

Of Water and Spirit:
Disciples in
Community of Christ

Worship

Reunion/Family Camps 2016



Community of Christ

Of Water and Spirit: Disciples in Community of Christ

These six intergenerational worship service outlines offer a combined focus on the 2013 Words of Counsel and how to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. The services have been created by a multi-nation team of field writers to be used as guides for preparing worship services that meet the needs of your community of friends and members who gather to share in fellowship, song, and worship at reunion or family camp. Each reunion or family camp provides us with the opportunity to explore our formation as disciples.

In addition to the worship service outlines, Worship Connections provide a connecting piece to each day's worship service to include as it best meets your needs. It ties together the theme of water with each of the daily themes listed below. In addition, it provides an opportunity for individuals to reflect on the meaning of each day's worship in relation to their own disciple journey.

The worship services begin with a focus on affirming the Trinity—a community of three persons—God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit. In the second service, we worship through scripture emphasizing the sacred story. Our third service explores God's vision for creation through shalom. The focus of service four is on the peace of Jesus Christ and inviting others. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is included in service five. The final service is a response to God's generous grace through baptism.

Make use of the various gifts and talents among those who have gathered for this time of sacred community. Encourage all ages to participate in these services to share their prayers, stories, and testimonies. Follow the movement of the Spirit in response to the needs and desires of your reunion community as you develop these worship opportunities.

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Note: Unless otherwise noted, all hymns herein are from Community of Christ Sings (CCS), and all Bible scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible (NRSV), copyright 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, and are used by permission. All rights reserved.

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Of Water and Spirit: Disciples
in Community of Christ
Worship Services

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The Worship Connections provide a way to connect each day's worship service. The character, Alex Water, can be male or female, and will present a connection between water and the theme for the day. You could use these presentations to begin each day's worship, incorporate them into the middle of the service, or use them at the end. Alex will close each Connection with a reflection question for participants to use individually or as part of a group.

Consider sharing the answers in one of the following ways:

1. Give participants several minutes to reflect on their answers and then share aloud with the group.
2. Form small groups for participants to share their answers immediately with one another following the Worship Connection.
3. Give participants small pieces of paper to record their answers to the question. During a specific time in the service, have them pass their answer to the left, pause for 20 seconds allowing time for reading and reflection, and then ask everyone to pass it to the next person. Continue this pattern for several minutes.
4. Create a design on a large poster board or foam core for each day using the graphic suggestions provided on page 6. Give participants sticky notes on which to write their answers during a specific time in the service. At the end of the service, attach the sticky notes to the poster board or foam core. Place the boards where everyone can read the answers.

Day 1—Water Is Powerful!

Hi, my name is Alex, Alex Water, and I am a water enthusiast! A water enthusiast is someone who loves water and knows more about it than anyone else. With me, it's all water...all the time! One of my favorite things to do in the summer is go fishing in the river near my house. I love to sit in the shade and watch the water. It gets me thinking about God.

At church the other day, we were talking about how to describe God. They were saying how God is really three persons—God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit—a Trinity, if you will. That was difficult to understand until I thought about water. You see, God is like the fresh spring that is the source, or beginning, of my river. All the water begins there and moves out. I know it is there, but I hardly ever get to see it. The water from that spring becomes the river by my house. That is more like Jesus—I see it as an example of how to live out what God wants me to do. However, the river is never still; it is always moving and flowing just like the Holy Spirit. Sometimes the water flows swiftly and powerfully. In those times, I remember when I felt like I needed to do something right away. I had to act right then. Other times the water is moving gently and calmly. My Sunday school teacher told me the Holy Spirit works like that, too.

Water is amazing, but so is God! I guess I am a water enthusiast AND a God enthusiast. God's love is the best thing ever, even better than water. Sometimes I think about all the ways having God in my life had made my life better. I could go on for hours about that, but I've got to get going. So instead, I'll just let you think about how God's love has made your life better, too.

I've got to run! I've got a date with a river. See you next time!

Reflection Question: How has God's love affected your life as a disciple or a seeker?

Day 2—Water Is Recyclable!

[Alex enters carrying a clear glass filled with water]

Hi, Alex Water, water enthusiast, here! Water is so amazing! I just can't stop talking about it. Hey, did you know that water is recyclable? We can use it repeatedly. The water in this glass was on the Earth millions of years ago. Can you believe that we are drinking the exact same water as the people in Jesus' time did? I know...pretty cool.

I bet this water has some amazing stories to tell. Each little droplet of water gathers with the other droplet in this glass to form something new. It changes and grows when we add or take away other droplets. Our sacred story is like that, each part that you add changes the shape and direction of the story.

You see, I learned about being a disciple from my Mom and Dad. They taught me about Jesus and took me to church. Now I am passing along to my (or other) kids what I learned from my parents, and have added my own part of the story, too. Each person in the sacred story has a part in shaping where the story will go next.

Hey, I wonder what role you will play in the writing of our sacred story. Like these droplets of water have taught me, only time will tell. Well, I'd better go finish drinking my water. You do need at least eight glasses a day to stay hydrated. See you tomorrow! Remember to drink your water!

Reflection Question: What part do you play in the sacred story?

Day 3—Water Provides Vitality!

