
A Service of the Word

choose**life**
WORSHIP AND ACTION FOR CREATION

A Service of the Word

Gathering Song

*As the people gather we sing Veni Creator Spiritus (Taizé) or
Laudate Dominum (Taizé)*

Greeting

Stand God of all

Creator of the spinning planets, the skies, seas, land and shore
and all that lives and breathes upon the earth:

All **We praise your name.**

We come to you, O God
gather us as one;
gather us from each and every place;
with the smallest and the greatest;
with the stones that cry out
the trees that sing
and the mountains that speak of your glory;
gather us together in the company of your Son
gather us with all creation
with all peoples
and in every language
to sing your praise.

God of all:

All **We praise your name.**

Hymn

Prayers of Penitence

A sung Kyrie may be used

Sit We come to the God who made us;
who calls us and who will renew us.
We come in sorrow for all that we have done that
mars the beauty of the world around us.
We come to seek fresh hope and a new beginning.

short silence

Forgive us that we so often close our eyes
to the everyday miracles of creation with which you surround us
and to the beauty and the fragility of life on this big blue planet.

Lord have mercy

All **Lord, have mercy.**

Forgive us for the times when we work in our own strength,
when we use our power inappropriately and damage your creation
and when we fail to rely on the power of your Spirit to lead and
guide us.

Lord have mercy

All **Christ, have mercy.**

Forgive us for the times when our love does not reach
widely enough;
when we do not pay attention to our relationship with your world
and when we fail to treasure your creative power to transform and
heal.

Lord have mercy

All **Lord, have mercy.**

May God who loved the world so much
that he sent his Son to be our Saviour,
to heal and restore what is broken;
forgive us our sins
lead us in pathways that lead to life
and make us holy to serve him in the world.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All

Amen.

Hymn

The Collect

Let us pray:

Holy God,
faithful and unchanging:
enlarge our minds with the knowledge of your truth,
and draw us more deeply into the mystery of your love,
that we may truly worship you,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All

Amen

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

A Reading from Scripture

Genesis 1:1-3; John 1:1-5;14; Genesis 1:1-3

- Reader 1 Over the waters of chaos
Your Spirit broods.
Over the confusion and darkness of our world
Your Spirit breathes new life.
Over the emptiness and silent places of our hearts
Your Spirit speaks to us the word of life.
- Reader 2 In the beginning when God created
the heavens and the earth,
the earth was a formless void
and darkness covered the face of the deep,
while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.
- Then God said, “Let there be light”;
and there was light.
- Reader 3 In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God.
All things came into being through him,
and without him not one thing came into being.
What has come into being in him was life,
and the life was the light of all people.
The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not
overcome it.
- And the Word became flesh and lived among us,
and we have seen his glory,

the glory as of a father's only son,
full of grace and truth.

Reader 1 Over the waters of chaos
Your Spirit still broods.
Over the confusion and darkness of our world
Your Spirit still breathes new life.
Over the emptiness and silent places of our hearts
Your Spirit still speaks to us the word of life.

This is the Word of the Lord

All **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 104

verses 24-34

All **Bless the Lord O my soul.
O Lord my God, you are very great.**

²⁴ O LORD, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.

²⁵ Yonder is the sea, great and wide,
creeping things innumerable are there,
living things both small and great.

²⁶ There go the ships,
and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it.

²⁷ These all look to you
to give them their food in due season;

²⁸ when you give to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.

²⁹ When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath, they die
and return to their dust.

³⁰ When you send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the ground.

³¹ May the glory of the LORD endure for ever;
may the LORD rejoice in his works—

³² who looks on the earth and it trembles,
who touches the mountains and they smoke.

³³ I will sing to the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I have being.

³⁴ May my meditation be pleasing to him,
for I rejoice in the LORD.

All **Bless the Lord O my soul.
O Lord my God, you are very great.**

Sermon

Affirmation of faith

*We sing the Taizé chant 'Ubi caritas, et amor' several times before
and after the affirmation of faith; the choir may hum the tune
underneath the spoken words of the affirmation.*

All **Ubi caritas et amor
Ubi caritas, Deus ibi est
Ubi caritas et amor
Ubi caritas, Deus ibi est**

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

All **We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

All **We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

All **We believe and trust in him.**

This is the faith of the Church.

All **This is our faith.
We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

All **Ubi caritas et amor
Ubi caritas, Deus ibi est
Ubi caritas et amor
Ubi caritas, Deus ibi est**

Intercessions

The chant Mayenziwe 'ntando yakho (Your will be done on earth, O Lord) may be used before the intercessions start, at the end of each section of the prayers, and after the Lord's Prayer.

God of love
the circle of your embrace
surrounds the smallest and the greatest:
the least and the lost
the tiniest creatures and the most powerful,
the hidden details and the mighty spaces of your world.
May we tend and treasure all that you have made, O God
and know our dependence on you.

