ
who promises us the waters of life through his resurrection.

Prayer of adoration and thanksgiving

Leader With hearts welling up in praise for God the fountain of all goodness, let us adore the Lord.

God of the deep ocean and the tiny brook,
we praise you and adore you for the gift of water that sustains all life.

At this time of worship, we remember with thanksgiving
the manifold manifestations of your grace through the gift of water.

Leader We remember the waters of Massah and Meribah and
All we praise and thank you for you are the God of gracious provision.

Leader We remember the healing waters of the pool of Siloam and

All we praise and thank you for you are a God of ceaseless compassion.

Leader We remember the baptism in the waters of the river Jordan and

All we praise and thank you for you are a God of transformation.

Leader Today we worship and adore you, God of provision, compassion and transformation.

All Let this worship enable us to be responsible stewards of your provision, channels of your compassion and agents of your transformation.

Amen.

Hymn Such as Morning has broken

Prayer of confession

Leader

God, the very source of life, whose spirit hovered over waters at the time of creation;
God in Jesus Christ, who came as living waters to quench the thirsty;
God the Holy Spirit, who waters and brings forth the fruit; we come to your presence confessing our attitudes of greed, dominance and insensitivity towards your wonderful creation, and particularly towards water.

All Let justice roll down like rivers, and let rivers roll out in justice.

Leader

We confess that we have been irresponsible in our use of water, wasting it to satisfy our comfortable lives. In many places we have commodified and privatised water, a natural resource, denying people access to it. In the name of development projects, water sources have been drained or polluted with industrial waste, causing risk to flora and fauna.

All Let justice roll down like rivers, and let rivers roll out in justice.

Leader

We acknowledge the lack of cooperation between different authorities and organisations to manage water resources fairly. We confess our failure, as faith communities, to address water justice and seek forgiveness for not speaking out for the thirsty and the dying in situations of drought.

All Let justice roll down like rivers, and let rivers roll out in justice.

Leader

We confess to being silent spectators as many vulnerable communities walk miles every day in search of water for their families. We regret our involvement in the commodification of water, which has resulted in contamination and reduction of water supplies. We come to your presence ashamed of our apathy and insincerity towards the abuse of water and other natural resources, asking you to inspire us to be challenged to conserve, preserve and use water prudently.

All Let justice roll down like rivers, and let rivers roll out in justice.

Absolution

All

God who brought water out of the rock,
God who quenched the thirst of those dying in the wilderness,
God who in Jesus gave the living waters
so that those who taste them would never thirst, God who in Jesus died on the Cross thirsty,
for there was none to quench his thirst, listen to all those who truly confess
and grant us forgiveness so that we act responsibly in our use of water,
become sensitive to the desperate needs of those without water,
and gain wisdom in conserving and preserving water so that rivers roll out in justice among all
nations and all peoples.

Amen.

Scripture readings

Amos 5:24

John 4:7-42

Intercessory prayer

You will need: a glass of clean water, a glass of salty water, a bottle of cool drink and an empty glass. You might like to play soft music in the background.

Leader Let us pray for the whole universe. (*Hold up the glass of clean water.*) Lord let this glass of clean water remind us of the available sources of fresh drinking water. Help us to protect the gift of water and utilise it with the spirit of sanctity and responsibility. May our lives be so balanced that greed makes way for need and the tendency to waste makes way for a commitment to save.

All Fountain of life, wash us clean from greed and sin.

Leader (*Hold up the glass of salty water.*) Let this glass of salty water remind us of the tears of those whose lives have been threatened by the excessive salination of their water resources. Let those who contribute to the rising sea levels shed tears of repentance and learn to lead a simple life so that others can 'simply live'.

All Creator of new life, transform us so that we may be channels of life.

Leader (*Hold up a bottle of cool drink.*) God of justice, we pray for all those who are resisting multinational corporations and developmental processes which plunder our natural resources and threaten the livelihood of millions. We pray for all organisations involved in the preservation of water, and with it, your gift of life. Help, guide and sustain them in their endeavours.

All God of justice strengthen those who seek to preserve your creation.

Leader (*Hold up the empty glass.*) Lord, we pray for all communities involved in the issues of water justice. Give us compassion to walk with those who lack the water of life. Help us to empty ourselves of prejudice and fill us with a vision of solidarity and fellowship so that we can work together in conserving the Gift of water.

All God of justice give us your vision.