[Alex enters carrying a flower]

Hi, it's me again, Alex Water. [Alex holds up the flower] Do you want to know something? Water is the reason this flower is alive. Seriously! Sometimes even I am amazed at all the things water can do.

Like usual, this morning I woke up thinking about water, and I started thinking about how much I need water. I live and grow because of water, and that's true for pretty

much everything, like this flower! Our whole world is made up of water and things that need water to live: plants, animals, me, Alex Water, and even the clouds need water!

Water is vital. Our world depends on water. If that isn't the most amazing thing ever, I don't know what is. At first, when I was thinking about how much I need and love water, I was sad, because water doesn't need me. But then I remembered something I heard in church the other day about the Sacredness of Creation, and I was reminded that the same way we need water, water needs us. All creation needs us, and we need creation, which includes all the plants, animals, people, and the clouds, too.

What it all comes down to is God's vision for creation, or shalom. God created the world with great love and compassion. It's up to us to be compassionate and loving towards creation (kind of like how I love water). Daily I ask myself, how can I be a part of God's shalom? Anyway, I'll let you think about that, but I have a new book about water I can't wait to read.

Reflection Question: How can you contribute to God's shalom?

Day 4—Water Quenches!

[Alex enters carrying a large glass of water and a handkerchief]

Hey, Alex Water, water enthusiast here! Whew! It is a scorcher today. All this heat sure does make a person thirsty. And what, you ask; does a water enthusiast like me drink to quench my thirst? Why water, of course. Nothing quenches my thirst like a nice big glass of water. Did you know that 80 percent of an infant's body is made of water? All living things on Earth need water to survive. Water can cool your body temperature and make your skin look dewy and fresh. It has the power to satisfy. Sometimes when I am busy, I forget to quench my thirst with water.

Come to think of it, sometimes when I get busy, I forget to quench my spiritual thirst, too. When my heart is weary, and I feel sad or angry, I know it is time to find the only thing that eases my spiritual thirst—the peace of Jesus Christ.

When I am living the peace of Jesus Christ, I find that life is less scary. I want to reach out to other people and share that same peace that I know. I want to act justly and mercifully toward others. I wonder what ways YOU

share the peace of Jesus Christ with others. I am always looking for new ways to share about two things I love most: the peace of Jesus Christ and water! Well, I'm off. See you later!

Reflection Question: What is a way you share the peace of Christ with others?

Day 5—Water Revitalizes!

[Alex enters dejectedly]

[Sigh] Hey there, it's me again...Alex Water...water enthusiast. Sorry, I am not my usual bubbly self today. I am having a tough time. Last night the dripping faucet in my bathroom kept me awake. Each time I was almost asleep...PLOP. On and on it went. Now you know how much I LOVE water, but that was just plain annoying.

Then, because I got so little sleep, I got into an argument with my friend and said a few things that I am now sorry for. I am hot, tired, and cranky. You know what might make me feel better? Going for a swim or taking a shower. All that water will revive me; I'm sure of it. At least, my body will feel revived.

Sometimes my spirit gets tired, too. When that happens, I remember that our church has sacraments to help me remember the covenants that God has made with me—sacraments like baptism, confirmation, the blessing of children, evangelist blessings, and laying on of hands for the sick, to name a few.

Maybe after I take that shower, I will see about spending some time in prayer asking God to forgive me for being so cranky today. Then I might take the sacrament of the Lord's Supper as a way to remember that God forgives me and gives me more chances to get it right. I think I also need to say, "I'm sorry" to my friend.

I sure hope you get a chance to take part in the sacraments. Like water can revive a wilting plant, the sacraments can reanimate your faith and give you renewed energy and faith to face whatever is happening in your life. I'd better get going. See you again soon!

Reflection: Talk about a time when the sacraments revived your faith.

Day 6—Water Transforms!

Hi, Alex Water here. As you know by now, I love water, and I really, really love getting to share my love of water with other people. Today is our last day together, and I've saved my favorite fact for last, but before that, I have a joke for you. It's about water of course. What did one ocean say to the other ocean? Nothing, they just waved. [Alex laughs a lot] Do you get it...because there are waves in the ocean?

Well anyway, back to the best water fact ever! Did you know water can move mountains? OK, well it doesn't move the whole mountain, but it can change the mountain! It's kind of like when I run my finger through sand and leave a trail, when water runs down a mountain, over time, it creates a trail. It can start as a small stream and can grow and grow until it's a whole river! Can you believe that something so small as a drop of water can have the power to transform a mountain? It's mind blowing!

This reminds me of a huge transformation I had in my life once, and wouldn't you know it; it involved water!

When I was 8, I was baptized. What a wonderful experience for me to be completely dunked in water! It was the BEST DAY EVER! It was *why* I was being baptized, and not just the water that made that day amazing! When I was 8, I decided to follow Jesus Christ, and that decision transformed my life. Once you choose a life as a disciple, your whole life takes on new meaning! It's like the mountain that forms a new river; my life formed a new river and took a completely new direction. This week I was able to share a lot about the awesome qualities of water, but I've also grown in my understanding of my life as a disciple.

Reflection Question: How has your life been transformed by your choice to follow Jesus?



