

# One Earth, One Sea, One Sky

As the International Space Station circles around the globe, we are ever more aware that we live together on one Earth with one global ocean and one atmosphere. Our Creator God calls us into communion and community with all Creation. Our part of the covenant is to love this small planet we call home and bring harmony in the Earth community. On this Earth Sunday take time to reflect on and give thanks for the gifts of Earth, Sea, and Sky.

In Truth and Action

**A Service for Earth Day**

**April 25, 2021**



# THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

## APPROACHED TO GOD

Before the service, meditate and speak to God. During the service let God speak to you. After the service talk to each other and the wider community about God.

## KEYS

Words printed in **ALL CAPS & bold** are spoken or sung by everyone.

At places marked with the “✝,” you are invited to stand, as you are able.

## Functionaries

### On Piano

- Lindsay Lundquist

### Singer(s)

- Kirsten Earl

### Reader(s)

- Joan Glanfield

### Support Personnel

- Ed Murdoch

### Videographer & Editor

- Franklyn James

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## Order of Worship

### INTROIT:

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF TERRITORY AND RECONCILIATION

*As we gather today, we recognize that the first peoples lived here for countless generations before we did. We acknowledge that we are on the unceded traditional lands of the **Secwepemc** First Nation, and we celebrate their faithful stewardship.*

### WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENT!

*—United for Mining Justice (UfMJ) is a network of United Church of Canada folks and allies working towards a just extractive sector laws and practices,*

*for an accountable Canadian mining industry, and for local and national jurisdiction over mineral resources. Our vision is a society where people's traditions, values and rights are respected.*

## CENTERING HYMN: Called by Earth and Sky (x2) MV #135

### LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

*Long, long, long ago, before there was anything, before there was a world, before there was light, before there was darkness, there was God: Creator and Source of Life.*

*God moved and God breathed the world into being, and God said, "Let there be light."*

*We light this worship candle as a visible reminder of the Creator's great light and love.*

### JOYS, CONCERNS, & REQUESTED PRAYERS

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

*One: We are one flock,*

***People: we are called to be one in community.***

*One: We have boldness before God*

***People: because we know we are loved and known***

*One: and so, in the same, way let us love each other, siblings and cousins.*

***People: not only in word or speech***

*One: but in truth and action—let us join together as one flock to worship the one God. Amen.*

#### OPENING PRAYER [Unison]

***Holy One, Heart of Creation,***

***you know us and call us into bold service.***

***We come together this day to celebrate your creation,***

***the beautiful streams that surround us and provide us with food and water, and that are often the centre of our communities.***

***We come to hear hard stories of where our still waters have been lost, communities broken.***

***Open our hearts to hear the cries of our family, of partners in Canada and abroad***

***so that we may be empowered to act in love for one another. For you are our shepherd, who leads us toward green pastures. Amen.***

## OPENING HYMN: For the Healing of the Nations VU #678

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION [In Unison]

*Holy One,*

*We are blessed to live in a land of plentiful natural resources.*

*We are blessed to have rules of law that protect our human dignity.*

*We recognize that these blessings are not extended to others, we recognize that our privilege allows us to exploit others.*

*We recognize that, in this country and overseas, mining has allowed us to reap the rewards of natural resources while also harming your creation and fracturing communities.*

*We recognize the harm caused by our want for more.*

*Heal us in our desire for ever more resources;*

*Forgive those times when we do not speak up against injustice, and embolden us to be agents of your change in this world. For the building of the kin-dom, Amen.*

### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

*One: Scripture assures us, The Lord is our Shepherd, we shall not want (Psalm 23).*

*“Whenever our hearts condemn us...God is greater than our hearts, and...knows everything” (1 John 3:20).*

*As a shepherd cares for scattered sheep, our God cares, forgives us, and calls us into community.*

*Members of the one flock—we are forgiven.*

***People: Thanks be to God.***

## SPECIAL SELECTION: Touch the Earth Lightly VU #307

### MINISTRY OF THE WORD

- **Psalm 23**
- **John 10:11-18**

*Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church today!!*

***People: Thanks be to God.***

# REFLECTION/SERMON: In Truth and Actions

## PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Creating God,

As we reflect on your holy word for our times, may the spirit open our minds and hearts to the full knowledge that the earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and all that live in it. Move our hearts to embrace what we hear, and strengthen our will to follow your ways. Amen (FJ)

On August 4, 2014, 26 billion liters of waste water containing dangerous chemicals poured into local waterways and one of the world's deepest freshwater lakes.