Leader Lord, we pray for the universal church and its mission and vision. Inspire us to work towards water justice. Transform our lives so that we may be channels of justice - not just in what we preach, but in our daily practice. Let your churches be role models within our communities in conserving water and preserving life in all its fullness. Bring churches together to work in unity so that justice will prevail and water will be available for our generation and future generations.

All God of hope make us instruments of hope.

Leader We bring these prayers to you in the name of Christ, our Saviour,

All Amen.

Inspired by the Lord's Prayer:

All

Our God, father and mother,
from, through and to whom all lives flow,

Your name is holy for you water every creature with life. May the 'waters rolling in justice' come down among us and dwell as in your presence.

Give us water sufficient for our living,

and help us to share water and other resources with those who are dying of thirst.

Forgive us our insincerity, insensitivity and irresponsibility

in saving and preserving water, and for our abuse of creation. And teach us to forgive one another.

Lead us not into the temptation of accumulation,
greed and power over water,
and deliver us from avaricious life styles.
For your word is like water cleansing us from evil,
your reign is righteousness flowing like an ever-flowing stream
dismantling the powers and principalities from generation to generation,
from history to history, for ever and ever. Amen.

The blessing

All

May God, who caused rain to water the face of the earth, May Jesus Christ, who gives us the water of eternal life, May the Holy Spirit, who quenches thirst with gifts from the spring of life inspire and challenge us to become advocates for water justice and bless us all to flow as 'justice rolls down as waters' both now and forever more. **Amen.**

WEEK THREE – CLIMATE CHANGE AND HEAT

Climate Change is not just an environmental issue. Our use of fossil-fuels and other actions not only damages God's creation but also creates injustice. The article linked below describes how the world is being divided into the 'into the cool haves and the hot have-nots'. Climate change refugees will become the largest refugee population this century. Justice based instruments, like the United Nations 1951 Refugee Convention, does not accommodate these new realities.

How may God be calling us to act in both the environmental and justice spheres simultaneously?

Heat: the next big inequality issue (<https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/aug/13/heat-next-big-inequality-issue-heatwaves-world>)

Bible Study by Elaine Ledgerwood (Uniting Church)

When I look around at our lifestyle, it seems to me that it is rather to easy to forget about climate change. Particularly for those of us who live in the city or large towns, we are relatively untouched by the changes going on around us. We hop from air-conditioned cars into air-conditioned buildings in summer. In winter we turn on our heaters. The tap always brings out the water we need, though we might not be able to water our gardens quite as often as we would like. Life goes on as usual and our largest reminders that the earth is warming comes from what happens to other people – the droughts, fires and floods that we see happening to those others on television.

For city communities, do you think this is an accurate description of our perspective? What would you change or add to make it more accurate for you?

For country communities, has there been an impact from climate change on your community? How could you respond to those whose experiences of climate change is second hand?

Read John 3:16-21. When you read these verses, read with the original Greek in a few places – for “world” read “cosmos” and in verse 19 for “judgement/condemnation” read “crisis”.

What do these elements of the original text inform us about the relationship between God, humanity and the world? How does this change the way we think about climate change?

Light and darkness have often been used (and misused) to describe good and evil. Much more frequently there are shades of grey.

As a group identify elements that could be contemporary examples of light and darkness (or greys).

Select one of these examples to focus on and read John 3 v19-21 again.

What (if anything) does this inform you about your example? What is the crisis?

It also seems to me that as we have been able to control our environment more and more, we have lost the sense of wonder at the world around us. Our lives become rushed and busy so there is no longer time to ponder or to enjoy the beauty of a single flower. Some of us may potter in the garden or walk in a park, but even those examples are controlled by humanity.

Share with the group a time you have encountered God in nature.

Towards the end of the book of Job, God responds to Job's complaints, not by giving a direct answer, but by giving Job a perspective that takes him beyond the needs of humanity.

Choose a section (just a few verses) between Job 38 – 39 to read.

What does this tell you about God's relationship with the cosmos? How does this change our perspective on our relationship with the world?

One awe-filled moment for me was standing in the darkness looking at the vastness of the cosmos and realising that in spite of the relative smallness of us here, God loves humanity.

During the week, find a space in nature and wait for God.

A WORSHIP SERVICE

Table preparation

Have a candle and the large globe or picture of planet earth hanging in space on a central table with several pairs of shoes and sandals on the floor in front

Call to Worship

Leader: Welcome to this sacred space (*The candle is lit*) The flame of the life of God

All: burns in the sacred ground of this our world. The life of Christ, God-with-us, proclaims our humanness a sacred place.