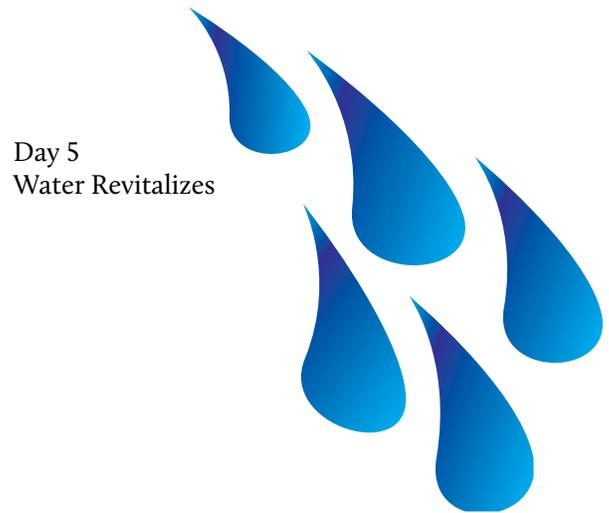
Day 1
Water is Powerful



Day 4
Water Quenches



Day 2
Water Is Recyclable!



Day 5
Water Revitalizes



Day 3
Water Provides
Vitality



Day 6
Water Transforms



2016 Reunion Worship — Day 1

We Believe

Matthew 3:13–17, Psalm 103:1–17, Doctrine and Covenants 164:9b

Gathering of the Community

Gathering Hymns

“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow” CCS 53

“Come Away from Rush and Hurry” CCS 83

“Siyahamb’ Ekukhanyen’ Kwenkhos’/We Are Marching in the Light of God” CCS 95

Welcome and Call to Worship

Leader: In the ocean and in the mountain

All: we see God’s face.

Leader: In the journey and in the familiar

All: we understand Christ’s love.

Leader: In the highs and lows; in the presence and giving

All: we recognize the Spirit moving among us.

Leader: Let us worship God in this time and in this place.

All: Praise God.

God Who Created the Universe

Scripture Reading Genesis 1:1–5

Responsive Reading

Leader: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me.

All: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and the daily benefits you provide.

Leader: The Lord works for justice for all who are oppressed.

All: The Lord abounds in steadfast love.

Leader: God’s love is high as the sky.

All: God loves us as we love our family.

Leader: God knows how we were made.

All: God’s love is everlasting to everlasting.

—Psalm 103:1–17 (Adapted)

Hymn of God

“Many and Great” CCS 3

OR “Herr, du mein Gott/You Are My God” CCS 12

OR “God, the Sculptor of the Mountains” CCS 21

OR “Creating God, Your Fingers Trace” CCS 139

Opening Prayer

God Who Walked Among Us

Reading: “A Man of Ancient Time and Place”

Slowly and poetically read “A Man of Ancient Time and Place” from Community of Christ Sings, #30.

Hymn of Jesus

“I Danced in the Morning” CCS 23

OR “Look at This Man, Born of God” CCS 26

OR “Christ Leads!” CCS 28

OR “Who Is This Jesus” CCS 38

God Who Lives Within Us

Hymn: "Come, Holy Spirit, Come" CCS 154

Discussion:

- Where have you recognized the Holy Spirit at work in your life? (Pause)
- Where have you recognized the Holy Spirit at work in your community? (Pause)
- Where have you recognized the Holy Spirit at work here at reunion (or at camp)? (Pause)

Hymn: "Come, Holy Spirit, Come" CCS 154

We know the Holy Spirit reaches out to us with joy, hope, love, and peace. We are touched by the Holy Spirit during times of elation and grief and in newness and in disappointment.

Hymn: "Come, Holy Spirit, Come" CCS 154

Depending on the size of your group, use the following conversation starters as a whole group activity or in small groups. Write the answers given by participants on paper large enough for the whole group to see and be able to reflect on the words shared. Remind the group there are no right or wrong answers. This is a sharing of reflections from the Holy Spirit into the lives of those present. If the group divides into two or more sections, ask each group to share their answers with the whole.

1. Give your first response on hearing the title, "Holy Spirit."
2. How have you recognized the Holy Spirit is active in experiences of love and grace?
3. How have you recognized the work of the Holy Spirit in your everyday life?
4. What practice would help you notice the Holy Spirit more often?

Hymn: "Come, Holy Spirit, Come" CCS 154

Prayer of Blessing for the Holy Spirit's presence

Trinity Litany

Focus Moment

Take a Russian doll set (Matryoshka nesting dolls) apart as you read this (adjust the reading to coincide with the number of dolls in your set.) Follow with an explanation of the Trinity using some of the thoughts below.

Inside the sacred mystery is a further sacred mystery

Inside the sacred mystery is a sacrament

 Inside the sacrament is a journey

 Amid the journey resides a living

Inside a living is a calling

 within that calling lies God

Within God lies a mystery

 eternally a mystery within another mystery

Not a puzzle to solve

 but a mystery to live

Welcome into God, one mystery in three, One God.

Discussion: *Our world is three-dimensional. We can weigh and measure all objects. We may know people who look like another person or behave like another person, or even sound like another person, but they are not the other person. They are separate people.*

God lives without the limits of our three-dimensional universe. God is infinitely more complex than we. The Bible clearly speaks of God the Eternal Source, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—there is only ONE God. God’s very nature is unity in diversity—a mystery into which we are invited to live and move and have our being.

