

SOWING SEEDS OF HOPE HOLY COMMUNION

(The beginning blessing is both a confession of our lack of stewardship and a blessing of soil, seed and water. It is suggested that you have simple containers of these (large enough to be seen) at the site of the blessing/confession.)

Prelude

Blessing of stewardship of the earth

P: All too often, we have forgotten that all we have belongs not to us but to God.

For times when out of ignorance or other concerns, we have used and abused the land and erosion has swept away good soil,

C: Forgive us Lord.

P: For soil that is burnt-out by chemicals and overuse, for land that is now desert of lack of cover and water, for the loss of forests and our greedy search for more land,

C: Forgive us Lord.

P: For our refusal to see the connections between our everyday life and the starvation of millions. For our acceptance of hopelessness and lack of faith in your power,

C: Forgive us Lord.

P: For our waste of your precious gift of water; for the pollution and destruction of water; and for allowing people to die for lack of clean water,

C: Forgive us Lord.

P: Creator God, we ask you to bless the land and give it new life. Teach us to be better stewards of the land, conserving and caring for the earth and all that it contains. Bless and care for all those who struggle to work the land; strengthen their witness and give them justice for their labor.

Bless the seeds that are planted, guard them from storms, calamity and drought and bring them to abundant harvest that all people may be fed. Give us a spirit of generosity and trust in your mercy; teach us to care for our neighbors.

Bless the water that brings life to the earth and all it contains. Just as we are baptismal people, may our use of water be a witness to life in the Holy Spirit. Strengthen and care for those who face drought and those that are recovering from flood. Remember your promise to your people and bring life and healing.

We pray in confidence through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

A: You care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly.

C: The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain, for so you have ordained it.

A: You drench its furrows and level its ridges;

C: you soften it with showers and bless its crops.

A: You crown the year with your bounty,

C: and your carts overflow with abundance.

A: The grasslands of the desert overflow;

C: the hills are clothed with gladness.

A: The meadows are covered with flocks and the valleys are mantled with grain;

C: they shout for joy and sing.

Hymn LBW #148 Now the Green Blade Rises

Apostolic Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

A: O God, you are my God;

C: Eagerly I seek you;

A: My soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you,

C: As in a barren and dry land where there is no water.

A: Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place,

C: That I might behold your power and your glory.

A: For your loving kindness is better than life itself;

C: My lips shall give you praise.

A: So I will bless you as long as I live.

C: And lift up my hands in your name.

Hymn of Praise

LBW #550 From All that Dwell below the Skies

Prayer of the Day

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: Let us pray:

Holy, mighty creator God, you reached into the depths of chaos and flung out the stars and planets. Working in the dirt and clay, you formed man and woman in your own image. You gave the stewardship and care of the wondrous earth and all it contains into the hands of humanity. When we failed, out of great love, you took your son and gave him to the world that all people may know Christ. Out of death, you have brought forth new life. Sow your seeds of hope deep in our hearts that we may be sent forth as witnesses in Jesus Christ to the power of your promise of new life.

C: Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 30:19-26

Psalm 126 (spoken responsively)
Second Reading 1 Peter 1:18-25

(stand)

Gospel Acclamation

(Use the Alleluia refrain from LBW #143 with a brief intro from the verse by the organ)

C: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel Luke 8: 1-15

P:...the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Hymn of the Day The Sower Comes a Sowing
(sung to the tune Thaxted by Gustav Holst, WOV #797)

The sower comes a sowing the Gospel on the land.
With grace God rains the Spirit to help the seed to grow.
For the dark of winter's over and the Sun begins to shine,
Christ has conquered death forever and life begins anew.
In hope the Word is planted like seed upon the ground,
And roots within our hearts so that faith will start to live.

Hold fast to this great gift and the giver who brings life,
Because the weeds surround us and rocks impede our way.
It is easy to grow tired, get discouraged, lose our hope
But the God who claims and names us stands firmly at our side
Hold fast then to this promise that comes to us from Christ,
Not death nor life nor powers can take us from our God.

Baptized into Christ's Spirit we have received the Word.
We live our lives in witness to God who gives us life.
We are nourished and forgiven, called by God to holy work
For the harvest that is planted calls us into the fields.
Here gathered into Christ's body we now depart to serve
As forth into all nations we bear the Word of God.

The Prayers

P: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

A: ...Lord, in your mercy,
C: Hear our prayer.

P: Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
C: Amen.

Peace

P: The Peace of the Lord be with you always.
C: And also with you.

Share with one another a sign of Christ's peace

Presentation of Gifts

WOV #765 **As the Grains of Wheat** *(sung as offering is collected)*

A: Let us pray.
The eyes of all wait upon you, O Lord, and you give them their food in due season.
C: You open wide your hand and satisfy the need of every living creature. We offer ourselves and all that you have given us, that our lives, our hearts and our possessions be a witness to your creative power and love through the power of the resurrected one, Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.
C: And also with you.
P: Lift up your hearts.
C: We lift them to the Lord.
P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Eucharistic Prayer

(WOV Eucharistic Prayer "G" for summer works very well with the theme's words of this service.)

Lord's Prayer

P: Let us pray with confidence in the words our savior gave us:
C: Our Father in heave, hallowed be your name....

Distribution

(Favorite hymns may be sung such as: Beautiful Savior, How Great Thou Art, All Things Bright and Beautiful, All Creatures of our God and King, etc.)

P: The body and blood of our Jesus Christ strengthen and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen.

Canticle

Hymn LBW #200 For the Bread Which You Have Broken *(verses 1 and 4)*

A: Let us pray:

Almighty God, in wisdom and beauty and with all power, you created the universe and all it contains. Give us grace and peace in abundance in the sure knowledge that you give us everything needed for life through Jesus our Lord.

C: Amen.

Benediction

L: Like a rock,

C: God is under our feet.

L: Like a roof,

C: God is over our heads.

L: Like the horizon,

C: God is beyond us.

L: Like water in a pitcher;

C: God is within us and in the pouring out of us.

L: Like a pebble in the sea,

C: We are in God.

L: God hold you fast, bless you for service, and strengthen your witness.

C: Amen.

Hymn LBW #410 We Give Thee but Thine Own

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Serve the Risen Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.