

A Liturgy for Earth Day

April 21, 2013 (Earth Day is Monday the 22nd, so this could be used on Sunday or Monday)

Elinor Brown

Call to Worship

Leader: God claims Earth and everything in it,

People: God claims World and all who live on it.

Leader: God built it on Ocean foundations,

Laid it out on River girders.

People: God is at our side; with God's help we make it.

Leader: Who is King-Glory?

People: God of the Angel Armies:

All: God is King-Glory. Praise God. Amen.

Psalm 24 (*The Message*)

Call to Confession

God calls us to turn away from our sins and to ask for forgiveness. Let us together confess our sins before our Creator.

Prayer of Confession

Creator God,

You alone have made all the blessings we see every day.

When we open our eyes, we see your beauty

And instead of being amazed and awed, we are apathetic.

When we are in relationship with others

We are annoyed by them rather than seeing your image reflected through them.

When we see rain, we wish for sunlight. When it is warm, we wish for cool breezes.

When we are in the midst of one season, we can only long for the beauty of another.

Lord, forgive our fickleness. Forgive our apathy. Forgive our dissatisfaction.

Give us new eyes to see the beauty of your earth. Give us new hearts that are passionate to

conserve, recycle and care for our global home. Give us new courage to stand up for this

Eden that you have blessed us with. Forgive us for sinning against your creation and you.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Believe this! Just as God created this wonderful world, God has also created us wonderfully and wants us to live in perfect harmony with other another. God has promised that if we say we are sorry for our sins, God will wash away the dirt of our sins and cleanse us as if we have been washed in a clear, pure stream. Believe the good news! Through Christ we are forgiven and are again restored to a right relationship with God. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Children's Time

Who made people and the world and the plants and the trees, and the water and everything? (Response) God. God made everything. God made us all and made us caretakers of the world and all that is in it. The Bible uses the word "steward" to mean someone who takes

care of God's world and all that God made. When God put us on the earth God trusted us to care for the world.

What does trust mean? (Response) Right. It means that God is sure that if we read the Bible and know how we should care for ourselves and the world, that we will do it.

There is a verse in the Bible that says "God has made us what we are, and in our union with Christ Jesus he has created us for a life of good deeds, which he has already prepared for us to do." (Ephesians 2:10)

God not only made us, but God made us just like we are so that we can do what God wants us to do. Wasn't that smart of God to make us like that? (Response)

Now God has made us like we are and given us gifts. Not presents, but things we are able to do like running, jumping, playing, working. What are some gifts that God has given us?

(Response) Yes, all of these things! And to be good stewards, we need to use these things to help others. Out of the gifts, we just named, how could we use these to help others? (Response)

God is trusting us to be able to do things for others, to be responsible—do what we say we will do, and be dependable—God can count on us.

I would like to give you a tag that says just that. It says "Steward of The Earth Who is Able, Responsible, and Dependable." The first letters of the words spell out "steward" so that we can remember what steward means to us.

If we are able, responsible, and dependable, we know that we can be good stewards of God's creations,

Let us pray: God, help us to be able, responsible, and dependable with the gifts that you trust us with. Amen.

Preparation: Make tags out of construction paper that look similar to the one below. You may want to use safety pins or tape when giving them to the children. Or copy them on sticky paper.



S teward of
T he
E arth
W ho is
A ble,
R esponsible &
D ependable

Prayer for Illumination

O God, clear away the fog in our minds. Let your word shine light the brightest sunshine so that we may hear your word, both read and preached, and that we may accept it into our lives like a healing balm. Amen.

Prayers of the People/Intercession

God of sunshine and rain, God of all the seasons, God of the birds and the flowers, of the gentle and the dangerous, God of all that we can see around us,

We worship your name and give you all the thanks and praise for the gifts of your world.

You asked us to be caretakers of the earth and we know that we struggle,

but we strive to try because we see your hand in everything.

In the...

...the fragileness of petals of a flower

...the strength of a flood or thunderstorm

...the beauty of a sunrise and sunset

...the awesomeness of a waterfall

...the tenacity of a humming bird

...the majesty of the mountains

...the mystery of the stars in the sky

...and the complexity of our own bodies.

We offer ourselves to become your hands and feet and minds in this world.

Give us the awareness to see what we can do to save your creation from our greed's destruction.

Give the audacity to speak out for creation that is not able to cry out for its own justice

Because we know that you have said that there must be a witness for you

or even the stones will shout out.

Give us the joy to celebrate with all creation that you are indeed Lord and God of all of life.

And we will be sure to give you all of the praise and glory forever and ever! Amen.

Scripture Possibilities for the Sermon

Genesis 1:1—2:3

Psalms 24:1

Psalms 104

Matthew 25:14-29

Offertory Sentence

God has given us so much and asks so little from us: to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with God. Let us give as we are able—regularly, sacrificially and gratefully.

Offertory Prayer

God, we give you back a tiny bit of the blessings that you have so freely given to us. Let our generosity flow to others so they may see your love and respond to it by giving also to others. Amen.

Charge & Benediction

Just as all creation celebrates God with all that it has, so we are called to go from this place celebrating God—with our gifts, with our talents, with our love. And as we do, may we know that God the Creator and giver of all good gifts, God the Son and savior of us all, and God the Holy Spirit, guide, healer and comforter, will be with us always and forever. Amen.