Scripture passage: 2 Corinthians 13:13

Message—“God, who is a community of three persons”

2 Corinthians 4:6; John 6:35, 51; Luke 4:18–19

Resources include the following:

- Theological Foundations—“Christ’s Mission, Our Mission: Exploring Our Faith,” September 2012 Leaders Gathering, www.CofChrist.org/common/cms/resources/Documents/Theological-Foundations.pdf
- “We Share Basic Beliefs,” *Sharing in Community of Christ: Exploring Identity, Mission, Message, and Beliefs*, 3rd Edition, Herald Publishing House, 2012, p. 14, also available at www.CofChrist.org/basic-beliefs
- *Understanding the Way, Exploring our Christian Faith, Revised Edition*, Anthony J. Chvala-Smith, Herald Publishing House, 2011.

Hymn

“Spirit of the Living God” CCS 567
OR “Womb of Life and Source of Being” CCS 62
OR “When We Seek Language” CCS 61
OR “Creator God, Creating Still” CCS 60

Disciples’ Generous Response

God gives and loves graciously and generously! We know that all we are and all we have are gifts from God. As followers of Jesus, our whole-life commitment is in response to God’s wonderful generosity. Being generous is about aligning our priorities with God’s priorities, aligning our hearts with God’s heart.

What is our response as disciples of Jesus? In simple terms, we are called to respond with thankfulness and share with others as generously as God has shared with us.

Blessing and Receiving of Offerings

God: Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer—to you we give thanks this day—and to you we bring the gifts that you first gave us for the living of our lives and for doing the works of your eternal Kingdom. Move among us we pray. In the name of Jesus Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit we pray. Amen.

Benediction

Response

“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow” CCS 53 or CCS 54
OR “When We Seek Language” CCS 61

2016 Reunion Worship — Day 2

We Learn

Luke 2:41–52, Mark 12:41–44, Psalm 104, Doctrine and Covenants 163:79

We Learn the Sacred Story through Scriptures

Gathering Hymns

“Alleluia” CCS 120

“Amen, Siakudumisa!/Amen, Sing Praises to the Lord!” CCS 109

“Halle, Halle, Hallelujah” CCS 86

Prayer for Peace

Ministry of Music: “Peace Salaam Shalom” CCS 310

OR Sing as a congregation with a soloist

Light the prayer candle before the Welcome

Welcome and Call to Worship

From the beginning, God was with us in creation, leading the Israelites to the Promised Land. They wrote psalms; the prophets had visions. The hearts of women and men were moved by the Holy Spirit to follow Jesus. The Holy Spirit has come as God’s gift to us to increase our awareness of God’s closeness to us. This is why we have come here to worship today.

God the Creator—Psalm 104 (adapted)

Reader: Bless the Lord, O my soul.

People: O Lord my God, you are awesome.

Reader: You stretch out the heavens like a tent,

People: You set the Earth on its foundations,

Reader: You make springs flow in the valleys;

People: giving drink to every wild animal;

Reader: By the streams the birds of the air have their homes;

People: they sing among the branches.

Reader: You have made the moon to show the seasons

People: The sun knows its time.

Reader: When you send your Spirit, all is created;

People: and you refresh the face of the Earth.

Reader: I will sing to the Lord forever;

People: I will sing praise to my God always.

Reader: Bless the LORD, O my soul.

People: Praise God!

Ministry of Music: “Be Still” CCS 156

(Invite a quartet to sing or to lead the congregation in singing)

Opening Prayer

Holy Spirit of God,
who deliberated over the chaos of creation,
deliberate over us today,
while we open our hearts and minds to this worship,
may we find ourselves reawakened into the garden of your world.
In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Focus Moment

Discuss the meaning of a “covenant”: a promise between two or more people or groups; shared promises. In the Bible, a covenant is a promise between God and people. God makes a promise; the people respond with promises. God keeps promises even when people do not. As we journey, we covenant to become a “dwelling place for God” (Ephesians 2:22). We seek to become personally “a sanctuary of Christ’s peace” for the sake of family, friends, congregation, community, denomination, the world, and God’s reign.” (<https://www.cofchrist.org/common/cms/resources/Documents/Sharing-in-Community-of-Christ-3rd-edition.pdf>)

Challenge worshipers to do something to care for the planet. Possibilities: Distribute bags in which people can collect litter, schedule a time for members to work together on a trail or waterway, or find a similar activity that is specific to your campground as a reminder that everything belongs to God and should be cherished and used justly according to divine purposes.

Focus Activity: Create braided bracelets with rainbow-colored embroidery thread. Prepare by putting one strand of each color chosen, in each of three groups. Tie them at one end with a simple knot. Give one to each person to braid perhaps finding a partner to hold the knotted end while the other partner braids, and then switch. Urge participants to wear their bracelet this week as a reminder that God loves them and promises to be with them always.