Quesnel Lake, in central British Columbia, birthing waters of salmon and an important tributary of the Fraser River watershed, was irreparably changed when the dam at the Mount Polley Mine broke in the middle of the night.

"For as long as I can remember, the waters of B.C.'s Quesnel Lake played an important role in my community," said Jacinda Mack, coordinator of First Nations Women Advocating Responsible Mining.

"We fished for trout and swam in its depths, camped along its shores and picked berries and medicines in the surrounding Cariboo Mountains. The entire time, we were sharing our Xat'sull language and culture with our children."

Jacinda's community has been devastated by the mine waste spill and the ongoing contamination of the water through mine activities. Despite calls from affected communities, church groups, and environmental organizations, there has been no accountability or justice for the people, for the animals, for all life living near Quesnel Lake.

Seven thousand kilometers away, Indigenous Lenca communities in Honduras are fighting to stop a mega-dam from being built on the sacred Gualcarque River.

Berta Caceres was their leader when on March 2, 2016, she was shot and killed in her home for her outspoken voice of dissent. Berta worked tirelessly to protect a river and a way of life at risk.

The Gualcarque River provides Berta's community with food and drinking water, and Berta's murder sent a clear message to anyone standing up to protect the earth that they were in danger.

The lone witness to her murder said, "Our dream is to build a different world, to generate life amid so much violence and death, but they do not even allow us to do that." Surely Berta, and her community, were walking in the most fearsome valleys in the days and months before her murder.

As an outspoken and committed woman leader, she had been defamed, criticized, and threatened, yet her struggle for the earth and the sacred water continued; evil surrounded her, yet she walked proudly in the footsteps of her ancestors, listening and answering the call of Creator to protect life.

April 22 is Earth Day. It's a day to remember and care for the earth. It's also a day for action and justice. There's a common chorus in Latin American hymns, "God is not in heaven. God is in our brothers and sisters." We know this from 1 John 3:16-18:

*We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.*

Berta laid down her life for her kin; her death is remembered as the day her seed was sown to be reborn in a million others who would live by her example.

She wasn't only fighting for the river sacred to her people, but for all rivers and lakes. "Wake up humanity!" she said as she received the Goldman Environmental Prize the year before she was killed. "There is no time left."

Sister Streams was a movement created by the communities impacted by the Mount Polley Mine disaster to remember and honour our waters, to pray for justice and their safekeeping. August 4 is a day to remember that we have only one planet and we, as guardians of the earth, must protect it.

As we struggle to respond to the call to be people of faith, caretakers of the earth and each other, let our discomfort challenge us to use our voice for the voiceless, the trees, the waters and the mountains, like Berta and Jacinda.

This Earth Day, as we walk on new grass and the abundance of life and promise blooms all around us, let us work together to protect Mother Earth, our common home. Let us defend her and keep her, honouring the sacrifices that so many have made for us and doing our part to live the vision of Jesus for a world of peace with justice.

***May it be so!***

### **HYMN: For the Fruit of All Creation VU#227**

#### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE [In Unison]**

Creator, Shepherd who laid down his life for love of us,  
Be with us in the light of the violence in our world.

*Be with the families of El Estor, Guatemala; as they continue to fight for justice in the shootings that killed Aldofo Ich, and paralyzed German Chub.*

Be with the families who relied on the gifts of Lake Quesnel which was decimated when the tailings dam burst at Mount Polley Mine in central British Columbia, releasing 26 billion liters of mine waste into Polley Lake, Hazeltine Creek, and Quesnel Lake—headwaters and spawning grounds of the Fraser River watershed.

May their stories and ongoing court proceedings, cause our country and our world to rethink our treatment of Indigenous peoples and our mining practices overseas and at home.

