

Season of Creation 2026

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Reflection and Prayers – Worship Stations Around the church.

LAND

World Map -

You will need - a large map of the world (available at stationery shops), pens, post it notes, prompts, instructions

When we reflect on the Bible story from Genesis 4, we hear of the land crying out to God to alert God to the murder of Abel by Cain. There are many places in the world today where we can hear the land crying out against injustice, violence and war. This includes acknowledging Tangata Whenua in Aotearoa as well as the First Peoples in other lands recognising that land was taken forcibly, and has resulted in disconnection, cultural distress and physical injury.

Write a prayer on a post it and place it different areas of the map and pray for God's justice and peace to reign in that place.

Soil/fruit- contemplation – life-giving – by font

You will need - a selection of easily eaten fruit, a bin for compost, prompts/instructions

The land brings us life. It nourishes and sustains us. The smallest things matter – the microbes in the soil, the worms that move around it, the bugs, insects. Every morsel of food that we eat has it's origin in the land at some point in it's life cycle.

Look at the images and representations of land here. What jumps out to you?

Take a piece of fruit

Give thanks and eat it.

Place the peel or core in the compost bin, returning what we do not need to the land helps nourish and restore it. This compost will be added to our community garden

Co-creation – finger prints on the land.

You will need - co-creation material, paint, handwipes, prompts/instructions. If you are not doing the whole co-creation art project you could print a large picture of some land (bonus if it is connected with your community) and have people place their fingerprints on that.

The land tells stories. Stories of how it came to be, who walked on it, who worked it, who was born on it and who is buried. The land is telling us now that it is suffering. The deforestation, flooding, pesticides, overuse, misuse, war, famine tell us a story.

,What story should we be telling today? What story will we tell our children and grandchildren about what we did to save the earth?

Reflect on this and when you are ready, dip your finger in some paint and put it on the "land" on the picture. Ask God to help you walk more gentle on our earth.

Psalm 139

You will need - a large print of the Psalm and some other copies, either bibles with the page marked or printed, sand tray, tea light candles, a large candle to light from. If you cannot use live flame then have a large LED candle and small LED tea lights instead.

Where could I go to escape
from your Spirit

or from your sight?

If I were to climb up
to the highest heavens,
you would be there.

If I were to dig down
to the world of the dead
you would also be there.

Suppose I had wings
like the dawning day
and flew across the ocean.

Even then your powerful arm
would guide and protect me.

Or suppose I said, "I'll hide
in the dark until night comes
to cover me over."

But you see in the dark
because daylight and dark
are all the same to you.

The gospel reading in Matthew references Jonah spending three days in the dark and foretelling Jesus three days in the ground before his resurrection.

We often think of the dark, the ground, being covered up as something that is scary, suggestive of death and burial.

Read Psalm 139:7-12

Many seeds and new life start in darkness.

We cannot go anywhere to escape from God, from God's Spirit, from God's sight.

We cannot go anywhere to escape from God's love

Even the darkest of places is light to God.

Think on these things for a moment.

When you are ready, light a candle

Wilderness Reflection

You will need: paper, pencils, saucers with sand (enough for most people), desert wind sounds that can be played during different parts of the service. Make sure the person leading this is using the microphone well so people can hear. If you are not doing the co-creation activity then you may wish to vary the ending by inviting people to a space where they can sprinkle some sand into a tray or similar.

We are going to participate in a contemplation this morning. We are going to the wilderness. If you are someone who likes to draw I invite you to find some paper and pencils. There are also saucers on your table full of sand. I invite you to take one and let your fingers move about in the sand through the reflection. Or you might prefer simply to sit and listen, do whatever is best for you.

I invite you to sit comfortably, gently breathe in for four counts and then breathe slowly out for four counts or more if you need. Do the same again. Close your eyes if you wish.

Play desert winds sounds - play loudly for 20s then bring down to really quiet.

As part of creation, we can imagine the wilderness as a wild and untouched place. It is a place that at first glance looks barren, a place where survival is not guaranteed and life precarious. Yet if we look closer, if we take the time to observe in these wilderness places we find tiny signs of life. Unique, rare, vulnerable life that is sustained in the most wild of places show us that even the most empty place can still be a place where life can be. We've lost most of our wild and untouched places in this world. This alone is a cause for mourning.

We also know that the wilderness is a metaphorical place, it is a place in our faith journey that we find our way from time to time. What does your wilderness place look like today? Is it a windswept beach, a desert, a rocky alpine space. It could be an empty playground or it could even be a room full of people where you feel you do not belong. Maybe your wilderness is being kept on read without a response or a phone call that never comes. Imagine your wilderness in your head in your head. Draw it on your paper. Make a shape in your sand tray

Pause

We know that the Israelites wandered the wilderness for 40 years and then another 40 years. We know that Jesus went to the wilderness where he was tempted.

The wilderness is a challenging place to be. It might be where we will feel the most vulnerable, the most scared and the most alone. How do you feel right now in your wilderness?

Let that feeling fill you up.

Let it sit with you. Do not be afraid of it and do not fight it.

Pause

Sometimes we have to be in the wilderness.

It is okay to feel angry, frustrated, afraid and alone.

It is okay to cry out to God and wonder if we'll get an answer.

Pause

Are you walking in your wilderness? Trace the shape of your journey in your sand or on your paper. Where is it taking you? Are you going around and around in circles or are you in a line?

Stop for a moment. Pause in your wanderings and look around.

What do you see? What do you hear? Draw it on your paper or draw shapes in your sand.

Pause

Are there any signs of life in your wilderness? Maybe there is something growing, something moving along the ground. Maybe you can feel a spot of rain or you feel the warmth of the sun? Maybe someone says a kind word. Maybe you feel something... different... something that is comforting or peaceful.