Camp Song: “It’s A Sign of God’s Love”

Sing along using this audio recording or have a group teach the song to everyone. Encourage everyone to make the motions and join in on the chorus. www.worldmaking.net/its-a-sign-of-gods-love.php

Disciples’ Generous Response

Read Mark 12:41–44

Today we have the opportunity to share joyfully all that we are and have to support Christ’s mission. Our giving is a response to God’s grace in our lives. Each time we give, lives are changed, and Christ’s mission moves forward.

Prayer

Gift-giving God, whose hands are held out to us, heaped high with an amazing assortment of gifts, help us return to you a measure of our time, talent, and money. With thankfulness, we join to equip all disciples for the work of ministry and we offer real-world help to bring healing and hope to our broken world.

In the name of Jesus Christ, through whom we grow into the unity of faith and a deeper knowledge your vision of shalom, amen.

Receiving of offerings.

Homily based on: Luke 2:41-52

OR play the Leading Congregations in Mission video, *Scripture Round Table* at <http://missionalleaders.org/video-resources/retreat-two-videos/> pausing when the video does to allow discussion.

Hymn of Sending Forth

“Great and Marvelous Are Thy Works” CCS 118

OR “You Are Called to Tell the Story” CCS 625

OR “Bless Now, O God, the Journey” CCS 559

Benediction

2016 Reunion Worship — Day 3

We Share

Matthew 5:9; Colossians 1:15–20; Doctrine and Covenants 163:3a and 4b;
Genesis 1:26; Isaiah 11:6–9

Sacredness of Creation

The worship setting should include cardboard cutout trees or silk trees. These will be necessary for a backdrop for the focus moment and the sending forth.

Gathering Hymn

“Uyai Mose/Come All You People” CCS 84
OR “Gather Your Children” CCS 77

Call to Worship

Leader: “You are called to create pathways in the world for peace in Christ to be relationally and culturally incarnate. The Hope of Zion is realized when the vision of Christ is embodied in communities of generosity, justice, and peacefulness” Doctrine and Covenants 163:3a.

All: You have called Lord, and we will respond!

Focus Hymn

“We Are Children of Creation” CCS 340
OR “Wind Who Makes All Winds That Blow” CCS 485
OR “Restless Weaver” CCS 145

Opening Prayer

Focus Moment

“Maynard and Sheepish” based on Isaiah 11:6–9 (see end of service)

Prayer for Peace

Apollo 8 was the first mission to orbit the Moon with three astronauts aboard. On Christmas Eve, 1968, the three astronauts read aloud from the creation account in Genesis, using the King James Bible text.

Show short rental film available from Sermon Spice, *Apollo 8 Creation Story*.

<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/5164/apollo-8-creation-story>

OR use www.youtube.com/watch?v=XEmn0uaQCYc

OR have the transcript below read by three readers:

Command Module Pilot James Lovell

The vast loneliness is awe-inspiring and it makes you realize just what you have back there on Earth.

Lunar Module Pilot William Anders

We are now approaching lunar sunrise, and for all the people back on Earth, the crew of Apollo 8 has a message that we would like to send to you.

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, ‘Let there be light’: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.”

Command Module Pilot James Lovell

“And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. And God said, ‘Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.’ And God made the firmament, and divided the waters, which were under the firmament from the waters, which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.”

Commander Frank Borman

“And God said, ‘Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear’: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters called the Seas: and God saw that it was good.”

And from the crew of Apollo 8, we close with good night, good luck, a Merry Christmas, and God bless all of you—all of you on this good Earth.

Hymn of Peace

“O Day of Peace” CCS 380

OR “Prayer of Peace” CCS 164

Lighting of the Peace Candle

Prayer

Disciples’ Generous Response

The important message of stewardship of the Earth is for all age groups to share:

The Great Kapok Tree: A Tale of the Amazon Rain Forest by Lynne Cherry ISBN-10:0152026142

OR *The Rainforest Grew All Around*, by Susan K. Mitchell ISBN-13:9780977742387

Doctrine and Covenants 163:4b

The earth, lovingly created as an environment for life to flourish, shudders in distress because creation’s natural and living systems are becoming exhausted from carrying the burden of human greed and conflict. Humankind must awaken from its illusion of independence and unrestrained consumption without lasting consequences.

Blessing and Receiving of Offering

“God of Creation” CCS 147

OR “For Beauty of Meadows” CCS 142

Sermon based on Colossians 1:15–20 and Matthew 5:9

God’s vision for creation is shalom.

Statement of confession

Leader: God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over fish of the sea and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and

over all the wild animals of the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth” (Genesis 1:26).

Reader 1: We confess that we have not always been stewards of the Earth that is our task to hold sacred.

All: We awaken, Lord and we will covenant with you this day to hold our world sacred in our hearts so we might share with others your vision of shalom.

(The participants of the focus moment go back to the front of the worship setting for closing the service. The suggested hymns will be necessary for this sending forth.)

Closing Hymn: “Light Dawns on a Weary World” CCS 240

Benediction

Sending forth

Read first part of “The Trees of the Field,” CCS 645.

“You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills will break forth before you; there’ll be shouts of joy!”

The congregation then sings CCS 645, while the participants of the focus moment lead the congregation in clapping hands.

Maynard and Sheepish

Three participants will represent the lion, lamb, and young boy. If costumes are not available, this can be done with masks only for the lion and lamb. They stand in stillness until after the scripture is read. Trees of cardboard or silk will be the setting.

