

## *An Earth Day Liturgy - #2*

### **THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S:**

#### ***A Liturgy of Celebration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Commitment***

*(Prepared by Mission in Canada for the 33<sup>rd</sup> General Council, August 1990 and commended to congregations for their use).*

#### **Call to Worship**

**One:** The Earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and all that dwells therein.

**All:** We live in God's world, we are not alone. We share the life with the heavens and the earth, with the waters and the land, with trees and grasses, with fish, birds and animals, with creatures of every form, and with all our brothers and sisters.

**One:** God saw all that was made, and behold, it was very good.

**Hymn** celebrating the beauty and mystery of creation

#### **Call to Confession**

God's creation is being abused and violated

We as human beings often see ourselves as separate from creation, not woven into the web of life.

The reference to having "dominion over the earth" is used to exploit and destroy the earth.

As individuals and societies, we become dependent on a lifestyle of limitless growth.

We are quick to blame and judge others rather than accept responsibility for the part we play in destroying our environment

We use more than our share of the earth's resources  
We are responsible for massive pollution of earth, water and sky.

We thoughtlessly drop garbage around our homes, schools, churches, places of work and places of play.

Much of the world struggles for survival - good food, clean water, adequate homes.

We squander resources on technologies of destruction-bombs come before bread.

#### **Prayer of Confession**

**All:** We confess these sins to you our God, Creator of the universe. You have set before us life and death. Too often we have chosen death. We have not loved the earth as you love it.

#### **Assurance of Pardon**

**One:** Know that our God is a God of love as well as of judgement. God promises to be with us as we struggle to be faithful. Thanks be to God.

#### **Prayer for Grace**

**All:** Holy and great Creator, we recognize as your people that these problems will not easily be solved. Give us the courage to truly repent and change our ways. May we genuinely ask for forgiveness from you, from the earth and from future generations. May we live this day faithfully loving your creation as you love it. May we walk together toward the future with hope.

#### **Experiencing the Word**

## Scriptures

## Reflection

### Act of Thanksgiving

**One:** We are thankful for the passion of children and youth among us who push us to recognize the urgency of the environmental crisis.

**All: Thank you creator and giver of passion.**

**One:** We are thankful for the wisdom of the aged among us who remind us of what it means to respect the earth and live in community with one another.

**All: Thank you creator and giver of wisdom.**

**One:** We are thankful for the insights of the native brothers and sisters among us who draw on their tradition and teach us about the sacredness of all creation and how to live in kinship with it.

**All: Thank you creator and giver of insight.**

**One:** We are thankful for the inspiration of those among us who have already begun to live their lives in ways that show a caring for the earth, water and the skies.

**All: Thank you creator and giver of inspiration. We thank you God for all signs of hope that keep us from despairing and point us toward new ways of living.**

### Act of Commitment

**One:** We have confessed our part in hurting the earth. We have

expressed our thanks for creation and those who care for it. We are ready to commit ourselves to a new way of living. Let us think about the hard questions that can lead to this kind of change, such as:

How do we leave behind the ways that have abused the earth?  
How do we show that we care for all creation?  
What can we do to stop those whose actions cause great pollution problems?

## Offerings

## Hymn

## Commissioning

**One:** God said: "I have seen the affliction of my people in Egypt, their loud cry of complaint against their slave drivers I have heard. I know well their suffering." In the power of the Spirit go forth, seeing the affliction of the earth as God sees it, hearing creation's cry of complaint as God hears it, knowing its suffering as God knows it.

**All: We commit ourselves anew to seeing the affliction of the earth, hearing its cry and knowing its suffering. We commit ourselves to learning more about the changes that are needed. We commit ourselves to embarking on the long and difficult road toward life lived in harmony with all God's creation.**

**In covenant with God and with the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, we are called to action in the name of Jesus the Christ.  
Amen.**