Sharing good news/joys Introducing theme

Leader

In a time when journeys were on foot, what motivated Abram's family to wander for hundreds of kilometres across the Middle East? Was it in response to climate change around 2,000BCE? What motivated Jesus to move around Palestine? Was it a spiritual drought? Both Abram and Jesus felt called by God even though the journeys were difficult and dangerous ones. For Jesus the important thing was sharing the generous outpouring of God's love for all. Early Christians were called followers of the Jesus Way. What might that mean for us today? How best can we walk together with each other and with Gods' world?

Prayer of thanksgiving and confession

Loving, Creating God,
all of nature calls you blessed, and so do we.

You are the Spirit of Life, the Breath of life, in whom we live and move and have our being, revealed to us in the life that abounds around and within us.

With our eyes let us see the dazzling worth of nature,

With our ears let us hear the music of the eons

And with our mouths let us proclaim the fullness of life embodied in Jesus of Nazareth.

We acknowledge Jesus as the pivot point of life,
and that how we react to him determines whether we live or die.
May we see the resurrection of life in him,
resurrection that shows us that the status quo can, must and will change. Amidst death and
decay, we are witnesses to the coming of spring.
We are convinced that another world is indeed possible.
Help us to devote our lives to that vision, with joy, integrity and courage.
Remind us, we pray, that it is not so much how we understand the resurrection in the light of
history, but how we understand history in the light of the resurrection,

We acknowledge at this time that we have not exercised the responsibility that rests upon us.
We acknowledge that so often our best efforts are tinged with greed –
the desire for more and different things
and how at times our greed is nothing less than theft
from those who have no power against us - people, animals and nature's store. May we continue
to open our eyes to the enormity of our deeds,
And our hearts to the suffering and despoiling which those deeds have caused.

We seek forgiveness from you; and from the children, women and men whose hurt have come
from us;
We seek forgiveness from every animal, plant and rock,
the skies above and the good earth itself, which nourishes and sustains us all. May we find the
grace to live for the world's healing rather than our own.
May we think clearly, engage in right action, and adopt a gentle life style – the very things we
see in Jesus of Nazareth
and in whose name we gather.

Amen.

(Compiled by Neville Watson)

Readings

Genesis 12:4a-13

Psalms 148

Philippians 4:4-9

John 3:16-19

WEEK FOUR – A FOCUS ON FOOD

Bible Study

In the New Testament, Jesus tells us that the whole Old Testament story points to, and is fulfilled in, him (Lk.24:25-27, 44-45; Jn.5:39, 46). This includes the Exodus. The Exodus, in the Christian understanding, is an event that points beyond itself, like a sign that points to what's lying ahead. In the New Testament, Jesus is understood to have fulfilled the pattern of salvation that God set in motion in the Exodus – Israel's rescue from Egypt points ahead of itself to Jesus, the true Passover lamb who was slain (Jn.1:29; 1 Cor.5:7; Rev.5:6, 12), and who by his death and resurrection rescued his people from slavery to sin and death (Rom.6). What's more, just as Israel was to eat the Passover yearly to remember their rescue, so Jesus gave a meal to remember his saving work which fulfilled the Passover – Holy Communion, or the Lord's Supper.

Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-23

What was the problem in Corinthian church with their celebration of the Lord's Supper? (vv. 20-22)

Paul can even say that because of their behaviour, their eating of the Lord's Supper is not really the eating of the Lord's Supper (v.20). Why was this particular issue so important?

Compare Exodus 12:4; do you see any connections between what is said there, and what was happening in Corinth?

What is the purpose of the Lord's Supper (vv. 23-26)?

One of the most powerful ways in which Jesus communicated the meaning of his death was by instituting this meal on the night before his death. It was similar to a Passover meal, but he himself (his body, his blood) was placed in the middle of it. The church has done this ever since that night, to remember the Lord's death for us, and proclaim it until he returns.

In Corinth though, things had got out of hand. Originally, the Lord's Supper was a full meal, with bread and wine ceremonially shared as part of it. When they did this in Corinth, the whole thing was completely unbalanced – rich people were stuffing themselves and getting drunk, while poor people were going hungry. Here was this meal which was meant to symbolise and celebrate the new community of love, peace and life that had been created through Christ's death and resurrection, and instead it only showed up division, greed and inequality! And so Paul says that this simply will not do.

Thinking it through...