Other props needed:

- Large blue circle made out of cardboard, poster board, or foam board on a stand to represent the Earth.
- The word “Peace” made out of large letters and placed on the Earth circle. Print large letters from computer or hand draw and cut out of poster board.
- Large cutouts of a lion and a lamb—print from a computer image or hand draw on paper or poster board.

Facilitator: A scripture tells us about what peace will look like. Let’s read it: Isaiah 11:6.

Maynard the lion: *Yawns and stretches.* “What am I hearing? That is ONE amazing scripture!”

Sheepish the lamb: “You are right about that, Maynard. You can be a very intimidating fellow. I am really looking forward to the peace kingdom.”

Maynard: “It’s the peace-able kingdom, Sheepish. Peace-ABLE...that must mean we are able to build peace!

Sheepish: What do you think the peace-able kingdom looks like?

Maynard: “I don’t know...let’s ask...look there” (*shades his eyes with his paw to look out into the congregation*). “He looks like a pretty intelligent young fellow...yes, you, the boy in the front row.”

Young boy: “Who me?” (*Looks around at the congregation before coming forward*)

Sheepish: Little boy we need this peace-able kingdom...can you help us build it?

Maynard: That’s R-I-G-H-T! That is what we need....that, that peace-ABLE place!

Young Boy: Sure! First, we know that God created the Earth. (*Puts a large, blue circle up on a stand to represent the Earth*)

When God was finished God declared it good and strong, just like you, Maynard, and gentle like you, Sheepish. God calls this SACRED! (*Places cutouts of a lion and lamb on the circle*)

God says that humankind—that means people like all of those gathered here today—are created in God’s image. We are responsible for building peace here on Earth. (*Places the large word “Peace” on the circle*)

Jesus asks you, Maynard, and you, Sheepish, to live side by side in peace. He asks all of us to follow your example to create pathways of justice, reconciliation, well-being, and wholeness for all creation.

Maynard: That is just so cool! As a matter of fact, we are very cool! Aww...I just love you two!

Young Boy, Maynard, and Sheepish look at each other and shout, “GROUP HUG!” (Hug)

2016 Reunion Worship — Day 4

We Proclaim

Isaiah 52:7, Doctrine and Covenants 163:2, Matthew 16:18

Peace of Jesus Christ

Gathering Hymn

“God Is Here!” CCS 70

OR “Blessed Be Your Name” CCS 252

OR “Jesu, Tawa Pano/Jesus, We Are Here” CCS 71

Welcome and Call to Worship

Readers should stand on opposite sides of the congregation

Reader 1: How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.”
—Isaiah 52:7

Reader 2: Jesus Christ, the embodiment of God’s shalom, invites all people to come and receive divine peace in the midst of the difficult questions and struggles of life. Follow Christ in the way that leads to God’s peace and discover the blessings of all the dimensions of salvation.
—Doctrine and Covenants 163:2a

Congregation: YES! OUR GOD REIGNS!

Opening Hymn

“My Life Flows On in Endless Song” CCS 263

OR “This Is My Song” CCS 389

Invocation

Focus Moment

Sand Art depiction of scripture passages describing Peter’s relationship with Christ. (See page 20.)

Hymn of Focus or Ministry of Music

“Find Your Wholeness” CCS 643

OR “I Have Called You by Your Name” CCS 636

Prayer for Peace

Read “The Peace of Jesus Christ,” CCS 317 as a poem. Use great expression.

Light the peace candle and offer a prayer for strength to “follow Christ in the way that leads to God’s peace.”

Sermon

Live as Jesus lived in generosity, compassion, justice, wholeness, and peace; based on Matthew 16:18, Doctrine and Covenants 163:2, and John 14:27.

Disciples' Generous Response

Share the video, *All Are Called to Christ's Mission*.

http://cofchrist.edgesuite.net/encoded/448233027680/448233027680_16x9_2650.mp4
OR Invite someone to share a testimony of following Christ's mission.

Blessing and Receiving of Gifts

Include this confession in the prayer of blessing:

Oh Lord, we recognize that we sometimes miss opportunities to grow in relationship with you, with others, and with our world. Sometimes we have not heard the call in our lives. We confess that we miss opportunities to work together to further Christ's mission. Today, as we offer these gifts to you, let them be our response to your call. Together we listen and respond. Amen.

Offertory Hymn

"Listen for the Call of God" CCS 343

OR "Christ, You Call Us All to Service" CCS 357

Hymn of Sending Forth

"My Peace" CCS 149

OR "The Lord Bless You and Keep You" CCS 655

Benediction

Sending forth

Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid." —John 14:27

Go in Peace!

Peter's Relationship with Christ

Invite two young people to take part. You will need a small fishbowl or another clear container. You will also need sand in various bright colors. Vary the amounts of each color. Place these on a table in the front of the group, flanking the peace candle as a worship setting for the rest of the service.

Leader:

Jesus said, "I have called you my friend." Did you know Jesus calls us his friend? That means it does not matter who we are, where we come from, what we look like, or what gifts we have, we are his friend. Let us talk about when Peter, the apostle, began his friendship with Jesus.

Read Luke 5:1–11.