All May your will be done and your love be shown
On earth as it is in heaven

God of love
we give thanks because you made all things
and created us in your image to live in unity.
Renew your image in us
help us to live as you intended
and to be at peace with you
with neighbour and stranger
and with the earth that you created.
May we love others and protect our planet home.

All May your will be done and your love be shown
On earth as it is in heaven

God of love
you entrust the work of caring for your creation into our hands
you bless us with so many good gifts
and surround us with beauty and awe in your creation.
May we never take the signs of your love for granted
and may we learn to tend and treasure all living things
as you intended.

All May your will be done and your love be shown
On earth as it is in heaven

God of love

You created a good and beautiful world
and call us to be partners in your work
but our choices so often damage others
and destroy our planet home.

Help us to walk more faithfully in the footsteps of Your Son;
fill us again with your creative Spirit,
so that as we walk through your world
we may be agents of change and transformation
peacemakers and peace shapers,
working to bring your healing
and making new life possible.

May your will be done and your love be shown

All

On earth as it is in heaven

God of love

You created a green and beautiful earth
With plants and crops for food and enough for all to share,
As climate change disrupts the patterns of the seasons
and extreme weather events become the norm
Help us to share our resources
to challenge unjust structures
and to feed the hungry with good things.

We pray especially
for communities who suffer disproportionate impacts of
climate disruption
and for young people who will inherit a changed world.
Give us strength to work together for a better future.

May your will be done and your love be shown

All

On earth as it is in heaven

God of love
You number the hairs on our heads;
You shaped planets and stars;
You name the constellations.
May we recognise the work of your hands
in the variety and abundance of life on this planet.
May we create space for others to flourish;
may we make room for all species to live in peace;
and may we learn our true place within the world
accepting our responsibility
to care for all life on earth with courage and commitment
until you gather all things to yourself.

Merciful Father
accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ

All **Amen.**

Let us pray in faith as Jesus taught us:

All **Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Hymn

Conclusion

May the God whose creative Word
brought light from darkness,
shine on your pathway
and be with you as you travel in this troubled world.

All **Amen**

May the circle of God's presence
surround you and those you love;
strangers and friends
and all creatures that dwell upon the earth.

All **Amen**

May the Spirit of God who groans within creation
open the pathway that leads to life
and inspire us to choose what makes for flourishing.

All **Amen**

God has called us;
God has spoken;
and now God sends us into the world;
to cherish, protect and defend all living things
in the power of the Spirit that brings life
and in the name of the Son who came to save the world.

We say the grace together

All **May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all,
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Preparation notes

Psalm 104

This is a long Psalm, so a selection of verses is suggested. The verses can be read antiphonally by the Leader and the congregation or you may choose one out of a number of musical or responsorial settings, for example ‘Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth’ which can be found on the hymnary website

https://hymnary.org/text/lord_send_out_your_spirit_and_renew

You could use verse 1 at the beginning and end said by all:

Bless the LORD, O my soul.

O LORD my God, you are very great.

Alternatively, the Taizé chant ‘Come Holy Spirit (When you send your Spirit)’ could be sung at the beginning and at the end as an invocation of God’s creative power in making, sustaining renewing the earth. This chant could also be sung at the beginning and end and between each pair of verses as a response. It helps to have a small group who can lead this singing.

Kyrie confession

If you have appropriate resources, you might like to use the following text ‘Broken and wasted’, which includes biddings interspersed with Kyrie responses. Information can be found here

<https://gregscheer.com/product/broken-and-wasted/>

Sermon

This can take a variety of forms, including interview, discussion, performance or presentation. You may also choose to include some silent meditation on the wonders of the world in which we live and its fragilities accompanied by suitable images. The NASA website has many beautiful

images of stars and galaxies. Suitable images of nature and the world around us are relatively straightforward to find.

Alternatively, you might like to organise a reflective session asking members of the congregation to consider how they know God in the world - as Creator, in the person of the Son, and as Holy Spirit.

Suggested Hymns and Songs

- Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty
- All creatures of our God and King
- O God, whose first creative Word
- Praise with joy the world's Creator (John Bell and Graham Maule)
- God of creation gentle life-giver (Craig Mitchell) to the tune Bunesan (Morning has broken) May be copied for non-commercial use with attribution.

God of creation
gentle life-giver
present at birth, and
all through our days;
author of sunrise
song in the night sky
here in this place, we
offer our praise.

Jesus, Companion
teacher and healer
friend of the grieving,
suffering, the poor.
Stand with your people
whisper among us
promise of mercy
goodness for all.

Spirit of Comfort
blow through Creation
stir up new life, breathe
peace through our world
Healer of hearts, and
hope for tomorrow
weave all our sorrows
into new dawn.

Here we give thanks for
life in its fullness
blessings received
your gifts to us all
Make us a people
filled with compassion
selflessly giving
serving your world.