

Pray and worship

Prayer is at the center of our lives as Christians. Praying together deepens our relationship with our faith and brings forth new gifts of the Spirit. As Jesus taught us, “where two or three are gathered in my name, I am with them” (Matthew 18:20).

The following suggestions will help you shape a prayer or worship service for creation.

Host an ecumenical prayer service

Hosting a prayer service is a simple and beautiful way to celebrate the season. While a prayer service that stays within your church community is welcomed, this season also offers a wonderful opportunity to connect with Christians outside of your denomination.

If interested, contact local Christian communities of denominations different from your own, and ask the clergy or justice coordinator whether he/she would like to collaborate in co-hosting a prayer service for the Season of Creation. If you send an email, be sure to share a link to the [Season of Creation website](#) and to include information about the season.

Start with the event checklist. Ask all participating communities to advertise the service. This will ensure good attendance and lead to a diverse, dynamic celebration. Sample flyers, bulletin inserts, and pulpit announcements are [online](#). Appoint either one clergy person or a group of clergy people from participating churches to lead the prayer service.

The following is an example of a prayer service that you can use and adapt to your context:



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ECUMENICAL PRAYER SERVICE **FOR SEASON OF CREATION**

Opening prayer (Begin your service by lighting a candle, and setting the space with other natural items from your local ecology, and open by praying:)

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 sentences

- 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

Sing a hymn that praises God as Creator. If possible, find a hymn that is shared by all participating traditions. [Click here](#) for a list of creation-themed hymns, thanks to Interfaith Power and Light.

Psalm 36:5-9

- One** Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the clouds.
Many **For with you is the fountain of life**
One Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains,
your judgments are like the great deep;
you save humans and animals alike, O LORD.
Many **For with you is the fountain of life**
One How precious is your steadfast love, O God!
All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.
Many **For with you is the fountain of life**
One They feast on the abundance of your house,
and you give them drink from the river of your delights.
Many **For with you is the fountain of life**
One For with you is the fountain of life;
Many **In your light we see light.**



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Confession

- One** We know that "creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now" (Romans 8:19-22). And so we confess. God of mercy and justice,
- Many** **We confess our overuse of transportation,**
One the need for speed overriding the healing of the earth's fever.
- Many** **We confess our hyper-consumption of food and energy,**
One producing meat and electrons on demand, but too often exhausting and poisoning the backyards of the poorest.
- Many** **We confess our soaps, our cosmetics, our synthetic clothes,**
One ignoring that their unseen, plastic microbeads run into our streams and oceans, now residing in fish, and probably in some of us.
- Many** **We confess our junk, the piles of what we throw away,**
One the sewage smelling of our lack of concern.
- Many** **We confess our mindset,**
One too often concentrating on our ability to buy rather than asking what we really need, what our world needs.
- Many** **We confess our unfaithfulness, not loving you with our whole heart and strength and mind,**
One not loving our human and non-human neighbors as ourselves,
- Many** **not caring for the creation you have given us as a gift.**
One Turn us from our cursed practices
- Many** **to life that is really living, giving ourselves away, following Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.**
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)

Reading of Scripture followed by preaching or participatory reflections

See the thematic readings offered below in this resource, or locally designate a text that reflects the particular context of your prayer service. Suggested scriptures are on the [Season of Creation website](#).



**SEASON OF
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Profession of faith

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|------|---|
| 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)

Offering and offertory prayer

You may want to have an offering, perhaps to collect money for a particular project or ministry, or you may want to gather local plants, animals, or other materials from your area as a way to raise awareness and offer thanks for the fruit of the earth where you live.

Prayers

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| 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. "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 | 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)

Closing Song

Sing a hymn that praises God as Creator. If possible, find a hymn that is shared by all participating traditions. [Click here](#) for a list of creation-themed hymns, thanks to Interfaith Power and Light.



Integrate creation into Sunday liturgies

Encourage your pastor to preach a sermon on creation or integrate creation themes into prayers during the Season of Creation.

The following ideas will help your pastor or prayer leader shape a sermon or prayers. Each week in the Season of Creation has a suggested theme. Scriptures from the Old Testament, Psalms, New Testament, and Gospels are listed along with a synopsis of how they connect with the theme. Any or all of these may be used during the season.

Additional denomination-specific ideas can be found at SeasonofCreation.org.

IDEAS TO SHAPE YOUR PRAYERS OR SERMON					
Biodiversity	Land	Water	Climate Change	Simplicity and Sustainability	Stewardship
OLD TESTAMENT					
Job 28: 1 - 11	Genesis 12: 1 - 10	Exodus 17:1-7	Gen 6:11-14; 9:8-15	Exodus 16: 13 - 21	Genesis 1: 24 – 31
The wonders of creation and the blessing of God that so many of our needs are met through them	God calls Abraham to journey to a land promised to him	The people in the wilderness are thirsty. Moses strikes the rock and water pours forth	The story of Noah and the Ark. God makes a covenant with all creation not just to humans	God provided enough manna for their needs. If they took too much, it rotted.	God created humans on the same day as other animals to form the web of creation
PSALMS					
Psalm 148	Psalm 126	Psalm 65	Psalm 24: 1-6	Psalm 104: 26 – 35	Psalm 8
The song of all created things offering praise to God	The harvest of joy when land is used properly	Water is at the heart of thanksgiving for God's provision	The Earth is the Lord's	God has provided food for all creatures.	God has made us wonderfully and with responsibilities in the care for creation



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Biodiversity	Land	Water	Climate Change	Simplicity and Sustainability	Stewardship
NEW TESTAMENT					
1 Tim 4: 1 – 5	Acts 4: 32 – 37	Revelation 22: 1 – 5	Romans 8: 18 – 27	2 Corinthians 9: 6-15	1 Peter 4 : 7 – 11
Everything created by God is good	The generosity of Barnabas in the sale of the land	The heavenly vision of water bringing life and growth	Creation is groaning in agony but waiting eagerly for the children of God to be revealed.	We need to share out of the abundance that we have been given.	Christians are called to be stewards of the grace of God.
GOSPELS					
Matthew 6:25 – 33	Matthew 4: 26-34	John 4: 4 – 15	Mark 16:1-8	Luke 12: 13 – 21	Luke 12: 42 – 46
All Creation is good and to be valued.	Jesus constantly used images from nature in his parables	Jesus offers living water to the woman at the well.	The resurrection is a message of hope for all Creation	We are accountable to God for what he has provided. God says "you fool"	We will be called to account for the way in which we have used what is given into our care.
CREATIVE IDEAS					
Church decorations with indigenous plants or harvest motifs	Church display of photographs showing the change in the local environment	Bowl of water on the altar. Renewal of baptismal vows.	Decoration of dry branches on the altar	Surround the altar with plastic rubbish, or at the door as people enter church	Put fruit and vegetables around the altar



**SEASON OF
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Host a creation-centered retreat

In this time of ecological crisis, a creation-centered retreat can be a powerful way to facilitate a deep spiritual experience that can support the ecological conversion of individuals and communities to respond to the “cries of the earth and the cries of the poor” (*Laudato Si*, 49). Consider hosting a morning or daylong retreat that includes praying outside, reflecting on the cry of creation, and discerning ways to engage in transformative action to care for our common home. Ideas for developing a retreat based on Pope Francis’ encyclical *Laudato Si’* are available at CatholicClimateMovement.Global/retreats.