Jesus invited Peter to be his friend when he called him to come and follow him, didn't he? Jesus calls each of us to be his friend. We are going to make a symbol of our friendship with Jesus.

Let's pour some of the sand into the bowl to symbolize your invitation to be a friend to Jesus. You may pick the color you like and the amount.

Read Matthew 14:22–31.

In this passage, Jesus challenged and taught Peter. When he calms the stormy seas and walks on the water, he is saying to trust in God in the stormy seas of life.

Let's pour sand in the same way as we did before. Pour sand to symbolize the lessons Jesus gives to you. Again, each of you may pick the color and amount you wish.

Read John 21:15–17.

Jesus calls Peter to show his love for him by responding. He tells him to "Feed my sheep." He is asking him to go out and meet the needs of the people he meets.

Let's pour the last of the sand to symbolize what that invitation to mission looks like to you.

Now look at the sand art that each of you has created. They don't look the same do they? You see, even though you made your art in the same way, the results are different. You each had an invitation to a relationship with Christ, you each received a lesson, and you each have a call from Jesus. However, because you are each unique and special in your own way, then your friendship with Jesus looks different. Your friendship is unique because of the genuine and unique person you are. As members of the world community, we each are unique, but we are all friends to Jesus. He has something to say to each. He calls everyone to engage in his mission. Christ's mission is our mission.

We Receive

Mark 6:13; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Doctrine and Covenants 158:11c, 162:2d, 163:2b, 163:9

Blessed by the Sacraments

Hymns of Preparation

Sing the designated stanza of each of the following hymns, which represent one of the eight sacraments.

“Wonder of Wonders” (stanza 1) CCS 491

“Sing Praise for Rain That Washes Earth” (stanza 1) CCS 494

“O Lord, We Come as Children All” (stanza 3) CCS 510

“In the Singing” (stanza 1) CCS 519

“When God’s Call to Serve” (stanza 4) CCS 535

“Dear God, We Come This Hour to Ask” (stanza 3) CCS 543

“O Christ, the Healer, We Have Come” (stanza 1) CCS 544

“Hands of Blessing” (stanza 1) CCS 548

Welcome and Call to Worship

We experience covenant and blessings through the sacraments. Discuss the hymns that were sung in preparation. Each hymn represented one of the sacraments.

Responsive Reading

Leader: We bless our children.

People: Not just one child, but all children of the Earth.

Leader: We enter the waters of baptism.

People: I have decided to follow Jesus.

Leader: We pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

People: In confirmation’s sacrament, I sense God’s holy hand.

Leader: We share in the blessing of the Lord’s Supper.

People: I eat the bread and drink the wine.

Leader: We affirm the Spirit’s gifts.

People: I confirm the call to serve.

Leader: We are blessed in the sacrament of love.

People: I pray their home be blessed.

Leader: We pray to be restored.

People: I feel the peace of Jesus.

Leader: We pray this sacrament of blessing.

People: I face the onward journey of service to my faith.

Hymn of Invitation

“As We Gather” CCS 73

OR “Gather Your Children” CCS 77

Invocation

Congregational or Solo Response

“Herr, du mein Gott/You Are My God” CCS 12
OR “In the Quiet of This Day” CCS 161

Focus Moment

Use the spiritual practice of Holding in the Light, a form of communal intercessory prayer using silence and imaging.

Ask those gathered to form a circle. You may want to place one or more candles in the center.

Invite the congregation to share in intercessory prayer in which specific people and needs are placed in God’s loving, healing care. Consider asking the Holy Spirit to hold these people or needs close.

Spend a few moments centering on God’s presence and the group’s intent of praying for others. You may read the scripture reflections or offer a prayer. Consider one or more of the following scripture passages: 2 Corinthians 5:17; Doctrine and Covenants 158:11c; 162:2d; 163:2b.

Enter silent prayer for those individuals and concerns the group wishes to lift. The whole group may choose to focus on one particular person or concern, or group members can make individual choices about the focus of their prayers. The names of those being prayed for can be made known or kept private.

Continue in silent intercession for three to seven minutes.

Offer a brief prayer of thanks to close your prayer experience.

Prayer for Peace

Hymn of Peace

Consider offering this as an instrumental ministry of music
“Prayer of Peace” CCS 164
OR “Make Me a Channel of Your Peace” CCS 605

Light peace candle during the hymn

Prayer for Peace in the world

Homily

Based on the blessings of the eight sacraments

Responsive Prayer of Confession

Leader: The Lord reigns!

Congregation: Majestic Creator God, do we tremble in awe before you? Silence

Leader: The Lord reigns!

Congregation: Worthy Redeemer God, have we raised your name in praise? Silence

Leader: The Lord reigns!

Congregation: Sovereign Sustainer God, have we fulfilled justice? Silence

Leader: The Lord reigns!

Congregation: We bow before you. Forgive us. Cleanse us. Free us.

All: In the name of the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, amen.

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Hymn of Preparation

"Coming Together for Wine and for Bread" CCS 516

OR "In the Singing" CCS 519

Blessing and Serving of the Bread and Wine

Consider a more casual setting for the emblems of the Lord's Supper. Examples: a gluten-free cracker topped with a grape; grape juice in a small disposable cup with a piece of bread served on top of the cup. Ask the congregation to wait until everyone has been served to partake of the emblems.

