

Living Water pilgrimage

The Season of Creation takes place every September, and is a time for Christians across the world to pray for and take action to protect our shared Earth.

This year, the theme for the Season is “Living Water” and focuses on a passage from Ezekiel with its image of living water flowing from God’s sanctuary revealing divine healing that renews land, water, biodiversity, and human responsibility towards the whole creation.

Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows.

There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live. [...]

Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.

- Ezekiel 47:9,12

Through living water comes healing; but in order to receive new life, we too must step into the water and also become part of God’s river of life, taking part in the healing of creation. This morning, as we walk through this little patch of nature alongside the stream of water, we will pause and pray for the protection and restoration of God’s glorious creation.

Station one - Prayer of Thanksgiving

Almighty and ever living God, we thank you for your love in all creation, and especially for your gift of water to sustain and cleanse all life. Christ is the living water, cleansing, refreshing, and making all things new.

So now we offer our thanks for the waters that bring beauty to all that we enjoy, the wild places, the bush, the mountains, coast and the sea. We give thanks and praise for all good lands, for the trees and pastures, for our plentiful crops, and for the living water that quenches them.

We praise you for giving us life through water, and for all waters everywhere. We especially praise you for the waters who sustain us in this part of our common home.

(Adapted from Anglican Aotearoa NZ Prayer Book)

Station two - Prayer of Lament

Leader:

We look upon your waters, O God, and we grieve:
Rivers run polluted.
Oceans choke with plastic.
Marine life disappears from warming seas.
Coral reefs fade and fisheries collapse.

All: Ashamnu (we have all been guilty)

Leader:

The seas rise and swallow coasts.
Storms grow stronger.
Floods destroy homes.
Drought cracks the Earth and children thirst.

All: Ashamnu (we have all been guilty)

Leader:

Only 14% of waterways in England aren't polluted with toxic chemicals
Sewage overflows into our seas, lakes and rivers
The homes of your precious animals are suffering,
And we have defiled your gift of sustaining and cleansing water.

All: Ashamnu (we have all been guilty)

Leader:

We confess that we have not guarded your waters.
We have consumed water without restraint.
We have polluted what you called good.
We have forgotten that the river of life flows from your throne.

All: Forgive us, O God.

Station three - Prayer of intercession

Reader 1: God of living waters, today we pray for a wounded world where waters are exploited, polluted, and withheld. We pray for places where plastics, toxins, and oil spills blacken creeks and wetlands, for communities whose fishing waters are contaminated and whose children drink from polluted streams.

Heal what has been poisoned. Bring justice where profit has silenced truth.

All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Reader 2: We pray for all rivers dammed without the consent of the vulnerable; for indigenous peoples whose sacred waters are engineered for distant cities and data centers; for the suffering of communities whose livelihoods are stolen by corporate greed, and whose health is sacrificed for global consumption.

Free what has been unjustly controlled. Let rivers flow again with dignity and life.

All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Reader 3: We pray for oceans burdened by plastic and chemical waste; for coral reefs bleached by warming seas; for great whales navigating through labyrinths of nylon and ghost nets; for the microscopic life, the plankton and the krill, now mingling with the invisible dust of synthetic waste; for the rivers that carry our runoff — the fertilisers, the dyes, and the heavy metals.

Turn our guilt into grace and our apathy into action. Stir governments, corporations, and communities to protect and share water justly.

All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

[Moment of silence to bring to God our own prayers of intercession]

Station four - Final Blessing

May the God who sprung water from a rock, quenching the thirst of those who wandered in fear, spare us from the drought of a senseless life.

May the God who flows from the wells of salvation, and who is Living Water to the foreigner, the stranger, and the unknown, keep us in peace.

May the God who rolls on like a river, changing the course of the world with streams of righteousness that guide the Church's vessel in this world, empower us to work for transformation.

And may the blessing of our merciful God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, keep us and preserve us in eternal life.

All: Amen

(Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil)

Season of Creation Prayer

Holy God, whose Spirit hovered over the waters at the beginning, we gather as part of your community of all creation, thirsty for your grace. We give thanks for the gift of water, the veins of our common home, that sustains the cedar and the whale, the pasture and the city. We are grateful for the local waters that nourish our homelands and our fellow creatures. We give thanks that in your well-watered garden, every drop is a sacred testament to your love.

Yet, we confess that we have treated this gift as a mere commodity. We have choked the seas with our waste and watched the warming tides rise in judgment. We lament the cracked earth of the drought-stricken and the salty tears of the climate refugee. Melt our frozen hearts, O God, and let the waters of repentance flow.

Lord of all Life, you promised that wherever the river flows, everything shall live. Stir in us a calling to care for the waters — to protect the watershed, defend the rights of water, and honor the dignity of the thirsty. May your Word be a spring within us, gushing forth for the healing of the nations.

May God our Father who brought water from the rock sustain us in the desert. May Christ our Lord who is Living Water refresh us for the work of restoration. And may the Holy Spirit carry us on currents of grace until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Amen