

Fourth Sunday in the Season of Creation

Cosmos Sunday

We worship with the entire universe



“Praise him you highest skies” Ps.148.1

This Sunday we worship with the entire universe, conscious that the cosmos is a vast sacred space of which we humans on Earth are a minute but privileged part. We join the Psalmists and call on the skies above and the deeps below to shout with songs of praise. And we celebrate that wonderful spiritual force called Wisdom that permeates, activates and unifies the web of worlds that is our cosmos.

Introit Hymn

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

In the name of the Creator of the cosmos,
In the name of Christ who fills the cosmos,
In the name of the Spirit who animates the cosmos.
Holy! Holy! Holy! The Cosmos is filled with God's presence

Greeting

The Cosmic Christ be with you.
And also with you.

Sentence:

“Praise him you highest skies” Ps.148.1

The Gloria in Excelsis,

a suitable hymn of praise or the following may be said or sung.

Glory to God in the highest!
And peace throughout the cosmos.

The Collect of the Day.

God, our Creator, as we reflect on the mysteries of the cosmos, we celebrate the wondrous design of the universe and the Wisdom that guides its course. Help us to discern how we are connected with living members of the cosmic community. Teach us to sense the presence of the cosmic Christ, whose presence fills and reconciles all forces in creation. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

After each reading the reader may say

Hear the word of the Lord,
thanks be to God.

First Reading: Proverbs 8:22-31.

‘The Wisdom Behind the World’. Wisdom is portrayed as a woman speaking. She claims to have existed before God created the cosmos and was a partner with God in the design of each part of the universe.

Psalm 148.

‘A Choir of Creation’. Starting with the angelic host, and descending through the skies to the varied forms and creatures of earth, then summoning mankind, we have a call to praise God that unites the whole creation.

Second reading: Colossians 1:15-20.

‘Christ, the Cosmic Power’. Christ is here introduced as the Cosmic One who is not only a force before all things existed but the one who is now the unifying impulse in all creation.

Gradual Hymn:

Gospel Reading: *The reader says*

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John 6:41-51

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

‘Living Bread from Heaven’. Jesus claims to be have been sent by the Father, the Creator of the cosmos. As such, Jesus is that bread from another cosmic realm who offers life to those on Earth.

After the Gospel, the reader says

For the Gospel of the Lord,

praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

The Sermon

The following Affirmation of Faith may be used:

Let us together affirm what we believe:

God creates all things,
renews all things and celebrates all things.

This we believe.

Earth is a sanctuary,
a sacred planet filled with God's presence,
a home for us to share with our kin.

This we believe.

God became flesh and blood
a piece of Earth,
a human being called Jesus Christ,
who lived and breathed and spoke among us,
suffered and died on a cross,
for all human beings and for all creation.

This we believe.

The risen Jesus
is the Christ at the centre of creation
reconciling all things to God,
renewing all creation and filling the cosmos.

This we believe.

The Holy Spirit renews life in creation
groans in empathy with a suffering creation
and waits with us for the rebirth of creation.

This we believe.

**We believe that with Christ we will rise
and with Christ we will celebrate a new creation.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The minister says: Let us pray for the cosmos and for the world.

[beginning with]

Jesus Christ, teach us to empathise with Earth.

**Make our spirits sensitive to the cries of creation,
cries for justice from the air, the clouds and the sky.**

**Jesus Christ, make our faith sensitive to the groans of the
Spirit in creation, groans of longing for a new creation.**

**Jesus Christ, make our hearts sensitive to the songs of our kin,
songs of celebration from the stars, the rains and the light.**

Christ, teach us to care. Amen

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray,

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 for ever. Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Invitation to Confession:

God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy, welcoming sinners and inviting them to the Lord's table.

We remember and confess that we have striven to discover other worlds, while polluting our own atmosphere and ignoring the needs of others with whom we are closely connected in that part of the web of creation.

Let us confess our sins against the cosmos in penitence and faith,
confident in God's forgiveness.

Confession

**Merciful God, our maker and our judge,
We have polluted Earth's atmosphere
and cut a hole in the ozone layer.
We have turned our greed into global warming.
We have ignored our crucial connection
with those parts of creation where we live.
We are sorry.
Lord Jesus, teach us to love the domains
that surround and sustain our planet. Amen.**

The Absolution.

Almighty God,
who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith:
pardon you and set you free from all your sins,
strengthen you in all goodness
and keep you in eternal life;
enable you to come home to Earth
by rejoicing under her galaxy,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The minister may add this Kyrie Eleison.

