



Sunday Sept 19th, 2021 The Fig Tree Worship Resource

*** Gathering & Lighting the Candle**

Welcome!

We worship this Sunday with the skies. We celebrate with the clouds, the winds, the dusk and the dawn. We listen to the sounds of sky proclaiming God's presence. We stand in awe before the vast reaches of space above us and thank God for the fragile piece of stardust we call Earth.

** The asterisk indicates the parts of our liturgy that are taken from the Season of Creation material.*

<https://seasonofcreation.com/>

***Call to worship**

In the name of the Creator,
who colours the sky,
the name of Christ,
who died under dark skies
and the name of the Spirit,
the wind in the sky. Amen.

Holy! Holy! Holy!

Sky is filled with God's presence.

Christ, we come into your presence today
to worship in this sanctuary called Earth,

Holy! Holy! Holy!

Earth is filled with your presence.

Acknowledging



Uniting Aboriginal and Islander
Christian Congress

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land and these waters. We pay respect to elders past, present and emerging, longing to live as lightly as we can, walking together, First and Second peoples on this wounded earth under a weeping sky.

Singing: Breathe on me TiS 407

Used with permission CCLI 206 729

Breathe on me, breath of God,
Fill me with life anew;
That I may love all that you love
And do what you would do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure;
Until with you I will one will,
To do and to endure.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
and all my life refine,
Until this earthly part of me
Glows with your fire divine.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
So shall I never die,
But live with you the perfect life
Of your eternity.



*** Prayer**

God, our Creator,
as we look into the skies
we celebrate the wonders
of the worlds that surround us.
Help us to see
your presence in the evening sky,
your spirit in the wind,
your mercy in the falling rain.
Teach us to hear the good news from the sky
celebrating the glory of God in Earth.
Rejoice with us as we behold the dawn
revealing the mysteries of the skies above
and Earth below.
In the name of Christ
who unites heaven and Earth. Amen.



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Listening

Read: Mark 9:30-37

For these words of faith

and for Jesus the Word: **Thanks be to God.**

Reflecting - Rev. Moira Dodsworth

Becoming Least

I am always encouraged by readings where the disciples show their humanity. It encourages me to carry on. The disciples find the teaching that Jesus is offering hard, this learning is outside their usual life experience. They have status in the community because they are the disciples of a famous teacher, they follow him, see miracles, are respected within the group of Jesus followers. But in today's reading from Mark, they are asked to be like children.

We must understand something of the status of children in their culture. In our society, children are valued, they are welcomed into a family and seen as precious. In Jesus' time, children were non-entities, they were unimportant, the least in the society and Jesus is asking the disciples to be like this. A friend of mine, a minister, worked with another cultural group that used his church. He worried about the children and spoke to the leaders about how they ran about unsupervised during services and the church was on a busy road. The leaders laughed and told him that Australians just didn't have enough children, Australians worry too much. They loved their children but, in their number, there was not the same focus on their welfare. These people would have understood this teaching and what it was asking.

Jesus was asking the disciples to be the servant of all, to be the ones who always put others before themselves. Jesus is making a reversal of status and values in the kingdom. Jesus tells the disciples that he will be killed

but this introduces a way of non-violence in the community of his followers. We, too must, as followers of Jesus follow this way. This means paying attention to social power and privilege, choosing the Way of the Cross in all our interactions.

The disciples know that their dispute about who was the greatest was not acceptable, they show this in their unwillingness to tell Jesus what they were talking about. They're embarrassed, Jesus is teaching them about the Way of the Cross, that he must die and they are worried about who is the greatest. Jesus tells them they must be servants; Jesus is challenging hierarchy as they are trying to build it, in their little community.

I think we can all understand them and feel for them. When we are challenged, it is easy to fall into the trap of thinking about things as they are, not the big picture. Imagine how you would feel if your leader said he must be killed. I'd be scared, unsettled, by the loss of a guide and mentor as well as what it might mean for me. Maybe the disciples were thinking, who's going to take over? They didn't understand. This is tough stuff, and we still find it challenging. As disciples we don't tell people what to do, we serve them, we become the least. The way we treat the youngest and most vulnerable is a good measure of our discipleship.

We must welcome those on the edges of society, the unlovely, the different, the poor, homeless, whoever turns up because when we welcome them, we welcome Jesus himself.



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Singing: Who is Greatest in the Kingdom?

NETTLETON 8.7.8.7 D

"Who is greatest in the kingdom?
Who among us is the best?"
The disciples were debating:
"In God's reign, who will be blest?"
Jesus, had those twelve forgotten?
Faithful living has a cost —
And to journey where you'd lead them,
they would journey to the cross.

"Who is greatest in the kingdom?"
The disciples heard your call:
"If you want to be the first one,
you must be the last of all."
Do not think that high position
is a thing that you deserve!
"If you want to be the first, then,
be the first to humbly serve."

"Who is greatest in the kingdom?
Who will take the throne and reign?"
Christ, you put a child among them,
and you told them once again:
"If you give a child a welcome,
then you also welcome me."
Faithful service, not ambition,
builds up God's community.

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Responding: **Prayers for World & Community**

We thank God for a wondrous creation. We celebrate with all the heavens. We pray for all those in need. We name them now. We close with the following prayer.

Jesus Christ, teach us to empathise with Earth. Make our spirits sensitive to the cries of creation, cries for justice from the air, the clouds and the sky.

Jesus Christ, make our faith sensitive to the groans of the Spirit in creation, groans of longing for a new creation.

Jesus Christ, make our hearts sensitive to the songs of our kin, songs of celebration from the stars, the rains and the light.
Christ, teach us to care. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours
now and for ever. Amen.

Passing the peace

May the Peace of God
dwell with you:
and also with you.

Offering

God of this wondrous creation, in what we offer may there be blessing for the whole of your creation. May what we give unite us to your ways for the sake of all. We pray this in your name as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. Amen.

Notices

For more worship resources and creation inspiration check out seasonofcreation.com
For more new hymns to common tunes, check out carolynshymns.com.



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Singing: Make me a channel TiS 607

Used with permission CCLI 206 729

Make me a channel of Your peace.
Where there is hatred
let me bring Your love;
Where there is injury,
Your pardon, Lord;
And where there's doubt,
true faith in You.
[chorus]
Oh, Master, grant that I
may never seek
So much to be consoled
as to console;
To be understood
as to understand;
To be loved
as to love with all my soul.

Make me a channel of Your peace.
Where there's despair in life
let me bring hope;
Where there is darkness,
only light;
And where there's sadness,
ever joy.

Make me a channel of Your peace.
It is in pardoning
that we are pardoned,
In giving of ourselves
that we receive,
And in dying that we're
born to eternal life.

Blessing

L May the Spirit of God, who is above all and
in all and through all,
fill you with the knowledge of God's
presence in sky and Earth and the pulsing
of Christ within you.

Go in peace!
Serving Christ and loving Earth!

P **We go in peace,
serving Christ and loving Earth.**

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