Why do you think, when Jesus wanted us to remember his death for us, he gave us a meal to remember him, rather than some other way? What is it about sharing a meal that makes it so appropriate?

How would you react receiving this letter? What would the Apostle Paul say if he saw the way that your church celebrates Holy Communion?

How can we examine ourselves before we share the Lord's Supper? Are there ever times when we shouldn't receive it?

Do members of your church ever get together for meals in one another's homes? If so, what is that experience like? If not, why not?

The way we share the Lord's Supper should speak of the equality and justice of God's kingdom. What else can we do to show that forth in the wider world, particularly with regards to food?

The community of God's people, gathered around Jesus, and empowered by his Spirit, has a vital role to play in the world, as a sign and promise of God's coming kingdom and reign. This must be true in our community life, in such things as the hospitality of the Lord's Table and the hospitality of our homes, but it also must be true as we engage with the wider global village.

WORSHIP

Opening prayer

Leader: In a world yearning for justice,
where some have plenty
and others go hungry,

All: come, Holy Spirit, and teach us to share your gifts.

Leader: On a planet under pressure
to care for the land
and to feed the people,

All: come, Holy Spirit, and teach us to share your gifts.

Leader: To people scattered by sin,
needing forgiveness
and thirsty for belonging,

All: come, Holy Spirit, and teach us to share your gifts.

Intercessions

Leader: Let us pray to the Lord with “God of Grace, hear our prayer.”

Lord we are a stiff-necked race.

We take for granted the bounty and blessing you pour down upon us.

We grasp for what we can get. We hoard. We over-consume.

We look out for ‘Me’ and ‘Mine’ to the exclusion of others.

We are a stiff necked human race and forget you from whom all blessings flow.

So now Holy One, we return to you with our prayers saying:

All: God of Grace, hear our prayer.

Leader: We thank you for your precious Creation,
And ask for forgiveness for the ways in which we have harmed it.
We pray for a constant new awareness. Of your goodness and generosity.
That there is enough for everyone. Enough room for every creature.
A world of splendour and beauty on offer through your grace and blessing.
And with that insight the grace to work for change.
Help us with our blind spots, bring us to a better understanding and so lead us into the life you
would have for every creature.

All: God of Grace, hear our prayer.

Leader: We thank you for the bounty you bestow and the remarkable complexity of our world,
and ask forgiveness for the damage we have inflicted as a species.
We pray for the victims of unsustainable processes and structures.
Communities where there is not enough to sustain life.
Cultures under threat of extinction.
Ecosystems at risk through the impact of human activity.
Holy One, help us to find a balance. To better understand the ways of your world and to tread
lightly. Help us to look to the future and to tend to your world.

All: God of Grace, hear our prayer.

Leader: We thank you for those who lead us towards a sustainable way of being.
For those wise in the ways of the environment, in social and economic structures, in
celebrating human life and diversity.
We pray as your Church that we might also be a prophetic voice and model of sustainability.
Reform us. Help us to live out our knowledge of your grace and power in discernable ways.
Enable us to speak with wisdom on complex matters with others.
And in all things look to you the Giver and Sustainer of Life.

All: God of Grace, hear our prayer.

Leader: Holy God, we are a stiff-necked race and have placed ourselves in danger.
We have ignored our place in this creation you have made and damaged it and ourselves. We
live in unsustainable ways and see the need for change.
Send us wise and inspiring guides through these perilous times.
Give us grace to cope with what lies before us.
Remind us of your presence as with the Hebrews in the wasteland,
and give us courage with hearts for action to take our part in your redemptive plan.
Help us through your Spirit of wisdom and love to make greater efforts towards sustainable
living. As individuals, households and communities.
That we might cherish your creation and embrace the future with joy.

God of Grace we place ourselves and our world in your hands. Lead us to safety we pray.
We ask these things in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Confession and Absolution

Leader: God's hand is open, filling all living things with abundance,
but we have been greedy and hard of heart.
Let us confess our sins.

Silence is kept

Hungry for God's forgiveness, we pray:

Leader: Holy God, we ask you to forgive us
for the love we have not returned to you,
though you have so richly fed us.

Forgive us
for the neighbours we have failed to love,
though we are all guests together at your table.

Forgive us
for the food we have wasted
when we could have shared your plenty with people in need.

Have mercy on us, we pray,
and forgive us all our sins,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Leader: The living God,
who is both just and generous,
forgive you all your sins
and make you messengers of justice and peace,
until all the hungry are filled with good things
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Closing Blessing

Leader: The God of peace,
who gives food to every living creature,
give you your daily bread
and make you hungry and thirsty for justice.