As we come home to Earth,
Christ, have mercy.
As we seek to love our home,
Christ, have mercy.
As we seek to care for our planet,
Christ, have mercy.

THE GREETING OF PEACE

Christ has reconciled us to God in one body by the cross.

We meet in Christ's name and share God's peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

The Greeting of Peace may be shared by the people.

Offertory Hymn:

The gifts of the people are brought to the Lord's table.

A suitable prayer, such as the one that follows, may be used.

God, our Creator, through your love you have given us these gifts to share. Accept our offerings as an expression of our deep thanks and signs of our concern for those in need, including our fellow creatures on planet Earth.

With all creation, we praise our Creator.

Blessed be God forever.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The priest takes the bread and wine for the communion, places them on the Lord's Table and says the following or an authorised Prayer of Thanksgiving.

The Creator be with you and all creation.

And also with you.

Open your hearts.

We open them to our Creator.

Let us give thanks to the Maker of the universe.

It is right to join the cosmos in thanking God.

God our Creator, source of everything in the universe, we bring before you this day, bread and wine and with it we bring before you the whole cosmos to say:

Thank you, Creator God, thank you!

Thank you for joining the web of creation for living and dying among us to redeem us and all creation:

Thank you, Redeemer God, thank you!

Thank you for rising to life permeating the cosmos with your Spirit to sustain and heal all things:

Thank you, Spirit God, thank you!

Therefore with voices of thanks echoing through the cosmos from the first day of creation until this very moment in time, we praise and thank you saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of all life,
The cosmos is filled with your presence
and glorifies your name.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy God, we thank you

for these gifts of your creation, this bread and wine,
and we pray that we who eat and drink them
in obedience to our Saviour Christ,
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
may be partakers of his body and blood,
and be made one with him and with each other
in peace and love.

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread;
and when he had given you thanks
he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,
'Take, eat. This is my body given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper, he took the cup,
and again giving you thanks
he gave it to his disciples, saying,
'Drink from this, all of you.
This is my blood of the new covenant
shed for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

The memorial acclamation.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Therefore we do as our Saviour has commanded:
proclaiming his offering of himself
made once for all upon the cross,
his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming again,
we celebrate, with this bread and this cup,
his one perfect and sufficient sacrifice
for the sins of the whole world.

As we eat and drink this holy sacrament,
renew us by your Spirit
that we may be united in the body of your Son
and serve you as a royal priesthood
in the joy of your eternal kingdom.
Receive our praises, Father,
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
with whom and in whom,
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
we worship you in songs of never-ending praise:

**Blessing and honour and glory and power
are yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND THE COMMUNION

[We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.]

We who are many are one body,
for we all share in the one bread.

[The gifts of God for the people of God.]

Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

The sacrament is given with the following words:

The body of Christ [the bread of heaven] keep you in eternal life.
Amen.

The blood of Christ [the cup of salvation] keep you in eternal life.
Amen.

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Bountiful God,

at this table you graciously feed us with the bread of life and the cup of eternal salvation.

May we who have reached out our hands to receive this sacrament be strengthened in your service, and become agents of healing for Earth and cosmos.

Christ calls us to be his disciples, to serve him with love and compassion, to serve Earth by caring for creation, especially those domains of the cosmos with which we are connected.

Most loving God,

**We will follow our crucified Lord,
listening for cries of injustice from the cosmos,
and the groanings of creation.
We will follow the risen Christ
to become partners in healing our planet.
We will care for creation,
honouring the cosmic community and celebrating life.**

The Blessing.

May the Spirit of God, who is the cosmic power above all and in all and through all, fill you with the knowledge of God's presence in Earth and the pulsing of Christ in creation, through whom all things are reconciled and renewed. And the blessing ... **Amen.**

The Dismissal:

Go in peace, serving Christ and loving Earth!
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Hymn: The Cosmic Christ

(Sung to the tune of *Amazing Grace*)

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| 1. Amazing is the Christ who died
To void all sin and curse,
Just as amazing is his life
That fills the universe. | 2. The risen Christ is more than one
Who waits on some far shore;
In, with and under ev'ry thing
Christ is the living core. |
| 3. The hidden Christ sustains for us
The blueprint of the skies,
The wisdom in each fragile form,
The soul that lights the eyes. | 4. The cosmic Christ moves deep below
To heal the wounds within,
When all creation groans in pain
Because of human sin. |
| 5. The cosmos hails the Christ, the one
Who reconciles all things,
'Til all creation rises new
With healing in her wings. | 6. As Christ unites the universe,
Restores this Earth once more,
A cosmic song reverberates,
A rich symphonic score |

The following acknowledgements are made:

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