Disciples' Generous Response

Share a personal testimony about how you have experienced blessing through one or more of the sacraments.

Blessing and Receiving of Disciples' Generous offering

Hymn of Benediction: "Now Let Us from This Table Rise" CCS 644

Consider singing this as a round. If needed, use the Community of Christ Sings Audio Recordings USB for accompaniment.

Sending forth

Brothers and sisters you are beloved by God who has chosen you. Go out now in joy. Love the unlovable and forgive the unforgivable in the grace-filled name of Jesus Christ, amen.

2016 Reunion Worship — Service 6

We Respond

Matthew 3:13–17, Doctrine and Covenants 164:9b–c

A Covenant Relationship

Prelude: Piano or Instrumental Ensemble

Welcome and Call to Worship

Discipleship must be grounded in an intentional spiritual formation that centers us in the presence of God, where we find inner peace. It is out of the depth and overflow of this peace that we find the capacity to cope with life and to extend ourselves in the ministry of Jesus Christ in the world.

—Stephen M. Veazey, 2005 World Conference sermon, “Share the Peace of Jesus Christ,” *Herald*, July 2005, 16.

Invocation

Holy Spirit by Francesca Battistelli www.youtube.com/watch?v=SS5S8Unvm48

OR Have a soloist sing “Holy Spirit” by Francesca Battistelli

OR Sing “Holy Spirit, Come With Power” CCS 46

Prayer for Peace and Lighting of the Peace Candle

Dear God, our Creator, Sustainer, and Friend, we have experienced your loving and healing Spirit throughout this week. We have been filled with your living water through worship, study, and community with disciples. We know what the peace of Christ is. Now, we come, recognizing that our life is a covenant with you. We are called not to keep that peace in our hearts and the smiles on our faces. You call us to lift our eyes and see the needs of those in our communities, in our workplaces, in our neighborhoods. Forgive us, Lord, for those times that we hesitate to share the incredible gift of your love and peace. We ask on this day and in those to come that we can keep our hearts filled with your love and our eyes open for how best to share your peace in the world. Open our hearts, Lord, help us to see the people of the world as you see them, so we can't ignore needs, but feel compelled to share the peace of Jesus Christ. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.

—Sherry Vojcsik, New Freedom, Pennsylvania

Focus Moment: Jesus Is Baptized

Scripture Reading: Matthew 3:13–17

Tell the story of Jesus' baptism. Today, there are those who are going to do what Jesus did! Discuss any questions or thoughts the children may have. Give out crayons and blank paper. Encourage everyone to create baptism pictures to take home and remember this special day.

Disciples' Generous Response

Reading: “Take My Gifts and Let Me Love You” CCS 609

Have this hymn read as the piano or a flute quietly plays the tune. Continue with the music as the offerings are received.

Blessing and Receiving of Offering

Personal testimonies on baptism experiences

Invite three people to share a 3–5 minute testimony on experiences they have had through baptism. Consider diversity in the selection of those who speak (age, gender, new member, long-time member). The testimonies could be about their own baptisms, a baptism in which they participated, a baptism they observed.

“O God, in Heaven, We Believe” (stanza 1) CCS 493

Testimony 1

“O God, in Heaven, We Believe” (stanza 2) CCS 493

Testimony 2

“O God, in Heaven, We Believe” (stanza 3) CCS 493

Testimony 3

“O God, in Heaven, We Believe” (stanza 4) CCS 493

Baptismal Challenge

Brief personal challenge to baptismal candidates based on Doctrine and Covenants 164:9b–c

Preparation for baptisms

Ministry of Music: “The Summons” CCS 586

Solo or small vocal ensemble

The Sacrament of Baptism

Congregation heads to the baptismal site. When they arrive, they create two lines facing each other, forming an “aisle” for the candidates to walk down and on to the site and sing the Hymn of Preparation. Baptismal candidates are the final ones to walk through. After candidates have walked past, the congregation follows and surrounds the font or pool.

Hymn of Preparation: “There’s An Old, Old Path” CCS 244

Candidates are announced by the presider before being baptized

Baptismal Hymn

“I Have Decided to Follow Jesus” CCS 499

OR “This Is a Day of New Beginnings” CCS 495

OR “Restore in Us, O God” CCS 219

Closing Prayer of Blessing

Greeting of those baptized today

Notes about the baptismal service:

This baptismal service can be modified to be a commitment service if there are no baptismal candidates. If so, the testimonies should focus on commitment. Speakers could share how they sense their call to discipleship and mission. Instead of moving to the baptism area, the congregation could come forward and symbolically, silently commit to making a difference in the world. This commitment could be during the Disciples' Generous Response, with members writing a statement of commitment and placing it in the offering or posting it on the walls or on poster board.

The baptismal service was written to have the worship take place in two locations: the main worship site and the place of baptism. Moving from one place to another can be powerful as we learn and worship in one area, and walk together to the baptism site. We form the "Old, Old Path" of which we sing by forming the two lines the candidates walk through. We surround the new disciples with a loving community as they step forth to be baptized. If you are worshiping and baptizing in the same location, try to make something similar. Have the congregation form the aisle in an arc leading to the font, so there is a pathway.