

Call to Worship

based on Psalm 42

Awake my soul!

Thirsting for water and thirsting for God go hand in hand.

Even deep tears can quench our thirst and lead us to hopeful springs of life.

Awake my soul.

Song

As the Deer Pants for the Water VU766

Placing the Symbols

In the beginning when it was very quiet,

the Word was with God, and what God was, the Word was. *(A Bible is placed in the table)*

In the beginning when it was very dark,

God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light. *(A candle is lit and placed in the table)*

When the time was right God sent the Son.

He came among us and was one of us. *(A cross is placed in the table)*

Centring and Land Acknowledgment

Take this moment to centre yourself deeply in the love of God.

Feel the ground beneath your feet.

Become aware of your body and how you are sitting;

open yourself a little more to your breathing.

Let your in-breath help you to become more aware.

Let your out-breath help you to trust in the Holy One.

Come into the sacred presence and let the sacred presence be in you.

Worship helps us to become aware of the sacredness of all life.

We acknowledge the sacredness of the land on which our churches and homes sit.

The St. Lawrence Valley has sustained much life throughout the millennia,

including the Kanien'kehá:ka, "Mohawk" peoples,

those of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the neighbouring Huron-Wendat,

Anishinaabeg, and Abenaki peoples, as well as traders and settlers,

refugees and immigrants, plants and animals.

We acknowledge how poorly we have honoured the wisdom, traditions,

cultures and languages of all who have called this place "Home."

So, today, we join our hearts and minds as one and honour the sacred beings that move;  
feathered and furry, four legs and two, swimming and flying; our companions.  
We honour the sacred still beings; cedar and maple, tulip and lilac,  
leafed and flowering, our wise and ancient siblings.  
We honour the sacred flowing beings; oceans and seas, rivers and lakes,  
ebbing, coursing, misting, our source of being.  
We honour the sacred winds and breezes, our breath and our life.

Song

I Heard The Voice of Jesus VU626

Scripture

Luke 8.26-39 *New Revised Standard Version, Anglicized Version*

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26 Then they arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. 27 As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs. 28 When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him and shouted at the top of his voice, ‘What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me’— 29 for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many times it had seized him; he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the wilds.) 30 Jesus then asked him, ‘What is your name?’ He said, ‘Legion’; for many demons had entered him. 31 They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss.

32 Now there on the hillside a large herd of swine was feeding; and the demons begged Jesus to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. 33 Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

34 When the swineherds saw what had happened, they ran off and told it in the city and in the country. 35 Then people came out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. 36 Those who had seen it told them how the one who had been possessed by demons had been healed. 37 Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them; for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. 38 The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but Jesus sent him away, saying, 39 ‘Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.’ So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him.

In the trance of overwork, we take everything for granted. We consume things, people, and information. We do not have time to savor this life, nor to care deeply and gently for ourselves, our loved ones, or our world; rather, with increasingly dizzying haste, we use them all up, and throw them away. ...

Sabbath time can be a revolutionary challenge to the violence of overwork, mindless accumulation, and the endless multiplication of desires, responsibilities, and accomplishments. Sabbath is a way of being in time where we remember who we are, remember what we know, and taste the gifts of spirit and eternity.

Song

God, When I Stand VU618

Reflection

Consider the following:

- How do we deal with mental illness?
- Who really has the problem here?
- Why does Jesus encourage him to stay home?

If you are with someone, talk about your insights.

If you are alone, write down some of your thoughts.

Invitation

The Creator invites us to the great feast of heaven,  
symbolized by the table prepared for us here, today.  
All are welcome and we affirm the goodness of the earth.  
From her generosity, we bring our gifts of bread and wine.  
Witnesses to hope, we participate in Christ's liberation.

Offering Prayer and Invitation

Blessed Holy Presence,  
we value our souls, our minds and our bodies  
and so we ask your blessing on us, knowing that you are always there;  
we value our work, our rest and our play  
and so we seek your blessing on all that we do and say;  
we value the earth, sea and sky  
and so we acknowledge your blessing in the very fabric of creation.  
Bless us God, that together with you we may produce a harvest of light.

Prayer Of Thanksgiving

God, we are still in your presence; you are still with us.

In Christ you accompany us, embodied among us, sharing our birthing,  
our living, our dying, sharing our dreams of hope and liberation,  
offering us new life and the shattering of the tomb.

In Christ you appear as the host at the ebbing and flowing of our lives;  
you beckon us to share your hospitality, your abundance, your challenge of love.

In Christ you sit as the guest at the table of the stranger;  
you bless us with your presence, your awakening of love.

In Christ you stand among us as host and guest at the heart of our community;  
you share with us your vulnerability, your unwrapping of love.

As hosts with Christ, we bless our bread.

As guests with Christ we pour our wine.

As welcomed strangers, united in Christ's life, death, and embodied liberation,  
we hear the words of promise:

Jesus shared bread and said: take and eat to remember me.

Jesus poured wine and said: take and drink to remember me.

In this action of justice-making we recall broken minds and bodies  
and blood shed through lust for power and nature's turn of hand.

In this action of remembrance,  
we recall the woman who broke open the expensive bottle  
of perfume and anointed Jesus, who then told us to remember love poured out.

In this action of hope, we recall the great feast of heaven,  
which is laid out for all to share and enjoy  
and is waiting for us to take our place at the table.

Living Ground of all being,  
breathe your Spirit into the bread and wine wherever we are,  
restore and heal all that is wounded, be present in the stillness of the waiting,  
roll back the stone of prejudice and fear, release the signs of hope and love.

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 forever.

Breaking And Pouring

We gently break this bread of fragile life;  
our breaking down becomes our breaking through.

We freely pour this wine of embodied love;  
our pouring out becomes our 'flowing with'.

As we eat this living bread and drink the new wine of resurrection,  
we celebrate the body of Christ by embodying liberation and extravagant love.

Communion

God, with divine tenderness, you remake us;  
by transforming pain, you heal us - your passionate energy is our sacred centre.  
The gifts of God for the people of God.

Prayer After Communion

God, Source of Life, you bless us with boldness and caress us with care.  
Christ, Wisdom of God, you bless us with boldness and caress us with care.  
Spirit, Midwife of new beginnings,  
you bless us with boldness and caress us with care.

Sung Blessing

*written by Rev. Darryl Macdonald to the tune Dark Isle*

May the love of Christ Jesus be with you this day;  
the Spirit to guide you each hour and each way;  
God's shield to protect you wherever you go; God blessing you forever more.