

**A Liturgy for Earth Day  
April 20, 2014  
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**(This Sunday is Easter Sunday so this liturgy has been especially written to include a celebration of creation with the resurrection of Jesus the Christ.  
Earth Day is Tuesday the 22<sup>nd</sup>, so it could also be celebrated the next Sunday or on Tuesday in a special service.)**

You may want to begin the worship service outside and process into the sanctuary during your first hymn. Or if you are really adventurous, hold the whole service on the lawn of the church. The neighbors seeing you outside may be drawn to your church.

**Call to Worship**

Leader: Christ is risen from the dead and brings new life to all of creation.

**People: He is risen indeed and the whole earth is in awe.**

Leader: The trees burst forth in bloom as a celebration of what God has done.

**People: The winds have blown away all of the darkness of Lent,**

Leader: And the waters offer a cool freshness to the ground in honor of the Good News!

**People: Christ is risen!**

**All: He is risen indeed! Hallelujah!**

**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 have done the miraculous for you have sent Jesus Christ to be the Savior of the whole world. We are humbled by your gracious mercy and feel the need to try to make things right.**

**On this beautiful Easter day when we have so much for which to be thankful, We are still aware of our short-comings.**

**We do not give others the mercy that we have received.**

**We do not care for the bountiful gifts that you have bestowed on us.**

**We trash resources, we waste materials, and we ignore nature.**

**As you have shown us what real love is, let us show it to others.**

**As you are the Great Steward of all, so let us follow your example.**

**As you have not created a single thing that does not have a special use on this earth,**

**So let us use what we need and share what we don't.**

**As you have created all things that are outdoing themselves to be lovely this spring day,**

**So let us take time to recognize them and the part they play in your wonderful world, saved by your Son's life, death and resurrection that we celebrate today.**

**Forgive us Lord.**

**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 and for which Jesus died.  
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

### **Assurance of Pardon**

Believe this! We have so much in which to rejoice. God created this wonderful world, Jesus saved this wonderful creation and the Holy Spirit leads us to live in perfect harmony with other another in it. God has promised that if we turn away from our sins, God will wash away the dirt of our sins and make us anew like 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.

### **Prayer for Illumination**

O God, let your word shine like the brightest sunshine so that we may know your truth, and accept it into our lives like a healing balm. Amen.

### **Prayers of the People/Intercession**

God of resurrection, you alone are holy and we are honored to be able to worship you. We find it hard to express enough thanks for what you have done for us through your son Jesus Christ and yet we cannot help but try. Like the psalmist we are in awe of the beauty that surrounds us. We marvel at its ability to die each year and yet burst forth with the help of the warmth you provide through the sun and the nourishment you supply through the rain and snow and minerals in the earth. This resurrection is a reminder to us of the life, death and resurrection of your son and the renewal that you offer everyone through this wonderful gift. We know that as we celebrate your wonderful gift that there are others who cannot celebrate and so we pray for them now...

- ...those that don't have the benefit of shelter from the harsh elements of the world
- ...those whose bodies are not acting with them for their health, but against them to cause them pain
- ...those who are experiencing grief in their lives as a result of losing someone they love
- ...those who cannot see the beauty in life and may be thinking that life is not worth living
- ...those who don't have the essentials to live—food and drink, healthcare, support
- ...and for all those hurting in ways we cannot imagine and need your Holy Spirit's comfort.

We offer ourselves to become your hands and feet and minds in this world.  
Give us the energy that can only come from joy and gratefulness to do those things to help and change the world for the better.  
Give the audacity to speak out for a creation that is not able to cry out for its own justice  
Give us the joy to celebrate with all creation that you are indeed Lord and God of all of life, that your son is the Savior of us all, and that your Holy Spirit is with us forever to be a comfort, strength, and an encourager. And we will be sure to give you all of the praise and glory forever and ever! Amen.

### **Scripture Possibilities for the Sermon**

Jeremiah 31:1-6

Psalm 118:1-2

Acts 10:34-43

Colossians 3:1-4

Matthew 28:1-10

**Offertory Sentence**

Just as the women were told to go and tell the disciples the good news of Jesus' resurrection, so God calls us to tell that same good news. Let us give of our tithes and offerings as a way to support the ministry of telling the good news that this congregation has been charged with.

**Offertory Prayer**

God, we know that even if we did not praise and thank you, that all of creation would shout the good news to all the nations. We ask that these offerings gathered here will be used to send the message loud and clear to the four corners of the earth that Jesus Christ is Lord. Amen.

**Charge & Benediction**

Just as all creation celebrates the gift of God in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 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.