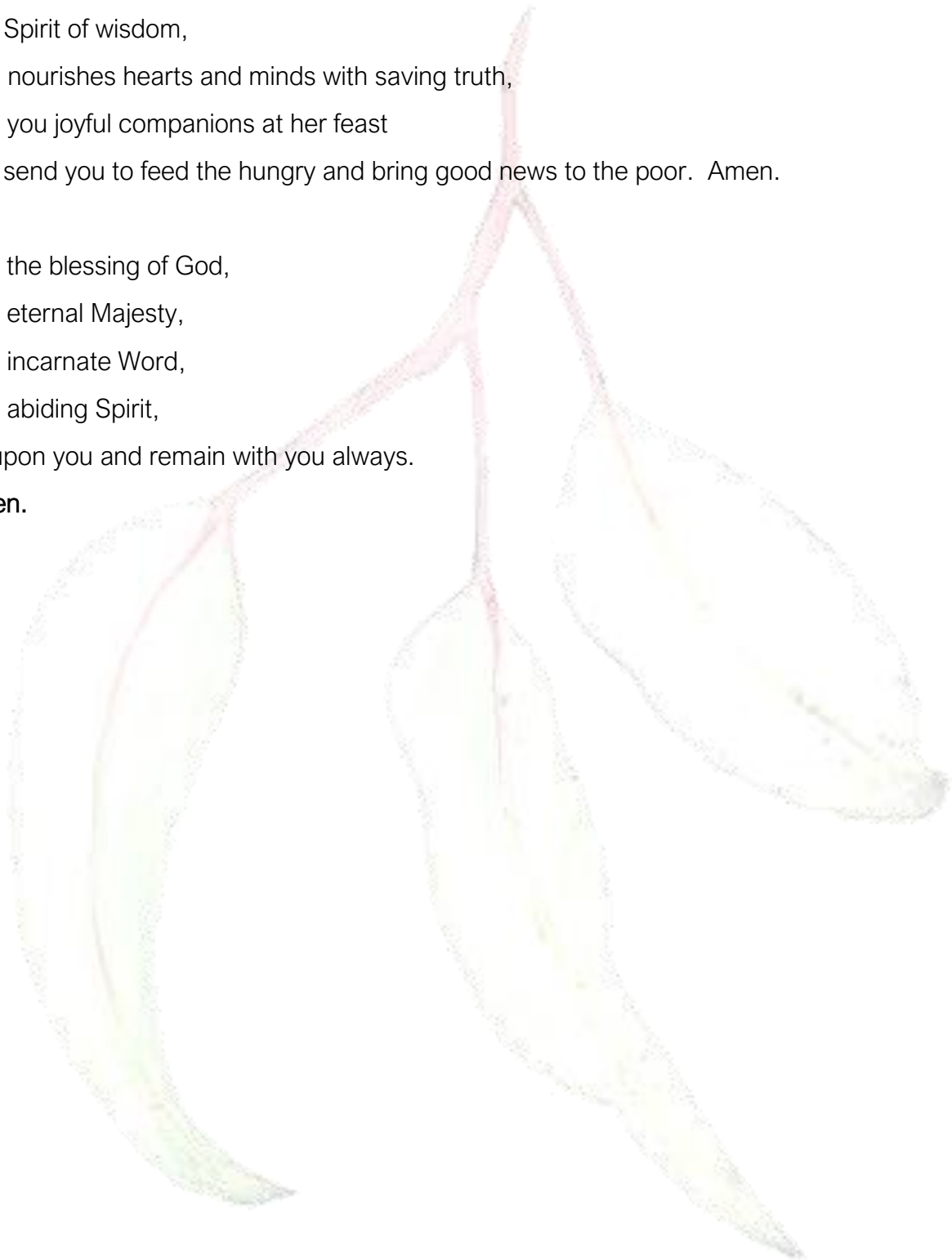
Amen.

The Lord Jesus Christ,
who feeds us with his own body and blood,

give you bread for your journey of mission
and bring you to the wedding banquet of heaven and earth. Amen.

The Spirit of wisdom,
who nourishes hearts and minds with saving truth,
give you joyful companions at her feast
and send you to feed the hungry and bring good news to the poor. Amen.

And the blessing of God,
holy eternal Majesty,
holy incarnate Word,
holy abiding Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.
Amen.



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