We know that God can be with us in the wilderness. Often it is only after repeated visits that we can see that. God was with the Israelites in the desert, the angels tended to Jesus' in the wilderness. Ask God to help you see life in your wilderness today.

Pause

As we finish let us ask God to help us to see the value in the literal wilderness to, the wild places that we must protect at all costs. These are places that are crying out for our help.

When you are ready, I invite you to come up to our art project, take some sand and sprinkle it over the wilderness, let this be a symbol of your journey today.

Reflection and Prayers – Worship Stations Around the church.

RIVER

Art

You will need - copies of the art and the artist statement

Reflect on the art inspired about Scripture about living water.

Anne Hutchison was part of St Mary by the Sea community and currently resides in Taupō and completed a Book of Hours style project. The Book of Hours were a common form of illuminated manuscripts in medieval times, using prayers, psalms and scripture with script and art work for prayer and meditation. Anne has used some traditional and contemporary techniques for calligraphy and draws inspiration from local flora and fauna.

As you contemplate these art pieces, consider:

Look at the whole picture, what jumps out at you?

Examine that part more closely, what do you notice?

Imagine you are in the scene yourself, where are you?

How does it make you feel?

Read the artists statement, does that change what you notice or see in the art?

Repentance

You will need: white board, dirty bowl of water used for confession, white board pens

During our confession we confessed and were forgiven for our actions against the rivers. However as we can see from the water that forgiveness does not change the impact of our actions.

Repentance means to “turn around”. It means to go a different way to the way we have been going.

How can we actively repent for our choices and the choices of individuals, groups, communities and governments? What action can we take when it comes to caring for and restoring our waterways? How can we ensure healthy water for all? Write these ideas down.

Co-creation

You will need: material you are using for the co-creation, several colours of blue paint. If you are not doing the whole project you could invite the creation of a river using collage and multi-media including bible quotes about justice and rivers.

Our hands can be used to both harm and heal. As you reflect on our role in creation care and justice, paint a line of paint in the river. Let this line of paint, together with everyone's lines, be symbolic of the collective nature of our response and care of nature. To do something by ourselves is overwhelming, by doing things together, we can do something amazing.

Justice

You will need: Large piece of paper, pens, pencils,

The reading today represents the hope for the future. A description of cleansing, flowing beautiful water flowing to the tree of life. It represents what happens with the world is back in balance. Rivers that flow clean and restore the land, rivers of justice and peace. A place of plenty and abundance. It is a beautiful and hope-filled idea for our future.

Imagine what our world would look like if all these things came to be true? If the Holy Spirit flowed through each of us and nations were healed?

Add words and pictures to the paper to describe what you imagine

Prayers

You will need: pictures, paper water droplets, pens. If you are creating a space with the different elements, set up the prayer station there, otherwise use a small wall space to hang the pictures and have blu-tac for people to stick their droplets onto the pictures.

Using these prayer prompts, write a prayer on a water droplet and place it in the river.

Picture of - River, quote about justice (ie Martin Luther King jnr) , voting, hospital bed

Include any images of justice relevant to your community.





hate, I despise
your festivals,
and I take no
delight in your
solemn assemblies.
Even though you
offer me your burnt
offerings and grain
offerings, I will not accept them;
and the offerings of well-being
of your fatted animals I will not
look upon.



Take away from me
the noise of your
songs; I will not
listen to the melody
of your harps.
But let justice
roll down like
waters, and righteousness
like an ever-flowing stream.

Amos 5:21-24

Prayer Prompts



Air Quality
Pollution
Breathing issues
Heating of the atmosphere

Loss of habitat
Loss of plants
Loss of diversity



Kauri Die-back
Mining
Deforestation



Loss of indigenous
livelihood
Loss of indigenous
knowledge



Prayer Prompts



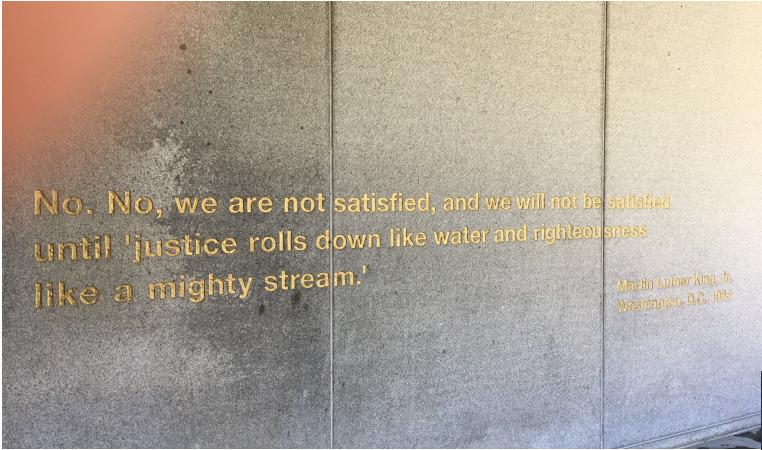
Natural wilderness spaces
Alpine, Beach, Desert
Waters around Aotearoa
Jungle
South and North poles



The impact our decisions have on
the wild places
The people who are harmed by our
consumer choices
The organisations bringing back
sustainable practices
Actions we can take to help restore
the wild



Prayer Prompts



No. No, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until 'justice rolls down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream.'

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Washington, D.C. 1963

Justice
Access
Equity
Equality

Those who are sick
Those who are lonely
Those who live in poverty
Those who don't have safe &
adequate housing



Our waterways
Equal access to safe water
Waste water management that
doesn't harm

The upcoming election
Guidance with who we should
vote for
Clarity from politicians over
their priorities.