Help us to discern the best way forward,  
That we may truly understand the blessings  
we have received from the earth, and use it wisely.  
We pray for miners, for those who put their lives at risk  
on the job of providing us with resources from the earth.  
We pray for land defenders,  
for those who question the status quo.  
May we show compassion and love to both.

We ask it in Christ's name, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen.

### **CLOSING HYMN: River MV #3**

#### **THANK YOU & BLESSING**

As we go forth from this sacred space,  
May we celebrate Earth and our shared lives,  
May we recognize our connections to all that is in and on Earth,  
May we truly and deeply value the inherent worth of all  
In this awesome interconnected web of existence,  
May we commit ourselves to a new way,  
And may we hold our commitments  
and each other gently yet firmly.  
Blessing and peace be yours. **Amen.**

### **DOXOLOGY: Like a Healing Stream (vs 1&4) MV #144**

## THANK YOUS & CREDITS

Thank you for participating in today's worship, I pray you have been greatly blessed.

Remember, for those we are unable to connect with for any reason; call to buoy up their spirits, and/or pray for them and entrust them to the care of the divine.

Due to physical distancing caused by the Corona Virus, COVID 19, all church activities that require physical contact are suspended until further notice.

## GIFTS & OFFERINGS

You may send us your gifts & offerings using the information below:

- Zion United Church @ to [zionunitedarmstrongbc@gmail.com](mailto:zionunitedarmstrongbc@gmail.com)
- St. Andrew's @ [standrewsunitedenderbybc@gmail.com](mailto:standrewsunitedenderbybc@gmail.com)
- Mission & Service Link: <https://www.united-church.ca/community-faith/get-involved/giving-opportunities>

Those of you who are on PAR and those who mailed in the gifts and offerings thank you.

We are always happy to hear your comments and queries. If you have prayer requests, you may use our social media message tabs or email them to [ministerfranklyn@gmail.com](mailto:ministerfranklyn@gmail.com)

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Source for "In Truth and Action: A Service for Earth Day" liturgy  
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Benediction by Diana Smith @ <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/complete-service/earth-day-worship-service>

## **MUSIC CREDITS**

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French translation: David Fines, 2006

Arr. Margaret Stubington, 2005

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## One Earth

- a. Offer a prayer of gratitude and thanksgiving for the precious gift of Earth—and your small part of it.
- b. Apologize for any thoughtlessness that has scarred its surface.
- c. Act to restore some damaged space: remove garbage, plant something, change some harmful behaviour—of yours or of your community's.

## One Sea

- a. Reflect on the gift of the global ocean, teeming with life but filled with pollution and turning more acidic every day.
- b. Research what happens with the water you use daily as it finds its way through the lakes and rivers into the sea.
- c. Ask how you can help to clean up the waters and prevent further harm to this source of life.
- d. Write a message to the ocean—but don't put it in a bottle!

## One Sky

- a. Breathe deeply and feel your lungs fill up. Exhale a prayer of thanksgiving for the sustaining gift of air.
- b. Reflect on the gases that make up the atmosphere and how important it is that they stay in balance. Ask yourself and your church how you can reduce the greenhouse gases that we emit by using energy from fossil fuels for heat, light, and transportation. Take action!
- c. Join with others in your community to urge politicians to make choices that curb global warming.

**We are all one and interconnected with one Earth, one Sea, one Sky—God's wondrous gifts for life.**

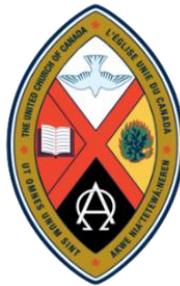
## Prayer

Creating God, we thank you for our home of Earth, Sea, and Sky. It is a home that is majestic and humble, vast and small, vibrant—and ailing. Help us join with all of Creation in caring for Earth, Sea, and Sky. Amen.

## Song

"Called by Earth and Sky" (*More Voices* 135)

Thank you for sharing in our Earth Sunday Worship experience.  
If you have not started a process of healing in this world,  
let this be and opportunity for us to start  
or continue working with all creation  
for the reconciliation and peace of  
all things.



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